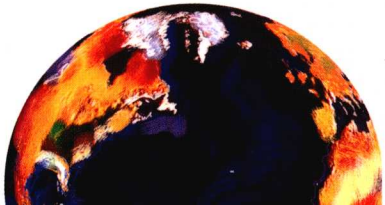
WORLD POLITICS

Interests | Interactions | Institutions

JEFFRY A. FRIEDEN
DAVID A. LAKE
KENNETH A. SCHULTZ



World Politics

INTERESTS, INTERACTIONS, INSTITUTIONS

Jeffry A. Frieden
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

David A. Lake
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Kenneth A. Schultz
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

W. W. NORTON & COMPANY
NEW YORK LONDON

W. W. Norton & Company has been independent since its founding in 1923, when William Warder Norton and Mary D. Herter Norton first published lectures delivered at the People's Institute, the adult education division of New York City's Cooper Union. The firm soon expanded its program beyond the Institute, publishing books by celebrated academics from America and abroad. By mid-century, the two major pillars of Norton's publishing program—trade books and college texts—were firmly established. In the 1950s, the Norton family transferred control of the company to its employees, and today—with a staff of four hundred and a comparable number of trade, college, and professional titles published each year—W. W. Norton & Company stands as the largest and oldest publishing house owned wholly by its employees.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Editor: Ann Shin
Managing Editor, College: Marian Johnson
Assistant Editor: Mollie Eisenberg
Copy Editor: Alice Vigliani
Production Manager: Eric Pier-Hocking
Design Director: Rubina Yeh
Photo Editor: Stephanie Romeo
Photo Research: Susan Buschhorn
Print Ancillaries Editor: Rachel Comerford
Emedia Editor: Dan Jost
Marketing: Nicole Netherton
Maps: Mapping Specialists Ltd.
Composition: TSI Graphics, Inc.
Manufacturing: Worldcolor—Taunton division

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Frieden, Jeffry A.
World politics: interests, interactions, institutions/Jeffry A. Frieden, David A. Lake, Kenneth A. Schultz—1st ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN: 978-0-393-92709-2 (pbk.)
1. International relations. I. Lake, David A., 1965– II. Schultz, Kenneth A. III. Title.
JZ1242.F748 2009
327—dc22

2009020706

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10110
wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company, Ltd., Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London WIT3QT

4 5 6 7 8 9 0

PREFACE

While the process of writing a textbook is a long and winding road, we have been guided throughout by two principles that spurred our enthusiasm for the project and that, we believe, make this textbook special. First, this text is organized around substantive puzzles that draw scholars and students alike to the study of world politics. This is a field that grapples with some of the most interesting and important questions in political science: Why are there wars? Why do countries have a hard time cooperating to prevent genocides or global environmental problems? Why are some countries rich while others are poor? This book gives students the tools they need to start thinking analytically about the answers to such questions. Second, we have sought to bridge the gap between how scholars of international relations conduct their research and how they teach their students. The text draws from the insights and findings of contemporary international relations scholarship and presents them in a way that is accessible to undergraduates who are just starting out in this field. Our ambition is to provide students with a "toolbox" of analytic concepts common to many theories of world politics that can be applied to a wide variety of topics. We hope to lay a solid foundation on which students can build their own understanding of the continually evolving world of international politics.

The core concepts in this toolbox are interests, interactions, and institutions. Chapter 2 presents the framework, and the remaining chapters apply it. The book is organized around the principle that problems in world politics can be analyzed using these key concepts.

- Who are the relevant actors and what are their interests?
- What is the nature of their interactions? What strategies can they be expected to pursue? When are their choices likely to bring about cooperation or conflict?
- How do institutions constrain and affect interactions? How might they impede or facilitate cooperation? When and how do institutions favor different actors and their interests?

Different problems and issues will emphasize interests, interactions, or institutions to varying degrees. There is no single model of world politics that applies equally to war, trade and international financial relations, and the struggles for improved human rights and a cleaner global environment. Nonetheless, any complete understanding must include all three concepts. Although we do not refer extensively to the traditional paradigms based on realism, liberalism, and constructivism in the rest of the book, we show briefly in the Introduction how each of the major "-isms" of international relations theory can be understood as a different set of assumptions about interests, interactions, and institutions in world politics.

