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The Responsibility to Protect Ten Years on from the World Summit: A Call to Manage Expectations

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Abstract

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the World Summit Outcome now is the time to pause and ask the question what do scholars expect from the Responsibility to Protect? This article draws on non-Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) research into expectations to argue that in the aftermath of the intervention in Libya and non-intervention in Syria scholars have to manage RtoP expectations. In so doing, it introduces four types of expectations into the RtoP discourse: ‘expectation gaps’, ‘expectation vacuums’, ‘expectation clouding’, and ‘inherited expectations’ - the latter of which is this author’s own contribution to the discourse. To illustrate the utility of the expectations approach, the article focuses on the debate over inconsistency in order to highlight the role of expectation gaps and inherited expectations. Going forward, it calls for further research into RtoP expectation management to be conducted and identifies key debates which need to be addressed. Ultimately, it advances an understanding of the RtoP that is inherently more sensitive to its limitations and possibilities.

Keywords

managing expectations, expectation gaps, expectation vacuums, expectation clouding, inherited expectations, inconsistency.

In 2011, the United Nations Security Council’s decision to authorise a military intervention in Libya was heralded by many advocates of the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) as a defining

¹ The article has benefitted from feedback at four presentations, June 2015, ESRC Seminar, ‘The Responsibility to Protect at Ten’, University of Westminster. June 2014, British International Studies Association ‘The Responsibility to Protect: Manage Expectations’ Dublin. March 2014, Guest Lecture, ‘Managing the R2P Expectation Gap’, University of Leicester. February 2014, International Studies Association, ‘The Responsibility to Protect: Manage Expectations’, Toronto. I would like to thank fellow panellists Tim Dunne, Robert Murray, Carrie Booth Wilding, Aidan Hehir, Theresa Reinhold, Justin Morris, Stephen Hopgood, and Pinar Gozan for their thoughts and comments. I would also like to thank Tara McCormack, Oliver Daddow and Jon Moran for their questions and feedback at the University of Leicester. In addition, I would like to thank Luke Glanville, Cristina Stefan and Georgiana Epure for reading an earlier draft and offering constructive comments. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the reviewers. Of course, any errors are the author’s own.

moment. Even sceptics acknowledged how surprised they were to see such ‘swift and robust’ action,² despite dismissing its relationship with the RtoP.³ The on-going crisis in Syria, however, led to claims that the RtoP is in fact dead, ‘Syria marks the death of R2P as a viable, functional concept’.⁴ Questioning whether its obituary is premature, analysts began to debate its demise.⁵ Responding to this, Gareth Evans claimed that it is better to think in terms of a ‘mid-life crisis’ and that ‘to evaluate how serious a mid-life crisis R2P might now be facing, we need to be very clear about what precisely were its intended scope and limits’.⁶ Essentially, Evans’ notion of a mid-life crisis attempts to offer a way out of what has become somewhat of an intellectual cul-de-sac. Undoubtedly shaped by norm life cycle theory, a rather crude birth/death narrative has surrounded the RtoP since its inception.⁷ As Bellamy explains, ‘From almost the day it was born, some analysts have been predicting the death of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle’.⁸ It seems that every time there is RtoP related action, advocates claim that it is a walking talking reality; whereas every time there is inaction, critics speak of its demise. This raises the question, what do analysts expect from the Responsibility to Protect?

In setting forth a call to manage expectations, this article asks RtoP scholars to establish an understanding of the RtoP that is inherently more sensitive to its limits and possibilities. At times, critics either demand too much from the RtoP and/or hold overly high expectations of

² Aidan Hehir, *The Responsibility to Protect: Rhetoric, Reality and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 12.

³ Aidan Hehir, ‘The Permanency of Inconsistency: Libya, The Security Council and the Responsibility to Protect’, *International Security* 38/1: 137-159 (2013).

⁴ Michael Newton, ‘R2P is Dead and Done due to Response in Syria’, *Vanderbilt Journal of International Law*, 2013, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/jotl/2013/09/newton-%E2%80%99Cr2p-is-dead-and-done%E2%80%9D-because-of-response-to-syria/>, accessed 24 February 2014. See also, David Reiff, ‘R2P R.I.P.’, *New York Times* 2011, 7 November 2011; Stewart M. Patrick, ‘RIP for R2P? Syria and the Dilemmas of Humanitarian Intervention’, *The Internationalist*, June 12 2012, <http://blogs.cfr.org/patrick/2012/06/12/rip-for-r2p-syria-and-the-dilemmas-of-humanitarian-intervention/>, accessed 24 February 2014; Mohammed Nuruzzaman, ‘The “Responsibility to Protect” Doctrine: Revived in Libya, Buried in Syria’, *Insight*, 15/2: 57-66 (2012).

⁵ Zifcak Spencer, ‘Is The Responsibility to Protect Dead? The Doctrine’s standing in the wake of the Syrian Massacre.’ In Vasilka Sancin and Masa Kovic Dine (eds.), *The Responsibility to Protect in Theory and Practice* (Ljubljana: GV Založba, 2013); Abramowitz, M., ‘Who will Stand up for the Responsibility to Protect?’, *New York Times* 2013, http://kristof.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/01/who-will-stand-up-for-the-responsibility-to-protect/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0, accessed 12 August 2013.

⁶ Gareth Evans, *Mass Atrocity Crimes after Syria: The Future of the Responsibility to Protect*, 2013, <http://www.r2pasiapacific.org/index.html?page=205716&pid=191756>, accessed 21 November 2013.

⁷ Many of the contributions to this special issue use ‘norm circulation’ rather than ‘norm-life cycle’ in an attempt to overcome such linear progression models. These are influenced by Amitav Acharya, *Whose Ideas Matter? Agency and Power in Asian Regionalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009). Also, Amitav Acharya, ‘The R2P and Norm Diffusion: Towards a Framework of Norm Circulation’, *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5/4: 466-479 (2013).

