



Analyzing Global Governance Failure: A Philosophical Framework

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Abstract

This article seeks to make a contribution to theory development by explicating the competing approaches (explanatory frameworks and research methods) that can be used in the analysis of episodes of global governance failures—undesirable events (such as war, or incidents of international terrorism) and behaviors (such as rogue political leaders accumulating weapons of mass destruction or supporting international terrorist groups) that are a consequence of the ineffectiveness of a global governance process. It does so by constructing a methodological taxonomy, which enables the identification of the competing philosophical methodologies that underpin contending perspectives on the causation of, and solutions to, episodes of global governance failures, by reference to contesting understandings of what knowledge is (an epistemological issue) and what exists that is capable of giving rise to consequences (an ontological issue). It then identifies the epistemological and ontological challenges facing policy analysts seeking to analyze and address global governance failure. Meeting these challenges requires the adoption of a methodology that draws insights from the epistemological and ontological syntheses that have emerged within contemporary social theory.

Introduction

This article seeks to make a contribution to theory development by explicating the competing approaches (explanatory frameworks and research methods) that can be used in the analysis of episodes of global governance failures—undesirable events (such as war, or incidents of international terrorism) and behaviors (such as rogue political leaders accumulating weapons of mass destruction or supporting international terrorist groups) that are a consequence of the ineffectiveness of a global governance process.¹ It does so by drawing upon the philosophy of the social sciences to construct a taxonomy of contesting understandings of what knowledge is (an epistemological issue) and what exists that is capable of giving rise to consequences (an ontological issue), and

by inference, how decisions are made (a rationality issue) and what motivates human actors (a nomological issue). This enables the articulation of the competing philosophical methodologies that underpin contending perspectives on the causation of, and solutions to, episodes of global governance failures, thereby enabling the articulation of their salient risks and thus their fundamental philosophical flaws. It then identifies the epistemological and ontological challenges facing policy analysts seeking to describe, understand, and address global governance failure. Meeting these challenges requires the adoption of an approach that draws insights from the epistemological and ontological syntheses that have emerged within contemporary social theory.

A Philosophical framework for the analysis of global governance failure

Any analysis of global governance failure is embedded in specific (contending and incompatible) judgments about the ultimate constituents of social reality and how they can be known. This leads to incompatible, not to say incomplete, analytical outcomes (in the form of contending perspectives on causation, consequences and solutions) because of

- what analysts presume to be knowledge, an epistemological issue;
- what they presume exists that is capable of giving rise to consequences, an ontological issue;
- how they presume decisions are made, a rationality issue; and,
- what they presume motivates human actors, a nomological issue.

Thus, how policy analysts analyze episodes of global governance failure depends on their philosophical² disposition.

A policy analyst has, as does everyone, a selective screen through which he or she receives knowledge of how the social world works and how people behave in it. This screen provides the value-oriented means by which he or she orders occurrences so as to give clarity of meaning to what would otherwise be an anarchic stream of events. These selective screens have both cognitive-rational (objective meaning) and communicative-rational (normative meaning) dimensions, which intermingle to produce an assumptive world: a “cognitive map of the world out there” (Young, 1979, p. 33). The result is a hierarchically structured set of beliefs, values, and norms that a person constructs as a result of his or her interaction with internal and external environments, which can be categorized as immutable core values, adaptive attitudes, and changeable opinions (Parsons, 1995, p. 375). How a policy analyst interrogates the social world, and so builds his or her assumptive world, depends, then, on his or her epistemological predisposition (contentions held about what is knowable, how it can be known, and the standard by which the truth can be judged) and his or her ontological predisposition (contentions held about the nature of being,

what can and does exist, what their conditions of existence might be, and to what phenomena causal capacity might be ascribed) (Dixon, 2002; Dixon and Dogan, 2002).

Epistemological dispositions

Epistemological concern about how the social world can be known gives rise to the proposition that a person can know a fact only if he or she holds a belief, as a propositional attitude or intentional state, that a factual proposition is true, which, then, when combined with desire or some other mental state, gives rise to behavioral dispositions. However, only some true beliefs (knowledge claims) are knowledge (as distinct, for example, from lucky guesses). The conversion of a true belief into knowledge requires a criterion or standard by which judgments can be made about what is and is not genuine knowledge.³ The epistemological debate within the social sciences concerns the relationship between the *objective* and the *subjective*. There are two broad epistemological approaches (Hollis, 1994): naturalism (embracing, *inter alia*, empiricism, logical positivism, falsificationism, and verificationism) and hermeneutics (embracing, *inter alia*, epistemological hermeneutics, existentialism, and transcendental phenomenology).

