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This roundtable offers four very perceptive and comprehensive reviews of this third edition of Frank Costigliola and Michael J. Hogan’s invaluable *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*. All of the reviewers praise the book highly, acknowledge the contribution of the earlier editions to their own work, and recommend this most recent edition to students and practitioners in the field.

The reviewers enumerate the differences between this third edition and the previous ones to show how those changes reflect the evolution of the field. Carol Chin does this most comprehensively in analyzing each of the essays for the changes in the field that are reflected within it. Molly Wood takes a somewhat more comparative view of the essays. She notes that this third edition features six women scholars as opposed to three in the second. She also notes that chapters on “Dependency,” “World Systems,” and “Modernization” are gone or partially subsumed within other chapters such as Nicholas Cullather’s chapter on “Development.”1 “Bureaucratic Politics” is also gone, but there are two new chapters on “Political Economy” and “Domestic Politics.”2 “Non-State Actors” and human rights (as part of the chapter on legal history) are covered for the first time, as are “Computational Methods.”3 But the biggest change represents the influence of the ‘cultural turn’ in foreign relations history specifically and in history more generally, resulting in entirely new chapters on religion, “nation branding,” emotion and the senses, as well as significant updates to chapters on gender, frontiers/borders, race, memory, psychology, and ideology, all topics, frameworks and/or categories of analysis strongly influenced by the “cultural turn.”

Jason Parker makes an intriguing argument that these changes between the first and third editions reflect a shift from a defensive to an offensive stance in the field. He argues that many, if not most, of the first volume’s chapters amounted to defenses of the various classic approaches drawn from political science and international relations theory rather than new ones responding to the criticisms at the time that U.S. diplomatic history was stagnant. This third edition, Parker says, “goes confidently on the offensive.” He counts the chapters on international-relations theory by Robert Jervis, national security by Melvyn Leffler, corporatism by Michael Hogan, borderlands by Nathan Citino, and domestic politics by Fredrik Logevall as defensive, on the grounds that their approaches are “seemingly fully absorbed into our historiographical bloodstream.”4 The other chapters he says are more of a “predictive bent” and therefore are more on the

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offensive. He especially commends the chapters on religion by Andrew Preston, memory by Penny M. Von Eschen, the senses by Andrew J. Rotter, emotion by Frank Costigliola, and psychology by Richard H. Immerman and Lori Helene Gronich as presenting the same sort of important challenge to the ‘rational actor’ approach in our field as it has to the field of economics.5

All of the reviewers, like Costigliola and Hogan themselves, are pleased with the changes coming about in the field. As Chin says, while “the field has not completely moved away from claims of synthesis on behalf of one approach or another, … most scholars now seem to welcome the diversity of methodologies, subjects, and approaches that this volume amply illustrates. It is indeed a sign of an intellectually healthy and vibrant field.” While Logevall complains mildly in his essay that historians have taken insufficient account of domestic politics in writing about foreign relations, neither he, the other essays in the book, nor these reviews bemoan the diminishment of high politics and diplomacy in the manner that Logevall and Kenneth Osgood did in their controversial New York Times editorial, “Why Did We Stop Teaching Political History.”6 The closest anyone comes to such nostalgia is the qualms Deborah Kisatsky expresses about the field’s progressive de-emphasis of the United States specifically and the nation state in general.

Kisatsky points out that while the volume is divided into two large groups of essays, those that emphasize tangible structures of power and those that prioritize constructed meanings, “the volume emphasizes constructed meaning most heavily, and while this tilt accurately represents a broader shift of focus, it also signals epistemological disaggregation within the field at large.” To a degree, she welcomes this disaggregation. She argues that it is intellectually liberating, consistent with the messy complexity of the past, and in keeping with the recognition that the “privileging of the nation as the unit of analysis prevents us from fully appreciating the intricacies of the global arena.” On the other hand, if we condemn the American exceptionalism embodied in common titles such as “The United States and Europe,” as Ussama Makdisi does so effectively in his essay on the Middle East, while we also diminish the role of the state, as Barbara Keyes does in her highly praised essay on non-state actors, what is left to American Foreign Relations as a field?7 She asks, “Do we…. simply dissolve… entirely into the wider humanities and social science matrix?” Kisatsky makes things even more concrete by asking, “If American foreign relations disappears, who will hire us?”


Such a prospect does not seem to worry Jason Parker. There are still many historians in the field who define themselves “as specializing in ‘U.S.-[country] or -area relations,” but, he notes approvingly, they are exhibiting “a vestigial trait whose relative absence” in Costigliola and Hogan, is “striking.”

Participants:

Frank Costigliola is Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor at the University of Connecticut. He has received three fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as awards from the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the Norwegian Nobel Institute. His most recent books include *Roosevelt’s Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton, 2012); *The Kennan Diaries* (W.W. Norton, 2014); and [with Michael J. Hogan] *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941* (Cambridge, 2014). He is a former president of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR). He is working on a book tentatively entitled *Between America and Russia: The Inner Life of George F. Kennan*.


Jerald A. Combs (Ph.D. UCLA 1964) is Professor of History Emeritus at San Francisco State University and continuing to consult there as Officer of International Articulation. He is the author of *The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers* (University of California Press, 1970); *American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations* (University of California Press, 1983), and *The History of American Foreign Policy* (4th ed., M.E. Sharpe, 2012).

Carol C. Chin is Associate Professor in the Department of History and International Relations Programme at the University of Toronto. She is the author of *The United States, East Asia, and the Idea of Modernity, 1895–1919* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2010). Her current research is on the role of transnational women’s networks in international affairs.


Jason Parker is Associate Professor of History at Texas A&M University. He is the author of *Hearts, Minds, Voices: U.S. Cold War Public Diplomacy and the Formation of the Third World* (New York: Oxford University

Molly M. Wood is professor of history at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. She holds degrees from the University of Virginia, the University of Richmond and a Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina. She has published in the area of gender and U.S. foreign relations history and, more recently, on pedagogy. Publications include “Gender and American Foreign Relations,” in Kara Vuic Dixon, ed., The Routledge Handbook of Gender, War and the U.S. Military (Routledge, forthcoming, 2017); “Teaching Fear and Anxiety in the Cold War, 1945-1989,” in Matthew Masur, ed., Understanding and Teaching the Cold War (University of Wisconsin Press, 2016); “‘Commanding Beauty’ and ‘Gentle Charm’: American Women and Gender in the Early Twentieth Century Foreign Service,” Diplomatic History 31:3 (June 2007): 505-530; and “Diplomatic Wives: The Politics of Domesticity and ‘the Social Game’ in the U.S. Foreign Service, 1905-1941.” Journal of Women’s History 17:2 (June 2005): 142-165. She is completing a book manuscript titled The Informal Politics of Representation: The U.S. Foreign Service and the World, 1890-1940.
The third edition of this very useful volume is a welcome sight. I first encountered *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* in my own grad school days (full disclosure: my Ph.D. advisor was Michael Hogan, and it was in his graduate seminar that I read the first edition of the book.)¹ At that time, we all dutifully studied the orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist ‘schools,’ after which we moved on to what seemed then to be a rich menu of interpretive possibilities: culture, psychology, world systems, and more.

Twenty-five years later, what has changed? In this volume, nine of the twenty-one chapters are to varying degrees, revisions from the second edition.² An additional five are replacements by a different author on the same topic. One-third of the chapters are on entirely new subjects (roughly the same proportion as between the first and second editions); this is the sign of a healthy, vibrant field. It seems likely that when the fourth edition is prepared, a decade or so from now, the editors will incorporate entirely new analytical approaches that are scarcely dreamed of today.

To begin with the revised or replacement chapters:

“Theories of International Relations” by Robert Jervis³ replaces the original essay of the same title by Ole R. Holsti,⁴ both authors coming from the realm of IR/political science. Jervis gives a quick but cogent overview of the three main schools of IR thought: realism, liberalism, and social constructivism, and then goes on to distinguish IR scholarship according to levels of analysis (individuals, the state, and the international system). Although Jervis believes the chapter “fits awkwardly” into the volume (9), it is still useful for graduate students to become conversant with IR methodology.

