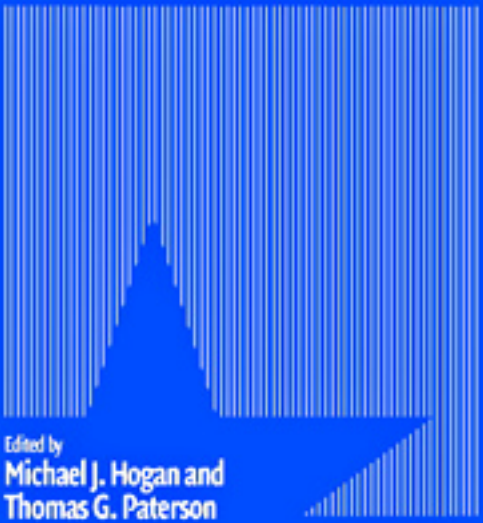
Explaining the History of AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS

★ Second Edition ★



Edited by
Michael J. Hogan and
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Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations
SECOND EDITION

Originally published in 1991, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* has become an indispensable volume for teachers and students in international history and political science, and general readers seeking an introduction to American diplomatic history. This collection of essays highlights the conceptual approaches and analytical methods used to study the history of American foreign relations, including bureaucratic, dependency, and world systems theories, as well as corporatist and national security models. Along with substantially revised essays from the first edition, this volume presents new material on postcolonial theory, borderlands history, modernization theory, gender, race, memory, cultural transfer, and critical theory. It seeks to define the study of American international history, stimulate research in fresh directions, and encourage cross-disciplinary thinking in an increasingly transnational, globalizing world.

Michael J. Hogan is Professor of History at Ohio State University and president of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. He has edited numerous works on American diplomatic history, including *Hiroshima in History and Memory* (1996) and *The Ambiguous Legacy: U.S. Foreign Relations in the "American Century"* (1999). He is the author of *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945–1954* (1998) and *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–1952* (1987), which received SHAFR's Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize. The George Louis Beer Prize of the American Historical Association, and the Quincy Wright Prize of the International Studies Association.

Thomas G. Paterson is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Connecticut. He has written *Soviet-American Confrontation* (1973), *Meeting the Communist Threat* (1988), *On Every Front* (1992), *Contesting Castro* (1994), and *American Foreign Relations* (2000, with J. Garry Clifford and Kenneth J. Hagan). He has also edited *Cold War Critics* (1971), *Kennedy's Quest for Victory* (1989), and *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations* (2000, with Dennis Merrill). With Bruce Jentleson, he served as senior editor for the *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Relations* (1997). He has won a Guggenheim fellowship, among others, and is a past president of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

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cambridge university press
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge cb2 2ru, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521832793

First published in print format

isbn-13 978-0-511-26157-2 eBook (Adobe Reader)
isbn-10 0-511-26157-8 eBook (Adobe Reader)

isbn-13 978-0-521-83279-3 hardback
isbn-10 0-521-83279-9 hardback

isbn-13 978-0-521-54035-3 paperback
isbn-10 0-521-54035-6 paperback

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Preface to the Second Edition

When we first wrote this preface more than ten years ago, we struck a defensive tone that now seems inappropriate. We noted that academic critics had repeatedly denounced the history of American foreign relations as a backwater of scholarly inquiry. According to the familiar indictment, scholarship in the field was dominated by an ethnocentric point of view, mired in detail, short on synthesis, and desperately in need of new directions. The tale of woe reminded us of the Maine farmer who was asked if a recent hurricane had damaged his barn. "Don't know," he answered. "Haven't found it yet." Even then, however, historians of American foreign relations were developing fresh topics, mining foreign archives, and applying new methods. Some were trying to reconceptualize the field, while others were exploring new ways of thinking about older approaches. What was true in 1991, moreover, is still true today. Indeed, over the last decade the study of American foreign relations has enjoyed something of a renaissance, so much so that it has required a new edition, and major revision, of this volume.

As was the case with the first edition, the essays that follow are not intended to rehash old debates or rebut specific critics. Nor are they designed as historiographical surveys of the literature. Instead, they present some of the new topics of inquiry and some of the innovative analytical approaches that have emerged in recent years. They are offered here in an effort to define the field, point research in fresh directions, and stimulate cross-disciplinary thinking about "U.S. international history" or the "history of American foreign relations." We think these phrases, rather than "diplomatic history," best capture the nature of the field described in the following essays, although we did not seek to impose them on our authors, whose contributions, for the most part, use all three phrases interchangably.

Most of the essays in the original edition first appeared in *Diplomatic History* and the *Journal of American History*, and some of these are republished in this edition as well. We asked each of the authors to revise and update his or her work, and we also commissioned many new essays, including pieces by Nathan Citino, Frank Costigliola, Nick Cullather, Jessica Gienow-Hecht, Kristin Hoganson, Gerald Horne, and

Robert Schulzinger. In the process we relied on the help and good advice of friends and colleagues, two of whom deserve special mention. Frank Costigliola provided invaluable suggestions and worked with Thomas Paterson to revise his essay from the first edition, and Jennifer Walton, a graduate student and research assistant at Ohio State University, did a terrific job coordinating the revisions.

Earnings from the sale of the second edition, like the first, will be contributed to the Lawrence E. Gelfand–Armin Rappaport Fund maintained by the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. We invite others to contribute to this fund, and we especially thank the authors in this volume for making their own contribution to the Gelfand–Rappaport Fund by waiving the usual publication or republication fees.

We are very pleased to rededicate this volume to Lawrence E. Gelfand and Ellis W. Hawley, and to the late Armin Rappaport. As our graduate directors many years ago, they first introduced us to the exciting ways of thinking about the history of American foreign relations and its relationship to other fields. We owe them debts that can never be repaid.

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Clifford and Kenneth J. Hagan). He has also edited *Cold War Critics* (1971), *Kennedy's Quest for Victory* (1989), and *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations* (2000, with Dennis Merrill). With Bruce Jentleson, he served as senior editor for the *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Relations* (1997). His articles have appeared in the *American Historical Review*, *Journal of American History*, and *Diplomatic History*, among other journals. He has won a Guggenheim fellowship, directed National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminars for College Teachers, and is a past president of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. In 2000, the New England History Teachers Association awarded him the Kidger Award for excellence in teaching and mentoring.

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1

Introduction

MICHAEL J. HOGAN AND
THOMAS G. PATERSON

World War I helped to spawn the first generation of specialists in the history of American foreign relations, most of whom had been trained originally as political historians. Influenced by that training, as well as by the war, these scholars soon created two distinct approaches to the study of American foreign policy. The nationalist perspective of Samuel Flagg Bemis and Dexter Perkins stressed the continuities in American diplomacy. These scholars celebrated the growth of American power and the creation of an American diplomatic tradition marked by such hallowed principles as those embodied in the Monroe Doctrine. Although not indifferent to the domestic influences on American foreign policy, they concentrated primarily on state-to-state relations, placed American diplomacy in an international, usually European, setting, and often conducted research in foreign archives that established a high standard for subsequent scholars.[1]

From the start, however, Charles Beard and other progressive historians challenged the nationalist perspective.[2] The scholars in this school were less enamored of multiarchival research and less inclined to focus on

1 For overviews of the field, from which this essay borrows, see Alexander DeConde, *American Diplomatic History in Transformation* (Washington, DC, 1976); John Higham, *History: The Development of Historical Studies in the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1965); Charles Neu, "The Changing Interpretive Structure of American Foreign Policy," in *Twentieth-Century American Foreign Policy*, ed. John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody (Columbus, OH, 1971), 1–57; Jerald A. Combs, *American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations* (Berkeley, 1983); Michael J. Hogan, ed., *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941* (New York, 1995); and Michael J. Hogan, ed., *Paths to Power: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations to 1941* (New York, 2000). For the nationalist perspective see Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1936); idem, *The Diplomacy of the American Revolution* (New York, 1935); idem, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1949); Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823–1826* (Cambridge, MA, 1927); and idem, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1826–1867* (Baltimore, 1933).