⁸ Alex Bellamy, *R2P – Dead or Alive?, The Responsibility to Protect - From Evasive to Reluctant Action?* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2012), p.11.

what can be done in order to address its limitations. For example, on February 23rd 2011, Continetti questioned, ‘Whatever happened to the “Responsibility to Protect”?’ and argued that the lack of a UN response to the Libyan crisis evidenced that ‘another foreign policy doctrine bites the dust’.⁹ When one considers that this was written just eight days after the initial protests in Benghazi, one is left wondering what he was expecting to happen within such a short space of time? As we now know, just three days later the UN Security Council passed UN Resolution 1970. The example provides insight into the problem of overly high expectations as the RtoP is condemned for not producing an automatic response. As Welsh rightly argues, ‘Whether or not international action actually occurs – particularly action involving military force – depends on a series of other factors, such as agreement on the facts (and what they signify) and the likelihood that military tools will have a positive effect’.¹⁰ Having said this, the article also demonstrates that those that champion the RtoP, at least at times, have ratcheted up expectations of what the RtoP can achieve. Added to the complexity, the RtoP operates within an ever-changing political environment in which expectations of what can and cannot be achieved change. The objective of this article therefore is to connect a) the need to develop an understanding of the RtoP that is inherently more sensitive to its limitations and possibilities, with b) the question, how do we do this? At least a part of this is managing the expectations that surround the RtoP.

The article is structured in four sections. First, it draws on the work of Political Scientists that have studied expectations in order to put forward four concepts that will aid expectation management: ‘*expectations gaps*’, ‘*expectations clouds*’, ‘*expectations vacuums*’, and ‘*inherited expectations*’ – the latter is this author’s own contribution to the discourse. Second, it offers a brief overview of the expectations that surround the RtoP to illustrate the need for an expectations approach within the RtoP discourse. Third, it evidences the added value of this approach by applying two of these concepts to one of the most prominent RtoP debates: inconsistency.¹¹ Regarding the latter, the article identifies an ‘expectations gap’ in the inconsistency debate and argues that analysts should reject the ‘inherited expectation’ of

⁹ Matthew Continetti, ‘Whatever happened to the “Responsibility to Protect”?’ *Weekly Standard*, 23 February 2011, http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/whatever-happened-responsibility-protect_552381.html, accessed 12 March 2011.

¹⁰ Jennifer M. Welsh, ‘Norm Contestation and the Responsibility to Protect’, *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5/4: 365-396 (2013), p.368.

¹¹ Paris identifies this as one of the five ‘structural problems’ facing the RtoP, the other four are ‘the mixed motives problem; the counterfactual problem; the conspicuous harm problem and the end-state problem’. Roland Paris, ‘The “Responsibility to Protect” and the Structural Problems of Preventative Humanitarian Intervention’, *International Peacekeeping*, 21/5: 569-603 (2014).

“never again” and accept the permanency of inconsistency whilst differentiating between legitimate and illegitimate inconsistency to manage expectations accordingly. Fourth, it concludes with an overview but also identifies points to guide future research on this topic.

Previous Research

Within the RtoP discourse, Bellamy has gone as far as to claim ‘the ‘RtoP is not a single norm but a collection of *shared expectations* which have different qualities’.¹² At this point, one could make the case that the role of expectations *has* been discussed extensively precisely because norms represent ‘shared expectations... about appropriate behaviour’.¹³ From this perspective, the extensive debate over the RtoP within the context of norm life cycle theory and norm contestation could be viewed as a body of work that does in fact analyse the expectations surrounding the RtoP.¹⁴ To be clear, the aim here is not to downplay the importance of such approaches but to draw attention to the fact that ‘expectations’ are often not referred to, and when they are, they are treated in a vague and conceptually unclear manner. For example, returning to Finnemore and Sikkink’s seminal definition of norms as ‘shared ideas, expectations, and beliefs about appropriate behaviour’ - this is the only time that the authors ever mention ‘expectations’ in the article as opposed to twenty-one references on ‘ideational’ and eight on ‘beliefs’.¹⁵ Although scholars continue to draw on this definition, there has been very little explicit engagement with expectations. The notable exceptions are Badescu, Welsh, and Bellamy.¹⁶ The lack of RtoP research therefore into

¹² Alex Bellamy, *Massacres and Morality: Mass Atrocities in an Age of Civilian Immunity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012), p. 392. Emphasis added.

¹³ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’, *International Organisation* 52/4: 887-917 (1998), p.894.

¹⁴ Jeremy Moses, *Sovereignty and Responsibility: Power, Norms and Intervention in International Relations* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Moses specifically critiques Finnemore and Sikkink for failing to address the motivations that underpin norm entrepreneurs. M. Negrón-Gonzales, and M. Contarino, ‘Local Norms Matter: Understanding National Responses to the Responsibility to Protect’, *Global Governance* 20/2: 255–276 (2014); Jennifer Welsh, ‘Norm Contestation and the Responsibility to Protect’, *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5/4:365-386 (2013); Amitav Acharya, ‘The R2P and Norm Diffusion: Towards A Framework of Norm Circulation’, *Global Responsibility to Protect*, 5/4: 466–479 (2013); Ramesh Thakur, *The Responsibility to Protect: Norms, Laws and the Use of Force in International Politics* (New York: Routledge 2011); Shawki, N. ‘Responsibility to Protect: The Evolution of an International Norm’, *Global Responsibility to Protect* 3: 172-196 (2011); J. Prantl, and R. Nakano, ‘Global Norm Diffusion in East Asia: How China and Japan implement the Responsibility to Protect’ *International Relations* 25/2: 204-223. (2011); Cristina Badescu and Thomas Weiss, ‘Misrepresenting R2P and Advancing Norms: An Alternative Spiral?’ *International Studies Perspectives* 11/4: 354-374 (2010).

¹⁵ Finnemore and Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’.

¹⁶ Jennifer Welsh, ‘Implementing the “Responsibility to Protect”: Where Expectations Meet Reality’, *Ethics and International Affairs* 24/4: 415-430 (2010). Cristina Badescu, *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility*

expectations, at least in part, helps explain Bellamy's claim that one of the key challenges ahead is that 'the United Nations, interested member states, and advocates of RtoP need to do a better job of managing expectations'.¹⁷ This is something that this author has been calling for since 2014¹⁸, but it would be a mistake to think that because RtoP scholars have discussed norms extensively they have also covered expectations.

Adding flesh to the conceptual bones is therefore necessary and should be understood as a complimentary rather than a competing approach. To do this, the article engages with Political Scientists who have been working on the role of expectations. The studies done on the topic quickly reveal that there are different *types of expectations*, *interplay between expectations*, and *different actor expectations*, which are not captured in the fleeting references to expectations in the RtoP discourse. For the purpose of clarity therefore, this article focuses on different types of expectations and reviews the RtoP discourse in order to highlight their utility. In so doing, it lays the groundwork for future research by putting forward four concepts to facilitate expectation management: 'expectations gaps', 'expectations clouds', 'expectations vacuums', and 'inherited expectations'.