In “National Security,” Melvyn P. Leffler⁵ argues, as he has since the first edition, that national security—that is, “protect[ing] domestic core values from external threats”—remains at the heart of the field of American foreign relations (25). The biggest change here is that Leffler now extends his analysis backward to the early Republic—an improvement over the previous emphasis on Cold-War national security, and an important deepening of his argument that these core values are central to American national identity. With this

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⁴ Ole R. Holsti, “Theories of International Relations,” in *Explaining the History*, 2nd ed., 51-90.

capacious conception, he states, “the new studies on culture, ideology, modernization, religion, and emotion mesh seamlessly with . . . a national security paradigm” (34-35).

Michael J. Hogan’s “Corporatism: from the new era to the age of development”⁶ is another of the original 1991 topics. Hogan has backed off slightly from his 1991 claim that corporatism “[could create] the first broad conceptual approach to the discipline in nearly thirty years.”⁷ But he still argues that “a corporatist analysis can be part of any effort to synthesize different approaches to the discipline” (52). Yet his own survey of old and new historiography makes it clear that, despite some new work on postwar modernization and economic development policy, few younger scholars have explicitly embraced corporatism as a primary analytical framework.

Nick Cullather has changed his focus from the second edition’s “Modernization Theory” to “Development and Technopolitics,”⁸ providing what is essentially an entirely new chapter. He traces the changes in ‘development’ and “modernization” as concepts and as policies (modernization theory makes a brief appearance here) and then zeroes in on technopolitics. This includes the introduction of material technologies (e.g., the switch from coal to oil) and the deployment of experts and expert knowledge (such as statistical indicators or economic planning). Ultimately, he says, “No aspect of US foreign relations affected so extensively or intimately the daily lives of so many people” (115).

Frederik Logevall’s “Domestic Politics”⁹ replaces the chapter by J. Garry Clifford on “Bureaucratic Politics.”¹⁰ Logevall’s scope is both broader and more diffuse. He builds a case that, in most periods of American history, the president must be cognizant of domestic political pressures when making foreign policy decisions—a point that seems obvious but has not always been the case historiographically. He concludes that scholars who take domestic politics into consideration and use sources beyond government archives “will come closer to what we all in this field seek: the best possible understanding of America’s record in world affairs” (163).

In “The Global Frontier: comparative history and the frontier-borderlands approach,” Nathan J. Citino¹¹ points out that “transnational movements of capital, people, commodities, and ideas” cannot be contained by national borders (169). He traces the expanding scope and methodology of the field of frontier-borderlands history and shows that it can carry foreign relations historians into such realms as western and native American history, migration, cultural encounters, national identity, ethnic and gender politics, and global

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history. This approach, perhaps more than any other, illustrates the limits of state power and American exceptionalism.

Emily S. Rosenberg’s updated essay on “Considering borders”12 might seem to be redundant with Citino’s—and indeed there is some overlap—but there is value in having both essays. Whereas Citino emphasized the West and the U.S.–Mexico borderland (with some mention of Canada), Rosenberg looks at the “explosion of research focusing on contact zones of various kinds” (191). Examples include imperial contact zones beyond the continental United States, oceans as “connectors of cultures and economic pathways” (192), migration, travel, missionaries, sports, and cultural exchange. By broadening the scope to “changing constructions of ‘self’ and ‘other’” (198), Rosenberg sketches out a rich vista of research possibilities in which the word ‘border’ may cease to have any meaning.

Michael H. Hunt has revised his earlier essay on “Ideology” to concentrate on “Nationalism as an Umbrella Ideology.”13 While in 2004 he noted that “resistance remains” among diplomatic historians to the use of ideology as an analytical framework,14 a decade later he can confidently assert that it “is now generally taken for granted by the field.” But since the term has come to embrace nearly everything in the realm of ideas, he proposes nationalism for an “umbrella, integrative role” (218). Defining nationalism as “a cultural movement that includes prominently a political program whose goal is a sovereign state giving expression to core collective values” (220), he makes a persuasive case for the importance of nationalism and national identity. Useful as it may be, however, the rest of the book suggests that the field has moved past the point where there can be such a thing as an umbrella concept.

In a similar refocusing to Hunt’s, Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht has reframed her earlier essay on “Cultural Transfer”15 to focus on “Nation Branding.”16 The old trope of ‘cultural imperialism,’ she says, was shown to be overly simplistic, but the question of the relationship between culture and power remains. One way to get at this is through an examination of cultural policy in the form of nation branding—the deliberate projection of a nation’s self-representation. In this endeavor, however, state marketing has to compete with images produced by non-state actors, both individuals and organizations. Among the many insights offered by this area of study, Gienow-Hecht concludes, is the question of who gets to define the ‘nation’ and “what we mean . . . [by] an ‘inter-national’ relation” (242).


The essay on “Psychology” by Richard H. Immerman now has the added co-author of Lori Helene Gronich. Immerman and Gronich discuss some of the problematic ways that psychology—in the form of psychohistory or psychoanalysis—has been applied in the past. They then go on to outline several more rigorous approaches, drawn from the work of political psychology. Group decisions, cognitive perceptions and motivations, individual or ‘personal’ diplomacy, deterrence, and intelligence are among the many fruitful approaches surveyed here. The authors warn, however, that psychology must be used carefully; “it cannot and must not be used to compensate for a lack of evidence” (347).

In the years since Frank Costigliola’s earlier essay on “Reading for Meaning: Theory, Language, and Metaphor,” the field of emotions studies has advanced significantly, with Costigliola himself one of the notable pioneers of what he calls “Reading for Emotion.” Examining “the thoughts, motivations, and behavior of historical actors” (357) would seem to be an obvious avenue to understand the making of foreign relations, but ‘emotional thinking,’ emotional norms, and the social and cultural evolution of emotions have not typically been part of the foreign relations historian’s toolkit. Thus most of the essay is devoted to explaining how and why emotions and personalities can be mined to illuminate relationships, decisions, and responses. Presumably by the time of the next edition, there will be less need to justify such a mode of analysis and, one hopes, a great deal more work in this rich area to constitute a historiographic survey.

Paul A. Kramer’s “Shades of Sovereignty: racialized power, the United States and the world” replaces the 2004 chapter by Gerald Horne entitled “Race to Insight: The United States and the Worlds, White Supremacy and Foreign Affairs.” Since race as a topic was not included in the 1994 edition, Horne at that time had to bring readers up to speed on the growing literature on the role of race in US foreign policy, pointing out that scholars needed to consider both the concept of ‘race’ and the lived reality of ‘racism.’ Kramer now further complicates the issue by emphasizing “shades” of racialized power instead of simplistic binaries (247) and by pointing out that in the phrase “racialized power,” “race appears . . . as a verb—something actors past and present do to each other” (249). His multifaceted divisions of the topic are too complex to summarize here, but it is safe to say that this chapter provides an extremely important tutorial for graduate students and established scholars alike.

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22 Horne, 323.
“Gendering American Foreign Relations” by Judy Tzu-chun Wu replaces “What’s Gender Got to Do with It? Gender History as Foreign Relations History” by Kristin Hoganson. As her title suggests, Hoganson still felt the need, in 2004, to justify the topic before going on to survey what was then (relatively) new and exciting work in the field. Wu’s chapter has not advanced much theoretically since Hoganson’s, and she spends a great deal of space summarizing a handful of works instead of giving us a comprehensive account of how the field has developed methodologically and historiographically. Among the topics not considered here are women as international politicians and as transnational non-state actors; gender and sexuality within the military; gendered discourse around war, peace, and national identity; non-binary gender identities as international issues; gender and development; gender rights and human rights, to name just a few. Perhaps she meant her chapter as a supplement to Hoganson’s rather than a replacement; in any case, graduate students would be well-advised to read both to get a fuller picture of the many ways to apply a gender lens to the study of foreign relations.

Penny M. Von Eschen’s chapter on “Memory and the Study of US Foreign Relations” replaces one on “Memory and Understanding U.S. Foreign Relations” by Robert D. Schulzinger. Von Eschen begins with the point that “history is never unmediated; it is produced,” (304) and the past is unstable. The production of history/memory, as she calls it, involves forgetting, silencing, and marginalizing as well as remembering. History and memory cannot be separated from media and popular representations, sites of public commemoration, and memory as either trauma or nostalgia. Popular culture includes films and, increasingly, video and online games. (I am sure that I am not the only one to have a student raise his hand—usually his—to share with the class some historical or quasi-historical insight gleaned from playing video games.) In an era of fake news, alternative facts, and distrust of experts, it is more important than ever to pay attention to the production, uses, and misuses of history.

