



Theories of International Relations: Contending Approaches to World Politics

By Stephanie Lawson

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Since the field of International Relations was established almost a century ago, many different theoretical approaches have been developed, each offering distinctive accounts of the world, why it has come to be the way it is, and how it might be made a better place.

In this illuminating textbook, leading IR scholar, Stephanie Lawson, examines each of these theories in turn, from political realism in its various forms to liberalism, Marxism, critical theory and more recent contributions from social theory, feminism, postcolonialism and green theory. Taking as her focus the major practical issues facing scholars of international relations today, Lawson ably shows how each theory relates to situations 'on the ground'. Each chapter features case studies, questions for discussion to encourage reflection and classroom debate, guides to further reading and web resources.

The study of IR is a profoundly normative enterprise, and each theoretical school has its strengths and weaknesses. Theories of International Relations encourages a critical, reflective approach to the study of IR theory, while emphasising the many important and interesting things it has to teach us about the complexities and challenges of international politics today.

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Editorial Review

Review

Combining a no-nonsense approach to explaining and assessing the most important features of International Relations theory with a keen sense of the discipline's evolving and contending approaches, this book has the rare quality of speaking well to newcomers to the field, who will appreciate its clarity and comprehensiveness, and older hands, who will appreciate the fresh insights and sharp analysis of the field's major theoretical perspectives and debates. As such, it deserves to be widely read by anyone interested in how we understand the complex world of International Relations.

Alex J. Bellamy, The University of Queensland

Stephanie Lawson has made the twists and turns of IR theory readily accessible to student and teacher alike. Decidedly, this will be the 'go-to' book for the next decade.

Peter Vale, University of Johannesburg

About the Author

Stephanie Lawson is Professor of International Relations at Macquarie University

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