Naturalism, which grounds social knowledge in material forces, has two key traditions: positivism, which rejects unobservables as unknowable and requires an agent ontology; and realism, which accepts unobservables as knowable and permits a structural ontology. Naturalism proposes two types of knowledge—the analytic and the synthetic (Hempel, 1966). Analytic statements are derived from deductive logic and can offer a profound and strong demonstration of cause and effect, explanation and prediction. However, they only produce definitive knowledge of mathematical and linguistic relationships. Synthetic statements are derived through inductive inference and offer a weak and contingent correlation of cause and effect (Williams and May, 1996, p. 25). While both address the problem of causality in different ways (Popper, [1959] 2000), naturalism can only offer reasonably reliable predictions; it cannot identify unambiguous causal relationships.

Hermeneutics, in contrast, contends that knowledge rests on interpretations embedded in day-to-day expressions or forms of life derived from cultural practice, discourse, and language (Winch, [1958] 1990), and thus uses the distinctive insights of linguistic philosophy to understand the meaning of human conduct. It contends that knowledge is generated by acts of ideation that rest on intersubjectively shared symbols, or typifications that allow for reciprocity of perspectives (Schutz, [1932] 1967). However, this requires acts of reflexive interpretation to ensure the appropriate contextualization of meaning (Blumer, 1969; Garfinkel, 1967). Thus, hermeneutic knowledge is culturally specific, subject to severe relativism, dynamic, and thus open to constant revision, which makes explanation contingent on culture, and prediction problematic.

Ontological dispositions

Ontological concern about the nature of existence or being (Nozick, 1981) gives rise to a set of questions: What does and can exist? What does it mean for something to exist? What are the conditions necessary for existence? What might be the relations of dependency among things that exist? The ontological debate within the social sciences considers the relationship between the two dimensions of human behavior (Wendt, 1991): the *external*—structuralism (embracing, *inter alia*, anthropological structuralism, functional-structuralism, historical materialism, linguistic structuralism, symbolic interactionism, language games, poststructuralism, and postmodernism)—and the *internal*—agency (embracing, *inter alia*, rational choice theory, social phenomenology, dramaturgical analysis, and ethnomethodology). Structuralism's central proposition is that "social structures ["the ordered social interrelationships, or the recurring patterns of social behavior that determine the nature of human action" (Parker, 2000, p. 125)] impose themselves and exercise power upon agency. Social structures are regarded as constraining in that they mould people's actions and thoughts, and in that it is difficult, if not impossible, for one person to transform these structures" (Baert, 1998, p. 11). In contradistinction, agency's central proposition is that "individuals have some control over their actions and can be agents of their actions (voluntarism), enabled by their psychological and social psychological make-up" (Parker, 2000, p. 125). Thus, "people actively interpret their surrounding reality, and act accordingly" (Baert, 1998, p. 3). The essential distinction concerns causation: structuralism contends that social action derives from social structures, whereas agency contends that social action derives from individual intention—the "top-down" structural approach versus the "bottom-up" agency approach (Hollis, 1994, pp. 12–20). Neither approach is adequate to explain the observed complexity of human society. Structuralism can apparently explain the empirically strong correlations between individual behavior and social cohort, but it cannot explain outliers derived from acts of free choice, and agency has the reverse difficulty of not being able to deal with structural imperatives.

These epistemological and ontological dichotomies give rise to four methodological families. They represent, logically, the only possible ways of describing and explaining the social world. As Archer (1995, p. 21) notes, "There may be lively debates about the useful concepts to employ in a given view of what social reality is, but equally that view does serve to rule out certain concepts from explanation." These methodologies embody very particular combinations of consistent epistemological and methodological assumptions and give rise to philosophically coherent enquiry agendas and methods (see Hollis, 1994, p. 19). They determine how events and situations are described, understood, and explained, how evidence is assessed to establish the validity of knowledge claims, and how what is true or false is to be decided. They underpin policy analysts' assumptive worlds, which enable them to frame appropriately the social world they encounter (Rein and Schön, 1993), thereby becoming the prisms through

which they perceive and analyze that world. These methodological families are captured in Figure 1.

