

FIFTH EDITION

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY



BRUCE W. JENTLESON





AMERICAN
FOREIGN
POLICY

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A MERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

*The Dynamics of Choice
in the 21st Century*

FIFTH EDITION

BRUCE W. JENTLESON

Duke University



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Preface to the Fifth Edition

When we went to bed on the night of September 10, 2001, the world was already going through a historic transition. The Cold War had ended, raising hopes for the future. War, though, had not ended, as the 1990s bore tragic witness in Bosnia, Rwanda, and all too many other places. New forces of globalization were sweeping the world, bringing their own combination of progress and problems. Democracy had spread but was facing the challenges of consolidation and institutionalization at best, backsliding at worst. All this, and more, made for quite a full foreign policy agenda for the United States.

And then came September 11. Most of us will always remember where we were when we first heard about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The images were piercing. The American psyche was shaken. And the foreign policy agenda was further transformed as the war on terrorism was launched. Less than two years later, claiming that it was a crucial front in the war on terrorism, the George W. Bush administration took the United States to war in Iraq.

In the years since, we have had to deal with this combination of the September 10 and September 11 agendas, plus the further issues posed as we move deeper into this new era and new century. Such are the challenges and opportunities for those who make American foreign policy—and for those who teach and study it.

American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century, Fifth Edition, is intended to help those of us who are professors and students take advantage of those opportunities and meet those challenges. This book is designed as a primary text for courses on American foreign policy. Its scope encompasses both key issues of *foreign policy strategy*—of what the U.S. national interest is and which policies serve it best—and key questions of *foreign policy politics*—of which institutions and actors within the American political system play what roles and have how much influence. Formulating foreign policy strategy is the “essence of choice,” the means by which goals are established and the policies to achieve them are forged. Foreign policy politics is the “process of choice,” the making of foreign policy through the institutions and amid the societal influences of the American political system.

Part I of this book provides the theory and history for establishing the framework of the dynamics of choice. Chapter 1 draws on the international relations and American foreign policy literatures to introduce core concepts, pose debates over alternative explanations, and frame the “4 Ps” (Power, Peace, Prosperity, Principles) analytic approach to foreign policy strategy. The next two chapters provide the partner framework for the domestic politics of U.S. foreign policy, both the key decision-making institutions (Chapter 2) and the influential societal forces (Chapter 3). The history chapters help ensure that expressions such as “break with the past” are not taken too

literally. Not only must we still cope with the legacies of the Cold War (Chapters 5, 6), but many current issues are contemporary versions of long-standing “great debates” going back to the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries (Chapter 4).

Part II (Chapters 7–14), substantially revised and updated, applies Part I’s approach to the 21st century foreign policy agenda and the major choices the United States faces today. Chapters 7 and 8 examine overarching “grand strategy” structured within the 4 Ps framework. Chapter 9 extends the domestic politics framework laid out in Chapters 2 and 3 to the contemporary period. Chapters 10 through 14 take major country and regional approaches: China and Asia (Chapter 10), the Middle East (Chapter 11), Europe and Russia (Chapter 12), Latin America (Chapter 13), and Africa (Chapter 14). The chapters are highly comprehensive, providing students with a broad survey of key issues since the end of the Cold War. Each chapter also features its own foreign policy politics case study.

This book also includes maps, boxes, and four main types of feature boxes: *Historical Perspectives*, drawing on history to provide additional insights into current issues; *International Perspectives*, giving a greater sense of how other countries view American foreign policy; *Theory in the World*, bringing out ways in which theory and policy connect; and *At the Source*, highlighting excerpts from major speeches and other primary source materials.

We also continue to provide the text and a reader in a single volume. Supplemental readings are keyed to each chapter. These readings develop theories and concepts introduced in the text and delve more deeply into major policy debates. They include works by scholars such as John Mearsheimer, Robert Keohane, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Walter LaFeber, John Ikenberry, and Charles Kupchan; major policy figures such as Henry Kissinger and Mikhail Gorbachev; and non-American authors from China, Russia, Europe, and India.

