HARRY POTTER AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATION

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Introduction
Harry Potter and the Study of World Politics

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Why Harry Potter?

Many artifacts of popular culture, as well as genres of film and literature, are important to world politics. A number of scholars have written on the relationship between science fiction and international politics;[1] an ever-expanding literature studies the interaction between popular culture and specific aspects of American foreign policy.[2] What does a volume on Harry Potter, then, bring to such discussions?

We decided that a systematic treatment of the engagement between international relations and popular culture is best served through a focus on a single franchise. Having only one subject allows the contributors to illustrate different ways of apprehending the relationship between world politics and popular culture while giving the volume an overall coherence. The fact that they all share a deep interest in Harry Potter was also a major consideration, as was the continuing popularity of the franchise. When we first began to discuss the idea for this volume at academic conferences, we quickly learned that many of our peers already noticed that the books speak to issues in international politics. The fact that almost all academics and students within the English-speaking world have at least some familiarity with Harry Potter means that the volume should be readily accessible to our intended audience. Furthermore, the success of Harry Potter has already produced a significant body of critical commentary.[3] By engaging with, and contributing to, this commentary the authors not only participate in an emerging field of inquiry within cultural, film, and literary studies, but they also demonstrate what international-relations scholars can contribute to debates about popular culture.

The most important reasons for choosing Harry Potter, however, are substantive. The extraordinary *international* success of the Harry Potter books, films, and merchandise makes the franchise a ripe subject for scholars of world politics. The royalties it generates made the books' author, J. K. Rowling, the wealthiest woman in England. Over 250 million copies of the series have been sold worldwide. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* had the largest printing of a first-run hardcover book in the history of the United States; it broke all previous records for copies sold in its first twenty-four hours after release in the United States and the United Kingdom.[4] In the People's Republic of China, "the first three Harry Potter

books" were "released as a box set with a first run of 600,000—the largest first printing ever for a commercial release in China."[5] The books have been translated into at least fifty-four languages and proven popular in such diverse places as Thailand and Iceland.[6] Together, the first three film adaptations grossed over three billion dollars and were themselves released in over forty dubbed or subtitled versions.[7] Commercial success has also had its downsides. For example, the diminished profitability of Harry Potter merchandise contributed to a recent shakeup at the Danish toy company, Lego.[8]

Harry Potter's commercial success has brought it into the realm of cultural politics. In Russia, accusations that the film visage of one character—the house elf "Dobby"—was a caricature of President Vladimir Putin created a minor uproar.[9] Many compare the incoming Dutch prime minister, Jan Peter Balkenende, to Harry Potter. According to one report, "he was even photographed during elections in 2002 holding a picture of himself and Potter film actor Daniel Radcliffe." But when the Belgian prime minister, Guy Verhofstadt, described Balkenende as "a mix between Harry Potter and a brave rigid bourgeois," it strained relations between the two governments.[10]

In the United States, the Harry Potter series has drawn the ire of some fundamentalist Christians, who complain that the books promote Satanism and witchcraft. The books have become one of the most challenged works in school and public libraries, and one of the most frequent subjects of book burnings. People have raised similar objections to Harry Potter in countries such as England, Australia, Russia, and Thailand.[11]

The fact that Harry Potter has emerged as an important cultural force not simply on a national level, but also on a global level, gives its analysis particular resonance for those interested in how popular culture relates to international politics. The study of Harry Potter interfaces, for example, with a number of ongoing themes in the study of international political economy. According to Patricia Goff, there are close, if under-explored, connections between national identity, the circulation of cultural "goods," and efforts to resist foreign cultural products. Cultural protectionism has not directly affected Harry Potter, but the franchise implicates a number of more traditional concerns in international political economy.[12] Conglomerates, such as Time Warner, play an important role in the marketing of Harry Potter, while the distribution and licensing of Harry Potter to local media outlets sheds light on international economic relations between firms. Copyright infringement, black market sales, and the distribution of copies licensed in one market to other

markets have been recurring issues in the business of selling Harry Potter in a global market.[13]

Cultural historians and theorists also place Harry Potter in the context of globalization. Some scholars link Harry Potter to the "commercialization" of childhood at the global level, the formation of "corporate" cultural hegemony, and to more general processes associated with late capitalism.[14] Whatever one thinks of such arguments, analysis of Harry Potter *should* shed light on how a variety of processes associated with globalization work in practice. Harry Potter is a British novel that has been marketed, with varying degrees of success, to consumers in a wide variety of cultural and linguistic communities. Differences in its reception, in the political and cultural concerns of translators, and in its relative popularity among various ethnic, religious, and national groups elucidate on the intersection between global and local forces in the current era.[15]

Thus, Harry Potter provides particularly fertile ground for evaluating and illuminating the engagement between popular culture and international politics. The international and political dimensions of the Harry Potter phenomenon, we believe, make it uniquely suitable for analysis by scholars of international relations.