Pedagogical Features

Our approach to the study of international relations is problem-oriented. Each chapter begins with a puzzle about world politics: a question or set of questions that lack obvious answers. We then use the concepts of interests, interactions, and institutions—along with known empirical regularities, current research results, and illustrative cases—to "solve" the puzzle and lead students to a deeper understanding of world politics. Each chapter includes three kinds of "boxes" that supplement the main text, as well as other pedagogical features intended to facilitate student learning.

- **"Controversy"** boxes probe ethical issues to stimulate classroom discussion and show how interests, interactions, and institutions can help us understand—if not necessarily resolve—the difficult normative tradeoffs involved.
- **"What Shaped Our World?"** boxes explain historical events that continue to shape contemporary world politics and illustrate the analytic theme of the chapter.
- **"What Do We Know?"** boxes describe empirical facts or regularities that are important for understanding the larger puzzle discussed in the chapter.
- **"Core of the Analysis"** overviews at the start of each chapter preview the key analytic points to be covered in the chapter.
- **"Reviewing Interests, Interactions, and Institutions"** tables at the end of each chapter summarize specific analytic insights.
- **Chapter outlines, marginal definitions of key terms, Further Readings sections, and a glossary** also aid study and review.

An extensive set of ancillary materials for instructors and students supports this book's goal of making an analytical approach to world politics accessible to introductory-level students. Students will find an array of study and review materials on the accompanying Web site (**wwnorton.com/studyspace**), as well as simulations and other exercises that encourage them to apply what they have learned in the text. For instructors, Norton offers a test bank, an instructor's manual, and an expanded PowerPoint set, all of which have been developed specifically to accompany *World Politics.*

Acknowledgments

We owe many debts in preparing this text. Roby Harrington of Norton brought us together and encouraged us to write this book. His vision, judgment, and steady editorial hand are reflected throughout. Ann Shin of Norton expertly guided the project from first draft to finished product and educated us in the art of writing a textbook. The final form and content of this book reflect her efforts to keep three sometimes over-committed academics on track, on theme, and on time. We are grateful also to the rest of the Norton team, including Marian Johnson, for her work as project editor, and Alice Vigliani for her thorough copyediting. Assistant editor Mollie Eisenberg helped keep the many pieces of the manuscript moving throughout the process, and production manager Eric Pier-Hocking kept a close eye on the quality of the printed book as all those pieces came together. Rachel Comerford ably managed the editing of the print ancillaries, and Dan Jost brought creativity and order to the development of the student website and other online resources. We owe thanks to all of them.

We are enormously grateful to the many reviewers and class-testers who provided guidance and helpful comments at many different stages of this project. In particular, we would like to thank

Rodwan Abouharb, *Louisiana State University*
Karen Adams, *University of Montana*
Todd Allee, *University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*
Juliann Allison, *University of California, Riverside*
Claire Apodaca, *Florida International University*
Alan Arwine, *Texas Tech University*
Robert Brown, *Temple University*
Renato Corbetta, *University of Alabama, Birmingham*
Andrew Cortell, *Lewis & Clark College*
Benjamin Fordham, *Binghamton University*
Giovanna Gismondi, *Ohio University*
Darren Hawkins, *Brigham Young University*
Paul Hensel, *Florida State University*
Uk Heo, *University of Wisconsin, Marathon*
Tobias Hofmann, *College of William & Mary*
Elizabeth Hurd, *Northwestern University*
Michael Kanner, *University of Colorado, Boulder*
Scott Kastner, *University of Maryland*
Jonathan Keller, *James Madison University*
Alan Kessler, *University of Texas*
Andy Konitzer, *Samford University*
David Leblang, *University of Virginia*
Ashley Leeds, *Rice University*
Lisa Martin, *University of Wisconsin*
Ronald Mitchell, *University of Oregon*
Layna Mosely, *University of North Carolina*
Will H. Moore, *Florida State University*

