Why Do States Sign Alliances?

BRETT ASHLEY LEEDS

Abstract

Despite the fact that policy-makers and scholars of international politics have often expressed skepticism about the efficacy of international agreements, formal military alliances have been an important feature of international politics for centuries. This essay first introduces the dominant explanation for why states sign alliance treaties: state leaders use formal alliances to convey credible information about their future intentions to partners and adversaries. It then considers empirical evidence in support of this perspective, particularly with regard to deterrence and compliance. Following this summary, I raise five puzzles that contemporary researchers are working to resolve, but which leave room for further analysis and development. First, I discuss the challenges faced by large n empirical studies of alliance formation. Next, I ask why strong states ally with weak states and consider some of the most compelling recent explanations. Third, I consider the complicated relationships between alliances and war. Fourth, I examine how alliances affect cooperation among member states. Finally, I encourage scholars to continue a recent focus on how alliances are designed. While we have seen significant progress in understanding military alliances over the last 20 years, primarily because of the development of game-theoretic models that capture strategic interaction and the collection of new data that allow for nuanced tests of the hypothesized relationships, there is good reason to believe that we will continue to see significant innovation over the next decade.

INTRODUCTION

Alliances are formal agreements among independent states to cooperate in the event of military conflict. Alliances are created in writing, and the written documents specify the obligations of the member states and the conditions under which those obligations are invoked. Thus, alliances represent formal intergovernmental cooperation. The promises incorporated in alliances include at least one of the following: (i) a commitment to assist an alliance partner militarily in the event of conflict with an outside state; (ii) a commitment to remain neutral and refrain from assisting a member state's adversary in any way, should conflict occur between a member state and an outside state; (iii) a commitment to consult with the goal of producing a coordinated

response to a military crisis that might arise in the future (Gibler & Sarkees, 2004; Leeds, Ritter, Mitchell, & Long, 2002).

Traditionally, scholars have been quite skeptical that formal intergovernmental agreements matter in international relations, particularly in the "high politics" arena of national security, often citing German Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's pre-invasion pronouncement that the Guarantee of Belgian Neutrality was a "mere scrap of paper" (Cooke & Stickney, 1931, p. 382). Thus, scholars have wondered why it is that policy-makers choose to codify their alliance promises in formal agreements and whether military alliances have any effect on state behavior or international outcomes. In this essay, I review our current understanding of why state leaders choose to formalize their alliance commitments, the effects formal alliances have on various aspects of international behavior and outcomes, and what I see as some important remaining puzzles that scholars continue to study.

FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH: WHY DO STATES FORMALIZE ALLIANCE COMMITMENTS?

While scholars have long discussed "alliances" as crucial to understanding international politics, many traditional approaches used the term differently than we use it here. Balance of power and balance of threat theories, for instance, focus on alignments rather than formal alliances (e.g., Walt, 1987, Waltz, 1979). Snyder (1997, p. 6) defines alignments as "expectations of states about whether they will be supported or opposed by other states in future interactions." States that are believed to share common interests and pursue similar goals in the international system are thus *aligned*. For the purpose of this essay, however, they are only *allied* if they have signed a formal agreement committing them to cooperate in future conflicts with outside states. As Morrow (2000) helpfully points out, aligned states often fight together in wars, and it is certainly not necessary to have a formal agreement as the basis for military cooperation—consider, for instance, the recent emphasis among policy-makers on creating "coalitions of the willing," which arise in response to particular policy issues. So, what benefits do states gain from formal alliance agreements?

A key reason that states formalize their alliance commitments is to provide information to potential adversaries about their intention to cooperate. Formal agreements convey this information more credibly than simple verbal statements because of the costs they impose on their members. Alliance members incur costs of negotiating and formalizing their agreement and of establishing means of coordinating their policies effectively (e.g., through official meetings among military officers, consultation on foreign policy issues, and joint training exercises). Alliance members also experience costs if they break

a formal agreement. If the alliance is invoked and a member state chooses not to fulfill its commitment, its international reputation for reliability will suffer and the leader may suffer domestic audience costs as well (Crescenzi, Kathman, Kleinberg, & Wood, 2012; Fearon, 1994; Gibler, 2008; Tomz, 2007). Because of this wide ranging set of costs associated with formal alliances, alliances serve as credible signals of future intentions, both because state leaders will only accept the costs involved in forming alliances if their intentions to cooperate are sincere and because having formed an alliance changes incentives in favor of future cooperation. In disciplinary jargon, alliances both entail sunk costs and tie leaders' hands; they have both screening and constraining effects (Fearon, 1997; Morrow, 1994; Smith, 1995).

