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# Trusting Relationships in the NATO Alliance

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## Abstract

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is one of the longest-lasting alliances in world history despite a large membership with often disparate foreign policy goals. For many theorists who focus on the problem of uncertainty and potential for defection among alliance partners, this is a puzzle – particularly given the historical (and even current) animosities between some of the member states. How is it that so many states can work together given the structural bias towards distrust in the international system? Given the goal of the papers on this panel to investigate how NATO might in fact facilitate trust-building among its members, this paper represents an initial attempt to consider how the question of trust can be considered with respect to the existing literature on both alliances and NATO. In doing so, it brings together three literatures: trust theory, alliance theory, and NATO studies, in order to reveal the points of intersection that might help us to understand how and why trusting relationships can be formed within the NATO alliance.

## Introduction

Alliances are ubiquitous within the history of international politics and, as such, are the topic of major concern for international relations scholars. As groups of actors coming together to overcome their rivals through military means, their existence 'is as original an event in politics as is conflict.'<sup>1</sup> Major scholars have linked alliances to some of the most fundamental attributes of the international system such as the balance of power.<sup>2</sup> Kegley and Raymond, equally, note that they are 'perhaps the most visible form of interstate agreement, in the sense not only that they exemplify the politics and norms constituting concerted efforts by autonomous actors to commit themselves voluntarily to a particularly course of action, but also because they fall into the "high politics" of national security policies and therefore command widespread attention.'<sup>3</sup> In short, alliances are not only widespread, but their importance has been trumped by a large and diverse group of thinkers.

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<sup>1</sup> George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1962), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Hans J Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th Revised ed. (New York: Alfred A Knopf), 188; Kenneth N Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill), 166; Stephen M Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 18-20.

<sup>3</sup> Charles W Kegley Jr. and Gregory A Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down: Alliance Norms and World Politics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina ), 45.

At the most basic level, alliances are cooperative formations of states in pursuit of a common goal, primarily the preparation for, and prosecution of, a military conflict against a common rival.<sup>4</sup> It is this military purpose that differentiates alliances from other types of associations or regimes.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, alliances are not just simple alignments of states with common military interests or fears. They only exist through formal agreement. Alliances therefore are not only the behavioral representation of pre-existing alignments of interests, but can also act as a means through which these alignments are strengthened.<sup>6</sup>

Because of their ubiquity and importance to ensuring state security, the academic literature on alliances is exceptionally large. Much of it has as its primary interest both the formation and maintenance of alliances given the egoistic nature of states and the pervasive problems of uncertainty within an anarchic international system. These two assumptions, egoism and uncertainty, drives much of the analysis. Put simply, given that states are, and given their environment must be, distrustful, how do alliances both form and continue to function?

This paper, reflecting the goals of the panel, attempts to turn this assumption on its head. Its purpose of is to explicitly examine a variable otherwise little considered in the alliance literature: trust. It must be said from the outset that this does not presuppose a belief that trusting relationships between alliance members are easy to create or maintain. Misplaced trust and the defection of one or more of the members at a critical moment is always possible, and this fear will always serve as a break to the development of trusting relationships. As Friedman put it succinctly, "The mere existence of a relationship based on security or aggrandizement is no guarantee of amity or exemption from international rivalry within one's own immediate circle."<sup>7</sup> The alliance itself is no panacea to the potential problem of diverging interests and the possibility of defection.

The claim is that though it may be difficult for states to develop trusting relationships, we should not completely rule out their ability to gradually entrust each other's security to each other through their experiences in alliance structures. Where the formation of these trusting relationships is possible, there are many benefits to an individual state, since being a member of an alliance where trusting relationships exist leads to a perceived increase of overall security.<sup>8</sup> Thus, instead of presupposing that mistrust by necessity must exist in the creation, maintenance, and eventual dissolution of alliances, we propose to ask how, if at all, can alliances help to build trusting relationships between states within the alliance?

The subject of study for this question is one of the most well-known alliances in history: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). What makes NATO substantially different from other alliances is both its size and its stability over time.<sup>9</sup> These properties make it an interesting subject of trust-

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<sup>4</sup> Glenn H Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 1. See also Kegley Jr. and Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down*, 52.

<sup>5</sup> George Modelski, "The Study of Alliances: A Review," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 7, no. 4: 774-75; Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Alliance Politics*, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Julian R Friedman, "Alliance in International Politics," in *Alliance in International Politics*, ed. Julian R Friedman, Christopher Bladen, and Steven Rosen (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), 10.

<sup>8</sup> Independent of the effects of whether joining/creating the alliance exacerbates external security dilemmas, which might lead to more long-term insecurity.

<sup>9</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 12; Alfred J Hotz, "NATO: Myth or Reality," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 288: 126; Wallace J Thies, *Why NATO Endures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

building between its members. The size is unusual because, all things being equal, the more states in an alliance the more likely it is that their interests will diverge and threaten the existence of the alliance. Despite this, NATO has achieved remarkable stability. Additionally, it has done so despite the fact that some of its members have had conflictual pasts and antagonistic overlapping interests. Given both the successes and continuing problems faced by NATO, this panel aims to understand whether the alliance itself has helped states form trusting relationships with each other, the effect of these trusting relationships on these relationships, and how some alliance partners have had more success in entering into a trusting relationship than others.

The papers on this panel are preconditioned on the idea of specific trust, that is, adopting the analytical framework concerned with whether A trusts B to do Z, not whether A trusts B generally. As such, we need to ask questions that specify the Z, or the thing to be entrusted between the partners. In this project, we have chosen two specific areas of trust to study. First, can each state trust the other not to defect by deciding to take advantage of them militarily? This question speaks to the problem that entering into an alliance can result in a decrease of tensions and military preparedness with respect to the other state that leaves both states potentially vulnerable to a sudden change in mood of the other. In the worst case scenario, revisionist powers can join alliances exactly to lower the guard of other states and strike at an opportune moment.

Second, can each state trust that their alliance partners will not abandon them in potential joint operations? This speaks to the perennial issues in the alliance literature about the fears of abandonment and entrapment - that the alliance members will not come to their alliance partner's aid when they need it, or that the alliance partner will behave recklessly and drag other members into an unwanted conflict. In this question we are keeping joint operations openly defined such that they can also include activities that go beyond the current scope of alliance agreements. This is an important element because, theoretically, there is a question over whether achieving specific trust in one area can help to achieve it in other areas and, practically, this responds to disagreements within NATO over the benefit and scope of out-of-area operations, which expand the traditional remit of the alliance.