2 See Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *America in Midpassage* (New York, 1939). For further discussion of the progressive school, as well as citations to the literature, see Neu, "Changing Interpretive Structure," 16–21.

state-to-state relations. They searched instead for the intellectual assumptions that guided American policymakers and for the domestic political, economic, and regional forces that shaped their diplomacy. Because these forces varied with historical circumstances, the progressive historians saw change rather than continuity, conflict rather than consensus, as major features in the history of American foreign relations.

The two approaches of these early scholars influenced later generations, as did such international developments as the rise of Fascist aggression and the outbreak of World War II, the Holocaust in Germany and the atomic bombings of Japan, the Cold War and the nuclear arms race. These dramatic developments contributed to a pervasive sense of disillusionment, to a pessimism about the future, and to a tragic view of life in an age dominated by war, revolution, and the prospect of nuclear annihilation. These themes were commonplace in intellectual circles generally and even began to influence the thinking of Bemis, Perkins, and other scholars among the founding generation of diplomatic historians. Although their writing on early American diplomacy had often been marked by an unbridled optimism, they grew increasingly disillusioned with the unfolding record of American foreign policy in the twentieth century. They also became more critical of the influence that public opinion and partisan politics exerted on policymaking, and more pessimistic about the ability of decision-making elites to understand, let alone to control, an international system that was increasingly complex and dangerous.

This critical, sometimes pessimistic, tone became one of the hallmarks of the realist historians who dominated the writing on American foreign relations in the 1950s and into the 1960s. Led by George F. Kennan, Hans J. Morgenthau, and others, realist historians, much like the nationalist school of an earlier day, were concerned primarily with the state, with state policymaking elites, and with the use of state power to advance the national interest.[3] Their work tended to downplay the internal sources of American diplomacy that had preoccupied the progressive historians, although it did not ignore the influence of public opinion, partisan politics, and misguided idealism. The realists, in fact, often heaped the blame for failed policies on the shifting moods of an uninformed public, on partisan rivalries, and on befuddled legal and moral precepts that blinded political leaders to the nation's real interests. Informed by these failures, realist historians touted the need for policymaking by professional elites who

3 For a sample of the original works of the realist scholars see Kennan, *American Diplomacy, 1900–1950* (Chicago, 1951); Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York, 1948); and idem, *In Defense of the National Interest* (New York, 1951).

stood above the crowd, who were unimpeded by the pressures of electoral politics, and who were guided instead by a disinterested expertise. These elites, argued the realists, were more likely to understand the architecture of global balances, contending alliances, and competing national interests that marked the world after 1945. They were also more likely to devise rational strategies that ensured the nation's security and fulfilled its weighty responsibilities as a world power.

The tendency of realist historians to celebrate elite management, draw lessons from the past, and write in prescriptive terms made their work particularly appealing to official Washington, as did their celebration of power and their focus on geopolitics and grand strategy. As Stanley Hoffman once pointed out, realism provided American leaders in the early Cold War with an "intellectual compass." It helped them to "excoriate isolationism," to "justify a permanent and global involvement in world affairs," and to "rationalize the accumulation of power, the techniques of intervention, and the methods of containment." What the realists offered, Hoffmann concluded, "the policy-makers wanted."[4]

Yet the realist historians also made important contributions to the study of American foreign relations. To be sure, they were largely indifferent to the domestic roots of American foreign policy, especially cultural and economic forces, and to the role played by trade unions, multinational corporations, and other nonstate actors. But the realists did focus renewed attention on certain issues intrinsic in the field, such as national security, national interest, balances of power, and grand strategy; and they introduced a critical point of view that continues to characterize more recent studies. In addition, many historians who worked within the realist framework added significant new dimensions of their own. In a series of monographs, for example, Ernest R. May rivaled Bemis's research in foreign archives. Not only did May place American diplomacy in an international setting, he went beyond Bemis in using multiarchival research to write multinational history.[5] Other historians delineated the influence of key individuals on American diplomacy or explored the intellectual and ideological assumptions that guided policymakers.[6] These lines of

4 Hoffman, "An American Social Science: International Relations," *Daedalus* 106 (Summer 1977): 47–48.

5 A sample of May's work would include *World War I and American Isolation, 1914–1917* (Cambridge, MA, 1959); *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York, 1961); and *The Making of the Monroe Doctrine* (Cambridge, MA, 1975). May continues to be a master of this kind of research. See his impressive last book, *Strange Victory: Hitler's Conquest of France* (New York, 2000).

6 See, for example, Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore, 1956); and Felix Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, 1961).

analysis would broaden and deepen in the 1960s, producing such works as those by Arno J. Mayer and N. Gordon Levin on the ideological and social forces that shaped Wilsonian diplomacy.[7]

At the same time, however, the works by Mayer and Levin highlighted a renewed interest in the internal sources of American diplomacy. Emphasized by Beard and the progressive historians but slighted by the realists, these sources became the special concern of William Appleman Williams and other revisionists of the 1960s and 1970s.[8] The revisionists placed primary emphasis on American ideas and on the American system of liberal capitalism. As they saw it, American leaders had embraced an ideology of expansionism founded on the principle of the Open Door. They had sought foreign markets to relieve domestic economic and political crises, and had forged in the process an overseas empire that violated the best principles of the nation. Although they surveyed the whole record of American diplomacy, the revisionists focused special attention on the Cold War. Finding that American policy in this era was more purposeful than the realists would admit, they also deviated from the realists in assigning the United States, rather than the Soviet Union, primary responsibility for the breakdown of the wartime coalition and for the years of unremitting tension that followed. Influenced by these events and by the wrenching experience of the Vietnam War, the revisionists were particularly critical of American policy toward developing countries. In the Third World, they argued, American officials had linked the United States to decaying colonial regimes, jeopardized their nation's best interests, and betrayed its basic commitment to the principle of self-determination.

The revisionists helped other historians shift their attention away from Europe and the great powers to the developing world. By shining a Beardian light on the economic forces that influenced decision making, they also brought more clearly into view the important role played by actors outside the state, especially organized business and financial interests. They reminded their readers of the significant linkages between state and society and of how social structure can shape foreign policy. In addition, the revisionists reemphasized the importance of ideas and ideology in the history of American foreign relations and lent new credence to the view of

7 See Mayer, *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917–1918* (New Haven, 1959); idem, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918–1919* (New York, 1967); and Levin, *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution* (New York, 1968).

8 Williams launched New Left revisionism with *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland, 1959). He explained the development of his thinking in "A Historian's Perspective," *Prologue* 6 (Fall 1974): 200–203. See also William Appleman Williams, "Open Door Interpretation," in *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Relations: Studies of the Principal Movements and Ideas*, ed. Alexander DeConde, 3 vols. (New York, 1978), 2:703–10.

American leaders as rational policymakers who sought to control events, calculate the national interest, and pursue a coherent, if misguided, vision.