So, how does the ability to signal future intentions credibly benefit member states? First, and most importantly, it may enhance deterrence. Formal game-theoretic models demonstrate that adversaries are less likely to make demands backed by threat of military force against targets with allies. All else equal, when a challenger believes a target will receive assistance in a war, the challenger should be more pessimistic about his probability of winning a war that might result from rejection of the demand, and thus less likely to make the demand (Fearon, 1997; Morrow, 1994; Smith, 1995; Yuen, 2009). Should deterrence fail, prior coordination may improve the alliance members' ability to fight jointly, making the alliance more successful than a similar ad hoc coalition would be (Morrow, 1994). Thus, states that feel threatened and believe their ability to deter or fight a challenger will be enhanced by an ally's assistance may be motivated to seek an alliance.

Second, reliable alliances may allow states to benefit from economies of scale in the provision of defense, thus lowering their individual defense burdens. When economies of scale are possible, states can achieve greater security at the same cost or the same level of security at lower cost through cooperation (Lake, 1999, p. 7). According to this argument, therefore, we should see alliances form when military technology is conducive to economies of scale in the provision of defense and/or among states with different comparative advantages in security provision.

Empirical evidence provides support for two implications of the costly signaling approach to understanding formal alliances. First, according to this perspective, because of the costs involved in forming and violating alliances, most alliance commitments should be sincere, and thus most alliances should be fulfilled when they are invoked by war. When we judge reliability by matching what state leaders did to what they promised to do in their treaties, alliances are reliable approximately 75% of the time (Leeds, Long, & Mitchell, 2000). In addition, the best predictors of alliance violation are changes in international power or in domestic institutions since the time of alliance formation. This suggests that leaders may have intended to fulfill alliances at

the initial conditions, but chose to violate their past commitments after factors affecting their value for war changed (Leeds, 2003a). The fact that most alliances are reliable when invoked by war is particularly impressive, given the incentives of challengers to target unreliable alliances; this selection effect most likely causes us to underestimate the true reliability of alliances in our empirical studies (Smith, 1995).

Second, alliances should deter challengers. Leeds (2003b) and Johnson and Leeds (2011) demonstrate that states with allies committed to assist them if they are attacked by outside powers are less likely to be the target of militarized interstate disputes, controlling for other factors that make militarized dispute initiation likely in a given pair of states. Benson (2011) finds that the deterrent effect is limited to alliances that promise support to an ally conditional on the ally being attacked without having tried to alter the status quo.

Thus, a compelling explanation for formal military alliances is that formal agreements provide states a means to signal their future intentions credibly. Because of the costs involved in forming and maintaining alliances and the anticipated costs of breaking a formal agreement, sincerely committed states are more likely to be willing to form alliances. And, because peacetime military coordination improves the ability of allies to fight successfully together and because states expect reputational costs from violating formal agreements, members of alliances become more committed to fighting with their allies. Thus, alliances provide reliable information to adversaries about the probability that potential target states will receive assistance in war, discouraging challenges. Alliances also make it easier for states to be confident that their allies will assist them in maintaining their security, allowing them in some instances to budget less for their own defense.

CUTTING-EDGE WORK: FIVE AREAS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite some significant (although not universal) agreement on the main functions of formal alliance agreements, a number of theoretical and empirical puzzles remain. I have identified five here that contemporary scholars are working to address.

Under What Conditions Do States Form Alliances?

On one hand, we have very strong theory about the conditions under which states should form alliances and with whom they should seek to ally. States should seek alliances when they feel threatened and expect improved deterrence and/or war-fighting ability with allied assistance. A state should seek

an ally who is strong enough to deter or defeat the threat, shares enough international interests to make pursuing a common foreign policy feasible, and is likely to fulfill the commitment, should the alliance be invoked. On the other hand, large n empirical studies have not always provided consistent support for these relationships, in part because of difficulties in research design.