The purpose of this paper is to consider the intellectual environment in which these two questions lie. The first section will introduce the concept of trusting relationships and establish what trust literature in international relations is most useful for thinking about the possibility of trusting relationships in alliances. The second section will examine how the research questions are considered within the current alliance literature with an aim to show how incorporating the trust literature can add to our understanding of state behavior within alliances. The final section will consider these issues with respect to major themes within the scholarly literature that have explained the durability of NATO and where these might benefit from a consideration of trust.

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Press), ix. This is particularly evident even now when we compare it to other US-centered Cold War alliances, such as SEATO, CENTO and ANZUS, all of which have either dissolved or are minimally functional. Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary, and Magnus Petersson, "Utility for NATO - Utility of NATO?," in *NATO: The Power of Partnerships*, ed. Håkan Edström, Janne Haaland Matlary, and Magnus Petersson (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan), 1.

## Trusting Relationships

With the exploration of any sociological concept comes a certain amount of fragmentation over definition and meaning. This is no different with trust. Despite the lack of consensus, conversations about trust in international relations have fallen into roughly three discrete categories: those who see trust as a rational phenomenon, a psychological phenomenon, and a social phenomenon.<sup>10</sup> In order to understand how trust theory might help us to understand alliances, we need to ascertain which theoretical approaches might be useful given the specified research questions. This section seeks to defend the utility of both social and, to some extent, rational approaches to trust over psychological understandings.

The focus of psychological trust research revolves around how trust affects the decision-making of individuals in leadership positions. The goal is to understand why different individuals are able to live with greater complexity, that they have a greater “tolerance of uncertainty,”<sup>11</sup> and what political effects arise from differences in this capability among political leaders. One of the more sophisticated theories of trust from a psychological perspective is the generalized trust approach of Brian Rathbun. Rathbun argues for the importance of generalized trusters, that is, individuals who are psychologically predisposed to trust in any given situation. Generalized trusters exist because trust is not simply a rational calculation, but has a moralistic component that differs in importance among individuals.

His research suggests that the presence or absence of individuals who are generalized trusters in US leadership positions has effects on how multilateral institutions are created. This is because generalized trusters will be more likely to accept institutions with binding commitments than those who are not.<sup>12</sup> As Rathbun puts it, ‘A belief that others are generally and inherently trustworthy provides the confidence needed to cooperate even when the gains from cooperation are inconsistent over a long period of time. Where generalized trust is lacking, states will insist on specific reciprocity, as they will be less certain that others will honor their agreements’<sup>13</sup> Rathbun maps the propensity to trust on the social psychology of the left and right, claiming that the more liberal you are, the more likely you are to be a generalized trusteer.<sup>14</sup>

It would seem that this result would have practical effects for studying trust in military alliances. Where general trusters are in positions of power of key states, we would expect that more cohesive and binding military alliances, such as NATO, could be formed. However, there is a major problem

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<sup>10</sup> Jan Ruzicka and Vincent Charles Keating, “Going Global: Trust Research and International Relations,” *Journal of Trust Research* 5, no. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Niklas Luhmann, *Trust and Power* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons), 15.

<sup>12</sup> Brian C Rathbun, *Trust in International Cooperation: International Security Institutions, Domestic Politics and American Multilateralism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 6.

<sup>13</sup> *Trust in International Cooperation: International Security Institutions, Domestic Politics and American Multilateralism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 28. He furthermore notes in other places with respect to security that ‘cooperators [will] be more willing to make binding security commitments than competitors as the latter will be more concerned about opportunism even in the same structural circumstances with the same information and the same interests.’ *Trust in International Cooperation*, 37. and ‘Generalized trusters will be more optimistic than non-trusters that these security commitments, which amount to moral obligations, can work effectively without hierarchical control.’ *Trust in International Cooperation*, 38.

<sup>14</sup> *Trust in International Cooperation*, 6.

that makes Rathbun's generalized trust theory less useful for the study of alliances than it might seem on the face of things.

Because it is an individual level theory - that is, that the degree of generalized trust in a state is dependent on the ability of those in power to win domestic political contests - it cannot explain long-term trusting relationships but for an appeal to the continuous character of the leadership. Rathbun's approach suggests that alliances such as NATO are highly dependent on the continuous left-wing nature of key governments, since absent the presence of general trusters, states will begin to back away from commitments they now find too risky. Rathbun states this explicitly concerning the NATO alliance, arguing that the members require moralistic trust to feel assured that the others will come to their aid, since there is an absence of specific reciprocity.<sup>15</sup>

Given that the continuous left-wing nature of NATO government is simply not empirically valid, then there is no explanation from this perspective for the continued success of the organization. This is perhaps why when Rathbun deals with NATO as a case study to defend the importance of generalized trust, he only discusses the short period of time when NATO was forming.<sup>16</sup> When it comes to the question of why NATO has continued to endure and now commands bipartisan support within the United States, he abandons his framework of psychological trust and suggests a sociological explanation in the creation of a common identity among the NATO members based on sixty years of shared experiences.<sup>17</sup> This common identity, a sociological phenomenon, in turn, generates the moralistic trust needed to sustain the relationships.<sup>18</sup> As such, in its inability to account for long-term sources of trust within the alliance structures, psychological theories such as Brian Rathbun's are of limited use to answer the research questions posed.

We are thus left with two possibilities: using rationalist trust theory or using social trust theory. Rational theories of trust are useful to understand alliance dynamics because they engage with the problem of uncertainty that is present in international politics. This is of particular importance for security politics since the costs of defection by an alliance member, whether it be in the form of abandonment or using the alliance to launch a surprise strike against an alliance member, can be very high. Understanding whether an alliance member is likely to be trustworthy is therefore of the utmost importance.

