

War and Peace

Domestic Politics and War

The Puzzle

- War is costly for states. But what if there are actors within the state — such as politicians, businesses, or the military — who see war as beneficial or expect to pay few or none of its costs? Do states fight wars to satisfy influential domestic interests?
- Rolling back the unitary actor assumption

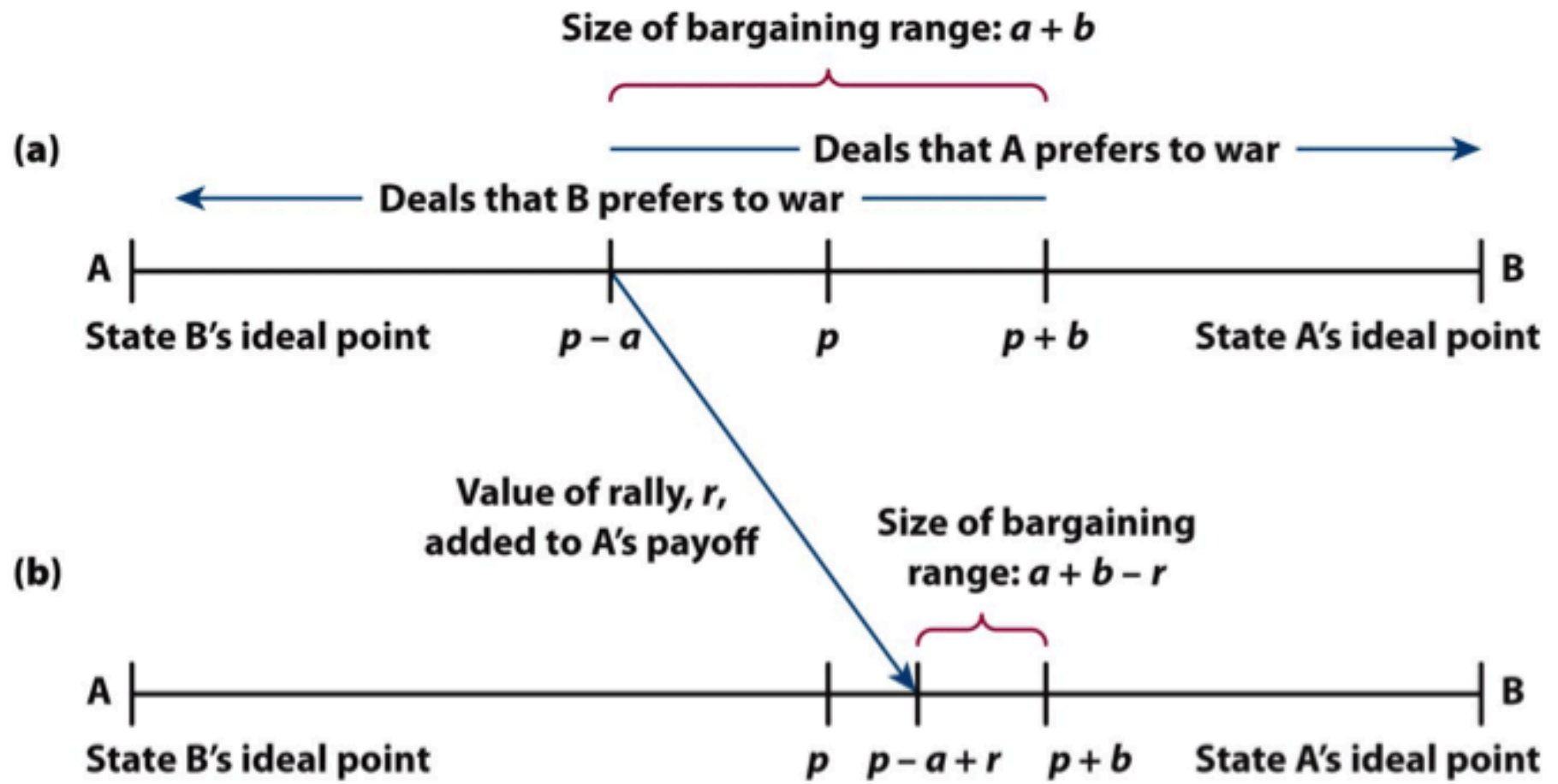
Who wants war? (Who are the relevant actors?)