Plan of the Volume

From its inception this volume has had two agendas, one methodological, the other substantive. On the one hand, the volume seeks to survey different ways that international-relations scholars can engage with popular culture. On the other hand, this is also a collection of essays about the relationship between Harry Potter and world politics. As such, we seek to address both scholarly and nonscholarly fans of Harry Potter. We decided that, in the final analysis, it would be best to organize the volume thematically, with different sections covering different aspects of Harry Potter and international affairs.

Thus, the volume is organized into four sections. The first part focuses on the relationship between Harry Potter and globalization. In chapter 1, "Producing Harry Potter: Why the Medium Is Still the Message," Patricia Goff situates the marketing of Harry Potter within broader changes in global media production and distribution. In chapter 2, "Glocal Hero: Harry Potter Abroad," Patrick T. Jackson and Peter Mandaville focus on how the localization of Harry Potter has contributed to its success. In doing so, they argue that cultural globalization is as much about local adapta-

tion and translation as about the spread, whole cloth, of American and "Western" culture.

In chapter 3, "Foreign Yet Familiar: International Politics and the Reception of Potter in Turkey and Sweden," Ann Towns and Bahar Rumelili compare the reception of Harry Potter in Sweden and Turkey. They argue that commentary on Harry Potter in both countries reflects differing conceptions of national identity vis-à-vis, on the one hand, the Anglo-Saxon world and, on the other, the West. Chapter 4, "Children's Crusade: The Religious Politics of Harry Potter," by Maia A. Gemmill and Daniel H. Nexon, situates the religious backlash against Harry Potter in the broader context of traditionalist responses to global modernity. Gemmill and Nexon trace traditions within Christianity about witchcraft in order to show that opposition to Harry Potter draws on long-standing representations of the malevolence of magic within Christianity—representations directly appropriated by Rowling in her creation of Harry Potter's fictional world. They argue, however, that the dynamics of the backlash complicate simplistic assessments of "modernity against tradition," "secularism against religion," and "globalization against localism."

The second part of this book, "Conflict and Warfare," examines the relationship between Harry Potter and political conflict. In chapter 5, "Conflict and the Nation-State: Magical Mirrors of Muggles and Refracted Images," Jennifer Sterling-Folker and Brian Folker examine the relationship between group identity and conflict in Harry Potter. They argue that Harry Potter teaches us important lessons about the inevitability of *realpolitik* in world politics, even in the absence of powerful nation-states. The next chapter in this section, David Long's "Quidditch, Imperialism and the Sport-War Intertext," reflects on the complicated interaction between international relations, conflict, and games and sports.

The third part, entitled "Geography and Myth," contains two chapters that locate Harry Potter within broader mytho-religious structures relevant to world politics. In "Naturalizing Geography: Harry Potter and the Realms of Muggles, Magic Folks, and Giants," Iver B. Neumann analyzes the geographical landscape of Harry Potter, which draws on long-standing folkloric traditions in western Europe, and draws parallels with the emerging landscape that undergirds American and European foreign relations. Martin Hall's "The Fantasy of Realism, or Mythology as Methodology," in contrast, explores the moral space of the fantasy genre in which Harry Potter is located in relation to major Christian traditions about the nature of evil, on the one hand, and realist understandings of international politics, on the other.

The final part of the volume, "Pedagogy," contains one chapter: "Dumbledore's Pedagogy: Knowledge and Virtue at Hogwarts," by Torbjørn Knutsen. Knutsen provides us with a detailed analysis of the pedagogy of Hogwarts in relation to the English boarding school genre from which Harry Potter is, in part, derived. He finds important lessons for the pedagogy of international relations, particularly with respect to the problem of making moral choices in a world often inhospitable to students' ideals.

Popular Culture and International Relations: Four Approaches

Over the last decade, the discipline of international relations has shown an increasing interest in the relationship between popular culture and various aspects of international politics. Scholars influenced by constructivism and post-structuralism now recognize that any attempt to understand the influence of cultural forces—such as ideas, identities, language, discourses, and symbols—requires moving beyond the statements of political elites and inquiring into the broader cultural resources that shape political processes. If culture profoundly affects politics, then we cannot neglect popular culture, since it is within popular culture that morality is shaped, identities are produced and transformed, and effective analogies and narratives are constructed and altered.[16]

Popular culture is a crucial domain in which social and political life are *represented*. For example, NBC's drama *The West Wing* was a fictional representation of political and personal struggles in the White House. Family situation comedies aim for humorous representations of daily life in a nuclear or extended family. Popular music, for its part, packages and represents a host of themes, including lost love, sexual desire, material success, personal feuds, and moral values.