Let us start with the idea of 'expectations gaps'. In Christopher Hill's seminal analysis on twenty years of the European foreign policy, he argued that the European Community (EC) had been 'talked up' so much that a significant 'capability-expectation gap' had been created.¹⁹ A key part of which was that pre-existing expectations had been expanded on as new and 'often irrational' expectations further increased the list of demands.²⁰ The outcome of which is that, 'The extent of demands is often unmanageable: stability and democracy for Eastern Europe, a 'solution' for the Yugoslav crisis, relief for Third World poverty, all loom dauntingly on the horizon'.²¹ Whilst many of the goals listed are noble, the demand side outstrips the supply side to the point that the EU (to use its current label) cannot fulfil the expectations placed on it. This can have a detrimental impact on the perceived authority of the EU. Of course, this is not to suggest that expectations are fixed. Over time, the changing

to Protect. (New York: Routledge 2011), pp.165-167. Alex Bellamy, 'The Responsibility to Protect Turns Ten', *Ethics and International Affairs*, 29/2: 161-185 (2015).

¹⁷ Bellamy, 'The Responsibility to Protect Turns Ten', p.181.

¹⁸ See footnote 1.

¹⁹ Christopher Hill, 'The Capability-Expectations Gap or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31/3: 305-328 (1993).

²⁰ *ibid.*, p.315.

²¹ *ibid.*

political, legal, moral, and cultural landscape may warrant new expectations to emerge and old ones to decline. Expectations therefore play out in a complex and fluctuating environment that, nevertheless, needs to be managed. Those that have developed Hill's argument have drawn on his later work,²² which 'stressed that the capability–expectations gap was intended not as a static concept, but rather as a yardstick by which the process of change in EU foreign policy could be monitored'.²³ This reaffirms the idea that expectations alter within an ever changing political environment.

Of course, the focus here is not on the EU as such; in fact, this acts as somewhat of a red-herring. The primary point is to emphasise the need to scrutinize the relationship between RtoP expectations and capacity. Writing in 2009, Badescu went as far as stating '[t]he divide between expectations and capacity is arguably the most serious challenge the R2P faces before implementation'.²⁴ Six years on, there has been a lot of work done on RtoP and capacity building, but the relationship between expectations and capacity remains overlooked and undertheorised. Thinking in terms of capability-expectations gaps helps establish a yardstick, by which I mean a more reasonable set of expectations, which can be used to assess the success/failure of whatever is under scrutiny. In other words, shared expectations of what should happen need to be in tune with the capacity of the actor[s] to fulfil these expectations. In relation to the RtoP, it seems that a case can be made that at times, critics have irrational expectations of what the RtoP can achieve. To return to the example of Continetti above, critics claim the RtoP is dead based on an expectation that there should be a direct causal relationship between awareness of a crisis and immediate action. This sets the benchmark too high. We need to develop a more reasonable set of expectations that are more sensitive to the limits and possibilities of the RtoP. This is not to suggest we cannot criticise the RtoP but that this needs to be measured against a more realistic yardstick.

Developing this further, let us pause to consider two new concepts that have been introduced into expectations discourse: 'expectations vacuums' and 'expectations

²² Christopher Hill, 'Closing the Capability–Expectations Gap' in John Peterson & Helene Sjørnsen (eds.), *A Common Foreign Policy for Europe* (London: Routledge 1998), pp. 18–38.

Christopher Hill, 'Renationalising or Regrouping: EU Foreign Policy Since 11 September 2001', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 42/1: 143–163 (2004).

²³ Also Toje, 'The Consensus-Expectations Gap: Explaining Europe's Ineffective Foreign Policy', *Security Dialogue*, 39/1: 121–141 (2008), p. 122.

²⁴ Cristina Badescu, *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect*, p. 153.

clouding’.²⁵ Essentially, the authors argue that although ‘expectations gaps’ are well established in political science, they do not fully capture the complexities involved as expectations can be shaped by more than just actors over promising. To explain, ‘expectation vacuums’ are described as ‘the anti-thesis of an “expectations gap”’ as these occur when actors fail to ‘stimulate interest’.²⁶ In other words, a lack of demand for a policy or action arises when the actors fail to spark support. Moving on to ‘expectation clouding’, the authors explain that these arise when actors fail to explain policies which results in an ‘expectations cloud’ as the policy is unclear. This may be done intentionally or unintentionally and the outcome – the expectations cloud – can have positive or negative consequences. To explain this in more detail, let us return to the idea that norms represent ‘shared expectations about appropriate behaviour’. Essentially, Flinders and Dommett draw our attention to the times when there are *no shared expectations* about what should be done. A real world event may take place which reveals that the original policy framework does not provide the necessary guidance on what should be done. This ambiguity may be positive as it allows flexibility; however, it can also act as a source of tension within the legitimacy process precisely because the actors involved do not have an agreed understanding of what constitutes ‘rightful conduct’.²⁷ As Widmaier and Glanville explain, ‘too much ambiguity can impede norm development’ but, at the same time, ‘too little ambiguity can undermine consensus’.²⁸

Of the two concepts, ‘expectation clouding’ holds most relevance for the RtoP as real world crises have raised questions which cannot be answered by simply turning to paragraphs 138 and 139 of the *World Summit Outcome Document* (WSOD). Again, it is worth stressing that this can be a positive thing precisely because ambiguity allows flexibility. As Kennedy’s analysis of the UN Charter rightly points out, its architects deliberately used ‘language that was adaptable enough to allow application under unforeseen circumstances in years to

²⁵ Katherine Dommett and Matthew Flinders, ‘The Politics and Management of Public Expectations: Gaps, Vacuums, Clouding and the 2012 Mayoral Referenda’, *British Politics*, 9/1: 29–50 (2014), esp. pp 32-37. This stems from a series of studies on this issue, see Matthew Flinders, *Defending Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Matthew Flinders and Andrew Kelso, ‘Mind the Gap: Political Analysis, Public Expectations and the Parliamentary Decline Thesis’, *British Journal of Politics*, 13/2: 249-268 (2011); Matthew Flinders, ‘Bridging the Gap: Revitalising Politics and the Politics of Public Expectations’, *Representation*, 45/3: 339-348 (2009).