The first challenge is that alliance formation involves the simultaneous decision of at least two states, and in the case of multilateral alliances, many more. While the theory above tells us when states should seek alliances, we only observe the formation of alliances when a state is successful at finding a willing ally who also meets the criteria the state seeks. Some of the factors that may make states most interested in finding allies (for instance, the fact that they face significant international threats that they cannot deter alone or that they might like to cut their defense spending) might also make other states wary of allying with them. Similarly, some factors that make states particularly desirable partners (for instance, high costs of violating past commitments) may also make states more wary of making commitments (Leeds, 1999). Thus, we need clearer theories of the dyadic/multilateral conditions that make it more likely that we observe alliance formation.

The second challenge is that the relevant game-theoretic models feature an identified potential challenger in addition to two potential allies. Many of the relevant variables—power, threat, shared interests—are understandable only in the context of considering all three actors. Whether an ally is sufficiently powerful to deter, for instance, depends on the relative power of the potential challenger and potential target. Most existing large n studies of alliance formation have attempted to capture the external threat faced by potential alliance members by looking at things such as the number of militarized disputes the state has engaged in recently (e.g., Gibler & Wolford, 2006), rather than identifying a source of threat explicitly (c.f. Johnson, 2012). Of course, it is not easy to identify potential threats; more creativity and careful thinking about how we can best operationalize threat would be very helpful.

The result is that we do not have a great record of empirical evidence about alliance formation that consistently supports the theory of alliances as costly signals, because research designs have not been employed that explicitly test the theory (see Leeds & Morgan, 2012, pp. 140–141 for a review of evidence about specific variables). There is significant evidence about other aspects of the theory, for instance, alliance reliability and deterrence, but it would be useful to have tests of alliance formation that are able to better capture the conditional relationships between power and threat, and between the attractiveness of an ally and the desire to ally.

Why Do Strong States Ally with Weak States?

Alliances are intended to improve the security of states. By promising to fight together, states aggregate their capabilities and deter challengers from attacking them. This would suggest that stronger allies are more valuable than weaker allies. And yet, we frequently witness alliances between strong states and weak states, often referred to as "asymmetric" alliances. While it makes sense that weaker states benefit from the security they gain from the assistance of a stronger ally, some have questioned what motivates stronger states to ally with weaker ones.

Morrow (1991) suggests that weak states who desire security from a stronger ally may be willing to offer other concessions—for instance, support of an ally's foreign policy—in return for an alliance. In other words, these alliances result from issue linkage, with weaker states offering other forms of support in return for military assistance (see also Palmer & Morgan, 2006). Fordham (2010) argues instead that because of trade relationships and other economic interests, strong states may have a self-interest in the security of smaller allies; defense of certain weaker states is defense of the large state's own economy.

Issue linkage arguments are theoretically compelling, and recent studies have shown that issue linkage both facilitates successful negotiation of alliance agreements and increases their credibility and compliance rates (Poast, 2012, 2013). The security/autonomy trade-off model is quite appealing to international relations scholars, and empirical studies about duration of alliances provide support for the theory (Morrow, 1991). That being said, it would be nice to see empirical studies that can isolate systematic foreign policy change in weaker states as a result of alliance formation. If indeed strong states are compensated for providing security through compromise on other issue areas, we should be able to document this empirically.

What Is the (Full) Relationship between Alliances and War?

While the relationship between alliances and militarized conflict is one of the core questions that scholars of alliance politics have addressed, there remains some disagreement about the overall effect of alliances on conflict, mainly because alliances change the calculations of multiple actors. Smith (1995) argues that while alliances may deter adversaries, they may also embolden partners, which could make the relationship between alliances and war less clear; while challengers may be less likely to make demands, thus reducing the probability of war, if challengers do make demands, targets are more likely to resist those demands (expecting allied support), and thus, the probability of war given a challenger demand may increase. Yuen (2009), however, claims that because challengers make lower demands of targets with allies,

it may not be the case that targets with allies are more likely to resist; they may simply concede smaller demands. Johnson and Leeds (2011) provide an empirical test of the probability that a state resists when targeted in a militarized dispute and find that targets with allies committed to defend them are actually less likely to resist and escalate disputes.

Fang, Johnson, and Leeds (2014) argue that this is not only because challengers often make smaller demands of targets with allies as Yuen expected, but also because allies sometimes act to restrain their partners from escalating disputes, encouraging them to concede demands rather than risk war (see also Pressman, 2008; Snyder, 1997). Allies do not always wish to restrain their partners, nor are they always successful at it; there are cases in which targets and their allies fight the challenger together and cases in which targets choose to fight the challenger even without allied support. Fang *et al*. do find, however, that targets that value their alliances highly are less likely to escalate disputes.

