

Russett and Oneal: skim chapters 3-4, chapter 5:

Ch 3:

- most countries generally at peace, but sometimes war seems like the rational choice (81)
- political science "can provide only partial, tentative conclusions about what countries can do to avoid violent conflict." (85)
- key factors that influence the decision to go to war:
 1. geography
 2. power; balance of military capabilities along with other measures of power
 3. alliances
- most important variable may be "Kantian influences" (91)
- democracy is coded based on competitiveness of political participation, openness and competitiveness of executive recruitment, and level of institutionalized constraints on the chief executive
- differences between regimes causes conflicts and non-democracies are likely to fight each other, but democracies don't fight wars against each other
- transition wars do not appear to occur, though it is important that democratic institutions become strongly embedded

Ch 4:

- democracy and economic interdependence reduce conflict
- does trade increase peace or is it just a consequence of peace caused by something else?
- data provides strong evidence for the economic interdependence hypothesis; democracy and trade are strong and statistically significant constraints on the use of force
- disputes less likely when states are trade dependence or democratic
- economic growth isn't key to peace, though the ties that result from the trade necessary for sustainable growth can make peace more likely (153-155)

Ch 5:

- International organizations are potentially the key factor; they mediate democracy and economic interdependence in such a way that reduces conflict (157)
- Networks of intergovernmental organizations are increasing: they have many purposes but they all function to distribute information and coordinate cooperation, coerce norm-breakers, mediate among conflicting parties, etc (161-163)
- International organizations help states learn about each other, which increases trust; makes it more likely that in a conflict, even if the organization is not directly involved, that state will trust each other and the information that they receive (narratives of mutual identification)
- while alliances and a preponderance of power continue to be important (172), it is important not to ignore the role of norms and trust building in reducing conflict
- After WWII there is a marked increase in democracy and interdependence, which also led a longer-term trend towards increased international organizations, which feed backs to bolster that democracy and interdependence in a way that reduces the risk of conflict (179)
- hegemonic stability does not explain peace: relative power of the hegemon has no impact; World War I and II proves and the number of wars fought by the US demonstrates that hegemons are not necessarily peaceful (188-189)
- 3 Kantian legs of institutions, democracy, and interdependence work together to cause peace