A philosophical taxonomy of the analysis of global governance failure

Each of the methodological families identified in Figure 1 supports a coherent set of approaches to the analysis of global governance failure. Each has predisposed its adherents to particular forms of reasoning as the basis for decision-making, and to particular nomological presumptions about how people are likely, or prone, to behave in given situations. Each, then, offers a set of flawed policy analysis propositions. In other words, analysis of episodes of global governance failure based on a denial of (1) either naturalist or hermeneutic epistemology will be unable to deal with issues that stem from the excluded epistemology, and (2) either structure or agency ontology will be unable to deal with issues that stem from the excluded ontology.

The naturalist-structuralist perspective

Policy analysts predisposed to a naturalist-structuralist philosophical stance would presume the social world to be knowable as “objective truth” by application of scientific methods within an ontological framework that assumes social structures impose themselves and exercise power upon agency. They would presume themselves to be capable of objectively describing an episode of global governance failure and identifying its structural causes and likely consequences using scientific methods. They would thus be predisposed to the neorealist⁴ *balance-of-power perspective* on global governance. Thus, in designing corrective action, they would presume that national political elites would accept the constraints imposed upon them by the global powers that be, because human behavior is presumed to be the outcome of rational thought constrained by the structure of material relationships and opportunity costs. Thus, they would offer remedial strategies based on the assumption that the structure of the international system, via the balance-of-power mechanism, can effectively influence the behavior of the political elites of nation-states in a predictable manner. They would presume that once the global powers that be are given a true understanding of the causes, the likely consequences, and the most desirable solutions to problems, they would be willing to exercise, legitimately, coercive power in order to address the threats and challenges posed by global governance failure, manifested as a set of sanctioned rules and regulations designed and administered by professionals and experts.

Policy analysts who adhere to the naturalist-structuralist methodology face the salient analytical risk of being unable to understand either the nature and causation of an episode of global governance failure because it cannot be explained only by the application of naturalist methods, or why their solutions,

		Epistemology	
		Naturalism	Hermeneutics
Ontology	Structuralism	<p>Naturalist Structuralism: Presumes an objective social world, knowable by the application of scientific methods, in which social structures exercise power over agency, which makes human behavior predictable. Embraces, <i>inter alia</i>, <i>anthropological structuralism</i> (concerned with how members of a society relate to social organizations and societal structures), <i>functional structuralism</i> (explaining the existence of a phenomenon or the carrying out of an action in terms of its consequences), and <i>historical materialism</i> (explaining how particular forms of society come into existence by reference to socioeconomic processes and relations).</p>	<p>Hermeneutic Structuralism: Presumes a subjective social world, knowable only as it is socially constructed, with people’s action being determined, and made predictable, by their collective interpretation of this reality. Embracing, <i>inter alia</i>, <i>symbolic interactionism</i> (explaining how meaning emerges through the interaction of language, identity, and thus society is the product of symbolic communications between interacting social actors; <i>language games</i> (explaining the complex of interwoven speech and action that are ordered in praxis in a way that makes sense to the participants), and <i>poststructuralism</i> (denying the self-sufficiency of systems structures and the possibility of precise definitions needed for knowledge systems, because the meaning of words is always changing and contestable).</p>
	Agency	<p>Naturalist Agency: Presumes an objective social world, knowable by the application of scientific methods, in which people are agents of their actions, with their behavior made predictable by their unconstrained self-interest. Embraces, <i>inter alia</i>, <i>essentialism</i> (explaining the nature of objects by reference to their internal properties); <i>reductionism</i> (explaining complex phenomena by reference to less complex phenomena); <i>materialism</i> (explaining all events and facts, actually or in principle, in terms of body, material objects, or dynamic material changes or movements); <i>rational choice theory</i> (explaining, and justifying, the collective results of the actions of individuals by reference to their own individual self-interest motivations); and <i>game theory</i> (making rational decisions under conditions of uncertainty).</p>	<p>Hermeneutic Agency: Denies the objectivity of social reality, which is only contestably knowable as what people believe it to be, with agency constrained by their subjective perceptions of social reality, which makes human behavior unpredictable. Embraces, <i>inter alia</i>, <i>social phenomenology</i> (explaining knowledge of objects by reference to how people construct meaning on the basis of their undifferentiated experiences); <i>dramaturgical analysis</i> (explaining social interaction by reference to theatrical metaphors); and <i>ethnomethodology</i> (explaining knowledge of social structures, and thus the ways people construct their world and make sense of what others say and do, by reference to a person’s actual, ordinary activities, so as to make practical actions, practical circumstances, commonsense, and practical sociological reasoning analyzable).</p>