At the same time, however, critics complained that revisionism was monocausal in its emphasis on economic motives, failed to differentiate between competing domestic interests, and ignored both the influence of legitimate national security concerns and the actions of other states on American diplomacy.[9] Reacting to these criticisms in the 1970s and 1980s, some historians sought to replace revisionist assumptions with those more characteristic of realism. Typified by John Lewis Gaddis, these postrevisionist scholars refocused attention on the state as the principal actor, on decision-making elites, on the strategic and geopolitical determinants of policy, and on such traditional notions as national security, national interest, and the balance of power. Postrevisionists generally discovered success in America's diplomatic record, especially in the early Cold War. When critical of American policy, their criticism tended to echo the older realists' complaints about the deleterious effects on decision making of bureaucratic struggles, misplaced ideals, public opinion, and party politics. In addition, although postrevisionist historians accorded economic diplomacy some room in their studies, they treated it as an instrument of grand strategy driven by geopolitical concerns, not by domestic pressures. If American leaders were empire builders, as these scholars admitted in a nod to revisionism, the empire grew by invitation from abroad rather than from imperatives rooted in the American system. It was a defensive empire erected in the context of the Cold War, for which the Soviets were primarily responsible.[10]

Postrevisionism was neither a new method of analyzing American foreign relations nor a coherent synthesis of older approaches. In contrast to revisionism, in whose shadow it emerged, postrevisionism reasserted the primacy of geopolitical considerations over internal forces in American foreign policy. Taken together, the two schools recapitulated a division that has marked the study of American foreign relations from its inception, and that also runs through many of the essays in this volume. As these essays reveal, however, ongoing differences over the primacy of causal forces have not deterred the current generation of historians from exploring new avenues of research, reconceptualizing older approaches, and charting fresh directions. On the contrary, the historical study of

9 For one of the many critiques of revisionism see Bradford Perkins, "'The Tragedy of American Diplomacy': Twenty-five Years After," *Reviews in American History* 12 (March 1984): 1–18.

10 The case for postrevisionism is made in John Lewis Gaddis, "The Emerging Postrevisionist Synthesis on the Origins of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 7 (Summer 1983): 171–90. Postrevisionist work on the Cold War is still very much alive and kicking. See Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997).

American foreign relations has been undergoing a fertile transformation in the last two decades.

The recent ferment, like earlier transformations, reflects broader trends and changes in society, politics, and scholarship. While the end of the Cold War may have encouraged a spirit of triumphalism in some quarters, it also led many diplomatic historians to mine newly opened archives in the United States and abroad, to ask new questions, and to rethink old conclusions. The communications revolution and a growing awareness of interdependence have prompted a return to issues of globalization and internationalization, including issues having to do with the women's movement, human rights, and the environment. They have encouraged many historians to address transnational connections that had not been addressed before, to explore anew the role of nongovernmental groups, and to "problematize" the issue of U.S. relations with the so-called "Third World."[11]

On one level, some of the newest scholarship tends to marry more traditional approaches with newer concerns and historiographical trends. The recent emphasis on international history builds on the scholarship of Bemis, May, and others. Works by Michael H. Hunt and Michael J. Hogan, to name two historians represented in this volume, fit into this category, as does the scholarship of Akira Iriye, who has done more than most to promote international history. At the same time, Melvyn P. Leffler's prize-winning scholarship blends a careful analysis of geopolitical and strategic issues – of the sort that preoccupied realist and postrevisionist historians – with a concern for the influence that "core values" have had on the way American leaders defined the national interest. What is more, if realism and postrevisionism continue to influence recent scholarship, the same is also true of revisionism, as is evident in work that explores the corporatist paradigm. While this work, too, is interested in the strategic and geopolitical forces that have influenced American foreign policy, not to mention the role of the state in policy formation, its most important contribution lies in connecting these influences to the process of statemaking at home and abroad, to the role of nonstate actors, and to the part played by domestic economic, political, and cultural forces.[12]

In addition, specialists in the history of American foreign relations have responded to criticism that portrays their field as parochial, ethnocentric, and hidebound.[13] Besides exploring international history, they have borrowed insights from scholars in related disciplines. The cross-fertilization

11 See Nick Cullather's contribution to this volume, which builds on his essay, "Development? It's History," in *Diplomatic History* 24 (Fall 2000): 641–53.

12 For a discussion of these two approaches see the essays in this volume by Melvyn P. Leffler and Michael J. Hogan.

13 This criticism is discussed and assessed in some of the essays that follow.

with political science and other social sciences has led diplomatic historians to explore such new avenues of analysis as those offered by dependency theory, world-systems models, and cognitive psychology, not to mention the corporatist paradigm. At the same time, specialists in the history of American foreign relations have learned from scholars in other fields, including those who are exploring the subject of historical memory, writing comparative and world history, or dealing with the issues and methodologies associated with the new cultural history.

The turn toward cultural history is perhaps the most significant transformation in the field since the first edition of *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*. Although Michael Hunt and Akira Iriye did important early work on ideology and culture, historians in larger numbers are now taking the cultural turn. To be sure, "culture" is a slippery and complicated term to define. Iriye described it as the production and transmission of memory, ideology, lifestyle, and symbols, such as artwork, film, and books. Andrew Rotter prefers to think of culture as a collection of overlapping "webs of significance." Whatever the specific definition, it seems fair to include under the rubric of culture a system of symbols and meanings, including language, emotions, values, and myths, that are embedded in everyday life.

Influenced by cultural historians and by specialists in literary theory, postcolonial studies, and anthropology, the new work on culture and international relations explores the connection between domestic political culture and foreign relations, questions of national identity and representation, and the role of new actors, such as tourists and artists. The best of the new contributions engage, with varying degrees of success, issues of power, including economic power, strategy, and geopolitics. Many diplomatic historians have come to understand that culture and power are inextricably entwined, that power can reside outside the state, and that culture influences how power is organized, who holds it, and how it is perceived.[14]

These newer cultural works follow two main strands of analysis. The first includes bilateral studies that address cultural exchange or "cultural transfer" between the United States and other countries. These focus on the motivations that influence the American government, as well as corporations, interest groups, and nongovernmental organizations, and they often reach beyond U.S. borders to examine how those abroad reshape American culture to their own ends.[15] The second strand of analysis

14 For a good recent overview of the literature on culture and foreign relations, see Robert Griffith, "The Cultural Turn in Cold War Studies," *Reviews in American History* 29 (2001): 150–57.

15 See for example, Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945–1955* (Baton Rouge, LA,

focuses on how culture affects policymaking in the United States, specifically on how ideas about race, gender, sexuality, religion, and family relationships, not to mention democracy, shape the worldview of American policymakers and the decisions they make.[16] Hopefully, scholars will continue these avenues of research in the next decade, find ways to synthesize both strands of analysis, and even extend their analysis to non-Western nations.[17]

The new directions in the field have begun to alter the way historians of American foreign relations use sources. Diplomatic historians have always valued a multiarchival, multilingual approach, and this trend continues.[18] The progress of declassification and additions to the State Department's *Foreign Relations of the United States* have also, to a certain extent, defined the boundaries of scholarship in the field. With the advent of the cultural turn, however, diplomatic historians are just as likely to use the archives of the United States Information Agency, the Agency for International Development, and the Labor Department as they are the records of the Departments of State and Defense. What is more, they are increasingly looking beyond government records to the records of nongovernmental organizations, corporations, interest groups, and international agencies. They are using newspapers and periodicals to gauge public opinion, and they are examining the intentions and impact of film, literature, music, and marketing campaigns.