²⁶ Dommett and Flinders, ‘The Politics and Management of Public Expectations’, p. 35.

²⁷ Ian Clark, *Legitimacy in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), esp. pp. 28-29.

²⁸ Wesley W. Widmaier and Luke Glanville, ‘The Benefits of Norm Ambiguity: Constructing the Responsibility to Protect Across Rwanda, Iraq and Libya’, *Contemporary Politics* (forthcoming), DOI: 10.1080/13569775.2015.1014178

come'.²⁹ But it can also be a negative because too much ambiguity can see divergent expectations arise which are not easily reconciled, especially if urgent action is needed, which may hinder a consensus being forged. For example, the WSOD provides no clarity on the relationship between the RtoP and the International Criminal Court which has led to an 'expectations cloud' arising as scholars hold radically different expectations over the relationship between the two.³⁰ To return to Evans' mid-life crisis analogy, this cannot be resolved by simply restating the RtoP's intended scope and limits as set out in the WSOD. Furthermore, although the UN Security-General reports make significant head way in clarifying certain aspects of the RtoP, they cannot cover everything and RtoP expectations will continue to alter within an ever changing political environment.

The fourth concept this article puts forward in relation to expectations management is the idea of 'inherited expectations'. As this is the author's own contribution to the discourse it is necessary to clarify its definition. Inherited expectations refer to expectations that are heavily shaped by a historical tradition. Locating this in the body of Political Science, I draw on the interpretivist view that actors 'construct their beliefs against the background of a tradition'.³¹ Utilising this logic, it seems evident that historical traditions influence and shape expectations and it is here that the idea of 'inherited expectations' needs to be factored in to future expectation management on mass violence. What may appear to be a new expectation on a contemporary issue may in fact be the heir of a traditional view that continues to shape the discourse. This will be illustrated in more detail through section three's focus on the inherited expectation of "never again".

A final point regards the internal relationship between different types of expectations: because there has been so little substantive research into expectation management, it will undoubtedly take some time to theorise the interplay between different types of expectations.

²⁹ See Paul Kennedy discussion of artful language, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present and Future of the United Nations* (London: Random House, 2006), pp, 33–47, quote taken from p. 45.

³⁰ Frederic Megret, 'ICC, R2P, and the International Community's Evolving Interventionist Toolkit', 23 December 2010, SSRN, <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1933111>, accessed 12 December 2014; Jason Ralph and Adrian Gallagher, 'Legitimacy Faultlines in International Society: The Responsibility to Protect and Prosecute After Libya', *Review of International Studies*, 41/3: 553-573 (2015); Kirsten Ainley, 'The Responsibility to Protect and the International Criminal Court: Counteracting the Crisis', *International Affairs*, 91: 37–54 (2015).

³¹ Mark Bevir, and R.A.W. Rhodes, 'Studying British Government: Reconstructing the Research Agenda', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 1/2: 215-239 (1999), p.224. Such thinking has been developed further through the Interpretivism in International Relations BISA Working Group (IIRWG). In 2013, IIRWG released its flagship volume, Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall (eds.), *Interpreting Global Security* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

At this stage, it is clear that each type of expectation does not exist in its own vacuum and more needs to be done in order to theorise the interrelated dynamics of expectations. In other words, how do expectations gaps interplay with expectations clouds and vice versa? Furthermore, new concepts will continue to be developed and introduced to the discourse which will further inform our understanding of how different types of expectations interrelate. The call to manage expectations therefore is an attempt to start a conversation on managing RtoP expectations, the need for which is further explained in section two.

RtoP and Expectations

A more thorough engagement with expectations helps us make sense of the RtoP discourse. Juxtaposing Hill with the birth/death narrative outlined at the start, it appears that an expectations gap has arisen between what the RtoP can do and what it should do. Analysts such as Continetti seemingly expect there to be a direct causal relationship between awareness and action. To take another example, on 18 February 2014, Freedland published a piece in *The Guardian* entitled ‘Why it’s a good time to be a dictator like Kim Jong-un’, in which he stressed the lack of a UN response claiming, ‘[f]ew speak now of the notion that once seemed set to reshape international relations, the “responsibility to protect”’.³² Once again, we see a critique of the RtoP published in the immediate aftermath of the Commission’s report (which was released eleven days prior) as though knowledge of the crisis should trigger an automatic and instant response. Of course, one can argue that the international community already knew of the terrible situation in North Korea and that little action has been taken since;³³ however, such examples begin to illustrate overly high expectations. Problematically, they pay very little attention to the complexity of the crisis at hand. Freedland fails to mention: a) the nuclear threat posed by North Korea, b) the complexity of the crisis in Syria, and c) argues that we live in a ‘post-intervention era’ without any reference to the intervention in Libya. In addition, such examples fail to acknowledge that paragraph 139 of the WSOD states that the UN should act on a ‘case-by-case basis’. Instead, the reader is presented with a superhero narrative - as soon as an RtoP crisis happens anywhere in the world, the UN Security Council should militarily intervene, if

³² Jonathan Freedland, ‘Why It’s a Good Time To Be a Dictator Like Kim Jong-un’, *The Guardian*, 18 February 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/18/north-korea-good-time-to-be-dictator>, accessed 18 February 2014.

³³ For an overview of the international community’s response see Alex Bellamy, ‘A Chronic Protection Problem: The DPRK and the Responsibility to Protect’, *International Affairs*, 91/2: 225-244 (2015).

they do not, the RtoP is dead. To return to Hill, this strikes the author as an ‘irrational expectation’ and we need to develop a more informed understanding of the RtoP that is sensitive to its limitations and possibilities.