Figure 1. A taxonomy of philosophical methodologies.

which presume a structuralist ontology (perhaps, in the first instance, deontological arguments based on world order, peace, and progress) are unable to secure voluntary compliance by “deviant” political elites in “rogue” nation-states.

The hermeneutic-structuralist perspective

Policy analysts predisposed to a hermeneutic-structuralist philosophical stance would presume that the social world is knowable only as “subjective truth” by application of the interpretative method, within an ontological framework that assumes social structures impose themselves and exercise power upon agency. They would presume themselves to be capable of describing, from particular cultural standpoints,⁵ an episode of global governance failure and of identifying its structural causes and possible consequences, but only after engaging in a reflexive interpretation of the apparent episode of global governance failure following intersubjective, value-based, and critically reflective communications with all the affected parties or stakeholders so as to ensure they have the appropriate contextualization of meaning (Blumer, 1969; Garfinkel, 1967). They would thus be predisposed to the constructivist⁶ *world society perspective* on global governance. Thus, in designing corrective action, they would presume that all the stakeholders are cooperative by nature and are ever willing and able to construct mutual understandings about their needs. Thus, they would offer remedial strategies that involve building a consensus among the stakeholders, following discourses on contestable values and standards that enable the construction of mutual understandings that form the basis for reasoning. They would thus presume that, once the stakeholders begin to build up a group consensus that it is in their interest to correct a global governance failure, a moral commitment to that solution would also build up, thereby ensuring compliance.

Policy analysts who adhere to the hermeneutic-structuralist methodology face the salient risk that an episode of global governance failure cannot be analyzed and fully understood by the application of hermeneutic methods. This is because the knowledge so generated is subject to severe relativism, dynamic, and thus open to constant revision, which makes explanation contingent on culture, and prediction problematic. This means that stakeholders may not be able to construct sufficient mutual understandings to fashion the consensus needed to build up enough moral commitment to secure voluntary compliance.

The naturalist-agency perspective

Policy analysts predisposed to a naturalist-agency philosophical stance would presume the social world to be knowable as “objective truth” by application of scientific methods, within an ontological framework that assumes social action derives from individual intention. They would presume themselves to be capable of objectively describing an episode of global governance failure and identifying its agential causes and likely consequences using scientific methods. They would thus be predisposed to the rational choice⁷ *international economic process perspective on global governance*. Thus, in designing corrective action, they would presume that all the actors involved would make purposive and predatory decisions on the basis of their own self-interest, because human

behavior is the outcome of such self-interested considerations. Thus, they would offer remedial strategies based on the assumption that purposeful action only follows decisions based on instrumentally rational analysis, premised on the self-interest motivation of all actors. They would presume that once contractual relationships with appropriate material incentives and disincentives are in place, instrumental compliance would follow, based on an economic calculation of the compliance costs and benefits.

Policy analysts who adhere to the naturalist-agency methodology face the salient risk of being unable to understand either the nature and causation of an episode of global governance failure, because it cannot be explained only by the application of naturalist methods, or why their solutions, which presume an agency ontology (involving material incentives and disincentives) is ineffective because of uncertainty, asymmetrical information, opportunism, and unenforceable contracts or because it cannot accommodate behavior that is induced by deontological considerations (such as ideological or religious obligations).