Even if alliances deter challenges against member states and do not encourage member states to escalate disputes if they are targeted, alliances may still encourage belligerent behavior on the part of member states by causing them to initiate disputes. Palmer and Morgan (2006), for example, argue that when a state succeeds in providing for its security more efficiently, perhaps by enlisting the help of an ally, the state can use its military resources to initiate other conflicts. They find empirical support for the claim that states that have recently formed new alliances are more likely to initiate militarized interstate disputes. Johnson and Leeds (2011), however, find that states with defensive alliances are not more likely to initiate militarized interstate disputes.

It is possible that whether alliances lead to dispute initiation depends on the prior existence of a desire to change the status quo. Benson, Bentley, and Ray (2012) find that alliance commitments aimed at deterring changes to the status quo are effective at reducing the probability of militarized dispute initiation among nonrevisionist states, but not among revisionist states; revisionist states may be slightly more likely to initiate disputes with alliance commitments, especially unconditional ones. Senese and Vasquez argue that among states who are already engaged in a contentious relationship, particularly over territorial issues, alliances can serve as one of many "power politics" moves that can increase threat perception and increase the likelihood that war occurs (Senese & Vasquez, 2008). Their analysis suggests that a long-term history of outside alliances in a dyad with a territorial dispute is associated with a higher probability of war at some point in the dyad's history.

We have more to untangle about the complicated effects of alliances on international conflict. My assessment of the current state of knowledge is

that there is more evidence that defensive alliances lower the probability of disputes and wars than that defensive alliances cause an increase in either disputes or wars. That being said, the relationships are quite nuanced with a lot of moving parts, and more research about the conditions under which alliances deter, embolden, entrap, restrain, and expand conflict is needed. Because of the complicated strategic dynamics, game theory is well suited to exploring these issues, but hypotheses derived from games must also be subject to careful empirical evaluation.

How Do Alliances Affect Relations among Members?

Most scholars and policy-makers think of alliances as primarily aimed at affecting relations between member states and outside states, for example, through deterrence. But, scholars have also been interested in how alliances affect relations among their members. For instance, can alliances help to manage conflict among member states and "spillover" to encourage other cooperative relations? Several scholars have studied the function of alliances as conflict management institutions and also their effects on other cooperative interactions, especially international trade.

Schroeder (1976) famously referred to alliances as "tools for management," claiming that more powerful states might be motivated to form alliances to "manage" the policies of other states. Similarly, Snyder (1997) and Pressman (2008) suggest that major powers may want to restrain the foreign policy actions of weaker powers through alliance constraints; these theories relate closely to the issue linkage arguments regarding asymmetric alliances discussed above. Others, however, suggest that alliances may serve a general function of making relations among member states less vulnerable to militarized conflict. Weitsman (2004) argues, for example, that alliances provide increased transparency and a means for regular communication and thus can be used to manage potentially adversarial relationships. Bearce, Flanagan, and Floros (2006) also argue that because alliances improve information flow among states, sharing an alliance should make militarized conflict among states less likely, and they find support for their hypothesis in a large n study. Long, Nordstrom, and Baek (2007) find that alliances with particular provisions for conflict management are particularly effective at reducing the probability of military conflict among members, and Gibler (1997) finds that alliances that resolve territorial disputes lead to less conflict among rivals.

Not only might alliances lead to less militarized conflict among member states, but they might "spillover" to cause more cooperation in other areas as well. Several scholars have argued, for example, that alliances lead to increased trade among members, both because government trade policies

favor allies and because firms seek business ties with states that they believe are less likely to engage in conflict with their home state; this relationship has been particularly evident since World War II (e.g., Gowa & Mansfield, 1993; Long, 2003). Similarly, Li and Vashchilko (2010) find that alliances between high-income and low-income states result in higher levels of bilateral foreign investment.

In the post–Cold War era, there has been an increased tendency for lower commitment alliance promises such as consultation and neutrality to be embedded in broader international cooperation agreements (Leeds & Mattes, 2007). It will be useful in the future for scholars to continue to study not only how and why different issues get linked in an individual treaty, but also what kinds of cooperation are most likely to pave the way for military alliances, and what kinds of cooperation are likely to be facilitated by military alliances.