Many of the essays that follow touch upon the variety of sources available to specialists in the field, as well as the different analytical approaches they deploy. Taken as a whole, they offer an overview of the current state of scholarship on the history of American foreign relations. They do not

1999); Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1993); and Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II* (New York, 1997).

16 Representative works include Frank Costigliola, "'Unceasing Pressure for Penetration': Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War," *Journal of American History* 83 (March 1997): 1309–39; Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, 1998); and Emily S. Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900–1930* (Cambridge, MA, 1999).

17 Two recent standouts are Mark Philip Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919–1950* (Chapel Hill, 2000); and Andrew Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: The United States and India, 1947–1964* (Ithaca and London, 2000).

18 Two recent examples are Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton, 1999) and Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill, 2002). See also Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (New York, 2002), which ably combines international history with a variety of new analytical approaches.

systematically review recent literature, detail all topics worthy of inquiry, or summarize all methods and interpretative frameworks, especially the seasoned schools of thought outlined in the early part of this introduction. They seek instead to define the state of the field, to outline new analytical models, to show how familiar topics and methods are being rethought, and to reveal the usefulness of questions raised by other disciplines and other fields of American history. These chapters illustrate many of the challenging ways of approaching the study of American foreign relations and highlight the healthy ferment and rich diversity that now mark the field.

2

Defining and Doing the History of United States Foreign Relations: A Primer

FRANK COSTIGLIOLA* AND
THOMAS G. PATERSON

This "primer" seeks to define the field of the history of United States foreign relations (what are we trying to do?), identify some of the well-explored topics in the field (what are we doing successfully?), and suggest some fresh approaches. How have changes in technology and environmental problems shaped U.S. foreign policy? How have the transfer of culture and the cross-border activities of individuals, corporations, and other non-state organizations changed the concerns of governments and the meaning of *foreign relations*? How can methodologies adapted from literary criticism, anthropology, and other fields of history open possibilities for foreign relations history?[1]

All foreign relations historians are engaged in explaining over time the interaction of states, peoples, and cultures in the international system.[2] We study U.S. expansion into Mexico in the nineteenth century; twentieth-century anticommunism; and economic influences, such as lending by the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund and operations overseas by U.S.-based corporations. We analyze the intersection of cultural and economic forces, such as in Nike's promotion of basketball star Michael Jordan as a symbol for high-fashion sneakers that are made in low-paid nations and consumed in the United States and in other rich nations.[3]

* Frank Costigliola wishes to thank Molly Hite, J. Garry Clifford, Walter LaFeber, and Thomas G. Paterson.

1 This chapter is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather suggestive in its citations to the vast literature in foreign relations history. We have emphasized recent representative studies.

2 "Foreign relations" has advantages over other definitions. "Foreign policy" focuses on the process in government of making a decision and on the policy decision itself, and "diplomacy" emphasizes negotiations between states (or statecraft). "International history" is so broad a term that it loses its usefulness. "Foreign relations" can be used to explain the totality of interactions – economic, cultural, political, and more – among peoples and states.

3 Walter LaFeber, *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism* (New York, 2002).

We also study U.S. individuals abroad, such as tourists and the wives of diplomats.[4] "But are tourists or spouses of diplomats really involved in the making or executing of *foreign policy* or in the process of *diplomacy?*" critics might ask. Historians have answered that *foreign relations history* has been expanding its purview to include all aspects of foreign relations, not just diplomacy. A broader, more inclusive history of foreign relations, moreover, can often better explain the context of diplomacy.

To study U.S. foreign relations is not to assume that the United States has been responsible for every change or problem in the world, that U.S. power is unlimited, or that weaker nations do not possess countervailing power.[5] We need to be aware of the reception issue – how influences from the United States have been received and often altered by recipient nations or groups. Foreign relations history has come a long way since the days of the "nationalist" school of Samuel Flagg Bemis, whose 1961 presidential address to the American Historical Association assumed that the United States was *exceptional*, for the growth of the American empire extended the "blessings of liberty." According to Bemis, whites migrated through an "empty continent," a metaphor that masked the harsh removal of American Indians and the expansion of African American slavery.[6]

Although written history has become more inclusive, the grand narrative of American exceptionalism still prevails in public discussions of the past and, more subtly, in some historical scholarship. A grand or master narrative is a foundational story, widely told and retold, that shapes the overall framework in which most history is written and remembered, and that makes *only some* evidence (in Bemis's formulation, the liberty of white males) seem relevant.[7] The grand narrative of American

4 Dennis Merrill, "Negotiating Cold War Paradise: U.S. Tourism, Economic Planning, and Cultural Modernity in Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico," *Diplomatic History* 25 (Spring 2001): 179–214; Christopher Endy, "Travel and World Power: Americans in Europe, 1890–1917," *Diplomatic History* 22 (Fall 1998): 565–94, and symposium *ibid*., 533–615; Catherine Allgor, "Louisa Catherine Adams in Russia," *Diplomatic History* 21 (Winter 1997):15–43; Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Relations* (Berkeley, 1990); *ibid*., *The Morning After: Sexual Politics and the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley, 1993); Jewell Fenzi, *Married to the Foreign Service: An Oral History of the American Diplomatic Spouse* (New York, 1994); Molly Wood, "'I Consider I Had a Career in the Foreign Service': American Foreign Service Wives, 1940–45," unpublished manuscript.

5 See John Lewis Gaddis, "New Conceptual Approaches to the Study of American Foreign Relations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives," *Diplomatic History* 14 (Summer 1990): 403–25.

6 Samuel Flagg Bemis, "American Foreign Policy and the Blessings of Liberty," *American Historical Review* 67 (January 1962): 291–305.

7 Like a paradigm, a grand narrative reflects, and helps shape, stories with varying truth values that we tell to make sense of history and our world. Thomas S. Kuhn described a *paradigm* as "some implicit body of intertwined and methodological belief that permits selection, evaluation, and criticism." See Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1996), 16–17.

exceptionalism assumes, first, that the "rise" of the United States to global power resulted from preeminence descending upon "America," a divinely favored nation with unique freedoms. Like a Horatio Alger tale, American exceptionalism is a rags-to-riches story that focuses on the luck and pluck and not on the stealing and killing entailed in becoming a continental and then a global empire. According to this compelling narrative, the United States, despite some mistakes, generally uses its power for benign purposes, a belief that has made it easier to cover up some foreign policy scandals. Another premise is that most people in the world appreciate, or should appreciate, U.S. beneficence. Related assumptions are that U.S.-style capitalism multiplies wealth and opportunity for nearly all; that human progress and happiness are best measured by such wealth and opportunity; that U.S.-style democracy enables the best "man" to be elected, as Woodrow Wilson put it; that U.S. influence is directed toward global peace, prosperity, and democracy; and finally, that the triumph over communism and ascendancy of global markets might mean the "end of history."[8]

This grand narrative is told and retold in schools, in most of the media, in churches, and by public authorities. Like a myth, the story of American exceptionalism does have *partial validity*. The key point, however, is that because this narrative is so satisfying to many people, and because this narrative is retold by such powerful institutions, that partial validity often becomes accepted as the *whole story*. A master of persuasive narrative, the commentator and novelist Joan Didion acknowledges that constructing narratives requires many "tacit agreements, small and large, to overlook the observable in the interests of obtaining a dramatic story line."[9] U.S. grand narratives have relied on similar "tacit agreements" to secure dramatic, self-congratulatory story lines. The historian Michael Adas notes that American exceptionalism is not only "more comprehensive and extreme than its counterparts elsewhere," but it "has also proven a good deal more impervious than most other national variants of divinely inspired mission to the unsettling excesses of human folly and cruelty that have abounded in the twentieth century."[10] Too few foreign policy