The hermeneutic-agency perspective

Policy analysts predisposed to a hermeneutic-agency philosophical disposition (Goffman, [1959] 1990), deny the possibility of an objective social reality and, therefore, the predictability of social action. If, as they claim, all knowledge is based on personal experience and interpretations of social reality, it follows that no social experience can be fully shared by two or more individuals, and thus relations between individuals cannot provide a *definitive* explanation of their behavior. This logic forces them to reject the notion of structural causation. They would presume themselves to be incapable of describing with any degree of certainty an episode of global governance failure and identifying its causes and likely or possible consequences. In designing corrective action, they would presume that all the human actors behave in a way that is ultimately unpredictable, because agency is defined by each individual's subjective perceptions of social reality, for they presume that what an individual believes to be "real" is, in fact, reality. Thus, they would offer remedial strategies based on nonrational, inspirational-strategic reasoning, involving *inter alia* a Weickian-like sense-making process (Weick, 1995), one that established, by trial and error, what can be done to correct global governance failure, and that can accommodate organized anarchy—ambiguous, mutually reinforcing perceptions of intention, understandings, history, and organization (March, 1988, 1994; Cyert and March, [1963] 1992; March and Olsen, 1976, 1989). They would presume that the global powers that be are inevitably engaged in garbage can-like decision processes (March and Olsen 1976), because the limits of human cognition make validity, truth, and efficiency irrelevant considerations, and would be willing to exercise the necessary coercive power in order to achieve the necessary level of compliance, however alienating the fear of force, threat, and menace might be, to their transient solutions to global governance failure.

Policy analysts who adhere to the hermeneutic-agency methodology face the salient analytical risk that their denial of an objective social reality leads to an exaggeration of the unpredictability of social action. Even if all knowledge is based on personal experience, the natural attitude (Husserl, [1931] 1960) itself is based on the expectation of reciprocity which, while never complete, may be so near as to provide high probability of quasi-prediction and, by implication, the possibility of quasi-structural causation.

The philosophical conditions for coherent analysis of global governance failure

In the face of incompatible epistemological and ontological contentions, the contemporary philosophy of the social sciences offers a way forward, through the diverse philosophical and methodological work of Archer (1990, 1995, 1996), Bhaskar ([1979] 1998), Bourdieu (1998), and Giddens (1984, 1993). These authors heralded a very clear attempt to reconcile the epistemological limitations of naturalism and hermeneutics, resulting in the *transcendental realism synthesis* (Bhaskar, [1979] 1998), and the ontological inadequacies of structure and agency, resulting in the *poststructuration synthesis* (Archer, 1995; Bourdieu, 1998; Giddens, 1984, 1993).

Transcendental realism, the epistemological synthesis, is concerned with the nature of factual description of the real world and offers a process by which its causal mechanisms can be identified. It makes two fundamental claims. The first is that the real world operates at three levels: the *empirical* (the perceived nature of events or processes open to the observer); the *actual* (events or processes as they actually occur); and the *real* or *deep* (the underlying mechanisms or imperatives that cause these events or processes) (Baert, 1998, p. 191). Knowledge of the real world, then, rests on unreliable empirical perceptions of the *actual* world, which is itself one remove from any *deep* explanations of it. Bhaskar ([1979] 1998, p. 11) thus draws a distinction between the transitive objects or phenomena (objects or phenomena as they are experienced) and the intransitive objects or phenomena (objects or phenomena as they are in reality). The second claim is that explanation of the real world involves a cumulative process of hermeneutic-based imaginative model building, whereby transitive knowledge is used to postulate hypothetical causal mechanisms that, if they exist, would explain any intransitive phenomenon under investigation. Transcendental realism does not overcome the uncertainties identified by the earlier naturalists, for problems of induction and the theory-laden nature of observation remain (Popper, [1959] 2000). However, it does embrace them at the ontological level, and it does adopt more sophisticated criteria for reality, which are free from the constraints of strict falsificationism. It also offers a potential reconciliation of the hermeneutic aspects of scientific discovery identified by Kuhn (1970) with an empirical-based approach to inference to the best explanation, that is, the process of choosing the hypothesis or theory that best explains available data (Wendt, 1999).

The *poststructuration ontological synthesis* is an attempt to adjudicate the ontological tensions between structure and agency. In contention is whether agency and social structure are interdependent, in a duality relationship as asserted by Giddens (“The reflexive capacities of the human actor are characteristically involved in a continuous manner with the flow of day-to-day conduct in the contexts of social activity” (1984: xxiii)), or interdependent but different and thus distinguishable (in an analytically dualist (Bhaskar, 1975) or morphogenetic relationship, as asserted by Archer (1995)), which means that, with time and power, social structure is both a cause and a consequence of agency (Parker 2000).