WHAT EXPLAINS VARIANCE IN ALLIANCE DESIGN?

Finally, over the past 10 years or so, scholars have begun to pay increased attention to variance in how alliance agreements are designed. This has been made much easier by the existence of the Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) dataset, which provides detailed information about the content of 648 alliance treaties signed between 1815 and 2003 (Leeds *et al.*, 2002, Leeds & Mattes, 2007). Increased attention to the design of alliances corresponds with a broader interest in the rational design of international institutions within the discipline (Koremenos, Lipson, & Snidal, 2001).

So far, scholars have been most interested in studying the effects of variance in obligations that state leaders include in their treaties (e.g., Benson, 2011, 2012; Leeds, 2003b; Long *et al.*, 2007). This is a crucial first step, since an assumption of the rational design of institutions program is that leaders design agreements, expecting them to have different effects on behavior. Once we show the different effects that differently designed agreements have, it is important also to explain the conditions under which state leaders choose different designs and why they do so. In a few recent studies, design features have been the dependent variable (e.g., Benson, 2012; Kim, 2011; Mattes, 2012a, 2012b; Poast, 2012), but we have much more to learn. For example, scholars can work to explain variance in provisions for managing the alliance, for instance, in levels and types of peacetime military cooperation (e.g., Leeds & Anac, 2005), means of dispute resolution among allies, and requirements for renegotiation. I am pleased to see research moving in this direction because it may allow us to disentangle more clearly screening and constraining effects of agreements, a major puzzle for all international cooperation scholars.

CONCLUSION

There is substantial agreement that states sign formal alliance agreements as a costly signal of their intentions to cooperate in the event of future military crises. Creating credible promises to cooperate has three main benefits: increased ability to deter challenges, improved ability to win wars should they occur, and opportunity to benefit from economies of scale in the provision of defense. While states do sometimes violate alliance commitments in times of war and terminate them opportunistically, particularly if significant factors affecting decisions for war have changed since the alliance was formed, the majority of the time alliances are reliable. Even within the "high politics" arena of national security, there is efficacy in international cooperation.

There has been significant progress in this research area over the last two decades. The development of game-theoretic models that are able to capture strategic interaction between allies and adversaries has significantly advanced our theoretical understanding of why states sign formal alliances and how these formal agreements affect behavior. The collection of new data that provides additional information about the content of formal alliance agreements, combined with clever research designs, has allowed for targeted empirical tests of several hypotheses drawn from these models. And yet, while we know a lot, several important puzzles remain. The current generation of scholars should continue to analyze, both theoretically and empirically, how states design their cooperative agreements to achieve their goals and the intended and unintended effects of these cooperative agreements on a variety of behaviors of member and nonmember states.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

Bearce, D. H., Flanagan, K. M., & Floros, K. M. (2006). Alliances, internal information, and military conflict among member-states. *International Organization*, *60*, 595–625. doi:10.1017/S0020818306060188

Benson, B. V. (2011). Unpacking alliances: Deterrent and compellent alliances and their relationship with conflict, 1816–2000. *Journal of Politics*, *73*, 1111–1127. doi:10.1017/S0022381611000867

Benson, B. V. (2012). *Constructing international security: Alliances, deterrence, and moral hazard*. *New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.* doi:10.1017/CBO9781139225694

Benson, B. V., Bentley, P. R., & Ray, J. L. (2012). Ally provocateur: Why allies do not always behave. *Journal of Peace Research*, *50*, 47–58. doi:10.1177/0022343312454445

Cooke, W. H., & Stickney, E. P. (1931). *Readings in European international relations since 1879*. New York, NY: Harper and Brothers Publishers.

Crescenzi, M. J. C., Kathman, J. D., Kleinberg, K. B., & Wood, R. M. (2012). Reliability, reputation, and alliance formation. *International Studies Quarterly*, *56*, 259–274. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2478.2011.00711.x

Fang, S., Johnson, J. C., & Leeds, B. A. (2014). To concede or to resist? The restraining effect of military alliances. *International Organization*, *68*, 775–809.