Within rational trust theory, there are two contenders. The first is a theory by Russell Hardin, who argues that trust is a matter of encapsulated interest, or the situation where 'I trust you because I think it is in your interest to take my interests in the relevant matter seriously in the following sense: You value the continuation of our relationship, and you therefore have your own interests in taking my interests into account.'<sup>19</sup> With respect to alliances, understanding trust in this sense focusses our investigations on the belief of the NATO states that the relationship will continue that creates positive benefits. On the basis of the continuation of both the relationship and the mutual benefits, trust is conferred. Absent both the benefits and the expectation of a continued

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<sup>15</sup> *Trust in International Cooperation*, 28.

<sup>16</sup> *Trust in International Cooperation*, 163-208.

<sup>17</sup> *Trust in International Cooperation*, 207.

<sup>18</sup> *Trust in International Cooperation*, 204. This conclusion comes somewhat ironically given that his problem with rational theories of trust is that 'They cannot account for diffuse reciprocity over time.' *Trust in International Cooperation*, 18. Emphasis in original.

<sup>19</sup> Russell Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 1.

relationship, NATO members should leave the alliance. Though Hardin's theory uses the word 'trust' as its central concept, in practice, this does not lead us far from the simple idea that states will do things that have positive expected values, making alliance defection a potentially major issue should the situation cause one or more states to believe that they do not have anything more to gain from membership.

A second version of rational trust that complicates this is offered by Andrew Kydd. This differs from Hardin's view in that it does not assume that states calculate interests on a case-by-case basis, but that particular states have particular types: those that will reciprocate cooperation due to having general interests in common or having a status quo orientation, and those that are likely to defect or have a revisionist orientation.<sup>20</sup> Kydd defines the level of trust as the probability that the other believes the other to have similar preferences, or in his parlance, is trustworthy.<sup>21</sup> The problem of trust thus revolves around resolving the uncertainty over the other state's type so that cooperation can occur between those identified as trustworthy and avoided with those identified as untrustworthy.

Using Kydd's rational trust theory to understand alliances is a somewhat difficult because of the way he changes the focus of trust in his different articles. Whether trust is about having a status-quo orientation or general interests in common matters with respect to alliance politics. If having a status-quo orientation is the measure of trustworthiness, then the key problem could be whether states can find other states that are of a status-quo orientation to form a stable alliance. But this is complicated by the fact that revisionist states or a mix of states with revisionist and status quo preferences can form security alliances together given the nature of the external threat. So using the status quo/revisionist dichotomy as the indicator of trustworthiness in an alliance structure faces immediate problems. The problem of trust in alliances, therefore, is better thought of from Kydd's perspective as one of the uncertainty over whether the alliance partners have similar enough preferences to respect their alliance commitments. This can include, but is not limited to, their status-quo or revisionist preferences. But by focusing on general preferences, Kydd's theory permits potentially more stability within alliances than Hardin might allow.

The last major theoretical group, the social theories of trust, share the psychological theories' emphasis on trust not simply as a rational prediction. Trust, "occurs within a framework of interaction which is influenced by both personality and social system, and cannot be exclusively associated with either."<sup>22</sup> It has an explicitly intersubjective quality comes about because an actor cannot demand the trust of another, but rather, it is something that can only be offered and accepted.<sup>23</sup>

Social trust theories do not completely discount the importance of rationality to trust-building. Indeed, trust cannot occur without some type of observation and speculation of the intentions of

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<sup>20</sup> Andrew Kydd, "Trust Building, Trust Breaking: The Dilemma of NATO Enlargement," *International Organization* 55, no. 4: 810; *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 3; "Learning Together, Growing Apart: Global Warming, Energy Policy and International Trust," *Energy Policy* 38, no. 6: 2680. Note that there is a slight problem across these definitions as states can be status quo yet still not share the same interests or want to reciprocate cooperation (or vice versa).

<sup>21</sup> *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> Luhmann, *Trust and Power*, 6.

<sup>23</sup> *Trust and Power*, 43.

the other. But instead of staying within a rationalist framework, social theories of trust note how trust takes familiarity with another from the past, and instead of merely drawing inferences from it, goes beyond the information given to define the future.<sup>24</sup> As Luhmann notes, in almost all cases 'no decisive grounds can be offered for trusting; [because] trust always extrapolates from the available evidence.'<sup>25</sup> Trust is thus not strictly rational, in fact, it rests on a particular type of illusion. In reality there is not enough information available to assure success of any trusting venture. What we do when we trust is to subjectively create a less-complex system that replaces the objective world, drawing selectively from the data we have and, importantly, 'overdrawing on the information.'<sup>26</sup>

The manifestation of trust in international politics for social theorists is the trusting relationship.<sup>27</sup> Trusting relationships are important because they suggest the possibility of long-term stability outside of rational prediction under uncertainty (as the the rational approach suggests) or propensity of changing leaderships to trust (as the psychological approach suggests). At the maximum extent, trust can be 'thoughtless, careless and routinized, and thus to require no unnecessary expenditure of consciousness.'<sup>28</sup> In other words, when the reduction takes place in an intersubjective agreement, it is simply experienced as true.<sup>29</sup>

Social trust scholars are primarily interested in how it is that the social environment affects the way that actors overdraw on their environment to make trusting or distrusting decisions, and how those decisions themselves might affect the social environment for other actors. For instance, Aaron Hoffman is interested in what he calls the fiduciary approach to trust, where to trust is not simply to believe someone to is likely keep to their agreement, but also that there are social elements to trust that make keeping the agreement an upright or honorable thing to do.<sup>30</sup> Another version of social trust theory, proposed by Kegley and Raymond, focuses on pre-existing social norms or rules against breaking agreements that facilitate trusting relationships. They point out that promissory obligations on the part of states frames almost all international politics, even if there is a debate over whether or not these obligations are flexible or binding.<sup>31</sup> Although an anarchical environment promotes distrust, states do not routinely enter into agreements through deceit. Instead, they reach agreements 'with the expectation of complying with their promises so as to realize the benefits they negotiated.'<sup>32</sup> This suggests that the relative strength of the norm that states should honor agreements will have an effect on the ability of states to develop trusting relationships. This can take two forms: either the actor either internalizes that the alliance obligations must be respected as a norm unto itself, or that they believe that breaking the norm and defecting will be costly to their external reputation because a significant number of other states believe the norm to be important.

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<sup>24</sup> *Trust and Power*, 20.