8 Francis Fukiyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York, 1992).

9 Joan Didion, *Political Fictions* (New York, 2001).

10 Michael Adas, "From Settler Colony to Global Hegemon: Integrating the Exceptionalist Narrative of the American Experience into World History," *American Historical Review* 106 (December 2001): 1695. See also Michael Kammen, "The Problem of American Exceptionalism: A Reconsideration," *American Quarterly* 45 (September 1993): 1–43; Walter LaFeber, "The Bush Doctrine," *Diplomatic History* 26 (Fall 2002): 551–53; Peter Bergmann, "American Exceptionalism and German *Sonderweg* in Tandem," *International History Review* 23 (September 2001): 505–34; Daniel T. Rodgers, "Exceptionalism," in Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (ed.), *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (Princeton, 1998); 21–40; Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design American Exceptionalism and Empire* (Ithaca, NY, 2003).

makers have followed John Quincy Adams, who balanced his commitment to that "divinely inspired mission" with his understanding that going "abroad, in search of monsters to destroy" would endanger the nation's freedoms.[11] Instead, many leaders have won at least initial domestic support by couching foreign intervention in terms of the grand narrative. Most foreign conflicts have largely been remembered and recorded in ways that embellish the story.[12] Although cynicism, dissent, criticism, and revisionism have persisted among the general public, counter narratives have generally remained as fragments or as conspiracy myths.

Inconsistencies in the story, such as the dictatorship and poverty in Guatemala following the U.S. intervention in 1954, or the economic breakdown in Russia following the "shock therapy" of U.S. private and governmental advisers after 1991, have largely been ignored, or explained as necessary or inevitable "transitions" by most U.S. observers.[13] Although triumphalists have argued that the supposed U.S. "victory" in the Cold War affirmed the grand narrative, other scholars have countered that the Cold War ended because of largely autonomous changes in the Soviet Union.[14] Historians who have analyzed specific aspects of U.S. relations with, say, Guatemala or Russia, have pointed to the holes in the master story.

Historians writing a broader narrative such as a textbook, however, have greater difficulty in avoiding the drama of American success, unless overt criticism becomes *the* focus of the story.[15]A chapter on Ronald Reagan's foreign policy, for instance, might easily dramatize Reagan's triumphant, personal relations with Mikhail Gorbachev at the expense of detailing the story of Reagan's incitement of wars in Central America. Even when writers try to present other viewpoints, some readers may still "read" according to the script they already know: The Rise of the United States to Number One. As the textbook writer C. Garry Clifford put it, when writing about U.S. leaders generally convinced of their own and of their nation's rectitude, it can seem like "nipping at the heels of the

11 "Address of July 4, 1821," in Walter LaFeber (ed.), *John Quincy Adams and American Continental Empire* (Chicago, 1965), 45.

12 For a discussion of how opposition to the war by Vietnam veterans slowly diminished after 1973, see Christian G. Appy, *Working Class War* (Chapel Hill, 1993); Susan Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America* (Bloomington, IN, 1989).

13 Stephen M. Streeter, *Managing the Counterrevolution: The United States and Guatemala, 1954–61* (Athens, OH, 2000); Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York, 1993); Stephen F. Cohen, *Failed Crusade: Americans and the Tragedy of Post-Communist Russia* (New York, 2000).

14 Michael J. Hogan (ed.), *The End of the Cold War* (New York, 1992). See also Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY, 1999); and Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York, 2000).

15 Howard Zinn, *A Peoples History of the United States* (New York, 1999).

great ones" to criticize constantly the hollowness of their virtue and the costs of their expansion. Scholars such as William Appleman Williams, Lloyd Gardner, and Walter LaFeber have achieved some critical distance by writing history with tones of tragedy or irony. Yet the dominance of the grand story in public discourse has left little inclination or space for considering basic contradictions, such as the "Tocqueville problem," which again became acute after September 11, 2001. Alexis de Tocqueville wondered whether it was possible for the United States – an entrepreneurial, pluralistic nation with a short attention span and a focus on individual gratification – to pursue a long-term foreign policy or war without undermining democracy and demonizing the enemy.[16]

However historians of U.S. foreign relations have considered the issue of American exceptionalism, they have situated their studies on one or more of four levels: the international, regional, national, and individual. One theme runs through all four levels and is thus central to the study of foreign relations history itself: the competition for power among individuals, interest groups, governments, economic systems, cultures, images, ideas, and more. Historians of foreign relations have traditionally studied material power, which is embodied in things we can touch, such as armies, tanks, and dollars. Many historians have also begun to study cultural power, which both reflects and produces meaning in grand narratives (the future according to communism), cultural beliefs (viewing, say, Koreans or Vietnamese as "gooks"), and cultural creations (film, television, and, in another aspect of cultural creation, the interpretive framework for viewing the world). These and other categories of power overlap. In the Shah's Iran, for instance, images of American life in Hollywood films stimulated exports of U.S. consumer products even as they infuriated traditional Islamic clerics and their supporters, who found such influence corrupting and who overthrew the Shah in the 1979 anti-American revolution.

First, let us consider the *international* level of analysis. How is power in the world distributed – along multipolar, hegemonic, or bipolar lines? What are the major sources of conflict, which states are the key actors, and which instruments of power do they use? How prevalent and influential are alliances, cultural influences, economic arrangements, and shared or disputed environmental concerns? How much influence is exerted by international organizations or by nonstate groups and movements?[17] How interdependent is the international system?[18] What are the norms of

16 Eric Alterman, *Who Speaks for America?: Why Democracy Matters in Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, NY, 1998).

17 Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, 1997).

18 Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence*, (New York, 2001).

international behavior and how have they changed?[19] Other questions can guide analysis at the international level. Is the international system in a state of major transformation, as, for example, in the much swifter than anticipated end of the Cold War? How have epidemics, such as the AIDS crisis in Africa and elsewhere, and natural disasters, such as the 1923 Tokyo earthquake, altered international relations? How have shocks to the international system, such as the oil price crisis of the 1970s or the terrorist strikes of 2001, wrenched bilateral and multilateral relations among nations and created new lines of cooperation and enmity?[20]

Second, historians of foreign relations can focus on the *regional* divisions of the world.[21] The decentralization following Cold War bipolarity has increased the importance of regional blocs, such as the European Union, and temporary groupings, such as the 1990–91 Gulf War coalition. Geographical and other place names can reveal the name-makers' own perspectives about other parts of world. Some terms – such as "Atlantic Community," "Free World," "civilized world," "Communist bloc," "socialist world," "underdeveloped nations," and "European Community" – have obvious political and cultural implications. After the break up of the Soviet Union, some U.S. diplomats mocked the turbulent nations of central and southern Asia as "the Crazy 'Stans." Geographical names, such as Far East, Middle East, East, and West, reflect a positioning of others by the people who originated the names and who had the cultural and political clout to make them stick. Saying or writing "America" when referring to the United States is so deeply imbedded in popular and scholarly discourses that it can be difficult to avoid even when one tries to do so. Consider also the Mercator projection, the most commonly used

19 Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York, 1996).