Fearon, J. D. (1994). Domestic political audiences and the escalation of international disputes. *American Political Science Review*, *88*, 577–592. doi:10.2307/2944796

Fearon, J. D. (1997). Signaling foreign policy interests: Tying hands vs. sinking costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *41*, 68–90. doi:10.1177/0022002797041001004

Fordham, B. O. (2010). Trade and asymmetric alliances. *Journal of Peace Research*, *47*, 685–696. doi:10.1177/0022343310381689

Gibler, D. M. (1997). Control the issues, control the conflict: The effects of alliances that settle territorial issues on interstate rivalries. *International Interactions*, *22*, 341–368. doi:10.1080/03050629708434897

Gibler, D. M. (2008). The costs of reneging: Reputation and alliance formation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *52*, 426–454. doi:10.1177/0022002707310003

Gibler, D. M., & Sarkees, M. R. (2004). Measuring alliances: The correlates of war formal interstate alliance data set, 1816–2000. *Journal of Peace Research*, *41*, 211–222. doi:10.1177/0022343304041061

Gibler, D. M., & Wolford, S. (2006). Alliances, then democracy: An examination of the relationship between regime type and alliance formation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *50*, 129–153. doi:10.1177/0022002705281360

Gowa, J., & Mansfield, E. D. (1993). Power politics and international trade. *American Political Science Review*, *87*, 408–420. doi:10.2307/2939050

Johnson, J. C. (2012). *The cost of security: Foreign policy concessions and military alliances*. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 3534220)

Johnson, J. C., & Leeds, B. A. (2011). Defense pacts: A prescription for peace? *Foreign Policy Analysis*, *7*, 45–65. doi:10.1111/j.1743-8594.2010.00122.x

Kim, T. (2011). Why alliances entangle but seldom entrap states. *Security Studies*, *20*, 350–377. doi:10.1080/09636412.2011.599201

Koremenos, B., Lipson, C., & Snidal, D. (2001). The rational design of international institutions. *International Organization*, *55*, 761–799. doi:10.1162/002081801317193592

Lake, D. A. (1999). *Entangling relations: American foreign policy in its century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Leeds, B. A. (1999). Domestic political institutions, credible commitments, and international cooperation. *American Journal of Political Science*, *43*, 979–1002. doi:10.2307/2991814

Leeds, B. A. (2003a). Alliance reliability in times of war: Explaining state decisions to violate treaties. *International Organization*, *57*, 801–827. doi:10.1017/S0020818303574057

Leeds, B. A. (2003b). Do alliances deter aggression? The influence of military alliances on the initiation of militarized interstate disputes. *American Journal of Political Science*, *47*, 427–439. doi:10.1111/1540-5907.00031

Leeds, B. A., & Anac, S. (2005). Alliance institutionalization and alliance performance. *International Interactions*, *31*, 183–202. doi:10.1080/03050620500294135

Leeds, B. A., Long, A. G., & Mitchell, S. M. (2000). Re-evaluating alliance reliability: Specific threats, specific promises. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *44*, 686–699. doi:10.1177/0022002700044005006

Leeds, B. A., & Mattes, M. (2007). Alliance politics during the Cold War: Aberration, new world order, or continuation of history? *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *24*, 183–199. doi:10.1080/07388940701473054

Leeds, B. A., & Morgan, T. C. (2012). The quest for security: Alliances and arms. In S. M. Mitchell, P. F. Diehl & J. D. Morrow (Eds.), *Guide to the scientific study of international processes* (pp. 135–150). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Leeds, B. A., Ritter, J. M., Mitchell, S. M., & Long, A. G. (2002). Alliance treaty obligations and provisions. *International Interactions*, *28*, 237–260. doi:10.1080/03050620213653

Li, Q., & Vashchilko, T. (2010). Dyadic military conflict, security alliances, and bilateral FDI flows. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *41*, 765–782. doi:10.1057/jibs.2009.91

Long, A. G. (2003). Defense pacts and international trade. *Journal of Peace Research*, *40*, 537–552. doi:10.1177/00223433030405003

Long, A. G., Nordstrom, T., & Baek, K. (2007). Allying for peace: Treaty obligations and conflict between allies. *Journal of Politics*, *69*, 1103–1117. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2508.2007.00611.x

Mattes, M. (2012a). Democratic reliability, precommitment of successor governments, and the choice of alliance commitment. *International Organization*, *66*, 153–172. doi:10.1017/S0020818311000336

Mattes, M. (2012b). Reputation, symmetry, and alliance design. *International Organization*, *66*, 679–707. doi:10.1017/S002081831200029X