The combination of *transcendental realism* and *poststructuration* suggest a fifth methodological position. This is one that presumes a world in which events or processes are knowable, the nature of which, however, can be only unreliably and contestedly perceived by an observer, and in which structure and agency only have properties that are manifest in, and reproduced or transformed through, social practice. The knowledge so gained can be used to generate hypothetical causal explanations for the observed events or processes, for which empirical corroboration can be sought. The discovery of an intransitive generative mechanism becomes, itself, a new phenomenon that needs to be explained. Progressively, deeper levels of explanation of the social world are thereby generated by this methodology. When applied to global governance failure, this fifth methodological position progressively facilitates deeper levels of understanding of global governance events and processes, permits more subtle explanations of global governance problems, and facilitates the enhancement of global governance learning through the reflexive capacities of those it empowers.

In seeking to understand the causes of global governance problems, transcendental realists would accept that global governance failures occur, but would be skeptical of any empirical generalizations about their causation derived from naturalist methods, which they would treat only as preliminary working hypotheses. They would search for a deep understanding of the underlying causal mechanism or imperatives. This would require them to engage with other participants in global governance processes in acts of reflexive interpretation of problems, so as to ensure that they have an appropriate contextualization of meaning, which would involve the application of hermeneutic methods that would enable them to identify perspective reciprocities that result from acts of ideation. This cumulative process of hermeneutic-based imaginative model building involves transitive knowledge being used to postulate hypothetical causal mechanisms that, if they can be empirically demonstrated to exist, would explain global governance failure. This process would involve a search for empirical corroboration. If such confirmation were possible, then a new intransitive generative mechanism would have been discovered, which would, in turn, become a new phenomenon to be explained. Transcendental realism thus leads progressively to deeper levels of explanation of

global governance failure, thereby permitting more subtle explanations of their causation.

In seeking to identify how best to deal with global governance failures for which subtle explanation has been found and agreed upon, poststructuralists would accept that participants in global governance processes have the necessary reflexive capacities to solve them but that those capacities can only be actualized, so becoming meaningful human action, when all participants are empowered and enabled to draw upon the structural properties of the governance system. This reflexive capacity is the embodied understanding they gain by engaging with global governance practice, thereby enabling them to learn by trial and error and from the mistakes made by others, so as to determine the relevance of general principles (such as rules, recipes, formal procedures, and judgmental criteria). By this means they are able to garner the understanding needed to solve global governance failures as they conduct their affairs with global governance processes. The resultant social practice, mobilized as it is in a continuous manner with the flow of day-to-day conduct, will, in turn, transform the enabling structural properties of global governance. This outcome creates the potential for further global governance failures, so necessitating the prospect of further learning as the search for global governance failure explanation and solution continues.

The acceptance of this synthetic philosophical stance, however, generates serious epistemological and ontological challenges for those engaged the analysis of global governance failure.

Implications for the intellectual integrity of policy analysis

The proposed methodology requires policy analysts to be philosophically reflective, and thus able not only to identify their own and others' epistemological and ontological predispositions but also to understand and accept the strengths and weaknesses of the contending methodologies for their performance as policy analysts. In essence, this requires them to embrace the following propositions.

First, good policy analysts would recognize the limitations of the cognitive-rational (objective meaning) and communicative-rational (normative meaning) dimensions of their cognitive map of social reality. They would be epistemologically and ontologically sophisticated enough to accept that what constitutes "good" policy analysis is an essentially contested concept, clarifiable through constructive discourse. Thus, they would actively seek insights into what might work in particular global governance situations by engaging with those who hold different philosophical dispositions. They thus would see such constructive discourse as normal, even if it has the propensity to create conflict, and, most certainly, as necessary, in order to create creative opportunities for policy analysts to engage with those holding contending philosophical perspectives so as to find solutions to threatening episodes of global governance failure.

Second, good policy analysts would be skeptical of any empirical generalizations about the causation and consequences of, and solutions to, an episode of global governance failure. These generalizations they would treat only as preliminary working hypotheses. They would thus seek to deepen their understanding by engaging in acts of ideation with those who hold different philosophical dispositions, which would allow the perspectives the reciprocity needed for a reflexive interpretation to emerge that would ensure an appropriate contextualization of meaning.