20 Political scientists have devoted a good deal of attention to the international system. For a summary of their findings see Ole R. Holsti's contribution to this volume. For a historian's appraisal of the impact of terrorist attacks, see Walter LaFeber, "The Post-September 11 Debate over Empire, Globalization, and Fragmentation," *Political Science Quarterly* 117 (Spring 2002): 1–17.

21 See, for example, James E. Lewis, Jr., *The American Union and the Problem of Neighborhood: The United States and the Collapse of the Spanish Empire, 1783–1829* (Chapel Hill, 1998); Geir Lundestad, *"Empire" by Integration* (New York, 1998) (*on the Western European and other U.S. allies*); Robert J. McMahon, *The Limits of Empire: The United States and Southeast Asia Since World War II* (New York, 1999); Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Place in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill, 1999); Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of the Vietnam War* (Berkeley, 1999) (on Western Europe and the war); Peter L. Hahn and Mary A. Heiss (ed.), *Empire and Revolution: The United States and the Third World Since 1945* (Columbus, OH, 2001); Matthew Connelly, "Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence," *The American Historical Review* 105 (June 2000): 739–69. For a world systems approach, see Thomas J. McCormick, *America's Half-Century* (Baltimore, 1995).

map of the world, which exaggerates the area of Europe and the rest of the northern hemisphere, while shrinking Africa and the southern half of the globe.[22]

Third, at the *national* level of analysis, foreign relations historians primarily explore domestic characteristics. We ask who or what has power in the nation itself. Although external settings have conditioned U.S. foreign policy, they have not controlled it. For that control, we look inward at a number of factors: economic, strategic, political, ideological, cultural, and social. We ask questions about the nation's economic needs, or perceived needs, and study strategic raw-material imports, the export trade, tariffs, and overseas investments. We consider perceived security needs by examining calculations of threats, war planning, and budgets. As the historian Andrew J. Rotter has pointed out in his study of U.S.-Indian relations, we need to take into account nations' diverging (or merging) cultural assumptions, which, in this instance, concern such matters as gratitude, class, race, strategic space, and economic growth.[23] Finally, we can become more attuned to how culturally-conditioned feelings, such as injured pride, resentment, and a desire for respect or revenge, can influence supposedly rational perceptions and decisions about foreign relations.

We also delve into U.S. politics and government to determine how decisions are made and by whom – who has power?[24] We study public opinion (do leaders essentially hear what they have in fact already shaped?) and opinion elites (does a small group of educated, well-informed leaders dominate opinion?). The role of interest groups, such as the "China lobby" and the Committee on the Present Danger, and of political parties, command attention. Bureaucratic competition and imperatives, the national security state, and the imperial presidency are other topics in this category. We wonder why Congress has so often abdicated its foreign policy powers, and we look at the impact of foreign policy crises on domestic politics and vice versa, as in the Vietnam War. We investigate the decision-making process and ask whether it is a hapless series of uncoordinated, sometimes emotional responses or a rational, systematic identification of tasks and weighing of alternatives – or perhaps an untidy mix of the two. We study the power that has accrued to presidents from what the political historian Jeffrey K. Tulis has called "the routinization of crisis" and the "attempted repetitions of charisma."[25] We ask about the quality and quantity of

22 See Alan K. Henrikson, "Mental Maps," in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (ed.), *Explaining American Foreign Relations* (New York, 1991), 177–92.

23 Andrew Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: The United States and India, 1947–1964* (Ithaca, NY, 2000).

24 Garry R. Hess, *Presidential Decisionmaking for War: Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf* (Baltimore, 2001).

25 Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton, 1987).

information available to leaders, and how their policy is carried out once it is decided. What instruments – foreign aid, covert agencies, military forces, foreign allies – are available to implement decisions? At the national level of analysis, we also probe social, ideological, and cultural categories. We explore the relationship between social and economic classes, political power, and decisions in the United States; the relationship between U.S. elites and elites of other countries who collaborate with them to dominate governments; lessons from the past such as the Munich and Vietnam syndromes; and tenacious ideological formulations, like manifest destiny, republicanism, and Western superiority.

At the national and at every other level of analysis, history and politics are unavoidably cultural. We can define *culture* as the shared meanings and values that are produced, exchanged, challenged, and altered by people operating within (and increasingly across) societies. Although cultural influences are often contradictory, even within a single person or government, they condition our perceptions and decisions. An ideology, such as Soviet communism or U.S. democratic-capitalism, condenses a complex, often contradictory culture to an easily understood formula.[26] The historian Seth Fein has pointed up the challenge of relating the "distinct international forces operating *between* nations to the transnational forces produced by the presence of one nation *within* another." Borrowing from postcolonial studies, historians of foreign relations are increasingly focusing on the forces of cultural adaptation and appropriation operating across national borders.[27] Cultural exports – such as jazz, computer software, and fast food – have earned profits for U.S.-based corporations,

26 For a broader discussion, see Hunt's essay in this volume.

27 For Fein, see http://www.history-compass.com/Pilot/northam/NthAm_CulturesAbstract.htm. On post-colonial studies, see Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," *The Journal of American History* 88 (December 2001): 829–65 and the commentaries that followed. See also forum in *Diplomatic History* 23 (Winter 1999): 21–7; Kristin Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865–1920," *The American Historical Review* 107 (February 2002): 55–83; Jessica Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Dependence in Postwar Germany, 1945–1955* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1999); Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher (ed.), *Culture and International Relations* (Providence, RI, 2003); Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream* (New York, 1982); Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1924–1930* (Ithaca, NY, 1984); *ibid*., *France and the United States: The Cold Alliance Since World War II* (New York, 1992); Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley, 1993); Rob Kroes, *If You've Seen One, You've Seen the Mall: European and American Mass Culture* (Urbana, IL, 1996); Melanie McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945–2000* (Berkeley, 2001); Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York, 1997); Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II* (New York, 1997).

have extended U.S. influence abroad, and have antagonized opponents of that influence. Culturally resonant events have influenced diplomatic relations. For instance, when Charles Lindbergh met a fervent welcome upon landing in Paris in 1927, Washington officials tried to ease resentment of war debt payments by sending the "boy aviator" on a goodwill tour of Europe.[28] In 1953, however, the U.S. government could do little when the electrocutions of spy Julius Rosenberg and of his wife Ethel Rosenberg motivated worldwide protests and undermined popular French support of U.S.-led NATO.[29]

Although the *individual* level of analysis has long been central to U.S. foreign relations history, the story of less powerful individual Americans living or visiting in foreign lands has only begun to be examined. Mary A. Renda has approached this topic by examining how U.S. Marines occupying Haiti in 1915–34 changed in the ways that they thought about their role, and the United States' role, as occupiers.[30] (See also the discussion of microhistory, below). Other individuals have the power to decide whether or not to negotiate, and their styles of diplomacy help to shape results. To understand how foreign policy is carried out, we need to study the personality traits, knowledge, emotional "buttons," ideology, political ties, ambitions, rivalries, prejudices, class, youth, and family background of U.S. leaders and others. We study not only the idiosyncratic but also the shared, which is to say that we explore the assumptions and environments that leaders have in common with their compatriots. What have been the impacts of illness and aging? Scholars have studied and debated the degree of intellectual impairment suffered by Woodrow Wilson during and after the Paris Peace Conference and by Franklin D. Roosevelt at and after the Yalta Conference, respectively.[31] The topic of Ronald Reagan's possible mental deterioration in his second term awaits declassification of records. Another crucial element is a diplomat's style. In accounting for the origins of the Cold War, for example, how much of a difference did it make that

28 Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion*, 180–81.