The new chapters represent a mix of new (or relatively new) methodologies and new (or renewed) attention to topics that have been part of the field all along.

Although the study of foreign relations has long included economic factors, Brad Simpson argues in “Explaining Political Economy” that political economy per se has been “seriously neglected.” Defined as “the study of the relationships among business, state, and society as well as those between economics and international politics” (58), this overlaps somewhat with Hogan’s corporatism, and indeed the two chapters cite some of the same historiography. Simpson suggests several avenues into the topic: the world economy

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(including, but not limited to Immanuel Wallerstein’s world-systems theory); multinational corporations; and finance and banking. Although his definition includes the relationship of “society” with the economy and the state, and although he mentions “the agency of ordinary people” (68), there is little consideration here of workers, consumers, or interest groups, to name just a few.

“Diplomatic History after the Big Bang: using computational methods to explore the infinite archive,” by David Allen and Matthew Connelly, is by far the newest entry in the volume, in the sense that back in 2004 the topic was barely on the radar of most members of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. Digital history was not exactly unknown then, but it had made hardly a dent in the study of American foreign relations. It is also one of the most valuable, as it provides a very readable overview of the techniques and applications of digital methods—both for grad students just designing their research plan and for the rest of us who wonder whether to try and acquire such skills. It also raises important questions about access to and preservation of the historical record, of concern to all scholars. The authors express the hope that this chapter will be outdated by the next edition. The methods probably will be, and the available historiography should have burgeoned by then, but the importance of the topic can only increase.

The study of “Nonstate Actors,” which Barbara Keys tackles, is certainly not new—after all, other chapters in the volume already include things like domestic politics, memory and popular culture, corporations, and cultural organizations, as well as aspects of individual motivations such as religion, psychology, emotions, and the senses. But here, acknowledging the unsatisfactory nature of the term “nonstate,” Keys zeroes in on three forms of nonstate institutions—nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and multinational corporations (MNC). In contrast to many of the other chapters, Keys’s spends little time surveying the existing literature on nonstate actors in the study of foreign relations but instead devotes her space to explicating how those nonstate institutions relate to state power. Since the term is a “negative definition,” affirming “the continuing dominance of the state” (121), she raises the very valid question of whether it should become obsolete by the time of the next edition.

In “Legal History as Foreign Relations History,” Mary L. Dudziak argues that law and lawyers matter greatly to the history of U.S. foreign relations. The preponderance of lawyers among past secretaries of state, the recent emphasis on human rights law, the role of law in war and diplomacy, and questions of national boundaries, sovereignty, and citizenship—all these are inarguable examples of the importance of law to foreign relations. Yet she warns that trying to incorporate legal history into one’s work without legal training is “fraught with peril” (145). Dudziak suggests various ways that scholars can gain the necessary expertise, including auditing law school courses, participating in the American Society for Legal History, and so forth. These measures would certainly be helpful to a grad student starting to frame her research questions and

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methodology, but they may also reinforce the reluctance among established scholars to venture on topics requiring legal knowledge, and that would be a pity.

Ussama Makdisi’s essay on “The Privilege of Acting upon Others: The Middle Eastern Exception to Anti-Exceptionalist Histories of the US and the World” provides an extremely important corrective and challenge to the U.S.-centered focus of our discipline. Too often, the problems of linguistic and cultural competence limit scholars’ ability to get away from U.S.-centered narratives and achieve a truly global perspective. Even those who style themselves as studying “the US and the world” or “transnational history,” he charges, are still guilty of writing and thinking from a U.S.-centered standpoint, of “exercis[ing] . . . the American privilege of acting upon and writing about others” (205). Part of the remedy requires a deep immersion in foreign languages and cultures and a thorough knowledge of not only primary sources but the secondary literature written by scholars in that language. Makdisi cites the particular example of the Middle East, where knowledge of Arabic is still not universal among those who write about U.S. involvement in the region, even as the “power, stakes and nature of US empire today” are more acute than anywhere else, and where the need for well-informed, non-orientalist work is critical (206). Another key, he argues, is “more humility” among those who claim to be writing transnational history (210). This chapter, more than any other in the book, should be required reading for all historians of American involvement in the world.

Andrew Preston’s chapter on “The Religious Turn in Diplomatic History” poses the question of why religion has been a relatively neglected topic in foreign relations history. He characterizes the “religious turn” as having begun around the turn of this century (and especially after 9/11). Religion, he says, is a slippery concept to define, and the tendency of diplomatic historians to equate secularism and modernity means that diplomatic historians tend “not to take people of the past . . . at face value” when they express religious beliefs (291). As to the question of whether religious beliefs can actually motivate actions, he reminds us that ideas, like any other factor, are but one element in a complex of decision-making factors. Ultimately, this chapter raises as many questions as it answers, suggesting there is much more work to be done in this area.

While most of the other chapters are primarily focused on historiography or methodology, Andrew J. Rotter’s essay on “The Senses” takes a case-study approach. A brief introduction establishes the importance of sensory analysis, especially for foreign relations history; he points out that “Encounters with the unfamiliar often inspire the most powerful sensory and emotional reactions” (318). He then proceeds to give examples of Americans’ reactions to the sights, sounds, smells, touches/feeling, and tastes that they encountered in the Philippines between 1898 and 1946. He shows that their reactions—from initial revulsion to gradual approval of the Filipinos’ “progress”—were closely tied to their efforts to “civilize” the local population to make them eligible for eventual self-government. The quotes from missionaries, educators, and officials are thoroughly convincing (and often entertaining), but one would have liked to see more in the way of analytical “lessons.” His concluding paragraphs about “how . . . [to] go about researching the senses” (329) have an

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almost cursory feel. He could have cut some of his Philippine examples and given more space to showing grad students and others how to engage in this kind of research.

Conclusion

In their introduction, Costigliolia and Hogan note that the study of U.S. foreign relations has become “more variegated and sophisticated . . . [and] has moved away from the kind of over-arching synthesis achieved in earlier decades” (2). As we have seen, the field has not completely moved away from claims of synthesis on behalf of one approach or another, but most scholars now seem to welcome the diversity of methodologies, subjects, and approaches that this volume amply illustrates. It is indeed a sign of an intellectually healthy and vibrant field.
Historians of American foreign relations owe a debt of gratitude to the editors of the third volume of *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* and to the many scholars who contributed to the book. The collection admirably demonstrates the methodological and theoretical vibrancy of the field, and it does so by presenting cogent introductions to a wide array of interpretive approaches. Seasoned scholars and novices alike will benefit from the informed discussions of past and present perspectives, the rich historiographic treatments that inform articles, and the copious footnotes that guide readers to further scholarship. The volume invites thoughtful reflection not only on the current state of the discipline, but also on its future direction and taxonomy, given the emergent perspective that “American foreign relations”—notwithstanding the title of the book—is dated nomenclature for a field that increasingly rejects the nation-state as a locus of analysis and that labors to elucidate the multitude of factors that condition power relationships in the world.

Editors Frank Costigliola and Michael J. Hogan observe in their introduction that the preponderance of entries fall into two broad categories: those that consider “tangible” systems and structures of power (such as states, firms, Non Governmental Organizations [NGOs], legal systems, or transnational economic regimes) and those dealing with “constructed meaning” (culture, ideology, race, gender, religion, memory, psychology, the emotions, and the human senses).1 Essays give relative weight to one or the other approach, but the scholars in this book uniformly acknowledge that formal structures and constructed meanings exist symbiotically and that historians cannot hope to attain a nuanced appreciation of the past without recognition of this interplay.

That said, the volume emphasizes constructed meaning most heavily, and while this tilt accurately represents a broader shift of focus, it also signals epistemological disaggregation within the field at large. The cultural and linguistic turn is intrinsically decentering. Its greatest value lies in its appreciation of power’s hidden workings and in its capacity to elucidate power’s unexpected manifestations. Because power is everywhere, and because systems of power (political, institutional, cultural, social, linguistic, symbolic, imagined, and real) infinitely intersect, scholars may start and end studies of power along any point. This is intellectually liberating, and it seems more consistent with the messy complexity of the past we seek to comprehend. It is also more in keeping with the field’s growing recognition that myriad actors and forces, not just states, have historically shaped power dynamics in the world, and that the privileging of the nation as the unit of analysis prevents us from fully appreciating the intricacies of the global arena.