<sup>25</sup> *Trust and Power*, 26.

<sup>26</sup> *Trust and Power*, 32.

<sup>27</sup> Aaron M Hoffman, "A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 3: 377.

<sup>28</sup> Luhmann, *Trust and Power*, 24-25.

<sup>29</sup> *Trust and Power*, 32.

<sup>30</sup> Hoffman, "A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations," 379.

<sup>31</sup> Kegley Jr. and Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down*, 44.

<sup>32</sup> *When Trust Breaks Down*, 46.

If norms strongly support the sanctity of agreements, then trust will be something on which states can rely.<sup>33</sup>

Theories of social trust attempt to supplement rational theories by including a social obligation to the predictive element of trust. This is important for the stability of alliances because, where possible, it means that alliances will be more stable than other theories might predict because states will consider obligation they owe as part of the rational calculation of whether to defect or not. Furthermore, where norms of reciprocity and promise-keeping are strong, states must additionally consider the costs of defection not only from their alliance partner, but also from other states within the social environment.

Different theories of trust thus then have within them the potential for theorizing the relative stability or instability of alliances given the assumptions they make in how trust works. Given these differences, in what way can they illuminate what have been the primary concerns in the alliance literature with respect to the central research questions? In order to engage with both theories of trust and alliances, the next section will show where trust literature can help the existing alliance literature, both in terms of where it reinforces some of the existing ideas and where it adds to the discussion.

## **Alliances**

The study of alliances has focused primarily around two questions: how is it that they initially form and how is it they can be maintained. Without discounting the importance of the first question, this project is primarily centered around the second question. That is, once the alliance is formed, can trusting relationships be built? Given the previously stated interest in examining specific trust, that is, that states trust each other to do specific things and not simply in general, this section is organized around the two questions we have already posed: whether each state trust the other not to defect by deciding to take advantage of them militarily, and whether each state trust that their alliance partners will not abandon them in potential joint operations.

## **Possibility of Defection**

As we stated from the outset of this paper, most of the literature on alliance maintenance ignores the possibility of trusting relationships forming. Instead, alliances are simply considered to be collections of rational actors attempting to maximize their security in an uncertain environment. Absent any factors other than self-interest, these actors will join, change, and abandon alliances where they feel it necessary. Most alliances should be unstable and temporary.<sup>34</sup> So states will also be aware of the possibility of gaining an advantage over the other alliance members through either defecting from the alliance or switching sides to other alliances where this best meets their interests.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Friedman, "Alliance in International Politics," 10-11. The extent to which alliances are unstable will be related to the interests served in the alliance. Alliance members do not have to have the same preferences in all areas for the alliance to operate. So long as the specific purpose of the alliance are held in the common interest of all the states, other interests can vary where they do not conflict with these core goals. This means that, in general, the more permanent the alliance, the more limited interests it is likely to serve Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 193., the more interests it serves, the less permanent we should expect the alliance to be. The more interests held in the alliance together, the more likely that one or more will diverge among the members over time.

There are a number of ways that trust research might help to understand how and why this pessimistic take on alliances might be overstated. For instance, from the rationalist trust literature we can understand how states constantly probe each other for trustworthy or untrustworthy signals. If a state is deemed untrustworthy, then trustworthy states will refuse to cooperate with it, expecting defection. Any failure to live up to the expectations of the alliance or complete defection to another side might have longer term consequences on reputation of the state, particularly if it frequently defects, since states are then more likely to then be considered untrustworthy.<sup>35</sup> We can see this taken up briefly in the alliance literature when Snyder argues that states wishing to avoid abandonment might also decide to ensure that they have a reputation for loyalty.<sup>36</sup>

To the extent that potential future cooperation is valued, states within alliances will be restrained in their defection, making the likelihood of automatically taking advantage of the other states when the situation arises smaller. Additionally, we can use Kydd's framework to take this argument one step further. If states do act knowing that they will be potentially judged as untrustworthy and face potential costs of non-cooperation, then joining an alliance itself can be seen as a mechanism for signaling type. This can explain Snyder's argument that entering into a formal alliance can act as a signal to increase the confidence of all of the members that there are similar interests at stake, and thus the state is trustworthy.<sup>37</sup>

Kydd's trust framework also provides an understanding of not only the level of trust states have between them, but also how the payoffs should be considered.<sup>38</sup> This is important because alliance commitments, as much as they are commitments to the other members, are also potential threats to adversaries. This might have such usefulness or utility that, as Snyder puts it, 'Even when an ally has betrayed one's trust, one may still want to keep one's own commitment in order to preserve one's reputation for resolve in the adversary's eyes.'<sup>39</sup> Thus though defections might reduce the level of trust among the alliance partners, the alliance might survive if the expected value is still positive given other possibilities.

Finally, there are potential social effects that could prevent the defection of states from the alliance. This comes from the idea that alliances, once formed, can then have independent effects on the member states. Snyder suggests that the act of allying itself may create interests that did not exist previously and may redefine the sense of 'self' among the states so that their partners' interests seem more like their own.<sup>40</sup> Like Hoffman stresses, Snyder argues that, 'Formal alliances introduce a *sense of obligation* not present in tacit alignments.'<sup>41</sup> As such, the actor either internalizes that the alliance obligations must be respected as a norm unto itself, or that they believe it to be damaging to their external reputation should they decide to defect because other states will view them

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<sup>35</sup> Kydd, *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations*. Snyder comes to this idea through the idea of the norm of reciprocity, that 'reneging will severely damage the credibility of one's future promises, to the present ally or to others.' Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 9., but Kydd shows that you can have a rationalist account of this phenomenon.

<sup>36</sup> *Alliance Politics*, 184.

<sup>37</sup> *Alliance Politics*, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Kydd, *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations*, 9.

<sup>39</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 36.

<sup>40</sup> *Alliance Politics*, 10.

<sup>41</sup> *Alliance Politics*, 8. [emphasis ours] See Hoffman, "A Conceptualization of Trust in International Relations," 376. for his explanation of the need for both risk and obligation to be present in trust.

negatively for breaking the norm. Where this is the case, there are two means to ensure that those states that have a low marginal utility of membership stay in the alliance. States can persuade them not to defect, can coerce them not to, or some combination of the two. In persuasion, they will rely on moral appeals to deter the possibility of breach.<sup>42</sup> So there are not only rational features that stabilize alliance behavior, but also the potential for socialization to occur once in the alliance structure that changes interests and duties.