29 *Ibid*., *France and the United States*, 79–81.

30 Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915–1940* (Chapel Hill, 2001).

31 Kenneth R. Crispell and Carlos F. Gomez, *Hidden Illness in the White House* (Durham, 1989); Bert Edward Park, *The Impact of Illness on World Leaders* (Philadelphia, 1986); *ibid*., "The Impact of Wilson's Neurologic Disease during the Paris Peace Conference," in Arthur S. Link (ed.), *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (Princeton, 1988), 58: 611–30; Edwin A. Weinstein, *Woodrow Wilson: A Medical and Psychological Biography* (Princeton, 1981); Alexander L. George, "The Impact of Crisis-Induced Stress on Decision Making," in Frederic Solomon and Robert Q. Marston (ed.), *The Medical Implications of Nuclear War* (Washington, DC, 1986), 529–52; Robert H. Ferrell, *The Dying President: Franklin D. Roosevelt 1944–1945* (Columbia, MO, 1998); Robert E. Gilbert, *Managing Crisis: Presidential Disability and the Twenty-Fifth Amendment* (New York, 2000).

a parochial, ill-informed, impatient man like Harry S Truman replaced a cosmopolitan, compromising, knowledgeable Roosevelt just when the international system was undergoing sudden change?[32]

Regardless of which levels of analysis historians choose, doing research in foreign archives is often essential. Even research on domestic topics, such as decision-making in the Kennedy White House, can benefit from the reports of Washington-based foreign diplomats. Historians of foreign relations also rely upon specialists in a foreign country's history or on preeminent historians of the relationship – such as Louis A. Pérez, Jr. on Cuba, Jian Chen on China, John W. Dower on Japan, Robert K. Brigham and William Duiker on Vietnam, Andrew Rotter and Robert McMahon on South Asia, Irwin Wall and William Hitchcock on France, Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov on the Soviet Union, Jussi Hanhimäki on Finland, Matthew J. Connelly on Algeria, and Douglas Little on the Middle East, to name but a few.[33] Fresh evidence on the Cuban missile crisis and on the Vietnam War has emerged from international meetings of scholars and former officials.[34] The 1998 CNN series on the history of the Cold War has yielded transcripts of interviews with former officials and analysts from both sides.[35] Transcripts of secretly recorded conversations

32 Warren F. Kimball, *The Juggler: Franklin Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman* (Princeton, NJ, 1991); Arnold A. Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945–1953* (Stanford, 2002).

33 Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill, 1998); *ibid.*, *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill, 1999); Jian Chen, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York, 1994); John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York, 1999); Robert K. Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy: The NLF's Foreign Relations and the Vietnam War* (Ithaca, 1998); William J. Duiker, *Sacred War: Nationalism and Revolution in a Divided Vietnam* (New York, 1995); Rotter, *Comrades at Odds*; Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (New York, 1994); Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Vietnam War* (Berkeley, 2001); William I. Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944–54* (Chapel Hill, 1998); Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War* (Cambridge, MA, 1996); Thomas A. Schwartz, *Lyndon B. Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA, 2003); Jussi Hanhima" ki, *Containing Coexistence: America, Russia, and the "Finnish Solution* (Kent, OH, 1997); Matthew J. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (New York, 2002); Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945* (Chapel Hill, 2002).

34 See, for example, Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto (ed.), *Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese-American Relations, 1931–1941* (New York, 1973); and Akira Iriye and Warren Cohen, eds., *The Great Powers in East Asia, 1953–1960* (New York, 1990); Robert S. McNamara, James Blight, Robert K. Brigham, et al., *Argument Without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy* (New York, 1999); James G. Blight, et al., *On the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York, 1993).

35 http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/guides/about.series/interviews/.

of Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard M. Nixon have provided fascinating insights, particularly into how the assumptions, styles, and emotions of these leaders affected their decisionmaking.[36]

A diversity of topics and approaches keeps our field exciting. Studies have dealt with the impact of race, militarization, modernization, military influence, manifest destiny, colonial policy, nuclear issues, religion, missionaries, the Peace Corps, nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, political movements, student protests, and drug trafficking.[37] Theories of

36 Michael R. Beschloss (ed.), *Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963–1964* (New York, 1997); ibid., *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964–1965* (New York, 2001); http://www.jfklibrary.org; http://www.nara.gov/nixon/tapes/index.html.

37 Brenda Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1935–1960* (Chapel Hill, 1996); Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957* (Ithaca, NY, 1997); *ibid*., "Who's the Real Ambassador? Exploding Cold War Racial Ideology," in Christian G. Appy (ed.), *Cold War Constructions* (Amherst, 2000), 110–31; Marc S. Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japan and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895–1945* (Chapel Hill, 2000); Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA, 2001); Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven, 1995); Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, 2000); David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michael E. Latham (ed.), *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst, 2003); David C. Engerman, "Modernization from the Other Shore: American Observers and the Costs of Soviet Economic Development," *The American Historical Review* 105 (April 2000): 383–416; Robert Buzzanco, *Masters of War: Military Dissent and Politics in the Vietnam Era* (New York, 1996); Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansion and the Empire of Right* (New York, 1995); Julian Go and Anne L. Foster (ed.), *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives* (Durham, NC, 2003); Shane J. Maddock (ed.), *The Nuclear Age* (Boston, 2001); Seth Jacobs, "'Our System Demands the Supreme Being': The U.S. Religious Revival and the 'Diem Experiment,' 1954–55," *Diplomatic History* 25 (Fall 2001): 589–624; Jane Hunter, *Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven, 1984); Carol C. Chin, "Beneficent Imperialists: American Women Missionaries in China at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century," *Diplomatic History* 27 (June 2003): 327–52; Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need Is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA, 1998); Deborah Kisatsky, *Containment, Co-optation, Cooperation: The United States and the European Right, 1945–55* (Athens, GA, 2004); Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA, 2003); Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* and the Iriye essay in this volume; Elizabeth McKillen, *Chicago Labor and the Quest for a Democratic Diplomacy, 1914–1924* (Ithaca, NY, 1995); Edmund F. Wehrle, "'No More Pressing Task Than Organization in Southeast Asia': The AFL-CIO Approaches the Vietnam War, 1947–1964," *Labor History* 42 (August 2001): 277–95; Cecelia Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement: Interpreting Interwar Peace Movements in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY, 1999); William O. Walker, III: "Drug Control and the Issue of Culture in American Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 12 (Fall 1988): 365–82, "Drug Control and National Security," *ibid*. (Spring 1988): 187–99; "The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: U.S. Drug Policy and Colombian State Stability, 1978–1997," in H. Richard Friman and Peter Andreas (ed.), *The Illicit Global Economy and State Power* (Lanham, 1999), 143–71; Anne L. Foster, "Prohibition as Superiority: Policing Opium in South-East Asia, 1898–1925," *International History Review* 22 (June 2000): 253–73.

dependency and hegemony, constantly tested and revised by new empirical studies, continue to inform works on inter-American relations.[38] Historians have recognized that some international wars, such as those in Korea and Vietnam, are also civil wars.[39] The question of how U.S. foreign policy has responded to international law has taken a new turn with war crimes tribunals.[40] Scholarship on the Cold War has been revitalized with a rethinking of issues and with a partial opening of many archives.[41] Although many top-level Soviet foreign policy files remain shut or have again been closed, important documents have nevertheless become available. The Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) has translated and put online a treasure of foreign policy documents that are archived in Russia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia; in China; and in Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and other former communist nations.[42] Some topics in Soviet foreign policy that are nearly impossible to research in Moscow's archives can be pursued in the archives of these other nations.[43]

Since the early 1990s, foreign relations history has been responding to fresh concepts about perception and reality in history. Although originating in older philosophical traditions, these concepts gained renewed impetus from the intellectual ferment in the structuralist and poststructuralist movements of the European continent in the 1960s and after. These ideas have also become influential among many literary critics, cultural critics, and other academics.[44] A principal argument here is that

38 See the essay on dependency in this volume.

39 Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton, 1981, 1990); Robert J. McMahon (ed.), *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War* (Lexington, MA, 1995).