Robert Packer, *Pennsylvania State University*
Robert Pahre, *University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*
Glenn Palmer, *Pennsylvania State University*
Leanne Powner, *College of Wooster*
Tonya Putnam, *Columbia University*
Stephen Quackenbush, *University of Missouri*
John Quinn, *Truman State University*
Robert Rauchhaus, *University of California, Santa Barbara*
Chad Rector, *George Washington University*
Dan Reiter, *Emory University*
Stephen Saideman, *McGill University*
Idean Salehyan, *University of North Texas*
Todd Sechser, *University of Virginia*
Megan Shannon, *University of Mississippi*
Randolph Siverson, *University of California, Davis*
Oleg Smirnov, *Stony Brook University*
Mark Souva, *Florida State University*
Patricia Sullivan, *University of Georgia*
Hiroki Takeuchi, *Southern Methodist University*
Aleksandra Thurman, *University of Michigan*
Kelly Wurtz, *Trinity College*

David Lake class-tested the entire volume in his Introduction to World Politics courses at UCSD in Spring 2007 and 2008. For their helpful comments, suggestions, and corrections, he would like to thank the over 700 students in those classes as well as his teaching assistants, Molly Bauer, Mark Farrales, Danielle Jung, Jennifer Keister, James Long, Sam Seljan, and Benjamin Tang. For research assistance, we thank Eric Belz, Jeffrey Bengel, Charles Frentz, Oliver Kaplan, Alexander Noonan, and Priya Rajdev.

We also thank Helena de Bres of Wellesley College for her thoughtful ideas and hard work on the "Controversy" boxes, and David Singer of MIT for his work on the figures and boxes in the international political economy chapters. Nancy Frieden graciously hosted an authors' meeting. David Leblang of the University of Virginia developed simulations for the student Web site. Todd Sechser, also of the University of Virginia, created the PowerPoint set that accompanies the book, and Nancy Lapp of California State University, Sacramento, spent countless hours working on the test bank. Brian Potter of the College of New Jersey brought his experience as a teacher to the instructor's manual. We are grateful for their contributions to the project.

INTRODUCTION

What Is World Politics and Why Do We Study It?

In the spring of 1921, Arabs and Jews living in Palestine came to the brink of war.[1] Angered by the influx of Jewish settlers, a group of Arabs set out to attack Jewish homes near their settlement at Tel Aviv. The Jews rushed out to confront them, and shots were exchanged. But the two parties did not go to war on that day. A rabbi named Ben Zion Uziel donned his rabbinical robes, walked out between the two sides, and implored them to go back to their homes. Uziel reminded both sides how the land over which they fought was once a barren desert plagued with disease and famine. By working together, he observed, Jews and Arabs had created a rich and fertile land whose natural resources were only starting to be enjoyed. The rabbi urged both sides to forswear war and instead focus on creating a prosperity that all could enjoy: "We have the entire land in front of us, let us work shoulder to shoulder to cultivate her, uncover her treasures, and live together in brotherhood." The appeal worked: both sides put down their arms and returned home.

We know now, of course, that the peace of that day would not last. Fighting between Arabs and Jews would begin anew only eight years later. In 1948, the state of Israel was created on that land, and that state has since seen frequent conflict with neighboring Arab states and with the stateless Palestinian people who once lived there. The Arab-Israeli conflict is one of the most intractable and dangerous rivalries in the world today. Still, as one scholar notes, "on that day in 1921, some men who otherwise would have died went home to enjoy life with their families."[2]

---

1. This story is told in Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1969), 175–78. We are grateful to Arthur Stein for making us aware of this anecdote. See Arthur A. Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 210.
2. Ibid., 210.

Though little more than a footnote in history, this anecdote illustrates what we study when we study world politics and why we study it. The field of world politics—also called international relations—seeks to understand how the peoples and countries of the world get along. As the account suggests, international relations can span the continuum from open warfare to peaceful cooperation. Some countries fight wars against one another and, when they are not fighting, spend significant resources preparing to fight; other countries have managed to live in peace for long periods. Sometimes countries engage in lucrative economic dealings, selling each other goods and services and investing in one another's economies. These interactions can make some people and nations very rich, while others stay mired in poverty. Like the people in the anecdote, the countries of the world are also increasingly aware of the natural resources they share and depend on: the atmosphere, the water, the land. The common threat of environmental degradation creates a need for international cooperation; in some cases, governments have responded to this need, and in other cases, they have not. And, as the story of Rabbi Uziel suggests, small groups—even individuals—can sometimes make a difference, whether through the work of a mediator, the lobbying of human rights groups, or more ominously, the activities of terrorist organizations. Understanding this varied landscape of conflict and cooperation is the task of those who study world politics. Getting students started down this path is the task of this book.