But if the nation-state is decreasingly central to the study of power in the world—if, as Barbara J. Keys notes in her essay “Nonstate Actors,” there is an ongoing “shift in the field away from scholarly preoccupations with state-to state relations” in favor of the recognition that “state power is but one of the drivers of foreign affairs”—are we also moving away from “American international history” as well as “American foreign relations” as descriptors of our field?2 If, as Ussama Makdisi astutely observes, we collectively sanction the

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American exceptionalist framework every time we frame our discussions in terms of the “United States and _____” (the world, the Middle East, Europe, the problem of X), what options are available to us? How do we do justice to the sophistication of our work—embrace the decentering, in all its messy glory—without dissolving entirely into the wider humanities and social science matrix? Are we, in other words, still a field? Should we be? If so, how should we imagine and represent ourselves, tangibly, to the wider world?

The volume’s editors suggest that the discipline does remain coherent, that despite centrifugal momentum, a cluster of core concerns unites us. All participants, Costigliola and Hogan write, recognize “contingency and diversity in human affairs, the subjectivity of belief, and the historicity of tradition.” All, moreover, have a “solid grounding in the analysis of . . . power in world affairs.” The global perspective and the focus on power relationships are both essential to the craft. These have, from the outset, anchored our discipline, and their centrality here ensures continuity with the past and the future of the field.

The nation-state, in any case, is hardly invisible in this collection of essays. Robert Jervis’s useful overview of international relations theory takes states seriously as units of analysis even as it acknowledges that the common practice of “searching on the dependent variable” complicates notions of causation. Melvyn P. Leffler’s “national security” and Michael J. Hogan’s “corporatism” models conceptualize foreign policy at the intersection of domestic and overseas concerns and thus validate the nation as an integrative unit of analysis. Brad Simpson’s immensely readable and important essay on political economy, and Nick Cullather’s equally valuable contribution on development, likewise depict the variety of actors that have historically shaped American economic ventures in the world while illuminating how U.S. policy advanced these endeavors. Mary L. Dudziak reminds us that the law serves at once as a “tool” of interest and as a “constitutive force” that “creates and structures future opportunities” for the exercise of state and social power. Fredrik Logevall’s treatment of domestic politics, and Michael H. Hunt’s consideration of “nationalism” as an animating American ideology, both employ the nation-state as a framework for analysis. Jessica Gienow-Hecht’s consideration of how, since the nineteenth century, the “nation” has increasingly become a “brand product,” and her urging of historians to conceptualize countries’ external and internal representation in relation to the

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4 Costigliola and Hogan, “Introduction,” 2.

5 Robert Jervis, “Theories of International Relations,” in Costigliola and Hogan, Explaining, 21.


8 Mary L. Dudziak, “Legal History as Foreign Relations History,” in Costigliola and Hogan, Explaining, 143.

enterprise of global marketing, similarly reflects an urge to push beyond traditional interpretations while acknowledging the salience of the nation as a site of action and analysis.\textsuperscript{10} David Allen and Matthew Connelly’s essay “Diplomatic History after the Big Bang” shows how computational innovation in the digital age casts new light on U.S. policymaking from the eighteenth century to the present, an endeavor that presumes continued scholarly interest in the official records.\textsuperscript{11}

It could be argued, in light of these contributions, that American foreign relations is alive and well. The field has not jettisoned the nation-state, nor is there a danger of this happening any time soon. What has occurred instead is that imaginative scholars have struck a balance between prior historiographic preoccupations with political, military, and economic ambitions and more recent attentiveness to culture as a conditioning force. This is as it should be in the profession: each generation builds upon those that came before, blending older and newer perspectives, shaping a fresh conception of the past, as well as the present.

Yet even as some contributors legitimize the state as a reference point, others put “methodological nationalism” more squarely on the defensive.\textsuperscript{12} Frank Costigliola, Andrew Rotter, and Richard H. Immerman and Lori Helene Gronich focus on the role that emotion, the senses, and psychology respectively play in shaping conceptions of the world, and they thereby reveal as flawed the notion of the state as a rationalist entity.\textsuperscript{13} Penny M. Von Eschen’s essay “Memory and the Study of US Foreign Relations” similarly exposes premises that diplomatic historians tend to take for granted: that certain events occurred relationally, for instance, or that some kinds of sources (government archival) are more appropriate than others (popular media) for uncovering the past and its meaning. “Broadening one’s historical frame and archives transforms the fundamental temporal and spatial assumptions of scholars about global war and foreign policy” and challenges historians to recognize the intertextuality of history and memory.\textsuperscript{14} The invented categories of race, gender, and religion examined by Paul A. Kramer, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, and Andrew Preston have historically informed American-global interchanges in ways that scholars have grown to appreciate; but increasingly, as these historians show, policymaking itself is less the story than is the entangled web of systemic, discursive, and material power that informs unequal relationships in the world.\textsuperscript{15}

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Keys, Nathan J. Citino, and Emily S. Rosenberg further demonstrate that the “periphery” is “moving to the center of scholarly attention” and displacing traditional structures of analysis. Keys shows that the interest in non-state actors since the 1970s functions to “de-privilege the nation as the primary ‘container’ of history” and challenges conventional chronologies—for instance, of the Cold War—by revealing that “many trends and developments arose or accelerated . . . quite independently” of state competition. Citino shows that recent histories of contested U.S. borderland regions illustrate how “transnational movements of labor, goods, and capital helped to define state economies, foreign policies, and political identities”; yet the greatest value of the borderlands approach lies in its potential to de-exceptionalize the history of the American nation through comparative study with other frontier societies in world history. Rosenberg agrees. She urges scholars to “interrogat[e] . . . borders of all kinds,” and she appreciatively discusses how such diverse approaches as postcolonial studies, contact-zones research, borderlands history, transnational studies, and various manifestations of the “cultural turn” have eroded “the saliency of modernist categories and assumptions about the writing of history” and revolutionized our understanding of self and other. Rosenberg deems the moniker “America and the World” superior to “American foreign relations” as a descriptor for an increasingly rich and diverse field that has moved far from its former preoccupation with states and state actors, narrowly defined, in favor of a much more “capacious” engagement with power in the world.

Makdisi, however, critiques the “US and the World” label and questions the authenticity of the field’s purported “transnational turn.” This label, he states, “suggests its own contradiction” by setting up a “dyad” that implies at once both “parity” and “distance.” While the purpose of the dyad is “to encourage an anti-exceptionalist historiography that presumably rejects the nationalist myths that remain central to how the United States officially represents itself,” the pairing does the reverse by reinforcing “the presumptive archival and historiographical hegemony of the American component” of the relationship. Though well-intentioned, many “US diplomatic historians and graduate students jump on the transnational bandwagon” only to perpetuate an “obsessive fixation with American actors, American machinations, American figures, American historiography and American representations. . . At what point is the fetish of ‘transnational’ history in danger of becoming, for all its genuinely critical underpinnings, yet another exercise in the American privilege of acting upon and writing about others?”

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17 Keys, 121 and 129.


19 Emily S. Rosenberg, “Considering Borders,” in Costigliola and Hogan, Explaining, 188.

20 Rosenberg, 198.

21 Makdisi, “Privilege,” 203.

22 Makdisi, 203 and 205.
Makdisi’s points are compelling, and his corollary arguments—that we need *more* immersion in languages other than English, *more* understanding of diverse world histories and cultures, *more* engagement with people and places beyond the Euro-American circuit, *more* testing of boundaries and borders in every sense, in order to approximate anything close to an authentic understanding of cross-cultural, cross-national, cross-regional interaction—seem uncontestable. That the scholars who seem be doing transnational history most successfully are “not those formally trained in American Studies or US foreign relations” but rather those who are deeply familiar with non-American themes, historiographies, and perspectives” underscores Makdisi’s point that if practitioners want to be truly transnational in scope, they must, once and for all, become “delinked from a nationalist subjectivity—from a sense of primary identification with America”—and embrace the decentering that is a necessary precondition to insight.23

But *do* we want to give up the U.S. modifier altogether? Is a complete delinkage from the nation possible, given the training, resources, time, and money needed to produce authentic, immersion-based transnational history as Makdisi defines it? Is such a scenario even desirable given the current configuration of the discipline within the American academy? The reality is that although some of the best work in the field comes from scholars at major research universities that have been at the forefront of reimagining the discipline, most historians ultimately end up working at small teaching colleges that delimit faculty lines according to traditional geographic and chronological categories. Defining the field as ‘American foreign relations,’ ‘U.S. international history’, or ‘America and the World’ gives practitioners a certain place in the academy. We are, above all, Americanists; we can teach the U.S. survey, as well as more specialized courses; we are easy to recognize; we are easy to describe; we fit into the curriculum. But if ‘the United States and the World’ goes away, what replaces it? If ‘transnational history’ is not an exact fit, what works better? If American foreign relations disappears, who will hire us?