- Political leaders: may act in self-interest rather than general interest.
 - But may face costs for losing war.
- Military: have an interest in larger budgets.
 - But tend to be acutely sensitive to loss of life.
- Special Interests: receive concentrated benefits and bear only a fraction of the costs of war.
 - Why not the general interests? General vs. Particularistic

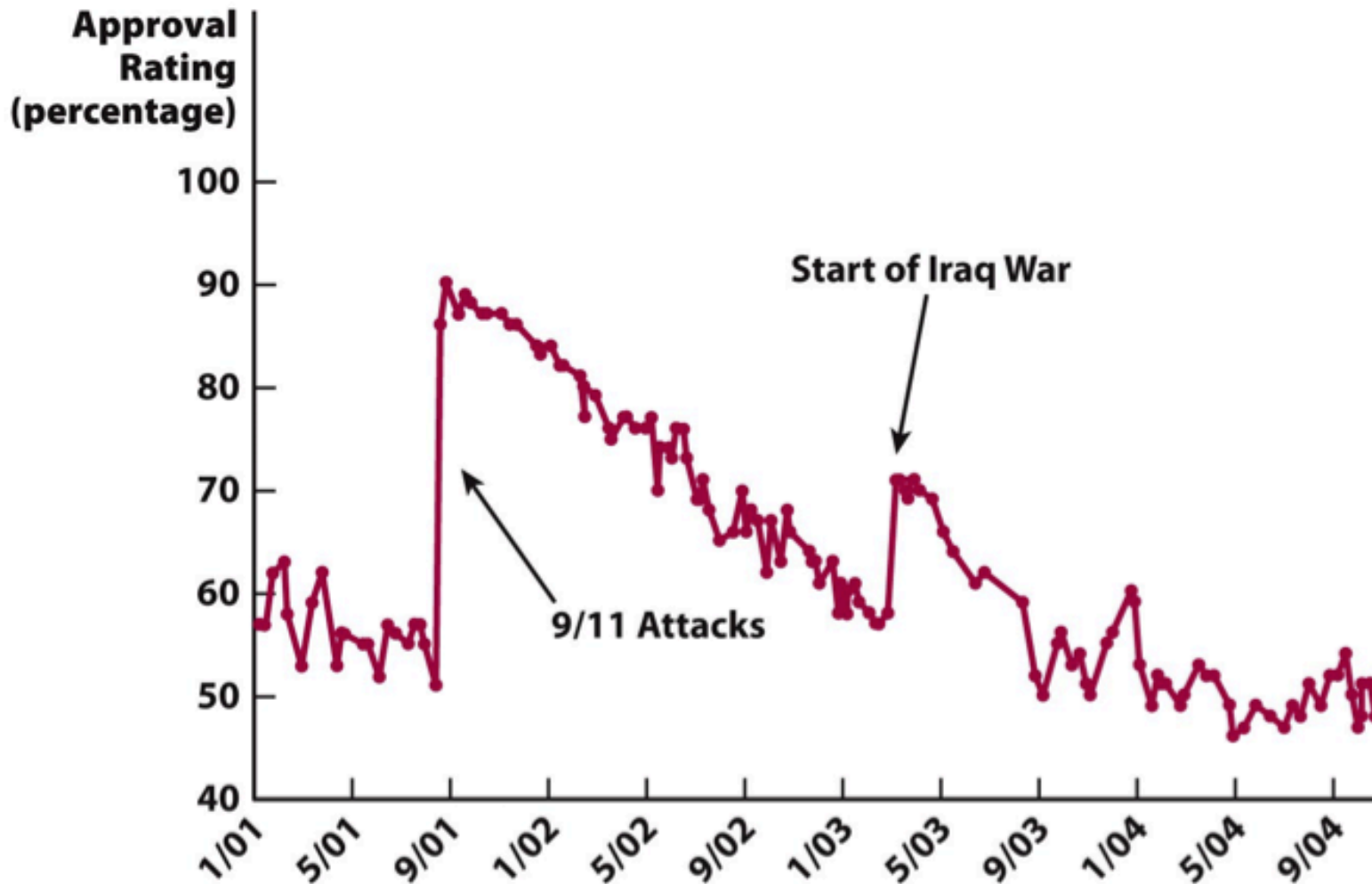
Leaders

- Assume desire to stay in office- so how does one stay in office?
- Depends on domestic institutions
- How might leaders use war to help stay in office?
- Diversionary Theory of War
 - Theory vs. Evidence