Why study world politics? The nineteenth-century Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle once wrote of economics that it was not a happy science but rather a "dreary, desolate, and, indeed, quite abject and distressing one; what we might call . . . the dismal science." Those who study world politics often think that Carlyle's criticism applies equally well to the field of international relations. The history of world politics offers its fair share of distressing observations. International wars have claimed millions of lives; civil wars and genocides have claimed millions more, and in most cases outsiders who might have prevented these deaths have chosen not to get involved. Since 1945, international politics have taken place under the threat of nuclear war, which could destroy the planet, and fears about the potential use of these weapons have intensified since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. International economic relations have in some cases been harmonious and generated great wealth for some countries. And yet, as one looks around the globe today, the inequality in living standards is stark. About half of the world's population—around 3 billion people—live on less than two dollars a day. Most countries have signed treaties promising to protect the basic human rights of their citizens, but some governments still kill, arrest, and torture their people—and outsiders usually do little to stop these violations. And despite increasing awareness of threats to the global environment, international efforts to do something about these threats often fail.

Still, the picture is not entirely bleak. One can point to a number of examples in which the world has changed for the better. For hundreds of years, the continent of Europe experienced horrific warfare, culminating in the first half of the twentieth century in two world wars that claimed tens of millions lives. Today, the countries of Europe are at peace, and a war between, say, Germany and France in the forseeable future is inconceivable. After World War II, many countries emerged economically shattered by war or destitute after decades of colonial rule,

but some have experienced extraordinary prosperity in the decades since. For example, in the 1950s, South Korea had one of the world's poorest economies, with a per capita national income of less than $150 a year. Today, South Korea boasts the sixteenth largest economy in the world, with a per capita national income of over $26,000 a year.[3] At the beginning of the twentieth century, only a handful of countries worldwide had political systems that guaranteed the civil rights of their citizens and gave people a say in government through free and fair elections. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, more than half of the world's population lived in democratic countries. And despite the uneven track record of efforts to protect the global environment, cooperation in this area was virtually unknown a few decades ago. In recent years, the number of international environmental treaties and organizations has grown dramatically, as has awareness of the common challenges we face.

We study world politics because the bad things that happen in the world distress us and because the good things give us hope that, through understanding and effort, the world could be a better place.

Eleven Puzzles in Search of Explanations

This book is organized around what we consider to be the most compelling and pressing puzzles in the study of world politics. Puzzles are observations about the world that demand an explanation. In some cases, they arise because the world does not work the way that we might expect. Some things that happen seem like they should not, and other things that don't happen seem like they should. War, for example, is a puzzling phenomenon. Given the enormous human and material costs that wars impose on the countries that fight them, one might wonder why countries do not settle their conflicts in other, more reasonable ways. The difficulty of international cooperation to end genocides or to protect the environment presents another such puzzle: given the widespread agreement that genocide is horrific and that the environment needs protecting, why is it so hard for countries to do something about these issues? Other puzzles arise because of variation that needs to be explained. Some countries today are enormously wealthy, with living standards more opulent than ever experienced in world history; in many other countries, people scrape by on meager incomes and suffer from malnutrition, poor health, and inadequate schooling. What accounts for these vastly different outcomes? The study of world politics is the effort to make sense of these puzzles.

To that end, this book seeks to understand eleven puzzles:

1. Given the human and material costs of military conflict, why do countries sometimes wage war rather than resolving their disputes through negotiations? (Chapter 3)

