



# American Foreign Policy and Political Ambition

*Ray J*

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**A Fresh Approach.** In his new core text, James L. Ray raises the bar for the study of American foreign policy, bringing original insight, crisper writing, and at last the most current theories to bear on the subject. Though he draws upon the realist, liberal, and radical perspectives, instead of relying on traditional axioms such as states seek power, or states seek security, Ray starts from the premise that the highest priority of leaders is to stay in power. Ray keenly observes that how leaders respond to their most important *domestic* constituents is the key to understanding why and how foreign policy decisions are made.

In chapters detailing the history of American foreign policy, Ray shows how domestic pressures have shaped in stunning ways foreign policymaking from the birth of the nation, through expansion and annexation, and right up through the Bush administration's Iraq War. Then, covering the policymaking process, Ray analyzes how various parties inside and outside government influence decisionmaking, with detailed discussions of the role of the media, public opinion, interest groups, the various federal agencies, Congress, and the executive. Ray shows how the ongoing debates around domestic economic and social policies like social security and Medicare have always played a part in the process.

**Regional Organization.** Rather than looking at successive issues, the book's final takes a regional approach, allowing students to think comprehensively about how different sets of issues human security, democratization, intervention, globalization, pollution, interstate wars intersect in specific ways in each of the various regions of the globe. Covering the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia in turn, Ray deals with events and trends that other books tend to miss.

**Great Writing, Great Pedagogy.** Written in candid and refreshingly jargon-free prose, the text nonetheless delivers the most current scholarship and information. Richly illustrated with maps, photos, tables, and figures students get a strong graphical sense of the importance of the interplay of domestic and foreign concerns. Pedagogical features like Lessons Learned boxes and lists of key terms in every chapter reinforce the book's central approach.

**Strong Teaching and Learning Support.** A suite of ancillary materials help students and instructors prepare for class and exams, including a testbank and PowerPoint lecture slides.

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