

International Relations Theory & International Law

	Realism	Rationalist/Functionalists	Constructivism	Domestic Politics
Main Theoretical Proposition	Self-interested states compete constantly for power, security, survival	Concern for power overridden by economic/political considerations; States can cooperate together	State behavior shaped by elite beliefs, collective norms, and social identities	Primary way international law matters is by how it influences domestic politics
Main Actors	States (rational, unified, egoist)	States (rational, unified, egoist)	Individuals (especially elite actors)	Domestic Actors: domestic interest groups, institutions, regime-type
Main Instruments	Military and Economic Power	Various (int'l institutions; economic exchange; promotion of democracy)	Ideas and discourse	Various (domestic institutions, domestic distribution of power)
Modern Theorists	Hans Morgenthau; Stephen Walt	Robert Keohane	Alexander Wendt; Christian Reus-Smit	Beth Simmons; Helen Milner
View of International Law	IL is not central to structure of IR; too decentralized; can't be enforced	Used to increase welfare: better information, lower transaction costs, clarifies claims	Reflects and informs the development norms that have been created and diffused	IL is used as a tool for domestic political actors to drive changes in policy
Main Limitation	Can't explain int'l institutions, cooperation, law	Can't explain how norms are created and diffused; often ignores power; human rights	Better at describing the past than predicting the future	Often requires country specific knowledge; difficult to disaggregate causes

Sources: Beth Simmons, Lecture Notes (9/10/2012); Stephen Walt, *International Relations: One World, Many Theories*, 110 Foreign Policy 29 (1998).