These are not specious questions. The first edition of *Explaining* (1991) aimed to counter stereotypes of the discipline as a scholarly ‘backwater’ not only to showcase the vibrancy of the field in its own right, but also to emphasize its continued relevance at a time when departments had increasingly stopped replacing diplomatic historians.24 Practitioners today are more multilingual than ever; they are more trained in cross-disciplinary methods; they are more sensitive to culture, gender, ideology, race, and other conditioning variants; they are more critical of exceptionalist tropes; they are more open to border-crossing, boundary-testing, and decentering approaches. In short, they are less explicitly ‘political’ and more methodologically and thematically innovative than at any point in the field’s history. Yet, as a recent report of the American Historical Association shows, “diplomatic/international history” has experienced a continued downward trajectory in the academy, with the total share of dedicated specialists dropping from around 7% in 1975, to around 5% in the 1990s, to under 3% as of 2015.25 We have responded favorably to criticism of the field; we

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23 Makdisi, 205.


25 Robert B. Townshend, “The Rise and Decline of History Specializations over the Past 40 Years,” *Perspectives on History: The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association* (December 2015) at
have invited many gardeners into our greenhouse; we have let a thousand flowers bloom; and the discipline’s standing seems less assured than ever. The ironic consequence of diversifying even further, of expanding ever wider our already elastic parameters, is that we may end up doing the work of skeptics for them, by collapsing the field so completely into the surrounding disciplines that there is little left to define us in common or to give us a distinctive purpose or place. This is not just an issue of jobs but of intellectual vocation. Do we still think that ‘American foreign relations’ or ‘U.S. and the World’ has something to offer the next generation of students? Do we think the imperial history of the United States is a story that should continue to be told, even if it has the effect of “naturalizing the nation” to a certain extent?26 Do we believe that there is something unique or valuable about the way we study power in the world? Or, has the time has come not just for our field, but for the historical discipline collectively, to recognize that the age of the nation-state may be passing and to adapt our profession to this reality in name as well as in practice?

I offer more questions than answers, in keeping with the field’s best tradition of open inquiry and exchange. The challenges raised by Makdisi and other contributors attest to the book’s success at stimulating contemplation about the field and its future. I thank the editors of H-Diplo for providing a forum for considering the purpose of our enterprise. I embrace the opportunity to hear others’ views about the contours of our discipline and to hear of possible alternatives for addressing twenty-first century concerns.

The arrival of the third edition of Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations elicits multiple twinges, especially for those for whom the 1991 original edition was among the very first books read in graduate school. Excitement, curiosity, nostalgia—and flummoxed woe at all the time that has passed since then—cascade in turn as one thinks back to that first encounter. The first edition represented an early reply to the Charles Maier challenge of 1980—‘marking time’ and all that—with some outstanding chapters by Robert McMahon, Emily Rosenberg, Thomas Paterson, and Akira Iriye, among others. These made a prospective case that the tools, methods, and approaches were in hand or in view to invigorate the field. Yet many if not most of that valuable volume’s chapters amounted more to defenses of various ‘classic’ approaches, drawn heavily from political science and international-relations theory, than to explorations of new ones. In retrospect, its reason for being was thus in a sense at odds with many of its constituent parts: claiming to have heard the ‘marking time’ challenge and pursuing new and innovative paths in reply, many chapters nonetheless hewed to more traditional dynamics and dimensions of international affairs.

If the first edition was thus on balance ‘defensive’—in both senses of the term—the third edition goes confidently on offense. It adds to the by-now copious body of evidence that, whatever the shortcomings in marketing our work to fellow historians in other fields, our guild has more than answered Maier’s call. While the third edition does remain rooted in some of the classic or traditional approaches to the field, to an even greater extent than the preceding two volumes it ventures outward into more recently-minted ones. Some of these have an especially ambitious, experimental, and promising air. These are not without methodological risk. For while the field can claim to have moved in step with—indeed, arguably even to have helped to lead—the larger profession’s international/transnational and cultural turns, it is less certain that every new intellectual innovation that comes along can ultimately be made to fit our archival and explanatory needs. The third edition, more future- than present-oriented and more outward- than backward- or sideways-looking than its antecedents, suggests that this will not be for lack of trying.

In this sense, the book as a whole wrestles with the question of its mission, as do many volumes of this sort. Is it meant to present the ‘state of the field?’ Is it rather to predict what ideas, topics, and approaches will be most influential in years to come as we adopt and integrate them? Or is it a sort of hybrid of both? Explaining Mark-3 is the last of these, though it leans toward the second. The book includes strong chapters by Robert Jervis, Melvyn Leffler, and Michael Hogan on international-relations theory, national security, and corporatism respectively among the longest-standing interpretive templates of the field. These are updated in tune with recent scholarship and events that may at first glance fit uneasily into their traditional molds. Leffler, for example, incorporates religion, development, and ideology under a national-security umbrella whose “synthetic qualities” enable it to shelter new versions of either or both external threats and internal

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He draws his analysis through 9/11 to the present day, in which Americans are once again debating how best to protect core values from asymmetric, shape-shifting threats abroad. These chapters, along with Bradley Simpson’s on political economy, offer theoretically scalable frameworks to encompass such new concerns.3 Pangs of skepticism develop every so often—even approaches as adaptable as these come across the occasional square peg or round hole, based as they are on more traditional modes of power and strategy—but positioned at the beginning of the volume they present a fine platform for the more targeted, thematic chapters to follow.

These run a fascinating gamut. This, in turn, illustrates the volume’s predictive bent. Some of these identify future challenges, a number of which are as much logistical as interpretive in nature. David Allen and Matthew Connelly offer a chilling look at the archival/data flood sure to come as our subjects themselves enter the age of massive quantities of ‘born digital’ records, and of scholars’ consequent need to use data-crunching tools to keep up.4 This has surely crossed many of our minds, especially after research-trip conversations with archivists frantically seeking solutions to this conundrum—and its particular nature and gravity as presented here ring ominously true, and set it somewhat apart from other obstacles the field will face. Other chapters, such as that by Barbara Keys, confirm the arrival of diverse non-state actors whose presence has marked the literature for a decade or more, and whose potential to continue doing so is formidable.5 Still others come across as daring and innovative, if still as yet somewhere in the conceptual or developmental stages.

Pondering just how these chapters fit together to serve the volume’s hybrid mission and its forward-looking orientation prompts a number of reflections. Among these is the uneven incorporation of the themes—some vastly more than others—herein into U.S. foreign relations literature. Nathan Citino’s piece on borderlands historiography, or Fredrik Logevall’s on domestic politics, for example, describe ideas and approaches seemingly fully absorbed into our historiographical bloodstream.6 Another reflection is the extent to which certain of the themes in these chapters spill over into one another. This is by no means a flaw, and in any case it can hardly be helped. It offers, among other things, fodder for productive seminar discussions parsing the thematic continua of Logevall-Simpson-Nick Cullather (domestic politics-political economy-development), or of Citino-Emily Rosenberg-Michael Hunt-Jessica Gienow-Hecht (borderlands-borders-nationalism-‘nation branding’), or the ways that Andrew Preston-Paul Kramer-Judy Tzu-Chun Wu (religion-race-gender) shoot through all of the above.7

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5 Barbara Keys, “Nonstate Actors,” 119-134.