Rally Effects and the Bargaining Range



Rally Effects are Always Short-lived

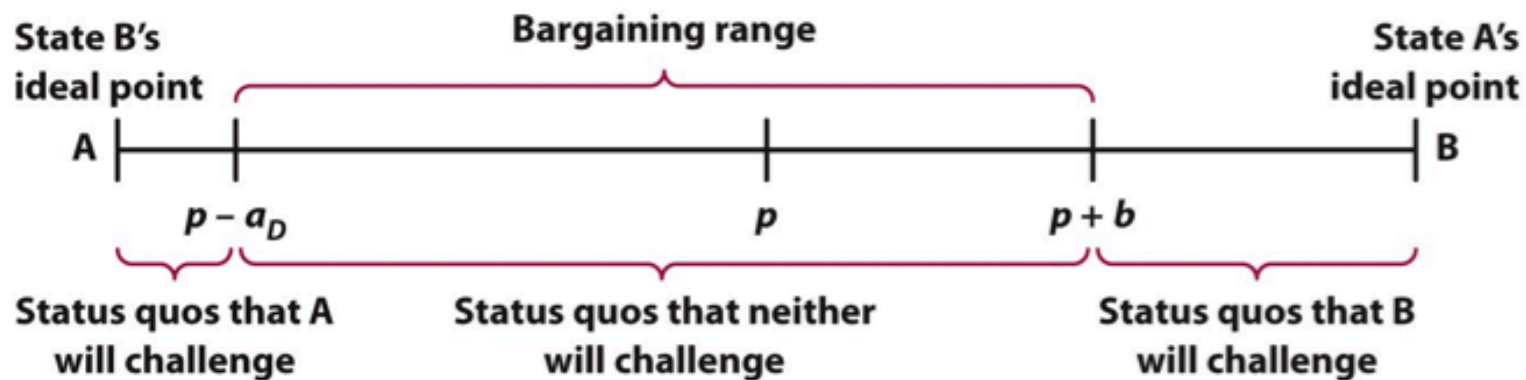


Bureaucracy/Interest Groups

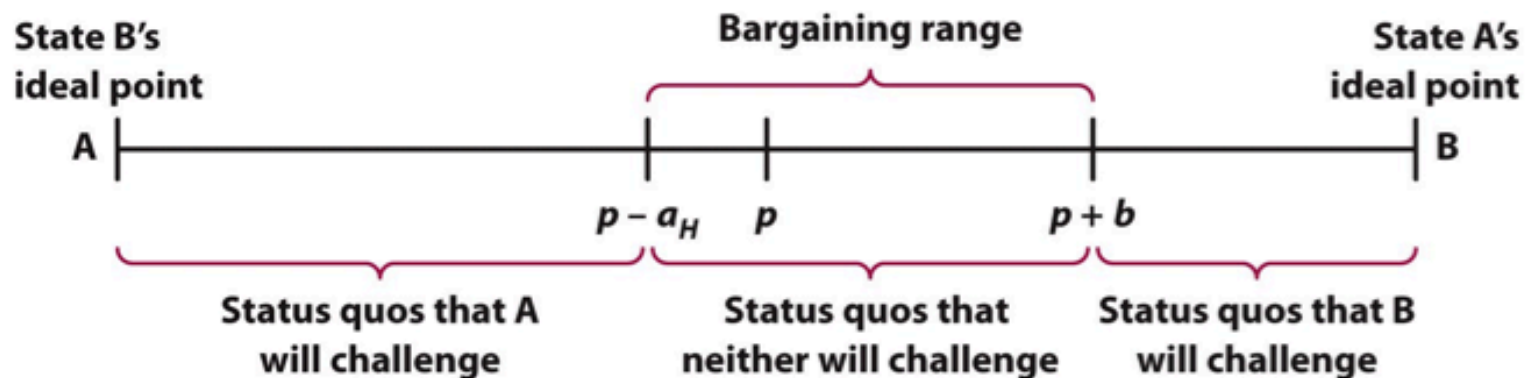
- Assume desire for more funding or desired policy- so how do they get more funding/policy?
- Ability to exert influence depends on the particular domestic institutions
- “Where you stand depends on where you sit”

Hawkish Interests and the Bargaining Range

(a) Bargaining with dovish interests in State A



(b) Bargaining with hawkish interests in State A

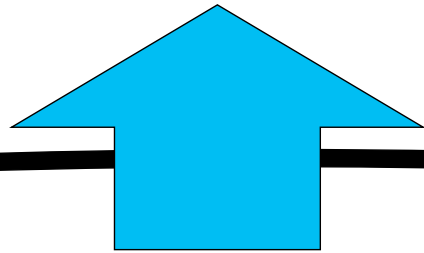


Special Interests Make Countries More Belligerent

- As the value attached to the issue in dispute increases, or as the costs of fighting for a politically influential group decline:
 - The smaller the bargaining range
 - The more likely the state is to challenge the other
 - The better the deal it takes to satisfy the state.
- **BUT** as long as a bargaining range exists, the proximate cause of war remains either incomplete information, problems of credible commitment, or indivisibilities.

IR Realm

A State's
Int'l Policy

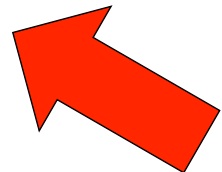
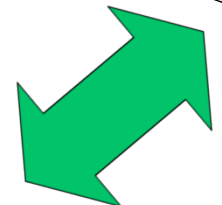


Domestic Realm

Leaders

Provide Support

Provide
Info/Carry
Out Policy

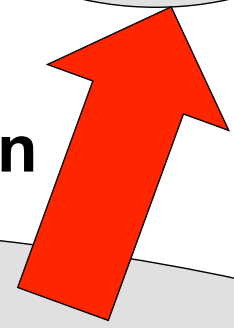


Organized
Interests

Elections?



Collective
Organization



Bureaucracy

The Public



The Democratic Peace

- The closest thing to an empirical law in international relations: although democracies fight on average as frequently as other states, they tend not to fight one another.

An Interest Explanation

- Special interests are less likely to prevail in democracies accountable to the people.
- Decisions are made by those who bear the costs of fighting.
- Suggests that democracies should be more pacific overall, not just with other democracies.

An Informational Explanation

- Democracies are more transparent.
 - Democracies are less able to “bluff”
 - But challenges, once made, are more credible.
- Democracies may have higher “audience” costs.
 - Leaders appear to pay a higher political cost for making a challenge and then backing down.
 - This also means that challenges are more credible.

Limitations

- Possible exceptions to the rule- esp. in “illiberal” democracies
- Could this be the result of capitalism and trade instead?
- How can we support each of the alternatives to these theories?