Morrow, J. D. (1991). Alliances and asymmetry: An alternative to the capability aggregation model of alliances. *American Journal of Political Science*, *35*, 904–933. doi:10.2307/2111499

Morrow, J. D. (1994). Alliances, credibility, and peacetime costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *38*, 270–297. doi:10.1177/0022002794038002005

Morrow, J. D. (2000). Alliances: Why write them down? *Annual Review of Political Science*, *3*, 63–83. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.3.1.63

Palmer, G., & Morgan, T. C. (2006). *A theory of foreign policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Poast, P. (2012). Does issue linkage work? Evidence from European alliance negotiations, 1860–1945. *International Organization*, *66*, 277–310. doi:10.1017/S0020818312000069

Poast, P. (2013). Can issue linkage improve treaty credibility? Buffer state alliances as a "hard case". *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *57*, 739–764. doi:10.1177/0022002712449323

Pressman, J. (2008). *Warring friends: Alliance restraint in international politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Schroeder, P. W. (1976). Alliances, 1815–1945: Weapons of power and tools of management. In K. Knorr (Ed.), *Historical dimensions of national security problems* (pp. 227–262). Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

Senese, P. D., & Vasquez, J. A. (2008). *The steps to war: An empirical study*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Smith, A. (1995). Alliance formation and war. *International Studies Quarterly*, *39*, 405–425. doi:10.2307/2600800

Snyder, G. H. (1997). *Alliance politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Tomz, M. (2007). Domestic audience costs in international relations: An experimental approach. *International Organization*, *61*, 821–840. doi:10.1017/S0020818307070282

Walt, S. M. (1987). *The origins of alliances*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Waltz, K. N. (1979). *Theory of international politics*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Weitsman, P. A. (2004). *Dangerous alliances: Proponents of peace, weapons of war*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Yuen, A. (2009). Target concessions in the shadow of intervention. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *53*, 745–773. doi:10.1177/0022002709339046

FURTHER READING

Leeds, B. A. (2003a). Alliance reliability in times of war: Explaining state decisions to violate treaties. *International Organization*, *57*, 801–827. doi:10.1017/S0020818303574057

Leeds, B. A. (2003b). Do alliances deter aggression? The influence of military alliances on the initiation of militarized interstate disputes. *American Journal of Political Science*, *47*, 427–439. doi:10.1111/1540-5907.00031

Morrow, J. D. (2000). Alliances: Why write them down? *Annual Review of Political Science*, *3*, 63–83. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.3.1.63

Morrow, J. D. (1994). Alliances, credibility, and peacetime costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *38*, 270–297. doi:10.1177/0022002794038002005

Snyder, G. H. (1997). *Alliance politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

BRETT ASHLEY LEEDS SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Brett Ashley Leeds is Professor of Political Science at Rice University. (link to webpage: http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~leeds/) Her research focuses on the design and influence of international agreements, compliance with international commitments, and the influence of domestic politics on international relations. She has written extensively on the politics of military alliances. Her recent articles have appeared in *American Journal of Political Science, Journal of*

Politics, International Organization, Foreign Policy Analysis, and *Journal of Peace Research*. In 2008, Leeds was awarded the Karl Deutsch Award by the International Studies Association, which is presented annually to a scholar in IR under age 40 or within 10 years of defending his or her dissertation who is judged to have made, through a body of publications, the most significant contribution to the study of International Relations and Peace Research.

RELATED ESSAYS

Globalization of Capital and National Policymaking *(Political Science)*, Steven R. Hall

States and Nationalism *(Anthropology)*, Michael Herzfeld

Racial Disenfranchisement *(Political Science)*, Vincent L. Hutchings and Davin L. Phoenix

Regime Type and Terrorist Attacks *(Political Science)*, Kara Kingma *et al*.

Reconciliation and Peace-Making: Insights from Studies on Nonhuman Animals *(Anthropology)*, Sonja E. Koski

Politics of Immigration Policy *(Political Science)*, Jeannette Money

Intervention and Regime Change *(Political Science)*, John M. Owen IV and Roger G. Herbert Jr.

Electoral Authoritarianism *(Political Science)*, Andreas Schedler

War and Social Movements *(Political Science)*, Sidney Tarrow

Information Politics in Dictatorships *(Political Science)*, Jeremy L. Wallace

Constitutionalism *(Political Science)*, Keith E. Whittington