For all of the waterfront that these chapters cover, however, they bring two other reflections to mind. As pronounced as the international/transnational and cultural turns have been, some in our guild still, perhaps somewhat reflexively, define ourselves as specializing in “U.S.-[country] or -area” relations—a vestigial trait whose relative absence here is therefore striking. The framework of bilateral geographies is found explicitly only in Ussama Makdisi’s chapter on U.S.-Mideast relations, where it serves principally to make a larger, transcendent point about American exceptionalism. Neither this third volume nor its predecessors foreground a bilateral-geographical taxonomy, privileging instead approaches that are in theory applicable to any such regional or axial relationship. But it is an interesting feature nonetheless given those inherited and enduring parameters of our studies.

Equally interesting, and here more a presence than an absence, are the points of interdisciplinary contact. These yield rich dividends, and promise more to come. As noted, our closest cousin in political science-international relations is well-represented, starring in its own chapter and prominently guest-starring in a number of others. Mary Dudziak’s excellent chapter on legal history lays out the ways that scholars like Kate Unterman are using that underutilized lens to examine thorny issues at the heart of modern international affairs: citizenship, sovereignty, authority, legitimacy, borders, and belonging, to name a few. Preston on religion, read alongside the volume’s most adventuresome chapters—Andrew Rotter on the senses, Frank Costigliola on emotion, Penny Von Eschen on memory, and Richard Immerman and Lori Helen Gronich on psychology (the latter two of these topics making a repeat appearance)—points to the gains to be made from understanding the interior lives of actors on the global stage. In this, they join the ongoing rethink in the cognitive sciences about the role of the ‘rational mind’ in human affairs—an inquiry whose potential consequences for our discipline’s interpretive matrix, originally centered on actors rationally calculating their interests, is perhaps greater than any save economics. Future editions might reap similar insights from chapters replicating this interdisciplinary openness with other fields less visible here. Communications, media, and network studies come to mind, as do anthropology, sociology, and of course area-studies specialists with whose work many of us have long been mutually working to integrate.

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The combined impact of the international/transnational and cultural turns helped to push many of these doors open, as *Explaining* makes clear both by what it includes and what it does not. The implications for the field are exciting, raising questions about the questions we will find our future selves debating. Notwithstanding the older and heated debates about the origins of the Cold War in a guild historically preoccupied with that conflict, there were in retrospect areas of basic agreement—above all on the central importance of superpower actions. Now that we have diffused agency broadly, infused culture widely, and demoted both the superpowers and the nation-state in much of our scholarship, one wonders what the fourth edition of *Explaining* will look like. Will it find that the ‘experimental’ chapters of this volume have achieved staying power? Will it lean rather toward topics—human rights, for example, or decolonization—that can themselves bridge several third-edition chapters at once, and perhaps re-periodize our subjects to boot? (Will the fourth edition still include the phrase ‘American Foreign Relations’ in its title?) Whatever the answers, there is little doubt that *Explaining* deserves to remain among the very first books that incoming graduate cohorts read and discuss. Along with the 2009 Tom Zeiler *et al.* forum in the *Journal of American History*, it shows the depth, vivacity, and inventiveness of the field.**12** It serves well as an inspection of our field’s toolbox—leaving up to the collective readership now and tomorrow to decide what it will be used to build.

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Twenty-five years after the publication of *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* in 1991, co-edited by Michael Hogan and Thomas Paterson, the eagerly anticipated third edition has now appeared (the second edition was published in 2004). Co-editors of the third edition Hogan and Frank Costigliola describe the new edition as an effort 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 U.S. history.”¹ They remind readers in their introduction that *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* began, initially, as a unique but somewhat defensive response to criticisms that foreign relations history was resistant to new topics and inventive methodologies and lagged far behind other sub-fields of U.S. history in overall relevance. Now, as evidenced by this collection and emphasized by the co-editors, foreign relations history is a diverse and methodologically innovative field that still maintains “solid grounding in the analysis of political, economic, cultural and military power in world affairs” (2).

The 2004 second edition consisted of twenty chapters plus a brief introduction while the third edition contains twenty-one chapters plus a fuller chapter-length introduction. The third edition features six women scholars, as opposed to three in the second edition. Authorship is also more diverse in the third edition in other ways. Twelve authors (Robert Jervis, Brad Simpson, David Allen and Matthew Connelly, Barbara Keys, Mary Dudziak, Fredrik Logevall, Usama Makdisi, Paul Kramer, Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Andrew Preston and Lori Helene Gronich) appear for the first time and more mid-career scholars are included.

The editors organize the twenty diverse content chapters into two large groups, those that emphasize “tangible structures” of power and those that prioritize “constructed meanings” (2). In the first group, Robert Jervis contributes a newly formulated overview of “Theories of International Relations,” followed by Melvyn Leffler’s updated chapter on “National Security” and Hogan’s updated chapter on “Corporatism.” Others in this first group highlight “the political and cultural implications” of institutions and borders over the more traditional topics covered by U.S. foreign relations historians. David Allen and Matthew Connelly follow Brad Simpson’s new chapter on “Explaining Political Economy,” with their innovative and timely chapter on “Using Computational Methods to Explore the Infinite Archive.” Nick Cullather writes in the third edition about “Development and Technopolitics” and Barbara Keys, Mary Dudziak, and Fredrik Logevall provide new chapters on “Non-State Actors,” “Legal History as Foreign Relations History” and “Domestic Politics,” respectively. Nathan Citino, Emily Rosenberg, and Usama Makdisi consider various borders in their respective chapters on “The Global Frontier,” “Considering Borders,” and “The Privilege of Acting Upon Others: The Middle Eastern Exception to Anti-Exceptionalist Histories of the U.S. and the World.”


provide chapters on two topics new to the third edition, “The Religious Turn in Diplomatic History” and “The Senses,” respectively, while Penny M. Von Eschen covers “Memory and the Study of U.S. Foreign Relations.” Finally Richard Immerman and Lori Helene Gronich update Immerman’s overview of “Psychology” and Costigliola updates his analysis of “Emotion.”

In more depth:

Robert Jervis tackles the daunting task (as he describes it) of explaining International Relations scholarship. He chooses to focus on the sub-topic of international security as the most relevant and the one that overlaps most with U.S. foreign relations history. He organizes his chapter into discrete sections, first on major theoretical approaches to international relations (realism, liberalism, and social constructivism) and second, according to levels of analysis (individual, state/domestic politics, and international systems). Melvyn Leffler also writes about the topic of security issues in his updated chapter on national security. He emphasizes the importance of national security policy history for understanding the various responses necessary for meeting external threats to American interests. National security policy history, he believes, provides a “comprehensive framework” which “allows for diverse interpretations in particular periods and contexts” because it encourages interrogation of both “foreign and domestic factors in shaping policies (25).” Likewise, Michael Hogan reprises his chapter on corporatism, which also appeared in the first and second editions. Hogan emphasizes the usefulness of corporatism as an “analytical device” for seeing “the connections between U.S. foreign relations and the nature of the modern state, the process of political alignment and realignment, and the economic, social, and organizational forces at work in national and world economies” (52).

The editors describe the next six chapters as those which focus on the “political and cultural implications” of institutions (2). Brad Simpson makes the case that political economy, which he defines as “the study of the relationships among business, state and society as well as between economics and international politics,” remains overlooked by most historians of U.S. foreign relations despite its value for understanding international relationships of power. David Allen and Matthew Connelly, in their new chapter on computational methods and digital history, outline some of the ways in which topics such as political economy and other international relations/foreign relations subjects will need to be researched and analyzed in the future. In his chapter on “Development and Technopolitics,” Nick Cullather highlights the importance of American visions and policies on international development, humanitarian, and technical assistance.

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5 Brad Simpson, “Explaining the Political Economy,” 58.

projects around the world. Barbara Keys addresses a “dizzying” array of non-state actors relevant for scholars of U.S. foreign relations, and therefore limits her chapter to the “methodological issues” involved in studying three important examples of non-state actors: NGOs, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and multinational corporations.

Like Simpson on political economy, Mary Dudziak finds that legal history has been largely left out of scholarship on U.S. foreign relations history. Through the lens of human rights history, she shows how law is already relevant to foreign relations history in a variety of ways, including as “a tool in international affairs” or as a “legitimizing force.” Fredrik Logevall, in his chapter on domestic politics, urges foreign policy scholars, increasingly pulled towards transnational and international perspectives, not to neglect what he calls “the internal sources of a state’s external behavior.” After all, it is elected officials and political appointees who make the foreign policy decisions that remain a key element of diplomatic history.