In a rare example that explicitly raises the need to manage expectations and specifically expectations gaps, James Finkle analyses the Atrocity Prevention Board under President Obama. Intriguingly, Finkle claims ‘managing the expectations – good or bad’ were one of the three major obstacles it faced:³⁴

Given the lofty goal expressed in its title and the complex and controversial issues it deals with, the APB naturally invites outsized expectations and suspicion. Although Ambassador Power has repeatedly cautioned that the “P” in APB does not stand for “panacea,” *some expected* the APB would spearhead an aggressive US policy to stop atrocities in places like Eastern Congo, Sudan and Syria.³⁵

The statement is relevant for two reasons. First, it invokes the idea of an expectations gap. From the outset the APB was framed in a manner which ratcheted up expectations of what it should achieve without enough consideration given to whether it has the capacity to fulfil this expectation. Second, it highlights the implications of this as some people (again, there is an unclear reference to whose expectations the author is referring to) then judge the success of the APB against this benchmark. Can the same not be said of the RtoP? Moreover, even if the United States had spearheaded such action, Badescu reminds us that complex crisis can dictate that the actor is hindered by inability rather than unwillingness, but that this still causes ‘very serious expectation and public perception problems’.³⁶ Accordingly, as this research agenda moves forward more studies are needed on the relationship between *different actor expectations*.

In addition, understanding the *different types of expectations* at play is a necessary step as the RtoP enters its second decade since the World Summit. For instance, consider the question: should political elites negotiate with Syrian President Bashar Hafez al-Assad in order to bring

³⁴ James P. Finkles, *Atrocity Prevention at the Cross Roads: Assessing the President’s Prevention Board After Two Years* (Washington: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), No. 2: 1-37, (2014), pp. 2 and 17. Emphasis added.

³⁵ *ibid.*, emphasis added.

³⁶ Badescu, *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect*, p. 154.

about a political solution to the conflict? As Bellamy highlights, RtoP expectations may complicate this:

By raising expectations about what the world should be doing to protect populations from genocide and mass atrocities, RtoP might inadvertently limit the deals that negotiators can offer perpetrators and damage already difficult relationships with political actors whose support is often needed to end the violence.³⁷

The statement is important because of what it does identify: an expectations gap and, also, what it does not identify: expectations clouding. Regarding the former, Bellamy draws attention to the significant implications that may stem from the RtoP expectation that the international community should not negotiate with perpetrators. The statement implies that expectations need to be reduced in order to gain the support of those that can bring about an end to the violence; however, this cannot be resolved easily. It is made more problematic by the fact that paragraphs 138 and 139 of the WSOD provide decision makers with no guidance on this issue. The lack of clarity reveals that this is not just a problem of expectation gaps, but also of expectation clouding. Quite simply, there are no shared expectations of what should be done within this context. To return to the work of Dommett and Flinders, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the drafters of the 2005 agreement failed to provide clarity on the question of whether the international community should negotiate with perpetrators. Accordingly, if we take the idea that norms reflect ‘agreed principles of conduct, meaning that all relevant actors are expected to play by the same rules’, the problem here is that there is no agreement of what should be done which fuels the potential for expectation clouds reflecting divergent expectations.³⁸

Expectation clouds underline that managing expectations is about more than addressing expectation gaps. It would be a mistake therefore to conflate the need to managing expectations with simply lowering expectations. Primarily, this is over-simplistic because we can see other types of expectations at play. Secondly, lowering expectations is not a cost-free approach. For example, reflecting on the first five years of the RtoP, Bellamy notes that

³⁷ Alex Bellamy, ‘Diplomacy and the Distractions of Protection’, *Global Observatory*, 26 November 2013, <http://theglobalobservatory.org/2013/11/diplomacy-and-the-distractions-of-protection>, accessed 11 January 2015.

³⁸ Ann Florini, ‘The Evolution of International Norms’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 40/3: 363-389 (1996), p. 364.

Ban Ki-moon campaigned under the slogan ‘promise less and deliver more’.³⁹ The statement reflects a conscious effort by the UN Secretary-General to reduce expectations under the assumption that it is better to over-achieve rather than under-achieve. In so doing, it draws on the sentiment expressed by Hill as one needs to balance expectations with capabilities; however, simply setting out to lower expectations is a risky approach. As Barnett and Finnemore’s reflections on the role of the UN in genocide prevention illustrate, by mid-1993 many actors inside and outside the UN were aware that it was ‘trying to do too much, too fast’ which they believed undermined the moral authority of the UN.⁴⁰ The subsequent scaling back of operations had tragic consequences as, at least in part, this contributed to the failing of the UN in Rwanda the following year. The intention here is not to downplay other factors, but to highlight that reducing expectations can also be harmful. The UN’s action over Rwanda represented a failure to uphold the rules embodied in the 1948 Genocide Convention, which eroded the legitimate authority of the UN in the 1990s.⁴¹ The example helps shed light on the need to manage rather than simply lower expectations. The former involves a more complex task of understanding different types of expectations and how they interact within a changing political environment.

In sum, we need to develop a more reasonable set of expectations which are sensitive to what the RtoP can and cannot fulfil. To return to Hill, initially there were ‘pre-existing expectations’ that surrounded what the EU was set up to achieve, let us call these, a, b, and c. Critically, over time, more and more was demanded of the EU to the point that it was expected to fulfil a, b, c, d, e, f, g, so on and so on. This is despite the fact that the EU simply did not have the capacity to fulfil all these expectations. In a similar vein, it is important to consider what the RtoP set out to fulfil and this is precisely what Evans is getting at when he asks us to consider its ‘intended scope and limits’.⁴² However, it seems that scholars need to do more than clarify what the WSOD did and did not say. The reason for this is that the WSOD does not provide guidance on all RtoP related issues which is completely understandable because expectations alter within a changing political landscape. More research is therefore needed, as different RtoP debates reflect different types of expectations

³⁹ Alex Bellamy, ‘The Responsibility to Protect – Five Years On’, *Ethics & International Affairs*, 24/2: 143–169 (2010), p.146.

⁴⁰ Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules For The World, International Organizations in Global Politics*. (London: Cornell University Press, 2004), p.131.

⁴¹ Adrian Gallagher, *Genocide and Its Threat to Contemporary International Order* (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2013), pp.108-121.

⁴² Evans, *Mass Atrocity Crimes after Syria*.

at play and different actor expectations. Section three shifts the focus on to one specific debate.

Managing Expectations of Inconsistency

In Roland Paris' analysis of 'the inconsistency problem', he argues that the 'R2P simultaneously symbolizes something larger than the 2005 agreement: it is the embodiment of the pledge to "never again" allow genocide to occur, a commitment born out of the Holocaust'.⁴³ The statement begins to illustrate the problem of an RtoP expectations gap as despite what was set out in 2005, there is an expectation that the RtoP should do more. To gauge this, the section asks us to consider how the 'inherited expectation' of "never again" has fuelled this expectations gap. To manage this, we need to reject the "never again" slogan as an 'irrational expectation' and accept the permanency of inconsistency whilst differentiating between legitimate and illegitimate inconsistency.