With this edition, we are offering a much-expanded and highly innovative coursepack, compatible with a variety of learning management systems (Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas, and others). It contains chapter reviews and vocabulary flashcards; multiple-choice quizzes to reinforce student understanding of chapter content and concepts; study questions to help spur class discussion and student thinking about key topics; and engaging video and critical-thinking exercises for further research and analysis. We are also offering a thoroughly updated Test Bank for this Fifth Edition, which can be found at wnorton.com/instructors.

This book reflects my own belief in a “multi-integrative” approach to teaching about American foreign policy. By that I mean three things: an approach that breaks through the levels-of-analysis barriers and integrates international policy and domestic process, encompasses the full range of post–Cold War foreign policy issue areas, and “bridges the gap” between theory and practice by drawing on both perspectives. With regard to this last point, I have incorporated the perspectives and experiences gained

through my own work in the policy world (at the State Department on the Policy Planning Staff, in Congress as a Senate foreign policy aide, and in other capacities) as well as from close to thirty years as a professor.

My interest in continuing to write this book is part of my commitment to teaching. Throughout my university education, I was fortunate to have some exceptional teachers. I was among the thousands of undergraduates at Cornell University who were first captivated by the study of foreign policy through Walter LaFeber's courses on diplomatic history. The late Bud Kenworthy, a superb and caring teacher in his own right, was instrumental in my realization as a senior that I wanted to pursue an academic career. When I went back to Cornell for my Ph.D., I was just as fortunate as a graduate student. Anyone who knows Theodore Lowi knows his intensity and passion for his work; these are especially evident in his teaching. Peter Katzenstein was my dissertation chair and has been a mentor in many ways, including in showing me how commitments to superior scholarship and excellent teaching can be combined.

In my years as a professor my good fortune has continued. In both his approach and his persona, the late Alexander George was a much valued mentor and colleague. Thanks also to Larry Berman, Ed Costantini, Emily Goldman, Alex Groth, Miko Ninčić, the late Don Rothchild, and other colleagues at the University of California, Davis, who were partners of many years in trying to make our political science and international relations majors as rich and rewarding for our students as possible. And to Hal Brands, Alma Blount, Peter Feaver, Jay Hamilton, Ole Holsti, Tana Johnson, Bob Koststad, Judith Kelley, Anirudh Krishna, Bruce Kuniholm, Fritz Mayer, Tom Taylor, and many other valued colleagues here at Duke with whom I have been sharing similar pursuits over the past ten-plus years.

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B.W.J.
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Durham, North Carolina

PART

I

*The Context of
U.S. Foreign
Policy: Theory
and History*

1 *The Strategic Context: Foreign Policy Strategy and the Essence of Choice*

Introduction: Foreign Policy in a Time of Transition

It was October 22, 1962, 7:00 P.M. A young boy sat on his living room floor watching television. President John F. Kennedy came on to warn the American public of an ominous crisis with the Soviet Union over nuclear missiles in Cuba. The boy's parents tried to look calm, but the fear in their eyes could not be masked. It seemed that the United States was on the brink of nuclear war.

The Cuban missile crisis ended up being settled peacefully, and the Cold War ultimately ended without nuclear war. For a while it seemed that the post–Cold War era was going to be a peaceful one. Indeed, when the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, and then the Soviet Union fell apart in 1991, a sense of near euphoria enveloped the West. President George H. W. Bush (1989–93) spoke of the end of the Cold War as “a time of great promise,” an “unparalleled opportunity . . . to work toward transforming this new world into a new world order, one of governments that are democratic, tolerant and economically free at home and committed abroad to settling differences peacefully, without the threat or use of force.”¹

To be sure, the significance of families' being freed from the worry of an all-out nuclear war is not to be underestimated. In this regard, the end of the Cold War left the world more secure. All too soon, however, we saw that the end of the Cold War did not mean the end of war. The 1990s will be remembered for peace agreements and the advance of democracy—but also for ethnic “cleansings,” civil wars, genocide, and new setbacks for democracy and human rights. It was a decade of strides toward peace and order, but also stumbles toward anarchy and chaos. For American foreign policy, it was a decade of great successes, but also dismal failures.