The means through which any international norm of trust varies is dependent on the sense of obligation to keep promises, and this will vary depending on the international environment. In general, 'When doubts over alliance reliability are pervasive and states, are not expected to uphold their agreements, a permissive order arises. Conversely, when the sanctity of agreements is widely embraced, as restrictive order emerges.' They argue that this has to do with the institutionalization of patterns of behavior. Behavior over time transforms from positive to normative, reinforcing the norm. Snyder does suggest that states could ensure that the contract of the alliance benefits the ally they believe might abandon them, they could signal their commitment through public statements and interstate diplomatic communications, or to support the wavering ally in specific conflicts to increase its expected value out of the alliance.<sup>43</sup> Thus the strength of any norm of keeping promises that makes trusting relationships easier to attain requires states to continuously signal that this is an expectation.

With respect to the possibility of defecting from the alliance, we can see that trust literature can be successfully integrated into much of the alliance literature. In fact, in many instances it provides the explanation to what were otherwise conjectures. What is means for the study of alliances is that there are factors that maintain alliances that need to be considered: the potential to be seen as untrustworthy, the potential to believe that obligations are important, and finally the potential for there to be a social environment that reinforces a norm of promise keeping.

### **Possibility of Joint-Operations**

The second question we must consider is whether members of the alliance should be able to trust each other to conduct joint operations together. In general, alliance agreements will stipulate what the commitment and duties are to a particular problem. This formality is designed to reduce the uncertainty in behavioral expectations on all sides.<sup>44</sup> All of this is particularly the case with alliances, given that there is always a feared possibility of the breach of alliance agreements, leading to 'statecraft influenced by mutual suspicion about the reliability of allies.'<sup>45</sup> This is particularly the case because no one in the alliance can know whether changed circumstances makes it such that other alliance members will believe that the costs of the alliance outweigh the benefits.<sup>46</sup>

There is already some alliance literature suggesting that there is a social element that goes beyond the written text of the alliance agreement itself. As Snyder puts it, 'Allies expect their partners to support them on a variety of issues short of war, including diplomatic crises, even though there is nothing in the alliance treaty requiring it. To withhold such support, at least when it does not run

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<sup>42</sup> Kegley Jr. and Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down*, 56.

<sup>43</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 183-84.

<sup>44</sup> Kegley Jr. and Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down*, 47.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

drastically counter to the partner's own interests, is likely to weaken the solidarity of the alliance.<sup>47</sup> As such, the alliance is more than the legal agreement, but encompasses larger norms of support, assistance, and friendship that are reenacted.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, Kegley and Raymond note that where norms of reciprocity are seen as valuable, 'the partner's need for aid, along with norms of promise-keeping and reciprocity, may be strong enough to counter the disparity of underlying interests.'<sup>49</sup> States thus might join with their partners even if they do not have a direct interest in the matter.

Coming at this problem from a perspective of specific trust changes adds another dimension to the analysis. Because specific trust requires something to be trusted in, this opens up the question as to whether achieving a trusting relationship in one area might facilitate the trusting relationship in another area. With respect to this project, therefore, we might ask whether or not forming a trusting relationship in one area, such as not militarily taking advantage of another alliance member, helps to form trusting relationships in other areas, such as supporting allies in joint operations.

Thus we might be able to build a series of trusting expectations within an alliance. First, that the other states do not use the alliance for their own gain in then attacking one of their fellow alliance members who would not be expecting it. Secondly, it is assumed that the alliance members, particularly in a defensive alliance, will come to the aid of the other state if attacked by a third-party. Thirdly, it might be expected that certain defined cooperation on external policy be taken outside of simple defense. From a social perspective, in every case, a trusting relationship means that there is an expectation that the promises be fulfilled that must be included in the calculation of the state making the decision to either cooperate or defect. So is there any transferability of trust within the alliance? Kegley and Raymond have already noted that 'trust among allies may be divisible', such that 'allies in one issue area are not necessarily cooperative in another issue area.'<sup>50</sup> But under what conditions might this have been possible?

This section has outlined the several ways in which trust theory might interface with existing thinking on alliances within the scope of the two research questions. First, can provide an explicit mechanism for propositions already made with the literature and show why particular conclusions that are not currently theoretically supported work. Second, with this information it can provide the basis for exploring how these mechanisms might work in practice. Lastly, it provides the means through which we might be able to understand the development of alliances through the linkages between areas of specific trust.

Finally, given that this project is using the NATO alliance as its case study, it needs to engage with the large body of empirical literature particular to this alliance. The last section therefore attempts to bring this discussion about alliances and trust into the NATO literature, specifically to consider what it is about the NATO alliance might prove fertile grounds for trust-building.

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<sup>47</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 8.

<sup>48</sup> Snyder, for instance, notes that there are several performative elements to alliances, including a public and ceremonial treaty signing and subsequent validation exercises such as restatements of the original pledge, joint military exercises, and coming to the alliance member's aid in disputes outside of the scope of the alliance *Alliance Politics*, 8, 11..

<sup>49</sup> *Alliance Politics*, 9.

<sup>50</sup> Kegley Jr. and Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down*, 72.

## NATO

The NATO alliance started as a *casus foederis* alliance, or a defensive alliance.<sup>51</sup> Though there is a common enemy in defensive alliances that provides an incentive for the states to work together, there are always going to be problems among the alliance members. This is no different within NATO, given the number of problems the organization has had to overcome or mitigate in its almost 70-year history. A great deal of ink has been spilled on the trials and tribulations of the alliance, particularly over perceived disharmonies of interest. It is exactly in the potential for disharmonies of interest that trusting relationships are important, since they provide the glue that prevents the alliance from immediately falling apart.