Third, good policy analysts would learn how to comprehend and evaluate the intended meaning of the contending arguments based on a diversity of epistemological and ontological perspectives. They would settle in their own minds competing epistemological and ontological truth-claims with consistency and without recourse to intentional activities and motivated processes that enable self-deception or self-delusion. They would thereby confront unpleasant truths or issues rather than resort to the mental states of ignorance, false belief, unwarranted attitudes, and inappropriate emotions (Haight, 1980). They would accept that the best policy outcome that can be expected from constructive discourses is sets of achievable global governance aspirations, implementable strategies, and a tolerable level of global governance conflict. They would view good policy analysis as an iterative process that involves learning-by-doing and learning-from-experience about what is the right thing to do and how to do things right.

Conclusion

Contemporary global politics—whether perceived as anarchy, system, society, or hegemony—and the interpretations of global governance—whether neorealist, constructivist, or rational choice—suggest that profound differences attend the discourses that shape the way episodes of global governance failure are explained and addressed. Underpinning these contending perspectives and interpretations are contesting methodological families—epistemological and ontological configurations—that give rise to the criteria or standards by which judgments are made about what is genuine knowledge with respect to global governance, what are the conditions required for something to exist and be capable of giving rise to consequences in the global governance arena, and, by inference, how global governance decisions are made and what motivates the human actors involved. In a world characterized by profound cultural diversity, which can be associated with equally profound philosophical differences, policy analysts seeking to explain and address episodes of global governance failure by *only* drawing upon *one* of these contending (fundamentally flawed) methodological families adopts a particular (fundamentally flawed) form of reasoning as the basis for their thought, decision, and action. The broad conclusion drawn, then, is that policy analysts seeking to explain and address episodes of global governance failure need

- to recognize the limitations of their cognitive map of global governance reality, thereby avoiding epistemological and ontological arrogance;
- to seek out and engage with those who disagree with their cognitive map of global governance reality;
- to treat all truth-claims skeptically, accepting that there are multiple standards by which they could be justified, particularly if they come from any ascendant epistemic community (whether founded on naturalism or hermeneutics); and
- to settle competing epistemological and ontological asseverations with consistency and without recourse to the self-deception or self-delusion that permits avoidance of unpleasant global governance truths.

Their challenge is to accept Heidegger's proposition that "thinking only begins at the point where we have come to know that Reason, glorified for centuries, is the most obstinate adversary of thinking" (cited in Barrett, 1958, p. 184).

Notes

1. Rosenau (1992, p. 15) conceptualizes global governance as "those institutions and regimes that the diverse actors in the [global] system fashion . . . as a means of pursuing their ideational and behavioral inclinations through time." These rule-oriented global governmental organizations (Diehl, 1989; Feld, Pfaltzgraff and Hurwitz, 1988; Jacobson, 1984; Kratochwil and Ruggie, 1986; Taylor, 2001) and international regimes (Keohane, 1984; Keohane and Nye, 1989; Little, 2001; Strange, [1982] 1997; Young, 1982, 1989) constitute a system of global governance without government (Rosenau and Czempel, 1992). This governance system, according to Keohane (1989, p. 3), is constituted by "persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations." The formal dimension can be articulated as the construction of international relations in a system of states, such as the European Union, or as "broad framework arrangements governing the activities of all (or almost all) the members of international society over a wide range of specific issues" (Young, 1989, p. 13). Rosenau (1992, p. 9) argues that "governance in a global purposive order is not confined to a single sphere of activity. It refers to the arrangements that prevail in the lacunae between regimes and, perhaps more importantly, to the principles, norms, rules, and procedures that come into play when two or more regimes overlap, conflict, or otherwise require arrangements that facilitate accommodation among competing interests." The complexity of contemporary global politics, whether described as anarchy (Waltz, 1979), system (Keohane and Nye, 1989), society (Bull, 1977), or hegemony (Wallerstein, 1979; Peterson, 1992), and the diversity of interpretations of it, suggests a reflective approach (Wendt, 1987; 1991, 1999) that acknowledges the profound cultural differences that attend the discourses that shape global governance. As highlighted by Huntington's (1997) clash of civilization thesis, cultural diversity is associated with very profound philosophical differences used to explain and address episodes of global governance failure.
2. The term *philosophical* is here used as a general category for concepts that include notions of knowledge (epistemology) and existence (ontology), which when combined in a variety of configurations produce several "methodologies." Thus, the methodological families introduced in Figure 1 refer to particular combinations of philosophical assumptions about epistemology and ontology.
3. A true belief or knowledge claim can be justified on various bases, including, *inter alia*,
 - on the evidence of sensory experiences, so becoming a *posteriori* knowledge (naturalized epistemology) (Kant, [1788] 1998);