The 1990s also saw the emergence of the “globalization” agenda. Globalization has been hailed by many for bringing such benefits as the spread of capitalism and economic freedom to the former communist bloc and the developing world and the closer linking through technology and markets of all corners of the globe, and for building the basis for global prosperity. President Bill Clinton spoke of “the train of globalization” that “cannot be reversed” and of how global trade could “lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty.” But he also warned that globalization needed “a more human face,” that it needed to address issues such as the global environment, the global AIDS crisis, and the widening gap between rich and poor nations.² Indeed, a powerful antiglobalization movement emerged in the 1990s. First in Seattle at the 1999 summit of the World Trade Organization and then at international economic meetings in ensuing years in various cities around the world, this movement mounted the most extensive and violent foreign policy protests since those of the anti-Vietnam War movement in the 1960s and 1970s. On this globalization agenda as well, the 1990s ended with a mixed sense of progress and problems.

Then came the tragic and shocking terrorist assault of September 11, 2001. “U.S. ATTACKED,” the *New York Times* headline blared the next day in the large print used for only the most momentous events, and the newspaper went on to describe “a hellish storm of ash, glass, smoke and leaping victims” as the World Trade Center towers crashed down.³ In Washington, D.C., the Pentagon, the fortress of American defense, was literally ripped open by the impact of another hijacked jetliner. The death tolls were staggering. The shock ran deep. A new sense of insecurity set in, for it soon became clear that this was not an isolated incident. President George W. Bush declared a “war on terrorism,” which started in October 2001 in Afghanistan against Osama bin Laden, his Al Qaeda terrorist network, and the Taliban regime. But it did not end there. “It will not end,” President Bush declared, “until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.”⁴ Less than two years later, claiming it to be a crucial front in the war on terrorism, the Bush administration took the United States to war in Iraq.

The Iraq war proved to be the most controversial foreign policy issue since the Vietnam war of the 1960s–70s. It was one of the key issues, along with the worst national and international economic crisis since the Great Depression, that helped Barack Obama win the presidency in 2008. During the presidential campaign he acknowledged both the threats American foreign policy needed to meet and the opportunities for progress. “This century’s threats are at least as dangerous as and in some ways more complex than those we have confronted in the past,” he declared. Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, more wars in the Middle East, more genocide and other deadly conflicts, climate change, global pandemics, global recession, rising powers such as China, recovering ones such as Russia—these challenges comprised a full and complex agenda. Thinking of all this, though, was “not to give way to pessimism. Rather it is a call to action . . . [to] a new vision of leadership in the twenty-first century” geared toward a “common security for our common humanity.”⁵

Any one of these sets of changes, plus new ones introduced by the Arab spring in 2011 and other recent developments, would be profound by itself. Dealing with the combined effects of all of them truly makes these first decades of the twenty-first century times of historic transition.

Just as each of the four most recent presidents has given different emphases to the U.S. role in this new era, so too have prominent scholars and analysts offered a range of views on its nature. Back in 1989, amid the sense of political and ideological triumph over communism, the neoconservative intellectual Francis Fukuyama envisioned “the end of history . . . and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”⁶ A few years later the Harvard University professor Samuel Huntington offered a much less optimistic view of a “clash of civilizations,” particularly between the West and Islam, with prospects for political and military conflicts.⁷ The *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman pointed rather to economics as the driving dynamic—to liberalism, clashing civilizations, and power politics as “the old system” and to globalization as “the new system.”⁸ Neo-conservatives proclaimed a “unipolar moment,” in Charles Krauthammer’s oft-cited phrasing, with the United States as dominant as any great power since the days of ancient Rome.⁹ The Rockefeller Brothers Fund, a prominent philanthropy, stressed the importance of “nonmilitary threats to peace and security,” especially global poverty and environmental degradation, and advocated a conception of “social stewardship” for addressing these issues “before they metastasize into larger threats.”¹⁰ The scholar-journalist Fareed Zakaria wrote of a “post-American world, a great transformation taking place around the world . . . creating an international system in which countries in all parts of the world are no longer objects or observers but players in their own right. It is the birth of a truly global order.”¹¹ Charles Kupchan called it “no one’s world,” with no single country dominant amidst unprecedented political and ideological diversity.¹² In my own work I’ve used astronomy metaphors about the transition from a Ptolemaic world, with the United States at the center and others revolving around it, to a Copernican one with efforts at global governance at the center and twenty-first century nationalism giving different countries their own orbits.¹³