3. Figures are 2008 estimates from U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ (accessed 5/29/09).

2. What if there are actors within a country who see war as beneficial and who expect to pay few or none of its costs? Do countries fight wars to satisfy influential domestic interests? (Chapter 4)
3. Why is it so hard for the international community to prevent and punish acts of aggression among and within states? (Chapter 5)
4. Why are trade barriers so common despite the universal advice of economists? Why do trade policies vary so widely? (Chapter 6)
5. Why is international finance so controversial? Why are international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund so strong? (Chapter 7)
6. Why do countries pursue different currency policies, from dollarizing or joining the euro, to letting their currency's value float freely? (Chapter 8)
7. Why are some countries rich and some countries poor? (Chapter 9)
8. How could relatively small transnational groups, from advocacy groups like Amnesty International to terrorist networks like Al Qaeda, bring about policy change within and among countries? (Chapter 10)
9. Given that nearly everyone wants a cleaner and healthier environment, why is it so hard to cooperate internationally to protect the environment? (Chapter 11)
10. Why do countries sometimes try to protect the human rights of people outside their borders? In light of widespread support for the principle of human rights, why has the movement to protect those rights not been more successful? (Chapter 12)
11. Why are some periods marked by extensive global conflict while others experience robust efforts at cooperation? Which of these patterns will hold in the future? (Chapter 13)

theory: A logically consistent set of statements that explains a phenomenon of interest.

After setting out one of these puzzles, each chapter shows how we can build theories to make sense of them. A **theory** is a logically consistent set of statements that explains a phenomenon of interest. When we confront the puzzle "Why did this happen?" theories provide an answer. They specify the factors that play a role in causing the events we are trying to understand, and they show how these pieces fit together to make sense of the puzzle. A theory of war explains why wars happen and identifies the conditions that make war between countries more or less likely. A theory of trade explains why countries sometimes choose to trade with each other and identifies what factors increase or decrease the amount of that trade. A theory of international environmental policy identifies the factors that foster or impede cooperation in this area.

In addition to this primary role of explanation, theories also help us to describe, predict, and prescribe. They help us to *describe* events by identifying which factors are important and which are not. Since it would be impossible to catalog all of the events that precede, say, the outbreak of a war, we need theories to filter the events that are worth including from those that are not. Theories help us to *predict* by offering a sense of how the world works, how a change in one factor will lead to changes in behavior and outcomes. And theories may help *prescribe* policy responses by identifying what has to be changed in order to foster better outcomes. Once a good understanding has been established of why wars happen, it might be possible to take steps to prevent them. Knowing what factors help countries emerge from

poverty makes it possible to advocate policies that have a chance of helping. Just as an understanding of how the human body works is important for curing diseases, developing theories of how the world works is a first step in the quest to make it a better place.

Theories also provide manageable explanations for complex phenomena. Given how complicated the world is, simplifying it in this way may seem like a misguided pursuit. Whereas the movement of a falling object might be characterized by mathematical equations dictated by the laws of physics, the decisions of individuals and groups are influenced by factors too innumerable to list, yet alone predict. Any theory, therefore, is doomed to oversimplify things. But this is precisely the point of theorizing. We do not build theories because we believe the world is simple or mechanical. Rather, we build them because we know the world is extraordinarily complex, and the only way to understand important phenomena is to cut away some of the complexity and identify the most important factors. As a result, any general explanation will not be right in every single case.

Given this outlook, we generally aspire for probabilistic claims. A probabilistic claim is an argument about the factors that increase or decrease the likelihood that some outcome will occur. For example, while we cannot predict with certainty whether a given conflict will end in war or peace, we can identify conditions that increase or decrease the danger of war. Similarly, we use theories to identify factors that make trade protection, or international investment, or cooperation to protect human rights or the environment more or less likely. Given the world's complexity, developing a compelling probabilistic argument is no small feat.

The Framework: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions

No single theory adequately answers all of the puzzles posed in this book. Instead, we offer a framework—a way of thinking about world politics that will be useful in building theories that shed light on our puzzles. The framework rests on three core concepts: interests, interactions, and institutions. **Interests** are the goals that actors have, the outcomes they hope to obtain through political action. A state may have an interest in protecting its citizens or acquiring more territory; businesses generally have an interest in maximizing profits; an environmental activist has an interest in protecting the atmosphere, the oceans, or whales. **Interactions** are the ways in which two or more actors' choices combine to produce political outcomes. The outcomes that we observe—wars, or trade and financial exchanges, or cooperation to protect human rights or the environment—reflect the choices of many actors, each looking out for his or her own interests, but also taking into account the interests and likely actions of others. War is the product of an interaction because it requires at least two sides: one side must attack, and the other must decide to resist. Similarly, efforts at international cooperation require multiple states to coordinate their policy choices toward a common goal. An **institution** is a set of rules,

interests: What actors want to achieve through political action; their preferences over the outcomes that might result from their political choices.