First and foremost it is necessary to differentiate between what the WSOD actually states and what RtoP scholars project onto the RtoP within the discourse. Regarding the former, paragraph 139 of the WSOD committed the UNSC to act in a 'timely and decisive manner' on a '*case-by-case basis*'.⁴⁴ In so doing, it recognised the role of cost-benefit calculations and distanced itself from a one-size-fits-all approach policy. Explaining this case-by-case logic, Welsh claims, 'a form of inconsistency is built into the very text as a recognition that the Security Council is a political body and must deliberate, and various calculations will come into that decision'.⁴⁵ Despite this, sceptics and critics routinely play the inconsistency card as their weapon of choice when attempting to criticise the RtoP. The argument being that since genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing are still taking place in countries such as Syria this is proof that the RtoP is failing to deliver on its stated goals.

To manage expectations, however, a key aspect is to consider how RtoP advocates have also fuelled the expectations gap that surrounds the RtoP. As far as this author is aware, Badescu

⁴³ Paris 'The "Responsibility to Protect" and the Structural Problems of Preventative Humanitarian Intervention', p. 579.

⁴⁴ The World Summit Outcome Document '2005 World Summit Outcome', UNGA Res. 60/1, 16 September 2005, p. 30.

⁴⁵ Jennifer Welsh, 'The Responsibility to Protect Principle is Not the Problem: Interview with Jennifer Welsh', *Global Observatory* (2013) <http://theglobalobservatory.org/interviews/641-the-responsibility-to-protect-principle-is-not-the-problem-interview-with-jennifer-walsh.html>, accessed 15 December 2013.

is the only RtoP scholar to address this issue in her analysis ‘closing the expectations-capacity gap’:

Because of its breadth, R2P might be perceived as too ambitious. At times, supporters’ message about what R2P is able to achieve certainly are, as seen, for example, in Gareth Evans’ subtitle to his book on R2P, “ending mass atrocity crimes once and for all” (2008a). The R2P framework is not going to be able to achieve this goal, no matter how morally satisfactory it sounds. Such arguments then, risk to be stamped as wishful thinking, just as the post-Holocaust “never again” dictum proved to be.⁴⁶

The statement captures the idea that advocates such as Evans have, at times, been guilty of increasing the demand side of the RtoP to the point that it outstrips the supply side. The idea of ‘ending all mass violence’ is, of course, somewhat of an aspirational statement. Furthermore, speaking in 2007 Evans clarified that he was not expecting an end to all ‘deadly conflict’ within his life time, ‘But no more Holocausts, Cambodias, Rwandas, or Srebrenicas? Surely that’s not only thinkable, but doable’.⁴⁷ From this perspective, mass violence is ‘the problem’ and the RtoP is ‘the solution’. Evans portrays his 2008 book as being about “the way in which the world has at least started to answer that question and to take the steps necessary to ensure that we will never again have to say “never again””.⁴⁸ The statement is important because it illustrates two things. First, despite the idea that RtoP represents the solution, he acknowledges that it remains a work in progress. This is something that sceptics and critics need to recognise. Second, we begin to see the idea that the RtoP can end mass violence such as the Holocaust extended to the point that it can end all mass violence.

It is here that I introduce the idea of inherited expectations and the implications of these for the RtoP. Despite the wording of the WSOD, the legacy of the Holocaust casts a large shadow over the RtoP discourse through the “never again” rhetoric.⁴⁹ To be clear on this, the problem is not so much the idea of “never again” another Holocaust, but the fact that this spilled over in to the expectation of “never again” any form of mass violence. Reviewing the

⁴⁶ Badescu, *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect*. p.166.

⁴⁷ Keynote Address by Gareth Evans, President, International Crisis Group and Co-Chair, International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, to United Nations University/International Crisis Group Conference on "Prevention of Mass Atrocities: From Mandate to Realisation", New York, 10 October 2007. <http://www.gevans.org/speeches/speech241.html>, accessed 2 July 2015.

⁴⁸ Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and for All* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2008), p. 3.

⁴⁹ Aaron Dorfman and Ruth. Messinger, ‘Toward a Jewish Argument for the Responsibility to Protect’ in Richard H. Cooper and Juliette Voinov Kohler (eds.), *Responsibility to Protect: The Global Moral Compact for the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2009), pp. 61-76.

discourse, it is evident that advocates have spoken in this tongue since the very beginning. As the UN Secretary General Kofi-Annan stated in 1999;

Of all my aims as Secretary-General, there is none to which I feel more deeply committed than that of enabling the United Nations never again to fail in protecting a civilian population from genocide or mass slaughter.⁵⁰

The moral outcry is understandable as people want to shout out “no more Holocausts, no more Rwanda’s”. It can also be tactical, for example, one may speak of ‘making poverty history’ without really expecting to achieve this goal; however, this ratchets up expectations of what the RtoP can and should do. According to the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) report, ‘There must never again be mass killing or ethnic cleansing’⁵¹, or to take another example, reflecting on the anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, the UNA-UK released a report entitled ‘Never Again?’ claiming ‘20 years on, people are still being massacred’.⁵² Essentially, if this was a war, military leaders would speak of ‘mission creep’. To return to Paris, we can see that the interplay between expectations helps explain why the RtoP symbolizes more than was agreed on in 2005 as the ‘inherited expectation’ of “never again” fuels the ‘expectations gap’ that surrounds the RtoP. The problem is that the RtoP is then judged by this benchmark. For example, following the crisis in Darfur, which is often cited as the first ‘test-case’ of the RtoP, Nick Grono argued, ‘until the first ethnic cleansing campaign of the twenty-first century is reversed, RtoP will remain aspirational, not operational, and “never again” will be “yet again” once again’.⁵³ Therefore despite the fact that the WSOD institutionalised inconsistency, it is often judged by the “never again” benchmark which, it inherited, and to this day, continues to be projected onto the RtoP.

Ultimately, we need to establish a more reasonable expectation of what the RtoP can and cannot achieve. To gauge this let us consider Aidan Hehir’s analysis ‘The Permanency of

⁵⁰ Cited in International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *Responsibility to Protect: Research, Bibliography, Background* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), p. 216.