This is important for NATO because scholars have questioned whether NATO is even a cohesive alliance from the very beginning. As Hotz put it in 1953, 'NATO's major problem has been to establish a reasonable harmony among dissimilar national interests.'<sup>52</sup> Though there were problems throughout the Cold War, this problem of disharmonies reared its head in a major way after the fall of the Soviet Union. With the disappearance of the primary opposition of the defensive alliance, there was speculation that NATO would be quite vulnerable to failure and dissolution,<sup>53</sup> since without the common Soviet threat there could be an increasing mismatch between the strategic priorities of all of the states.<sup>54</sup>

This was witnessed in a series of crises for the alliance. One major theme was the continuous accusations of free-riding among the alliance members.<sup>55</sup> Even as recently as 2011, Robert Gates accused the European allies of being 'willing and eager for American taxpayers to assume the growing security burden,'<sup>56</sup> thereby threatening the continued existence of the alliance.<sup>57</sup> The problem is highly visible when it comes to post-Cold War NATO operations. For instance, in Kosovo the United States was responsible for 70% of all air sorties.<sup>58</sup> Even the unity expressed by the Article

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<sup>51</sup> Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 14.

<sup>52</sup> Hotz, "NATO: Myth or Reality," 126.

<sup>53</sup> Liska, *Nations in Alliance*, 42.

<sup>54</sup> Ronald D Asmus, Robert D Blackwill, and F Stephen Larrabee, "Can NATO Survive?," *The Washington Quarterly* 19, no. 2: 79, 82; Ellen Hallams, Luca Ratti, and Benjamin Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," in *NATO Beyond 9/11: The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance*, ed. Ellen Hallams, Luca Ratti, and Benjamin Zyla (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan), 1, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Alexander Lanoszka, "Do Allies Really Free Ride?," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 57, no. 3: 133-34. Paddy Ashdown, "Europe's Free Ride on the Back of NATO Is Over," *The Telegraph*, 1 November 2011; David Gompert and Richard Kugler, "Free-Rider Redux: NATO Needs to Project Power (and Europe Can Help)," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 1 (1995).

<sup>56</sup> Lanoszka, "Do Allies Really Free Ride?," 133.

<sup>57</sup> This is not a unchallenged view. For instance, Weber argues that the United States has empirically shown a high level of tolerance to this decades of free-riding behavior, likely because it continues to extract benefits from the alliance in 'the maintenance of interoperability, the building of capacity among new members and access to European infrastructure and facilities as staging posts to operations outside Europe.' Mark Webber, "NATO Beyond 9/11: The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance," in *NATO Beyond 9/11: The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance*, ed. Ellen Hallams, Luca Ratti, and Benjamin Zyla (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan), 32.

<sup>58</sup> John R Deni, *Alliance Management and Maintenance: Restructuring NATO for the 21st Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate), 60.

5 declaration after 9/11 was quickly subsumed by the divisions over burden-sharing in Afghanistan has been pointed to as a crisis in the alliance over defining and addressing threats.<sup>59</sup>

The debates over burden-sharing are embedded within larger conflicts within NATO on NATO's post-Cold War goals and operations. Initial calls from the United States suggested a move from heavy armored based forces to take on the Soviets to a more flexible force with more expeditionary elements for deployment to areas outside of member state territory.<sup>60</sup> However, the promotion of out-of-area operations has been an issue of contention within the alliance. The popular belief in the United States was that NATO had to go 'out of area or out of business,' whereas the European allies were focused on limiting this to operations within Europe.<sup>61</sup>

Out of area operations were particularly problematic for Germany, who has serious reservations based on their history and constitutional tradition.<sup>62</sup> This along with similar concerns from other alliance members created tensions in the alliance coming to terms with how best to deal with the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>63</sup> These problems were only magnified by 9/11, when President Bush pushed for NATO members to demonstrate a willingness to operate beyond Europe, not simply extend democracy and liberalism eastward.<sup>64</sup> Internal debates revolved around whether the alliance should become some kind of global policeman in response to the risk of terrorism, with the United States pushing for this redefinition and European allies reluctant to embrace this change.<sup>65</sup>

So there is no shortage of issues that could potentially fragment the NATO alliance. So many, in fact, that as a former US ambassador to NATO put it, 'The lack of coterminous interests makes it remarkable that NATO is able to make any headway at all.'<sup>66</sup> No doubt part of what drives the crisis-

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<sup>59</sup> Andrew Cottey, "NATO: Globalization or Redundancy?," *Contemporary Security Policy* 25, no. 3: 391; Michael Cox, "Beyond the West: Terrors in Transatlantia," *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 2; Hallams, Ratti, and Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," 8; Azeem Ibrahim, "Testing the NATO Alliance: Afghanistan and the Future of Cooperation," *Harvard International Review* 31, no. 2; Rebecca R Moore, *NATO's New Mission: Projecting Stability in a Post-Cold War World* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007), 3.

<sup>60</sup> Deni, *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 1-2. This can be seen in the 1991 Strategic Concept, which moved NATO to consider multi-directional threats, which would mean that the alliance would have to move away from forward, territorial-based defense. *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 32.

<sup>61</sup> Hallams, Ratti, and Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," 6. Although Article 6 defined the territorial extent of the obligation of Article 5, some scholars have argued that there was an expectation from the start of the alliance for support out-of-area even if there was not a legal obligation. When this was not met, there was disappointment with the Alliance, which some believed falsely would lead to its disintegration. Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 202.

<sup>62</sup> In 1994 the Constitutional Court ruled that Germany could participate in out-of-area missions only in the context of collective security such as NATO or the UN. However, this did not change German hesitancy to put their soldiers in operation outside the defense of Western Europe. Deni, *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 67-68.

<sup>63</sup> Cottey, "NATO: Globalization or Redundancy?," 393; John Bolton, "The End of NATO?," *The World Today* 56, no. 6: 13; Asmus, Blackwill, and Larrabee, "Can NATO Survive?," 79; Hallams, Ratti, and Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," 28-30.

<sup>64</sup> Moore, *NATO's New Mission*, 91.

<sup>65</sup> Alexandra Gheciu, *Security Civilization?: The EU, NATO and the Osce in the Post-9/11 World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 113.