interactions: The ways in which the choices of two or more actors combine to produce political outcomes.

institutions: A set of rules, known and shared by the community, that structure political interactions in particular ways.

known and shared by the relevant community, that structure political interactions. Institutions define the "rules of the game," often embodied in formal treaties and laws or in organizations like the United Nations. Institutions create procedures for making joint decisions, such as voting rules; they also lay out standards of acceptable behavior and often include provisions for monitoring compliance and punishing those actors that violate the rules.

Applying this framework to any particular puzzle is straightforward. We first think about who the relevant political actors are and what interests they have. We think about the choices, or strategies, available to each actor, how those choices interact to produce outcomes, and how the strategic interaction influences what the actors actually decide to do. And we think about what institutions, if any, might exist to govern their behavior.

The framework is intentionally flexible, pragmatic, and open to a variety of assumptions about which interests, interactions, and institutions matter. A theory emerges when we identify the specific interests, interactions, and institutions that work together to account for the events or pattern of events we hope to explain.

In building explanations, we do not precommit to any one set of actors or interests as being the most important regardless of issue area. Sometimes, it is most useful to think about states as actors pursuing goals such as power, security, or territorial aggrandizement. In other situations, we get more leverage thinking about politicians concerned about holding on to their office, or businesses interested in maximizing profits, or labor unions interested in protecting their members' jobs, or groups of like-minded individuals with strong ideological interests in, say, protecting human rights or extending the dominion of a particular religion. We cannot judge whether any particular assumption about actors and interests is right or wrong; rather, we judge whether that assumption is useful or not useful in explaining the puzzle. Indeed, assumptions are simplifying devices, which means that, strictly speaking, none captures the exact, entire truth. Since all decisions are made by individuals, it is not precisely accurate to say that a state or an interest group or an institution is an actor; and yet, sometimes, it is quite useful to assume precisely that. Similarly, when we ascribe interests to individuals—such as assuming that politicians care primarily about holding on to office—this is a sweeping generalization that cannot be right 100 percent of the time; and yet, very powerful insights can be drawn from this assumption.

We focus on two broad types of interactions that arise, to one degree or another, in all aspects of politics: bargaining and cooperation. **Bargaining** describes situations in which two or more actors try to divide something that both want. States may bargain over the allocation of a disputed territory; finance ministers may bargain over how high or low to set the exchange rate between their currencies; rich countries may bargain with poor countries over how much aid the former will give and what the recipients will do in return; governments may bargain over how much each will pay to alleviate some environmental harm. **Cooperation** occurs when actors have common interests and need to act in a coordinated way to achieve those interests. Governments that want to stop one country from invading another may try to act collectively to impose military or economic sanctions on the aggressor. Governments that share an interest in preventing climate change or degradation of the ozone layer need to cooperate in restraining their countries' emissions of the offending pollut-

bargaining: An interaction in which actors must choose outcomes that make one better off at the expense of another. Bargaining is redistributive; it involves allocating a fixed sum of value between different actors.

cooperation: An interaction in which two or more actors adopt policies that make at least one actor better off relative to the status quo without making the others worse off.

ants. Individuals who want to lobby for a particular trade policy or an environmental regulation have to pool their time, money, and effort in order to achieve their common aim. In short, bargaining and cooperation are everywhere in political life.

The institutional setting can vary considerably depending on the issues at stake. In some areas of world politics, there are well-established rules and mechanisms for enforcing them. International trade, for example, is governed by the World Trade Organization (WTO): it sets out rules that determine what kinds of trade policies member countries can and cannot have, and it provides a dispute resolution mechanism that allows countries to challenge one another's policies. Other areas of world politics have weaker institutions. As we will see in Chapter 5, the United Nations (UN) theoretically governs the use of military force by states, but it has, in practice, had a hard time enforcing these rules on its strongest members. As we will see in Chapter 11, there is an extensive body of international human rights law setting out standards for how governments should treat their citizens; unfortunately, noncompliance is common, and offenders are rarely punished. We will also at times focus on institutions at the domestic level—that is, the rules that govern who rules within countries and how they make decisions. Domestic political institutions determine which actors have access to and influence on the policy-making process. In some cases, differences in domestic political institutions can have profound effects on world politics. In Chapter 4, for example, we will encounter a phenomenon known as the "democratic peace": the observation that mature democratic states have rarely, if ever, engaged in a war against one another.

LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

The variety of actors and institutions that play a role in world politics means that we will see important interactions at three levels:

- At the *international level,* the representatives of states with different interests interact with one another, sometimes in the context of international institutions such as the UN or WTO.
- At the *domestic level,* subnational actors with different interests—politicians, bureaucrats, business and labor groups, voters—interact within domestic institutions to determine the country's foreign policy choices.
- At the *transnational level,* groups whose members span borders—such as multinational corporations, transnational advocacy networks, terrorist organizations—pursue interests by trying to influence both domestic and international politics.

These levels are interconnected. The interests that states pursue at the international level often emerge from their domestic politics. For example, whether or not a country's representatives push for liberalizing trade agreements with other countries depends on whether the interests within that country that support freer trade prevail over those that oppose it. Similarly, the relative influence of actors within domestic politics may depend on international conditions. Leaders may be able to use militarized conflict with other states in order to enhance their hold on power at home. International institutions that promote trade liberalization enhance the power of domestic interests that benefit from trade. Finally, transnational

actors operate at all levels. Transnational networks like Amnesty International or Greenpeace try to change national policies by lobbying governments or mobilizing public opinion within key countries, and they try to change international outcomes by working with (or against) international institutions.

Because of these interconnections, we do not automatically privilege one level of analysis over others. Although international relations scholarship has experienced vigorous debates over which level of analysis is the "right" or "best" one,[4] we find that no single level is always superior to the others in making sense of our puzzles. In some cases, it is possible to build useful explanations from the bottom up, in a two-step process: (1) domestic interests, interactions, and institutions determine the interests that state representatives bring to the international level, and then (2) these interests combine in international interactions and institutions to determine the final outcome. The chapters on international political economy in Part Three generally rely on this two-step logic. In other cases, however, it is more useful to start elsewhere. In Part Two, we start the analysis of war on the international level: given that states have conflicting interests over things like territory or one another's policies or regime composition, why does the bargaining interaction sometimes lead to war? Only after laying out this basic logic do we turn to some of the domestic factors that push states toward more or less belligerent policies. In Part Four, transnational actors play a central role, and we show how they pursue their goals by altering domestic interests and by changing the prospects for international cooperation.

INTEGRATING INSIGHTS FROM REALISM, LIBERALISM, AND CONSTRUCTIVISM

In adopting a flexible framework based on interests, interactions, and institutions, we depart from the way the field of world politics is often organized. Many textbooks and courses on world politics emphasize the contrast between three schools of thought: realism, liberalism, and constructivism. In contrast to our framework, which holds few preconceptions about how the world works, these three "-isms" represent very different worldviews about the nature of international politics. Much ink has been spilled over the years by proponents arguing for the superiority of their preferred approach.

We can understand the differences among realism, liberalism, and constructivism by mapping them into our framework. Each school of thought is defined by a cluster of assumptions about what interests, interactions, and institutions are most important to understanding world politics.

Realism

Realist ideas can be found in the writings of Thucydides (ca. 460–400 BCE), Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778). Realism was most forcefully introduced to Americans by Hans Morgenthau, a German expatriate whose 1948 book *Politics among Nations*

4. For a classic statement of this debate, see J. David Singer, "The Levels-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics* 14, no. 1 (October 1961): 77–92.

remains a classic statement of the realist approach. Realism was given its modern and scientific guise by the contemporary scholar Kenneth Waltz.[5]

Realism starts with two key assumptions: that states are the dominant actors—indeed, some would say the only relevant actors—on the international stage, and that the institutional setting of world politics is characterized by anarchy. **Anarchy**, a term we will revisit in Chapter 2, refers in this context to the absence of a central authority in the international system, the fact that there is no world government ruling over states the way that countries have governments that rule over their citizens.

anarchy: The absence of a central authority with the ability to make and enforce laws that bind all actors.