Whatever the differences among these perspectives, they share a common view of the importance of foreign policy. Time and again we hear voices claiming that the United States can and should turn inward and can afford to care less about and do less with the rest of the world. But for five fundamental reasons, the importance of foreign policy must not be underestimated.

First are security threats. September 11 drove these home all too dramatically. No longer was the threat “over there” in some distant corner of the globe; it had arrived right here at home. But it is not “just” terrorism. Although relations among the major powers are vastly improved from the Cold War, cooperation cannot be taken for granted, given both the policy differences that still exist and the internal political uncertainties Russia and China in particular face. Wars continue to be fought in the Middle East, and

stability remains fragile in regions such as South Asia (India, Pakistan) and East Asia (the Koreans, China, and Taiwan). Weapons of mass destruction proliferate in these and other regions, and may fall into the hands of terrorists. The United States is also at risk from newer security threats, such as avian flu with its potential for millions of fatalities and other “diseases of mass destruction” (DMD). Cyber threats have become increasingly ominous not only in standard security terms but also with their unprecedented potential to disrupt daily life.

Second, the American economy is more internationalized than ever before. Whereas in 1960 foreign trade accounted for less than 10 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP), it now accounts for almost 30 percent. Job opportunities for American workers are increasingly affected by both the competition from imports and the opportunities for exports. When the Federal Reserve Board sets interest rates, in addition to domestic factors such as inflation, increasingly it also has to consider international ones, such as foreign-currency exchange rates and the likely reactions of foreign investors. Private financial markets have also become increasingly globalized. So when Asian stock markets plunged in late 1997, and when Russia’s economy collapsed in mid-1998, middle-class America felt the effects, with mutual funds, college savings, and retirement nest eggs plummeting in value. And when U.S. financial markets had their meltdown in late 2008, the negative results were transmitted around the world.

Third, many other areas of policy that used to be considered “domestic” have been internationalized. The environmental policy agenda has extended from the largely domestic issues of the 1960s and 1970s to international issues such as global warming and biodiversity. The “just say no” drug policy of the 1980s was clearly not working when thousands of tons of drugs came into the United States every day from Latin America, Asia, and elsewhere. Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s “Ten Most Wanted” list included mostly members of U.S.-based crime syndicates when it was first issued in 1950, by 1997 eight of the ten fugitives on the list were international criminals (and that was before 9/11 put Osama bin Laden and other terrorists at the top of the list). Public-health problems such as the spread of AIDS have to be combated globally. The rash of problems in 2007–2008 with children’s toys, pet foods, and prescription drugs produced largely in China showed that product safety could no longer be just, or even mostly, a domestic regulatory issue. In these and other areas the distinctions between foreign and domestic policy have become increasingly blurred, as international forces affect spheres of American life that used to be considered domestic.

Fourth, the increasing racial and ethnic diversity of the American people has produced a larger number and wider range of groups with personal bases for interest in foreign affairs. Some forms of “identity politics” can be traced all the way back to the nineteenth century, and some were quite common during the Cold War. But more and more Americans trace their ancestry and heritage to different countries and regions and are asserting their interests and seeking influence over foreign policy toward those countries and regions.

Fifth, it is hard for the United States to uphold its most basic values if it ignores grievous violations of those values that take place outside its national borders. It is not necessary to take on the role of global missionary or world police. But it is also impossible to claim the country stands for democracy, freedom, and justice, yet say “not my problem” to genocide, repression, torture, and other horrors.