<sup>66</sup> Deni, *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 107. Jamie Shea expressed similar views when he noted that NATO was an alliance that, while being consistently in crisis, nonetheless has remained stable over a very long period of time Jamie Shea, "NATO at Sixty - and Beyond," in *NATO: In Search of a Vision*, ed. Gülnur Aybet and

driven responses to NATO is the idea that where goals (temporarily) diverge, the fall of the alliance must follow. But despite all of the problems in the 1990s, the invocation of Article 5 after the 9/11 attacks showed that NATO governments were prepared to honor their treaty obligations even if it meant that they risked becoming the next target of terrorism.<sup>67</sup>

So why is it that NATO members stay in an alliance with so many divisions? Should these divisions signal that there is a real disharmony of interest that puts alliance commitments, let alone to operate outside of the formal alliance commitments, in doubt? Just because NATO has been reasonably stable in the face of adversity does not trust must be the glue that holds the alliance together. Thus we must consider what explanations currently exist in the literature for NATO longevity and cooperation to see how they might interface with the trust literature.

## Trust and NATO

Among the scholarly works written on the subject, scholars have put forward a number of possibilities explaining the relative stability and cooperation among NATO allies. The key arguments are bipolarity, institutional structures, the specific form of military cooperation, and democratic norms. This section reviews the key arguments in these categories in order to see which have the potential for trust to play a part.

The first explanation of NATO's longevity points to the bipolar system of alliances that developed after the end of the Second World War. Unlike previous alliance structures, which were reasonably flexible in terms of membership, the bipolar system created rival blocs were both inflexible in membership and ideologically antagonistic. Chatterjee suggests that this situation ensured that shifting alliance structures were replaced by adjustments through the give and take of the arms race.<sup>68</sup> The conditions of bipolarity were also important for the stability of the alliance since the difference between the superpower and all the other states creates a clear hierarchy, reducing possible inter-alliance struggles for predominance.<sup>69</sup>

This provides an argument for stability that excludes the role of trust-building, though with two caveats. First, bipolarity itself could have strengthened trust-building between the member states. There is no necessary either/or between the structure of the international system and the possibilities of trust-building. Second, this argument clearly holds only for the Cold War, and NATO's success has continued far beyond this.

Others explain the relative stability through the structure of NATO, with formal and elaborate institutional structures for decision-making.<sup>70</sup> As a former Secretary General of the organization put it, "NATO is a unique institution. It features, first of all, an exceptional political consultation mechanism that is geared towards consensus. This consensus process is sometimes perceived as

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Rebecca R Moore (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 11., see also Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 1.

<sup>67</sup> Christian Tuschhoff, "Why NATO Is Still Relevant," *International Politics* 40, no. 1: 102.

<sup>68</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *Arms, Alliances and Stability: The Development of the Structure of International Politics* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd), 200.

<sup>69</sup> Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 290.

<sup>70</sup> Chatterjee, *Arms, Alliances and Stability*, 200; Webber, "NATO Beyond 9/11," 34. The NATO alliance is not the only collective defense agreement that evolved into a collective security arrangement. The Franco-Belgian Accord and the St. Petersburg Convention might be seen as predecessors to this trend. Deni, *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 14.

slow and cumbersome. But it has distinct advantages. It creates a sense of predictability. And it fosters both a responsibility and a pre-disposition among the Allies—big and small—to seek common solutions to problems.”<sup>71</sup> Some scholars have already linked the structure of the organization directly to its ability to generate trusting relationships. Chris Donnelly has previously noted that “NATO is the international institution par excellence for developing networks of trust between individuals from different countries and different agencies. It is precisely on the basis of trust that information and intelligence is most readily shared. It is pointless for governments to legislate for information exchange if the basis of mutual trust is absent.”<sup>72</sup> Equally, Mark Webber argued that the alliance was useful in preventing conflict between the members by ‘increasing trust and transparency,’<sup>73</sup> echoing the rationalist perspective on trust. Though these scholars have not engaged in trust theory, their arguments provide us with the suggestion that there is something about the institutional structure that might foster the development of trusting relationships among the member states.

A further element is the explicit cooperation between NATO members in prospective war fighting. This trait was evident since a 1948 US Defense Department strategic concept paper that suggested the alliance should but be integrated based on an international division of labor - not simply one where members fight independent wars against a common foe.<sup>74</sup> Military integration in peacetime was an important innovation because it provided the training and equipment to fight as one force if and when the time came.<sup>75</sup> It also provided a structural force against the potential renationalization of security across Europe that sustained a stable peace within the alliance.<sup>76</sup> This integration also included sharing an unprecedented amount of information about their respective militaries and future plans, allowing for a historic level of transparency and integration within the alliance.<sup>77</sup> This pooling was historically new since NATO members ‘not only pooled their resources within the framework of NATO’s unified military commands, they encouraged their allies to grow stronger so they could do more for the common good.’<sup>78</sup> In sum, John Duffield has noted that “By damping the security dilemma and providing an institutional mechanism for the development of common security

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<sup>71</sup> NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at the Albanian Parliament, 6 July 2006. The Treaty of Washington was reasonably vague as to the administrative and political structures that would govern the alliance. However, the establishment of the Council and the principle that subsidiary bodies could be set up was enough to get things going. The Council rapidly expanded the number of bodies, such that by December 1949 there were seven working staffs, boards, or committees established. Just over a year later a working group was established to develop a budget for these growing staff numbers, with the approval of the establishment of an international budget coming in May 1951. At the end of 1951, NATO had created “a permanent, continuously sitting central body known as the Council Deputies, its own unified secretariat, and three major operating agencies *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 15.

<sup>72</sup> Chris Donnelly, "Security in the 21st Century," NATO HQ, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2003/s030605a.htm>.

<sup>73</sup> Webber, "NATO Beyond 9/11," 33.

<sup>74</sup> Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 100. Thies additionally argues that this reflected a US wish to perpetuate their nuclear monopoly, thus emphasizing their special role in strategic bombing. The European allies accepted this specialist division of labor as the foundation for defense planning, whereby the United States would be responsible for a strategic air offensive to defend their European partners. *Why NATO Endures*, 101.

<sup>75</sup> Some scholars note that this was at least partly driven by exogenous forces, particularly the increased pace of warfare meant that advanced planning had to take place for military cooperation to be effective. *Why NATO Endures*, 291.

<sup>76</sup> Karl Kaiser, "The New NATO," *Asia-Pacific Review* 10, no. 1: 67.

<sup>77</sup> Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 108.