Three scholars featured in this collection deal explicitly with “borders” in U.S. foreign relations history. Nathan Citino emphasizes global frontiers, or the conceptualization of U.S. foreign relations history as part of understanding what is usually now called “the U.S. and (or in?) the World.” His perspective on this analytical framework is highly comparative and grows directly from the vibrant subfield of borderlands/frontier history. It is useful for understanding such topics as national identity, migrations, and cross-cultural contact. Emily Rosenberg, whose 1991 chapter in Explaining introduced gender to many diplomatic historians for the first time, including those of us who attended graduate school in the mid-1990s, continues to define “borders” more broadly and creatively, as “those spaces at which different systems of meaning and organization intersect.” She identifies and covers in this chapter three different kinds of borders: contact zones, transnational interactions, and disciplinary borders relating to the ‘cultural turn’ in historical scholarship. Ussama Makdisi also addresses disciplinary borders, explicitly taking on the contradictions of transnational history recognized now by the increasingly ubiquitous ‘U.S. and the World’ label, with explicit focus on the study of the U.S. and the Middle East. He identifies three main categories of analysis for this example of transnational scholarship: scholars of American literature or American Studies

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8 Barbara Keys, “Nonstate Actors,” 120.


who have focused on American representations of the Middle East; scholars more traditionally grounded in U.S. Foreign Relations; and scholars trained either outside the U.S. and/or outside of the field of U.S. Foreign Relations.

Hogan and Costigliola identify the scholars in the second half of the third edition as those who focus more on “constructed meanings” rather than “tangible structures” (2). Michael Hunt reprises his chapter on ideology, which also appeared in both the first and second editions, but from a new perspective. He acknowledges that ideology, and the importance of ideas for constructing meaning, has been long accepted as a valid framework for analysis of foreign relations history. But as he admits, the success of ideological approaches has resulted in a potentially unending “proliferation of ideological constructs” (218) that are valid and useful for studying foreign relations and international history. Hunt therefore suggests that nationalism can serve as an “umbrella” ideology, a useful framework, or “interpretive device,” (218) for understanding American interactions with the rest of the world. As a powerful sense of identity, it can help us understand how to place the U.S. in a global context, and also how Americans define the “dangerous other” (221). Jessica Gienow-Hecht also addresses the nation in her chapter, identifying some of the challenges scholars of international history face in the wake of the ‘cultural turn.’ She suggests that analyses of “nation branding” may help scholars understand better “the complexity in the exercise of, and longing for, influence as well as in the organization and marketing of power and power aspirations” (233).

Paul Kramer analyzes a variety of modes of scholarship on race, U.S. foreign relations history, and international history, emphasizing race as an important component of power relations. Judy Tzu-Chun Wu’s chapter on gender builds on the work of both Emily Rosenberg and Kristin Hoganson in the first and second editions of Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, by emphasizing intersectional analysis. Wu highlights three examples: the intersections between the military as an institution and a cultural force with a variety of sexual practices; gender and the global economy, focusing on women as producers of global goods; and migrations of women. Andrew Preston contributes a chapter on religion and diplomatic history, one of the newest subjects of inquiry in the scholarship on U.S. foreign relations. Usefully, for such a new sub-field, he provides an overview of relevant literature, mainly from the last ten years. He also acknowledges the many challenges of incorporating religion into the historical scholarship, not the least of which is the lack of a globally consistent understanding of what, exactly, ‘religion’ is or means. Yet like other scholars featured in this collection, he argues forcefully for the relevance and significance of internal “mental forces,” such as religion for understanding foreign relations decision-making. In her chapter on the relationship between history and memory studies, Penny Von Eschen calls on scholars to remember the “silences” of the past and


to be willing to go far afield of the traditional diplomatic archives for source material. She applauds the internationalization of the sub-field of memory studies, a trend making it even more relevant for foreign relations historians. She also emphasizes the importance of intertextuality for linking foreign relations history and memory, highlighting the need to interrogate a variety of sources from popular culture, literature, politics, film, and media, etc.

The last three chapters each reflect on methods of interpretation that recognize historical actors as flawed and imperfect human beings variously affected by sensory stimuli, cognitive processes, and emotion. Andrew Rotter introduces analysis of the physical senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, touching/feeling, as a category of analysis for better understanding various kinds of “encounters” between people and/or nations and different kinds of “negotiated hegemonies.” In his chapter he provides a detailed analysis of a specific case study, that of the U.S. Empire in the Philippines from 1898 to 1946. He concludes that understanding the senses is relevant for U.S. foreign relations history more generally as part of the “cultural entanglement” in which all human beings, including policymakers, engage. “Relations between people and nations,” he explains, “are experiential, embodied” (329). Richard Immerman and Lori Helene Gronich address the “complex relationship between psychological approaches and the history of American foreign relations.” The authors explore how new developments in psychology have opened up new possibilities for foreign relations historians to analyze the personalities of decision-makers, the impact of stress and anxiety on officials, “group decisions,” and the ways in which cognitive processes lead to assumptions and perceptions that can influence policy-making. Linking psychology with U.S. foreign relations history, they conclude, helps to explain “how people make sense out of the complex world in which they live” (340). Frank Costigliola, in the third edition’s final chapter, lays out the argument for using emotions as a category of analysis for foreign relations history and emphasizes the importance of “looking at human motivation and behavior from the inside out.” While emotions remain “elusive,” difficult to define, and challenging to identify in the words and actions of historical figures, he contends that close textual analysis and a willingness to consider such source material as descriptions of behaviors, gestures and expressions, for example, will enable historians to overcome some of the inherent challenges in analyzing emotion.

There are, of course, relevant changes in content in the third edition of Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, reflecting the ongoing evolution of the field over the past decade. “Dependency,” “World Systems,” and “Modernization” are gone, or partially subsumed within other chapters such as Cullather’s chapter on “Development.” “Bureaucratic Politics” is also gone, but there are two new chapters on “Political Economy” and “Domestic Politics.” “Non-State Actors” and human rights (as part of the chapter on legal history) are covered for the first time, as are “Computational Methods.” But the biggest change represents the influence of the “cultural turn” in foreign relations history specifically and in history more generally, resulting in entirely new chapters on religion, “nation branding,” emotion and the senses, as well as significant updates

20 Richard Immerman and Lori Helene Gronich, Psychology,” 334.
21 Frank Costigliola, “Reading for Emotions,” 357.
to chapters on gender, frontiers/borders, race, memory, psychology, and ideology, all topics, frameworks and/or categories of analysis strongly influenced by the “cultural turn.”

Publishers and editors of a 4th edition will have to decide whether or not the next Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations will need to be issued as a two-volume work, or how to introduce new chapters or new approaches within an appropriate one-volume length. Or, perhaps historians of American foreign relations (international history, transnational history, and/or the U.S. and the World), ten or twelve years from now, will no longer feel the need to even attempt to collect, in one place, such a collection. But I think that they will, acknowledging both the inevitable limits of such a venture, and also its value. By placing these chapters into one volume, the editors continue to encourage a valuable virtual conversation among the authors and among the readers. The special roundtables and forums published in the journal Diplomatic History have served as an accurate indicator of the new chapters that have been added since the 2nd edition. If we follow form, a 4th new edition could and should include chapters on Environmental History and U.S. foreign relations, Sport and International Diplomacy, History of Children/Childhood and foreign relations history, Labor history and foreign relations history, and/or Music and Diplomacy. The Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations experiment, begun in 1991, remains a useful and unique work of scholarship—part reference work, part historiographical overview, part methodological primer, part history of the field as a whole—but more than just a ‘state of the field’ collection.
Like articles in Diplomatic History and panels at the annual conference of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) in recent years, the third edition of Explaining American Foreign Relations History reflects a notable strength of our field: respect for traditional approaches coupled with readiness to welcome new insights and methodologies. As editors, we deeply appreciate that thoughtful scholars like Carol China, Jerold Coombs, Deborah Kisatsky, Jason Parker, and Molly Wood have offered such perceptive comments on our book. Like the reviewers and like many readers, we also associate each of the three editions with stages in our intellectual trajectories, professional careers, and even personal lives. Not surprisingly, for many of us the reactions have been emotional as well as intellectual. As Parker describes it, the publication of a new edition has sparked “excitement, curiosity, nostalgia, and flummoxed woe at all the time that has passed.” For Chin, Kisatsky, and Wood, as well as for the many readers who began graduate school in the 1990s or later, Explaining has personal meaning because it was one of the first books they read in a seminar. For the editors, members of the generation that entered graduate school in the late 1960s, career-launching books include Barton J. Bernstein’s Towards a New Past and William Appleman Williams’ The Tragedy of American Diplomacy, The Contours of American History, and The Shaping of American Diplomacy.1 A fascinating project would be to trace the intellectual, political, and cultural influences that have driven this evolution.