Foreign policy thus continues to press on Americans, as individuals and as a nation. The choices it poses are at least as crucial for the twenty-first century as the Cold War and nuclear-age choices were for the second half of the twentieth century.

This book has two principal purposes: (1) to provide a framework, grounded in international relations theory and U.S. diplomatic history, for foreign policy analysis; and (2) to apply that framework to the agenda for U.S. foreign policy in the post–Cold War world.

The analytic framework, as reflected in the book’s subtitle, is *the dynamics of choice*. It is structured by two fundamental sets of questions that, whatever the specific foreign policy issues involved and whatever the time period being discussed, have been at the center of debate:

- questions of *foreign policy strategy*—of what the national interest is and how best to achieve it
- questions of *foreign policy politics*—of which institutions and actors within the American political system play what roles and how much influence they have.

Setting foreign policy strategy is the *essence of choice*, establishing the goals to be achieved and forging the policies that are the optimal means for achieving them. Foreign policy politics is the *process of choice*, the making of foreign policy through the political institutions and amid the societal influences of the American political system.

Part I of this book provides the theory (in this chapter and Chapters 2 and 3) and history (Chapters 4, 5, and 6) for establishing the framework of the dynamics of choice in U.S. foreign policy. Part II then applies the framework to the major foreign policy choices the United States faces in these first decades of the twenty-first century.

The Context of the International System

The United States, like all states, makes its choices of foreign policy strategy within the context of the international system. Although extensive study of international systems is more the province of international relations textbooks, two points are particularly important to our focus on American foreign policy.

Quasi anarchy

One of the fundamental differences between the international system and domestic political systems is the absence of a recognized central governing authority in the international system. This often is referred to as the *anarchic* view of international relations. Its roots go back to the seventeenth-century English political philosopher Thomas Hobbes and his classic treatise *Leviathan*. Hobbes saw international affairs as a “war of all against all.” Unlike in domestic affairs, where order was maintained by a king or other recognized authority figure, no such recognized authority existed in the international sphere, according to Hobbes. Others since have taken a more tempered view, pointing to ways in which international norms, laws, and institutions have provided some order and authority and stressing the potential for even greater progress in this regard. Yet even in our contemporary era, although we have progressed beyond the “nasty, brutish,” unadulterated Hobbesian world by developing international institutions like the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund—as well as a growing body of international law—the world still has nothing at the international level as weighty and authoritative as a constitution, a legislature, a president, or a supreme court. Thus, the prevailing sense is that what makes international relations “unique and inherently different from relations within states” is that “no ultimate authority exists to govern the international system. . . . As a result the existence of a ‘quasi-anarchy’ [*sic*] at the international level conditions state-to-state relations.”¹⁴

System Structure

System structure is based on the distribution of power among the major states in the international system. “Poles” refer to how many major powers there are—two in a **bipolar** system, as during the Cold War, when the United States and the Soviet Union were the sole major powers; three or more in a **multipolar** system, as in the nineteenth century, when Great Britain, France, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia were all major European powers.

Whatever the structure, where a state ranks in the system affects what it can do in foreign policy terms. Theorists such as Kenneth Waltz see system structure as very deterministic, making “[states’] behavior and the outcomes of their behavior predictable.”¹⁵ To know a state’s structural position is thus to know its foreign policy strategy. Yet such claims can go too far, taking too rigid a view of how much is fixed and determined at the system level. For example, we know the Cold War went on for almost fifty years and that it ended peacefully. Waltz argues that this proves the stability of bipolarity and the success of deterrence policies. Yet it is worth asking whether the Cold War had to go on for fifty years: could it have been ended sooner if leaders on one or both sides pursued different policies? Or consider the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 (discussed in more detail in

Chapter 5): the bipolar-system structure raised the possibility of such a crisis but did not make either its occurrence or its successful resolution inevitable. Although it is important to take system structure into account, it should be as a context for, not a determinant of, choices of foreign policy strategy. This is especially true in the current era, because system structure is less clear than during the Cold War and earlier.