⁵¹ International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2001), p. 70.

⁵² UNA-UK, *Never Again? UNA-UK Guide to the Responsibility to Protect and the Prevention of Atrocity Crimes 1-15* (2015), p.1.

⁵³ Nick Grono, ‘Briefing, Darfur: The International Community’s Failure to Protect’, *African Affairs*, 105/421: 621-631 (2006), p.630.

Inconsistency’.⁵⁴ In setting out his critique of the current world order, Hehir makes seemingly unreasonable demands:

Statements by the P5 on Libya highlight that they will continue to treat each case put before the Security Council on a case-by-case basis following evaluation of their respective interests. The responses of China and Russia to the ongoing violence in Syria (dealt with in the following section) certainly suggests that they have not stopped making cost-benefit calculations.⁵⁵

The statement clearly acknowledges the ‘case-by-case’ approach yet criticises this on the grounds that, despite the RtoP, we still live in a world in which states have not stopped making cost-benefit calculations. But what does Hehir expect? It is difficult to imagine a world in which states stop making such cost-benefit calculations and, moreover, surely when deciding to conduct RtoP actions such as military intervention, it is imperative that states do this. For example, in February 2014, the Commission of Inquiry reported that ‘systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations have been and are being committed by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’ which it is claimed constitute ‘crimes against humanity’.⁵⁶ When faced with a clear RtoP case on one hand and the nuclear threat posed by North Korea on the other, surely states have a responsibility to make cost-benefit calculations.⁵⁷ As Morgenthau succinctly stated, whilst the individual has the right to say, ‘let justice be done, even if the world perish’, the state does not have the right to say this on behalf of its citizens.⁵⁸ Within such circumstances, policymakers face a ‘clash of responsibilities’ as they address the external demand of protecting populations abroad and the internal demand of protecting citizens at home.⁵⁹

The call to manage expectations therefore asks us recognise that, in the words of Bismarck, ‘politics is the art of the possible’.⁶⁰ For critics such as Hehir, it is possible to do more and we need to ‘go beyond the RtoP’ and ‘grasp the nettle’ to implement UN Security Council

⁵⁴ Aidan Hehir, ‘The Permanency of Inconsistency: Libya, The Security Council and the Responsibility to Protect’, *International Security*, 38/1:137-159 (2013).

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 150.

⁵⁶ United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’ A/HRC/25/63, 7 February 2014, p. 6.

⁵⁷ For an overview on the methodological problems that surround cost-benefit analysis of military conflict see Ron Smith, P. ‘The Economics Costs of Military Conflict’, *Journal of Peace Research*, 2/2: 245-256 (2014).

⁵⁸ Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Amongst Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (Mc Graw Hill, 1985), p.12.

⁵⁹ Adrian Gallagher, ‘A Clash of Responsibilities: Engaging with Realist Critiques of the R2P’, *Global Responsibility to Protect*, 4/3:334-357 (2012).

⁶⁰ I would like to thank Cian O’Driscoll for this comment which he rose as discussant at International Studies Association in 2014.

Reform, a UN reaction force and an independent judicial body to oversee decision making.⁶¹ This would help overcome the problem of inconsistency as an independent body free of the inherent national biases of the P5 would oversee decision making. To take another example, Roff calls for establishing an international RtoP Institution that would act as an independent international body (based on the model of National Human Rights Institutions at the domestic level) to hold both states and the United Nations accountable regarding how they fulfil their RtoP.⁶² Notably, both of these normative appeals call for a significant reworking of the current world order and, in so doing, raise two relevant points. First, even if such reforms are achieved, it is highly doubtful that these would end mass violence once and for all. This is not to suggest that these authors claim such reforms would end mass violence entirely, but to simply re-enforce that the idea of saying “never again” to all mass violence is a fallacy. Second, such reforms raise the question of whether sceptics and critics create overly high expectations of what is achievable. In other words, do they fall into the trap of ‘demanding the impossible’? Revolutionary voices have often embodied the latter sentiment when addressing the issue of where society *is*, as opposed to, where it *can be*.⁶³ In so doing, they seemingly appeal to Browning rather than Bismarck, ‘Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his grasp, or what’s a heaven for?’⁶⁴ From this view, we should not accept the status quo for if we do, we cannot re-write the ills of the current world order – this is why we need to go beyond the RtoP. But of course, Bismarck and Morgenthau ask us to consider that moral over-reach may lead us in the opposite direction, after all, ‘[t]he United Nations was created not to lead mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell’.⁶⁵ So, whereas Hehir and Roff believe such reforms would advance the international community’s capacity for human protection, it *may* be that there overly high expectations are counterproductive.

In defence of Hehir, managing expectations does not mean that we should lower them to the point that we accept *double standards*. Moving forward, this author proposes that when it comes to managing the expectations that surround inconsistency we need to differentiate

⁶¹ Hehir, ‘The Responsibility to Protect’, pp. 228-254.

⁶² Heather M. Roff, *Global Justice, Kant and the Responsibility to Protect: A Provisional Duty* (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 113-117.

⁶³ I am drawing here on two works in particular, Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (Location: Harper Perennial, 2007). Slavoj Zizek, *Demanding the Impossible* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013).

⁶⁴ Robert Browning, ‘Andrea Del Sarto’ in Robert Browning, *Poems By Robert Browning* (Maryland: Wildside Press, 2007), p. 144.