Readers of this volume, especially newcomers to the field, should not burden themselves with the responsibility of mastering all the methodologies in these twenty-one chapters. Pick the approaches that seem best suited to your personality, interest, and topic. Scholarship is a matter of elective affinities. The individual chapters can stand alone.

Along with the other reviewers, Parker assesses the “book as a whole.” The compendium “wrestles with the question of its mission, as do many volumes of this sort.” That criticism set us looking, again and again—and in vain—for the short preface that we had written. For some reason the publisher left that out, and we did not catch the omission. The preface made explicit how we conceptualized Explaining as the companion volume to our 2014 edited book, America in the World, 2nd edition, also published by Cambridge. With the latter book focused explicitly on historiography, we intended Explaining to explore methodological approaches, both those already in wide use by historians and those with significant potential. That conception is largely but not wholly realized. While nearly all contributors to Explaining offer elements of a “how-to” manual, many have, unavoidably, also mixed in arguments for a particular methodology, details of case studies, and reviews of the historiography. On this and on other matters, we decided to take a tolerant, ‘big-tent’ approach. A fair criticism would be that the volume both benefits and suffers from the resulting heterogeneity.

Another fair criticism focuses on the homogeneity implied by the title, Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations. Some of the reviewers question whether that title is too narrow and too dated for this third edition. The issue seems analogous to the periodic discussion in SHAFR about updating the title of its flagship publication, Diplomatic History, which reflects an even earlier and narrower conception of our field.

Despite the debate, the title *DH* persists as a legacy of the past and as an implicit marker of how far we have come since the journal was founded. So, too, does the name of our organization, a half-century old this year. Perhaps all these names will change by the time a fourth edition of *Explaining* appears. But for this third edition, we regard the book’s title as admittedly old-fashioned and politically incorrect, but also as something nonetheless treasured.

The issue of how our field conceptualizes itself is addressed with special thoughtfulness and poignancy by Kisatsky. She argues that “the cultural and linguistic turn is intrinsically decentering.” She wonders whether this de-centering will lead to our field’s “dissolving entirely into the wider humanities and social sciences matrix?” She points out that using psychology, the senses, and the emotions as categories of analysis “reveals as flawed the notion of the state as a rationalist entity.” She asks whether the emphasis on non-governmental organizations and non-state actors signals that “the age of the nation-state may be passing.” Then Kisatsky poses an attention-grabbing question: “If American foreign relations disappears [as a field], who will hire us?”

Though not wholly sufficient, the best answer to these tough questions is to point to the incredibly vibrant intellectual activity at the annual SHAFR conventions. While the cultural and linguistic turns can de-center state power, they have also re-invigorated the study of state power by affording historians new tools and insights for understanding the behavior of policy makers. Rather than losing itself in the wider matrix of the humanities and social sciences, SHAFR has attracted a dazzling array of scholars interested in all kinds of interactions across borders, both those entailing state power and those that do not. While nearly every SHAFR conference seems to set a record for attendance and diversity of viewpoints, the meetings still provide a home for more traditional topics and approaches.

Other developments seem reassuring, at least to us. Though attention to the inner self of policy makers and other actors certainly undercuts the view of the state as a rationalist actor, that depiction, as most of us would admit, was not realistic. Moreover, attention to memory, the senses, religion, and emotions can help us understand the state and its actors in their full complexity. Furthermore, despite scholarly recognition of the importance of non-state actors, state-centered military, political, and economic clout remains. Indeed, the United States and other nations are now asserting such power with a vengeance, though not without challenge. We wish we could be so positive about the future trajectory of the job market. But we seriously doubt that the increased vibrancy and creativity of scholarship is causing the decline of positions in our field, whether we define it as diplomatic history, the history of U.S. foreign relations, or the history of the U.S. in the world.

Despite the old saw that those who do not study the past are condemned to repeat its mistakes, we still, deep down, believe in the more cynical version: those who study the past repeat its mistakes anyway. Furthermore, historians, like almost everyone else, are terrible prognosticators. Nevertheless, since we are both in our seventies and hence can be dismissed as over-the-hill, we venture some suggestions for the editors of the fourth edition and proffer some guesses as to how the presidency of Donald J. Trump may affect the relevance of the methodologies discussed in the twenty-one chapters of *Explaining*.

Memorandum to the editor(s) of the 4th edition, which, based on past history, might appear in 2028: Try to figure out a good balance between the methodological approaches discussed in *Explaining* and the historiographical topics covered in a possible third edition of *America in the World*. How can you imaginatively combine or otherwise cover topics from the third edition? Feel free to drop the methodologies that, over the years, prove to be clunkers. From the perspective of 2017, possibly fruitful approaches and
topics for 2028 include human rights, communications, networks, labor, sports, music, anthropology, family, children, and animals.

As we write these words on 20 May 2017, President Donald J. Trump is embarking on his first overseas venture in foreign relations. Will he continue in office? Will he succeed at challenging, for good or ill, the hegemony of the Wilsonian perspective that has dominated U.S. foreign relations for a century? Whatever the answers to these and other questions, the volume’s chapters can offer insight. IR debates will continue to revolve around the theories laid out by Robert Jervis. Will Trump instigate a revolution in the core values that Melvyn P. Leffler emphasizes as shaping conceptions of national security? The President seems intent on changing the standards for how personal, corporate, and national financial dealings intersect. Regardless of whether he succeeds, Michael J. Hogan’s concept of corporatism and Brad Simpson’s study of political economy will remain relevant. Decreased funding for the State Department and other non-military federal agencies will likely deepen the crisis of managing the flood of e-documents, thereby making the methodologies of David Allen and Matthew Connelly all the more pertinent. Cuts by Washington and advances by Beijing will likely have an impact on the developmental and technopolitical forces described by Nick Cullather. Similarly, the changed international environment may limit the influence or change the direction of the Western-oriented NGOs studied by Barbara J. Keys. Or perhaps a crisis will thrust the Trump-Pence administration into a frenzy of nation-building as happened with President George W. Bush, despite his campaign promises.

Given Trump’s emphasis on policing the territorial border and on defining who is a citizen, the legal issues outlined by Mary L. Dudziak are sure to remain on the national agenda. So, too, will domestic politics retain the importance that Fredrik Logevall rightly attributes to them. Whether globalization advances, retreats, or, more likely, does both, the discussions of borders by Nathan J. Citino and Emily S. Rosenberg will remain relevant. Michael H. Hunt now seems prescient with his emphasis on nationalist ideology. Similarly, the marketer-in-chief would probably love to have a conversation with Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht. Historians will need to keep in mind the astute analysis of race by Paul A. Kramer and of gender by Judy Tzu-Chun Wu to fully understand the unhappy effects of rolling back recent advances in U.S. domestic and foreign policies. At a time of insistent emphasis on American Exceptionalism, scholars will need to review Ussama Makdisi’s admonishments about the slippery slope of similar attitudes that are more unintentional. Religion, as discussed by Andrew Preston, may well become a flashpoint in the foreign policy of a president resolutely anti-Muslim and risking blasphemy in his claimed chumminess with God. Surely the senses, emphasized here by Andrew J. Rotter, will remain relevant when studying a germophobe. The construction of memory, as elucidated by Penny M. Von Eschen, attains even greater relevance in an age of officially promoted “alternative facts.” As for psychology, discussed here by Richard H. Immerman and Lori Helene Gronich, and emotions, emphasized by Frank Costigliola: a field day.

These cheeky observations will no doubt seem naive and short-sighted to future historians. We just hope they will not also prove painfully optimistic.