This is why the metaphor of a game of billiards, which state-structural explanations frequently use, is misleading. The essence of billiards is the predictability of how a ball will move once it has been struck; hit the cue ball at a certain angle from a certain distance with a certain force, and you can predict exactly where on the table the target ball will go, regardless of whether it is solid or striped. In international systems theory, the “hitting” is done by external threats, the “angles” are set by the state’s position in the structure of the international system, and the “path” the state’s foreign policy takes is predictable, regardless of the “stripes or solids” of its foreign policy priorities, domestic politics, or other characteristics. In reality, though, while states are not like “crazy balls,” bouncing wherever their domestic whims might take them, they are not strictly reactive, either. Their foreign policy choices are constrained by the structure of the international system but are not determined by it. Domestic politics and institutions matter a great deal, as we discuss in Chapters 2 and 3.

The National Interest: The “4 Ps” Framework

The national interest: all of us have heard it preached. Many of us may have done some of the preaching ourselves—that U.S. foreign policy must be made in the name of the national interest. No one would argue with the proposition that following the national interest is the essence of the choices to be made in a nation’s foreign policy. But defining what the national interest is and developing policies for achieving it have rarely been easy or self-evident. The political scientists Alexander George and Robert Keohane capture this dilemma in an article, noting that problems have been encountered because the concept of the national interest has “become so elastic and ambiguous . . . that its role as a guide to foreign policy is problematical and controversial.” Yet they also stress the importance that the national interest can have, and needs to have, to help “improve judgments regarding the proper ends and goals of foreign policy.”¹⁶

Our approach in this book is to establish in general analytic terms the four core goals that go into defining the U.S. national interest: Power, Peace, Prosperity, and Principles. These “4 Ps” are not strict categories in which this policy goes in one box and that one in another. Reality is never that neat. The national interest almost always combines two or more of the “4 Ps.” Indeed, although sometimes all four core goals are complementary and can be satisfied through the same policy, more often they pose trade-offs and tensions,

and sometimes major dissensus. The “4 Ps” framework helps us to see this complexity, to analyze how priorities are set, and to locate the corresponding debates over what American foreign policy *is* and what it *should be*—what we earlier called “the essence of choice” in foreign policy strategy.

In setting up this analytic framework, we are not pitting the U.S. national interest against the interests of the international community. Indeed, the U.S. national interest has become increasingly interrelated with the interests of the international community. This is not and likely never will be a pure one-to-one relationship in which the U.S. national interest and other international interests are fully in sync. There is much debate about just how interrelated they are. For example, the George W. Bush administration criticized the Clinton administration for allegedly pursuing a foreign policy in which “the ‘national interest’ is replaced with ‘humanitarian interests’ or the interests of ‘the international community.’”¹⁷ On the other hand, among the main criticisms of the Bush administration’s own policies was that they often put the American national interest at loggerheads with the interests of others in the international community, and that this proved not to be in anyone’s interest. The Obama conception of “common security for our common humanity” presented another approach posing its own debates.

For each of the “4 Ps” we lay out three main elements:

- basic conceptualization and working definition
- the most closely associated broader theory of international relations (the IR “-isms”)
- representative policy strategies and illustrative examples.

Power

Power is the key requirement for the most basic goals of foreign policy: self-defense and the preservation of national independence and territory. It is also essential for deterring aggression and influencing other states on a range of issues. “Power enables an actor to shape his environment so as to reflect his interests,” Samuel Huntington stated. “In particular it enables a state to protect its security and prevent, deflect or defeat threats to that security.”¹⁸ To the extent that a state is interested in asserting itself, advancing its own interests and itself being aggressive, it needs power. “The strong do what they have the power to do,” the ancient Greek historian Thucydides wrote, “and the weak accept what they have to accept.”¹⁹

Realism is the school of international relations theory that most emphasizes the objective of power. “International relations is a struggle for power,” the noted Realist scholar Hans Morgenthau wrote; “statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power.”²⁰ He and other Realists take a very Hobbesian view, seeing conflict and competition as the basic reality of international politics. The “grim picture” is painted by the University