Realists assume that anarchy profoundly shapes the interests and interactions that matter in world politics. Because there is no central government and no international police force, states must live in constant fear of one another. With no external restraint on the use of military force, every state must first and foremost look out for its own survival and security. Hence, all states have an interest in security, and this interest dominates other possible interests because no other goal can be realized unless the state is secure. In practice, the interest in security leads to an interest in acquiring power—primarily, military capabilities. By accumulating power and by ensuring that potential enemies do not become more powerful, states can ensure that they are not vulnerable to attack and conquest. The quest for power, unfortunately, inevitably brings states' interests into conflict with one another: when one state improves its military capabilities to enhance its own security, it typically undermines the security of its now comparatively weaker neighbors. For realists, then, international politics is, as Hobbes described the "state of nature," a war of "every man, against every man" in which life is "nasty, brutish, and short."

Because states are concerned with security and power, nearly all interactions involve bargaining and coercion. Each state tries to get a bigger share for itself; one state's gain is another state's loss; and the threat of war looms over everything. Even when the potential gains from cooperation are large, realists argue, states worry more about the division of the benefits than about the overall gain. Each must fear that the state gaining the most will be able to exploit its gains for some future advantage. As a result, states may forgo mutually beneficial exchanges if they expect to be left at a disadvantage. Cooperation, realists conclude, is difficult and rare.

Finally, realists assert that because of the anarchic nature of the international system, international institutions are weak and exert little independent effect on world politics. Institutions like the UN and the WTO merely reflect the interests and power of the dominant countries, which had the most say in their creation and design. Although realists may recognize that institutions can matter at the margin, they conclude that rules are unlikely to be followed and that states will always bow to interests and power in the end.

Liberalism

An equally venerable tradition, liberalism is rooted in the writings of philosophers John Locke (1632–1704) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), and economists

5. Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf). First published in 1948, this book has been released in many editions since then. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

Adam Smith (1723–1790) and David Ricardo (1772–1823). Contemporary advocates include Bruce Russett and John R. Oneal, who make the modern case for the pacifying effects of democracy, international commerce, and international law, and Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, whose work helped bring the study of international institutions to the fore.[6]

Liberal theorists accept many different types of actors as important in world politics: individuals, firms, nongovernmental organizations, and states. Unlike realism, liberalism does not require that any one interest dominate all others. Instead, liberal theory, like the framework presented in this book, is quite flexible in ascribing goals to actors. Moreover, since wealth can be used to purchase the means to accommodate many different desires, liberals assume that for many practical purposes actors can be treated as if they desire to maximize wealth.

Liberals are generally optimistic about the possibilities for cooperation in world politics. Whereas realists see most situations as involving conflicting interests, liberals see many areas in which actors have common interests that can serve as the basis for cooperation. Although liberals acknowledge that world politics is often wracked by conflict, they do not believe that conflict is inevitable; rather, conflict arises when actors fail to recognize or act on common interests.

Whether or not actors can cooperate to further their common interests depends a great deal on institutions, both domestic and international. At the domestic level, liberals believe that democracy is the best way to ensure that governments' foreign policies reflect the underlying harmony of interests among individuals. In this view, which we will revisit in Chapter 4, conflict and war are the fault of selfish politicians, voracious militaries, and greedy interest groups, whose influence can be tamed only by empowering the people through democratic institutions. At the international level, the scope for cooperation gives rise to a demand for institutions. Liberals posit that international institutions facilitate cooperation by resolving a host of dilemmas that arise in strategic interactions and by making it easier for states to make collective decisions. In Chapter 2, we will consider these dilemmas and the ways in which institutions might resolve them.

Constructivism

A relatively new approach, constructivism has roots in critical theory and sociology, and several of its most forceful proponents in world politics have been Peter J. Katzenstein, John G. Ruggie, and Alexander Wendt.[7] Constructivists assume that interests are not innate but are constructed through social interaction. Actors do not have fixed and predetermined interests; rather, they acquire interests from interacting with others within their social environment. Whether or not two states have conflicting or harmonious interests is something they discover as their re-

6. Bruce Russett and John R. Oneal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: Norton, 2001). Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (New York: Longman). First published in 1977, this volume is now available in a third edition published in 2000. Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

7. Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); John G. Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization* (New York: Routledge, 1998); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).