<sup>78</sup> *Why NATO Endures*, 135.

policies, NATO has contributed to making the use of force in relations among the countries of the region virtually inconceivable.”<sup>79</sup>

There is no doubt that states, in specializing their militaries to work within the larger alliance structure, must have some type of trust in their alliance partners to come to their aid when necessary. Otherwise they would not take the risk in an otherwise uncertain environment. The necessity of trust is particularly in play with the pressures to create a leaner alliance where each state provides core capabilities. As Hans Binnendijk has put it, this “requires a high degree of trust that allied nations will provide capabilities another nation has given up to specialise in their missions”<sup>80</sup> This variable is interesting from a trust perspective, because its very existence suggests a trusting relationship to begin with, but at the same time it can serve to solidify or advance the trusting relationships already in existence.

The last argument for NATO longevity points to its role not simply as a security institution, but as a democratic institution. This it was not simply that NATO was different from other historical alliances because it was permanent, open-ended, and highly institutionalized, but that it for the most part had a membership composed of states ‘sharing a common heritage, common values, and common interests, backed by a willingness to pool their resources in peacetime as well as wartime for the sake of defending and advancing those common values and interests.”<sup>81</sup> Some authors have argued that reinforcing these shared norms of liberal democracy was particularly important early in the alliance’s history given the domestic weakness of the European states.<sup>82</sup> Equally, the fact that NATO was explicitly anti-communist might have been just as significant as the promotion of democratic values.<sup>83</sup> The fact that the NATO alliance was composed of primarily democracies meant that, unlike non-democracies, there are positive payoffs for talking things through and being seen to save the alliance by coming to agreement,<sup>84</sup> so the character of the states magnified the institutional elements driving communication. This could be why throughout NATO history the members did not try to break the alliance when disagreements arose, some of which were reasonably strong. Instead, they attempted to mobilize support for their side within the alliance in order to pressure the other state to change their preferences.<sup>85</sup> Constructivist scholars in particular tend to focus on the way that NATO has either reconfigured or reaffirmed the Western and democratic identity that it holds in a post 9/11 world. In this sense, NATO is not a conventional alliance, but an organization whose

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<sup>79</sup> John Duffield, "NATO's Function after the Cold War," *Political Science Quarterly* 109, no. 5 (1994/95): 767.

<sup>80</sup> Hans Binnendijk, "Defense Issues for the NATO Summit," (Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 2012). For a recent example, 15 NATO states, in an effort to share military burdens, collectively procured C-17 strategic lift aircraft. Deni, *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 93.. There are also large gaps in key European capabilities, particularly “significant military intelligence capabilities, especially advanced signals intelligence (SIGINT), relying instead on the United States.” *Alliance Management and Maintenance*, 98-99.

<sup>81</sup> Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 288.

<sup>82</sup> Alexandra Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe": The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press), 37. These liberal democratic values came under pressure with the inclusion in 1952 of Greece and Turkey to NATO, which several NATO members pointed out at the time could undermine the community of liberal democratic values embodied in the alliance - only showing the importance of liberal democracy to a large number of the alliance members *NATO in the "New Europe": The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press), 23..

<sup>83</sup> Webber, "NATO Beyond 9/11," 34.

<sup>84</sup> Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 302.

<sup>85</sup> *Why NATO Endures*, 133.

identity is based on the shared democratic foundations of the members.<sup>86</sup> NATO, as such, is a 'constitutive entity' that can both influence and shape the preferences and perceptions of states.<sup>87</sup> Liberals, similarly, focus on how NATO has been linked with notions of democracy and freedom, promoting a set of liberal democratic values.<sup>88</sup> So the question for the study of trust is whether the liberal democratic nature of the NATO states and the institutionalization of liberal democracy within the alliance aids in trust-building, particularly as some authors have already noted that the commonality between the members in terms of liberal democracy promotes group loyalty and trust.<sup>89</sup>

Looking at the existing literature on NATO therefore gives us a start in thinking about potential mechanisms of trust-building within the alliance, whether it be the institutional nature of the alliance, the plans for collective defense, or the persistence of liberal democratic norms and liberal democratic states. Which of these, if any, might have been important for forging trust, and is there a different answer depending on the thing being entrusted?

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to consider how the two research questions about trust-building in the NATO alliance that frame this project intersect with the existing literature on trust, alliances, and NATO. It did so by bringing together the three different literatures to map out the major themes, overlaps, and potential innovations among them. First, it suggested that rational and social theories of trust are likely more useful in the study of alliances than psychological theories. Second, it demonstrated how trust theory interacted with current thinking on alliances in terms of the two research questions, suggesting that not only could trust theory fill in the gap for expectations already in the literature, but it added a new dimension in considering the links between domains of specific trust. Third, it reviewed the literature on NATO that currently explains the success of the alliance as a means to suggest where initial research could be done in pinning down the causal forces for successful trust-building.

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<sup>86</sup> Hallams, Ratti, and Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," 14. We can see this in how, in the post-Cold War era, NATO not only was central in the building of a new European security order, but one that was 'whole, free, and at peace.' Gülnur Aybet and Rebecca R Moore, "Missions in Search of a Vision," in *NATO: In Search of a Vision*, ed. Gülnur Aybet and Rebecca R Moore (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 2. Some scholars have claimed that NATO was responsible for shaping the legal and institutional arrangements in the former Eastern Bloc, that '[t]hrough systematic interactions with political elites from Central and Eastern Europe, NATO helped shape definitions of appropriate liberal democratic identity." Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe"*, 2. This included not only helping in the military and bureaucratic reform of these states through providing advice, but also in exerting pressure on conservative opposition to these reforms.

<sup>87</sup> Hallams, Ratti, and Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," 14. Moreover, national delegates to NATO and the senior international staff form themselves a community of speakers in that they all share a broad set of common views that help them to make sense of the world. Though they may disagree about what should be done and how so, this occurs within a shared framework that allows them to come to some agreement over reasonable goals and strategies for these goals. For instance, the debates will happen within a shared framework of the importance of liberal-democratic values. Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe"*, 6-7.

<sup>88</sup> Hallams, Ratti, and Zyla, "Introduction - a New Paradigm for NATO?," 13.

<sup>89</sup> Mark Webber, "NATO Beyond 9/11: The Transformation of the Atlantic Alliance," *ibid.*, 44.

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