⁶⁵ These are the words of Dag Hammarskjöld which continue to be expressed at UN. For example, The President of the United Nations General Assembly statement, 2007, <http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/statements/statement20070709.shtml>, accessed 2 January 2015.

between legitimate inconsistency - in cases where the complexities of the crisis dictate that there is no consensus on what action should be taken - and illegitimate inconsistencies - in cases when the Great Powers are evading their responsibility or even participating in it themselves. For example, Bellamy differentiates between ‘the *appearance* of selectivity caused by the necessary exercise of practical judgement and genuine duplicity.’⁶⁶ The former aligns itself with the idea of legitimate inconsistency in that a crisis may be so complex, for example in Syria, that we cannot have a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach.⁶⁷ The latter aligns itself with the idea of illegitimate inconsistency. There are clearly historical cases, such as the Rwandan genocide in 1994, which are not as complex as North Korea in 2014 and yet the role of the West in evading responsibility has been well documented.⁶⁸ Brown highlights this distinction well when he explains that actors such as Tony Blair defended inconsistency on the grounds that ‘it is not possible to “right every wrong”’ but at the same time Blair failed to address the question, ‘how is the choice made of which wrong to right?’⁶⁹ Over a decade on, it seems that Western states have still not done enough to address this issue. For example, in the aftermath of the intervention in Libya, Ruan Zongze, the Vice President China Institute of International Studies (one of China’s Foreign Ministry think tanks) stated;

Who should be protected and who should be left alone? And how to deal with double standards? Why have the United States and other Western countries kept silent on and turned a blind eye to the fact that Gulf country Bahrain used armed forces and tanks to deal with demonstrators in February 2011 and Saudi Arabia dispatched troops to help Bahrain put down the revolt? Simply because Bahrain is America’s close ally and the United States does not want to see the downfall of the current Bahrain government.⁷⁰

The statement aptly captures the perception of amoral selectivity which fuels anti-RtoP politics.

Overall, Paris’ claim that the RtoP represents something larger than the 2005 agreement provides an apt backdrop to consider the expectations gap that surrounds the RtoP. At least in

⁶⁶ Alex Bellamy, *The Responsibility to Protect: A Defense* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 137.

⁶⁷ United Nations Report of the Secretary-General, Responsibility to Protect: Timely and Decisive Response A/66/874-S/2012/578, 25 July 2012, p. 6.

⁶⁸ Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books 2009).

⁶⁹ Chris Brown, ‘Selective Humanitarianism: in Defence of Inconsistency’ in D. Chatterjee and D. Scheid (eds.), *Ethics and Foreign Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 35.

⁷⁰ Ruan Zongze, ‘Responsible Protection: Building a Safer World’, *China Institute of International Studies*, http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2012-06/15/content_5090912.htm, accessed 20 June 2012. Also, Aidan Hehir ‘The Responsibility to Protect as the Apotheosis of Liberal Teleology’ in Aidan Hehir and Robert W. Murray (eds.), *Libya, The Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 44-45.

part, this helps explain the birth/death narrative. Every time there is an RtoP crisis, the lack of an automatic UN Security Council response, leads to an R.I.P narrative. To understand this we need to factor in the ‘inherited expectation’ of “never again”, which pre-dates the 2005 agreement and helps explain why this narrative has surrounded the RtoP since its inception. This author’s view is that Weiss’ post-Libya analysis was correct when he stated, ‘Libya suggests that we can say no more Holocausts, Cambodias, and Rwandas—and occasionally mean it’.⁷¹ This is qualitatively different from expecting an end to all mass violence which to draw on Hill, appears to be an ‘irrational expectation’. Going forward, we need to differentiate between legitimate and illegitimate inconsistency. A useful point of guidance here is Wheeler’s distinction between consistency and coherence as the latter suggests ‘like cases must be treated alike, but this does not mean that every case can be treated the same’.⁷² In other words, it is not so much the ‘permanency of inconsistency’ that is the problem as there can be an inconsistent yet coherent approach. It is the persistence of genuine duplicity or at least the perception of it, which continues to plague the RtoP. Debates will undoubtedly continue over whether reforms such as those set out above are in fact possible. The pressing point here is that a more reasonable expectation is that there will be less mass violence, rather than none, in a post-RtoP world.

Conclusion

The article advances an understanding of the RtoP that is inherently more sensitive to its limitations and possibilities in which political action is judged according to a much more nuanced account of the contexts in which it takes place. Expectations management aids this goal. It draws attention to the fact that the RtoP discourse often makes fleeting reference to the role of expectations despite the importance placed on them. Without a more substantive engagement expectations will continue to be referred to in a rather vague and open ended manner which raises more questions than provides answers. Addressing this lacuna, the article draws on the work of Political Scientists who study expectations which reveals different types of expectations, the relationship between expectations, and different actor expectations, that are simply not captured in the current RtoP discourse. Although no single article can address this research agenda in its entirety, it puts forward four concepts to lay the

⁷¹ Thomas Weiss, ‘R2P Alive and Well After Libya’, *Ethics and International Affairs*, 25/3: 287-292 (2011), p. 291.

⁷² Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 305.

groundwork for future studies: expectation gaps, expectation vacuums, expectation clouding and inherited expectations – the latter is the author’s own contribution to the debate. To evidence the utility of these concepts, the article provided a brief overview in section two, prior to a more specific engagement with the debate over inconsistency. The article identifies an ‘expectations gap’ in the inconsistency debate and argues that analysts should reject the ‘inherited expectation’ of “never again” and accept the permanency of inconsistency whilst differentiating between legitimate and illegitimate inconsistency to manage expectations accordingly.

In closing, this author identifies three points to guide new research in this area. First, there is significant work to be done on the expectation management of other key RtoP debates such as prevention, the expansion of the concept, gender security, the responsibility to rebuild, and the RtoPs relationship with the International Criminal Court - to name just a few. For example, the need for a ‘gender lens’ asks us to reassess RtoP expectations regarding ‘sexual and gender based violence’.⁷³ Unfortunately, this remains somewhat of a peripheral in the discourse. Second, it is evident that there are complex internal relations between different types of expectations. The article has drawn attention to the relationship between expectation gaps and expectation clouds as well as expectation gaps and inherited expectations, but there is clearly much more needed on the dynamics at play. The Political Scientists who study expectations only seem to be beginning to get to grips with this issue. Moreover, as new types of expectations are identified and introduced to the discourse they will feedback into the interplay between different types of expectations. Third, it is clear that the expectations of different actors need to be addressed in much more detail as we unpack the notion of ‘shared expectations’ through a focus on states, policymakers, NGOs, civil society groups, victims, perpetrators, bystanders, think tanks, journalists and so forth. It is imperative that RtoP scholars gain a more informed understanding of how these expectations are shaped within a changing political landscape and the implications that stem from them. Fourth, this needs to feed into studies on norms more. As aforementioned, the focus on expectations is meant to compliment not compete which studies on norms. This article helps lays the groundwork, but much more is needed as the RtoP enters its second decade since the WSOD.

⁷³Sara E. Davies and Eli Stamnes (eds.), ‘Special Issue: R2P and Sexual and Gender Based Violence’, *Global Responsibility to Protect*, 4/2 (2012).