40 John W. Coogan, *The End of Neutrality: The United State, Britain, and Maritime Rights, 1899–1915* (Ithaca, NY, 1981); Calvin D. Davis, *The United States and the Second Hague Peace Conference: American Diplomacy and International Organization, 1899–1914* (Durham, NC, 1976); Thomas Cushman and Stjepan Mestrovic, *This Time We Knew: Western Responses to Genocide in Bosnia* (New York, 1996); Leon Friedman and Susan W. Tiefenbrun, *War Crimes and War Tribunals: Past, Present, and Future* (Hempstead, NY, 1999).

41 The most influential synthesis to emerge in the early 1990s is Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power* (Stanford, 1992). Also influential, and with a different perspective, is John L. Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997). See also Lloyd C. Gardner, *Spheres of Influence* (Chicago, 1993); Anders Stephanson, "Fourteen Notes on the Very Concept of the Cold War," in G. O' Tuathail and S. Dalby (ed.), *Rethinking Geopolitics* (New York, 1998); Odd Arne Westad, "The New International History of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 24 (Fall 2000): 551–91; Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945–2002*, 9th ed. (New York, 2002).

42 http://cwihp.si.edu/.

43 Odd Arne Westad, "Secrets of the Second World: The Russian Archives and the Reinterpretation of Cold War History," *Diplomatic History* 21 (Spring 1997): 259–71.

44 Richard Rorty (ed.), *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method* (Chicago, 1968); Vincent Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA, 1980); Frank Lentricchhia, *After the New Criticism* (Chicago, 1980); Catherine Belsey, *Critical Practice* (New York, 1980); Dominick LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual*

although common-sense or philosophical positivism may be appealing, such thinking may often be simplistic in assuming that reality is concrete, reachable, and fundamentally unaffected by our perceptions. Historians such as Joan Scott, Robert F. Berkhofer, and Emily S. Rosenberg have agreed that our underlying cultural assumptions and categories about the world help shape what we see and what we conclude about reality, including our own experiences and the experiences of historical actors.[45] The same argument holds for former U.S. Presidents and for other historical actors: *Their* underlying cultural assumptions and interpretive categories helped shape what *they* saw, experienced, and what they concluded – say, about the necessity for U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia. Underlying assumptions, such as those concerning communism, race, and American exceptionalism, are most influential when they remain implicit and thus unexamined. One essential qualification to keep in mind is that categories and assumptions *influence* but do not *determine* interpretations of experience and our data. It is not relativism but rather clear-eyed investigation when historians draw attention to the interpretive categories that historical actors used – usually without being aware of the fact – in their own perceptions of reality. There can be many interpretations of reality. Historians construct and narrate *their* accounts of the past (and the present) with their own, often tacit, often unconscious assumptions and interpretive categories. As a practical matter, this "constructivist" approach has not resulted, and need not result, in drastic changes in writing history.

History: Texts, Contexts, Language (Ithaca, 1983); *ibid*., *History and Reading* (Toronto, 2002); John Toews, "Intellectual History After the Linguistic Turn," *The American Historical* Review 92 (October 1987): 879–907; George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (Chicago, 1987); Christine Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era* (New York, 1994); William F. Hanks, *Language and Communicative Practices* (New York, 1996).

45 Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in Joan W. Scott and Judith Butler (ed.), *Feminists Theorize the Political* (New York, 1992), 22–40; Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* (Cambridge, MA, 1995); Emily S. Rosenberg, "Revisiting Dollar Diplomacy: Narratives of Money and Manliness," *Diplomatic History* 22 (Spring 1998): 155–76. See also Lynn Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley, 1989); Frank Ninkovich, "No Post-Mortems For Postmodernism, Please," *Diplomatic History* 22 (Summer 1998): 451–66; Regina U. Gramer, "On Poststructuralisms, Revisionisms, and the Cold War," *ibid*., 19 (Summer 1995): 515–24; Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (ed.), *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC, 1993); Gilbert E. Joseph, et al. (ed.), *Close Encounters of Empire* (Durham, NC, 1998); Anthony G. Amsterdam and Jerome Bruner, *Minding the Law* (Cambridge, MA, 2000); Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (ed.), *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley, 1999). Historians of foreign relations might also profit from Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York, 1998); Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York, 1997); David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven, 1988). See also the essays in this volume by Hunt, Rosenberg, Hoganson, Gienow-Hecht, Iriye, and Costigliola.

Rather, like other scholars in the humanities, foreign relations historians need to do their work fully aware that there are many implicit assumptions shaping our thoughts, even as we try to be objective.

The ideas sketched above have been used by historians who examine how interpretive categories, such as gender, can legitimate or delegitimate foreign policy options. Kristin Hoganson, Emily Rosenberg, and Mary Renda have shown that at the turn of the twentieth century, leaders and opinion-makers implicitly believed that it was masculine, and hence necessary, to go to war against Spain in Cuba and to act in what they saw as paternal ways in supposedly helpless, feminized nations.[46] As another example, George F. Kennan in 1945 depicted an end to U.S. cooperation with the Soviets as "political manliness" while labeling continued cooperation as "collaboration," language that suggested the debased "collaboration" that had just taken place in Nazi-occupied Europe.[47] In the postwar era, what Robert D. Dean calls "the politics of manhood" seemed to justify Joseph McCarthy in linking "commies and queers" in the State Department while silencing the doubts of Kennedy and Johnson administration officials about escalating the Vietnam War.[48]

Aspects of "microhistory" can be adapted to foreign relations history. Microhistorians have likened their methods to criminal detection, in which careful observation of seemingly marginal details of obscure events and lives can result in evidence that is significant in terms of larger issues. As the European social and microhistorian Edward Muir has noted, the "guiding premise . . . has been that through the intense study of a few revealing documents," one can "recapture" social or other interactions of the past.[49] Although microhistory generally assumes, as Muir puts it, that there *is* a historical "reality that can be known," this sub-field also assumes that historical discoveries can be understood only in their original cultural contexts.[50] Microhistorians watch for "silences" and changes of

46 Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, 1998); Emily Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900–1930* (Cambridge, MA, 1999); Renda, *Taking Haiti*.

47 Frank Costigliola, "'Unceasing Pressure for Penetration': Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War," *The Journal of American History* 83 (March 1997): 1330.

48 Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst, MA, 2002). See also Geoffrey Smith, "National Security and Personal Isolation: Sex, Gender, and Disease in the Cold-War United States," *International History Review* 14 (May 1992): 221–37.

49 Edward Muir, "Introduction: Observing Trifles," in Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (ed.), *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe* (Baltimore, 1991), x; Richard D. Brown, "Microhistory and the Post-Modern Challenge," *Journal of the Early Republic* 23 (Spring 2003): 1–20. We are indebted to Richard D. Brown for discussions on microhistory.

50 Muir, "Introduction," xiv.