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American Exceptionalism and US Foreign Policy: Public Diplomacy at the End of the Cold War

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— using the simple number of roll calls and a single definition of "close" without regard to what specifically was at stake as the only data for the dependent variables has all kinds of problems. Henehan acknowledges many of these problems, but does not temper her broad claims about the importance of what manipulation of those data show. Ultimately, this very simple operationalization does not tell us very much about what is most important about congressional foreign policy behavior. She aims for simplicity, but in doing so artificially avoids the messiness—and interesting information—that a vast array of other congressional foreign policy activity contains.
— using only the Senate is questionable, although a perfectly understandable limit for a dissertation that became a book.
— this is not really a predictive theory since the content of future "critical issues" cannot be discerned ahead of time. Postdiction is the strongest claim that can be made.
— her assertion (83) that "each period covered by one of the critical issues can be seen as having four stages" followed by her identification of the stages is critical to her postdiction of level of activity. Yet it is not clear where these four stages came from.

The limits and problems in this book lead me to reject her claims of a theoretical breakthrough. Nor do I think that we know something major that we did not know before. However, the strengths of the book are also very real.

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American Exceptionalism and US Foreign Policy: Public Diplomacy at the End of the Cold War. By Siobhan McEvoy-Levy. (London: Palgrave, 2001. Pp. 256. $75.00.)

This book offers an interesting foray into an important and timely subject. The author explores chiefly how American leaders have used the idea of American exceptionalism to realize foreign and domestic goals, including building support for government policies. But the work also deals more broadly with rhetoric and its meaning in American public diplomacy and foreign policy.

The author offers several useful conclusions on American exceptionalism, the notion that the United States is exceptional, unique, and even morally superior in the world, and that it has the ability and perhaps the mandate to remake the world in its own image. First, she shows that the notion of exceptionalism was an important and not just sporadic factor in shaping American foreign policy rhetoric and, to some extent, behavior. In studying the policies of the administrations of William Jefferson Clinton and George Herbert Walker Bush, the author accomplishes this task.

Second, exceptionalism was an important factor, despite changes in leadership and party. The author shows that despite the transition of power from Bush to

Clinton, we could observe some continuity in public diplomacy and in rhetoric emphasizing exceptionalism. More attention to the literature on individual versus nonindividual determinants of foreign policy would have helped here.

Third, an interesting but somewhat submerged argument is that ideas of exceptionalism were promoted particularly in times of crisis, transition and uncertainty. The end of the Cold War changed the world and, in turn, the Clinton and Bush administrations drew from "a common institution of rhetoric for strategic political purposes" (143). They responded to the conceptual challenge about how to think about the world, as well as to objective global changes, and they did so by invoking the rhetoric of American exceptionalism. It helped them navigate domestic and world affairs in challenging times and reflected the dynamic interaction of realist U.S. foreign policy concerns as well as a normative impulse shaped over centuries about American manifest destiny, not only at home but abroad.

While these arguments and findings are important, the book, like any work, has a few weaknesses. First, it is a bit quick. For instance, the author argues that exceptionalism has the potential to foster and prevent international peace and stability, but does not develop this weighty argument. Added attention to developing key arguments would have benefited the work.

Second, the author introduces a range of models of foreign policy analysis, including the well known organizational process and bureaucratic politics models. However, the connection to, and salience of, the models to the central goals of the book could be more clear. The models, furthermore, are not explored much in the book, and thus appear to be a bit forced on the reader.

Third, the author would have done well to pay some closer attention to method. For instance, she argues interestingly that the use of exceptionalist rhetoric was linked to times of uncertainty, such as those that accompanied the end of the Cold War, and she offers some evidence to make that point. However, since both Clinton and Bush faced these circumstances, as the author points out, we would also want to see how a President and elites who did not face these circumstances might react. Thus, a case study on a Cold War presidency would have helped here. If the nature and execution of public diplomacy differed in a Cold War case, the finding of the book would be strengthened. However, if it did not change much, that would raise questions about causality. In either case, the effort would help sharpen and buttress the findings by facilitating comparison.

This book was published prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks, but it is timely because the attacks have reignited a debate about public diplomacy as a tool of statecraft. Many now argue that the United States needs to be more effective at communicating central aspects of its experience, and specific policies, to foreign audiences. And bureaucratic efforts are now focused on how to do so in the future. Moreover, the Europeans and others have been disturbed by perceived U.S. unilateralism. This raises an inevitable question: should American leaders reconsider the value of exceptionalism as the strategic tool that the author suggests that it is?

On the whole, the author makes a useful contribution, and she is likely to provoke debate on these important issues of the day.

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Visions of International Relations. Edited by Donald J. Puchala. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002. Pp. xxi, 170. $16.95 paper.)

The paradigmatic diversity—or anarchy—of the anachronistically labeled subfield "international relations" (IR) is distinctive, if not unique, in the discipline of political science. In a complex evolutionary fashion, theories proliferate, compete for the scarce resources of tenured positions and space in journals and syllabi, mutate into variants (some earning the coveted "neo-" prefix), and periodically suffer mass extinction due to an externally changed environment (check out the dustier shelves of your campus library for the huge literature devoted to U.S.-Soviet nuclear weapons negotiations, 1960–1990). For the graduate student with a good memory for labels and categories, this is a boon when preparing for qualifying examinations. However, it leads to a perennial criticism that the field of IR pays more attention to how people study international politics than to politics itself.

This book, derived from a series of talks given at a graduate seminar at the University of South Carolina in 1998, is an effort to survey and assess the state of this subfield. The authors were guided by the three questions: what should be studied, how should it be studied, and why is the author's favored approach relevant to contemporary politics?

About two-thirds of the volume is focused on the discipline as it was and is. The essays of Yosef Lapid, Margaret Hermann, Harvey Starr, Charles Kegley, and Puchala critique the existing characteristics of IR, with a primary focus on the aforementioned problem of theoretical diversity/anarchy. Hermann's essay—a variant on her 1998 International Studies Association (ISA) presidential speech—is one of the most interesting treatments, with Hermann applying her wide knowledge of sociopsychological theory to analyze the sociology of the IR field itself.

The three remaining essays are more forward looking, pointing to the evolution of the field beyond the state-centered focus of "international relations" to something far broader. Gregory Raymond considers the re-emergence of moral issues, invoking classical Greek mythology, the Mayan Empire, and other historical referents in understanding the 1990s conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Richard Mansbach likewise focuses on issues that have emerged in the post-Cold War period, but which have pre-Westphalian antecedents, notably the declining dominance of territorial issues.

Constructivism—clearly the most important new theoretical approach to emerge in the 1990s—receives an extended and partially autobiographical discussion from Nicholas Onuf. Unfortunately this does not incorporate a discus-