- if there are sufficiently good justification reasons that are, themselves, either in need of no further supporting reasons (foundationalism) or are mutually supporting (coherentism) (Lucey, 1996);
 - if it is a product of a psychological process that produces a high proportion of true beliefs (reliabilism) (Alston, 1989);
 - if its prima facie justification cannot be made defective, as a source of knowledge, by being overridden or defeated by evidence that the subject does not possess (epistemic defeasibility) (Shope, 1983); or
 - if the degree of belief held in a true belief, which is a measure the believer's willingness to act in accordance with that belief, conforms to the axioms of probability theory (probabilism) (Rosenkrantz, 1977).
4. Neorealists perceive the world as a system of nation-states—an *international system* (Carr, 1946; Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1979). Relations between states are power driven and emphasize competition and conflict, because the international system's anarchic structure provides few, if any, constraints on the pursuit of power. Neorealists consider that national interests are paramount within the international system (Boucher, 1998, p. 30; see also Part I) and that in political life, power is the prime motivation or driving force. The analytical focus is located at the system level rather than the individual level, with the key group being the state, presumed to be a unitary rational actor operating under conditions of uncertainty and imperfect information. Under this perspective, international anarchy makes the nation-state and its external sovereignty the dominant concerns, and purposeful action is intended and designed to maintain world order, peace, and security by soliciting the collective support of all nation-states to oppose and punish deviant behavior by any nation-state.
 5. Cultural standpoints relevant to global governance failure might, for example, include "Western," "Islamic," "gender," "ecological," and "Africanist" positions.
 6. Constructivists perceive the world as an international society of interest groups. This view overlaps the concepts of *global civil society* (Edwards, 1999, p. 3), *global society* (Banks, 1948), *global citizenship* (Falk, 1992a, 1992b, 1994, 1995), *cosmopolitan citizenship* (Delanty, 2000), and the virtual *network community* (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998; Frederic, 1992). Constructivists advance the proposition that subnational groups in one nation-state are networking with their counterparts in others, thereby creating a dense web of relationships that constitutes a new global order (Slaughter, 1997, p. 184) that seeks to satisfy those needs and interests that they consider to be important but that nation-states are unable to satisfy. In so doing, complex and multilayered relationships are established, which, over time, build shared attitudes and common beliefs that, in turn, build commitments, expectations, and loyalties that ultimately engender transnational organizations beyond state control (see, for example, Mitrany, 1933, 1966). This process has increased the importance of nonstate actors (Rosenau, 1990), which now require nation-states to seek their active cooperation (Reinicke, 1998, p. 219) so as to enable them to address global disorder effectively and efficiently with a minimum amount of alienation (Knight, 2000, pp. 171–172). Under this perspective, sovereignty issues are subservient, since nation-states share power with nonstate actors, purposeful action can be developed only within the terms of the appropriate discourse, and the instruments of governance must be based on the existing symbolic interaction of global actors (Wendt, 1999).
 7. Rational choice posits a world of self-interested individuals and subscribes to Jeremy Bentham's universalist-cosmopolitanist principle of the greatest happiness of the "citizens of the world" (Boucher, 1998, p. 31 and also Part 1; see also Bentham, [1802] 1987, pp. 128–136; Brown, 1992, 1995; Thomson, 1992). It posits that social benefits inevitably follow from efforts to liberate the global market from political obstacles to exchange, which, advocates of rational choice assert, should be the driving force of the relations between nation-states (see also Soros, 1998), thereby ensuring that the principle of "cooperative competition" (Reinicke, 1998, p. 60) or "competitive cooperation" (p. 73) is embedded in international governance mechanisms. Thus, nation-states are willing to trade their sovereign autonomy for the absolute economic benefits of cooperation (Zacher with Sutton, 1996, p. 22 and also p. 21). Under this perspective, global governance

mechanisms are minimalist, and purposeful action only follows decisions made on the basis of self-interest.

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