

COMMENTS ON THE GODDARD&NEWMAN PAPER, ASSEMBLED BY GEMINI 3

Since its publication in late 2025, the "Neo-Royalism" paper by Goddard and Newman has sparked significant debate among political scientists, policy analysts, and journalists. Because it challenges the two "standard" ways of looking at the world (Liberalism vs. Realism), it has been both praised for its originality and scrutinized for its implications. Here is a breakdown of the key reactions and themes from the discussion:

1. Scholarly & Academic Reactions

In academic circles (such as the Good Authority podcast and university workshops), the paper is being treated as a paradigm shift in International Relations (IR) theory.

- * The "Intellectual Blinders" Argument: Many scholars agree with Goddard and Newman that the "Westphalian" model (which assumes states act as rational, unitary blocks) fails to explain current U.S. behavior. The paper is being praised for providing a vocabulary to describe "cliques" and "personalist interests" that were previously dismissed as mere "eccentricities."

- * Debate over "Durability": A central point of academic contention is whether Neo-Royalism is a temporary glitch tied to Donald Trump or a permanent structural shift. Critics argue that if the U.S. returns to institutionalized foreign policy after 2028, the "Neo-Royalist" framework might lose its predictive power.

2. Media & Public Discourse

The term "Neo-Royalism" has been picked up by outlets like Mother Jones and The Washington Post to explain current headlines that seem otherwise nonsensical.

- * The "Mafia" Comparison: Commentators have noted that Goddard and Newman's "Neo-Royalism" sounds remarkably like a global protection racket. The media has used the framework to explain why tech CEOs (like those from Nvidia or Tesla) and foreign leaders "grovel" or offer "tribute" to the President.

- * Legitimizing Autocracy: Analysts have pointed out that by treating the U.S. President as a "sovereign" among "sovereigns," this framework explains why the administration seeks approval from "tough people" (like the House of Saud or Vladimir Putin) while showing contempt for "soft" democratic leaders.

3. Key Critiques and Challenges

Not all reactions have been uncritical. Some common pushbacks include:

- * Comparison to "Neo-Reaction" (NRx): Some readers have noted the linguistic similarity between "Neo-Royalism" and the "Neo-Monarchist" ideas of thinkers like Curtis Yarvin. While Goddard and Newman are describing the system critically, some critics worry that naming it "Royalism" might inadvertently lend a sense of historical inevitability or "glamour" to authoritarian behavior.

- * The Bureaucratic Resistance: Skeptics argue the paper might underestimate the "staying power" of the professional civil service. They suggest that while the "clique" may rule the headlines, the vast "Westphalian" bureaucracy (the Pentagon, State Department, Treasury) still quietly enforces traditional national interests.

Summary of the Orders Compared. The following table highlights the differences that have been the focus of most comments:

Feature	Liberal Order (LIO)	Westphalian Order	Neo-Royalist Order
Primary Actor	International Institutions	Sovereign States	Personalist Cliques
Main Goal	Cooperation / Peace	National Security	Extraction of Rents/Tribute
Logic of Power	Rule-Based (Laws)	Balance of Power	Arbitrary Exceptions
Typical Interaction	Multilateral Treaty	Alliance/War	The "Deal" (Tribute)

The "Greenland" Test Case. One of the most cited examples in recent commentary is Trump's interest in Greenland.

* Westphalian View: A state seeking territory for strategic/military advantage.

* Neo-Royalist View: A "sovereign" seeking a "personal legacy" or "real estate play," treating a sovereign territory as a private commodity to be traded between leaders.