Such representations are not merely passive mirrors; they also play a crucial role in constituting the social and political world. In their pioneering work, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann argue that most human knowledge consists of typifications: generalizations, or stereotypes, about other people, the world, political life, and so forth. Most of these typifications do not derive from direct experience. We learn them from the testimony of others: parents, peers, teachers, and a variety of scientific, religious, and political authorities. Many of us, for example, do not have direct proof that the world is round. We "know" the world is round because people whom we trust tell us so: those, for example, who have circumnavigated it or have seen it from orbit. Sim-

ilarly, most of us gain our knowledge of foreign countries from journalists, scholars, and other people who have been to those places, who testify to the fact that those countries do exist, and who tell us about the politics, beliefs, and customs of the people who inhabit them.[17] As C. Wight Mills argues,

> The first rule for understanding the human condition is that men live in second-hand worlds. They are aware of much more than they have personally experienced; and their own experience is always indirect. . . . Their images of the world, and of themselves, are given to them by crowds of witnesses they have never met and never shall meet.[18]

A great deal of politics relies upon, operates through, and produces representations. President George Bush's famous address after al Qaeda's attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., was itself a *representation* of the events. It drew on representations from the media and intelligence communities about the attacks themselves, relied on representations of America and the world deeply ingrained in American political culture, and presented a representation of the meaning and significance of the attacks that it then tied to specific courses of action, such as the imminent invasion of Afghanistan.

There are many differences between the kind of representation involved in a politician's speech and that of a fictional television program, but many of these differences are ones of degree. The former might be thought of as a *first-order representation*.[19] It seeks to directly re-present political events. In this terminology, television and print journalism are also examples of first-order representation. Although a speech by a politician is often a re-presentation of facts and narratives reported in the media, both claim to be direct representations of the "real world."

Popular entertainment usually takes the form of *second-order representations*, in that its narratives re-present elements of social and political life through a layer of fictional representation. If a politician is always a kind of actor, attempting to convince us with her speeches, "act presidential," or "feel our pain," then a professional actor playing a politician is an actor portraying an actor.[20] Consider the extensive literature on *Star Trek*, which examines how it describes and represents the Cold War, humanitarian interventions, and so forth. *Star Trek*, in this sense, represents representations.

International-relations theorists often neglect second-order representations. They also view first-order representations as relatively unproblematic expressions of the "facts" of international politics. The speeches and debates

of political elites are often the "stuff" of our investigations, whereas we usually treat books, films, and television as afterthoughts or indirect commentary on political events. For many purposes, there is nothing wrong with this mode of analyzing the social world. At the same time, both speeches and television dramas are *representations* of social life, and they interact with one another in a variety of important ways. We need to keep in mind that, for many people, second-order representations are often more significant sources of knowledge about politics and society. Popular entertainment not only commands a larger audience than the news or political events, but it frequently has a more powerful impact on the way audiences come to their basic assumptions about the world.

The distinction between first-order and second-order representations is not always easy to draw. As we suggest, first-order and second-order representations interact in a variety of ways. Moreover, sometimes one person's second-order representation is another person's first-order representation. In the philosophy of the social sciences, a famous debate turned on exactly these issues. The topic happened to be witchcraft, and the issue was whether witches existed or not. The key question was how to study societies where representations of witches and their purported actions played a key role in constituting the social matrix. Peter Winch, who opened the debate, held that the way to go about it was to forget about the question of whether witches existed or not. If representations of witches played a key role in constituting social life, then those representations should be among the starting points of any inquiry into this particular social world. It is no coincidence that this debate fastened on a religious theme. One can study religion as a set of beliefs—rather than as theological truths—but, from that perspective, religion is definitely a second-order representational system, one with a profound influence on world politics.[21]

A better understanding of world politics, we believe, requires an investigation of a broad array of second-order representations. Popular entertainment is but one form of second-order representation in which individuals invest an enormous amount of time and energy. Such phenomena play an important role in creating our social reality; just as much as first-order representations, they are part of what the French philosopher Michel Foucault refers to as the "archive," that is, the broad stock of social knowledge, forms, analogies, symbols, and techniques through which actors are able to communicate and otherwise influence their environment.

Such forms include ritual recitals, festivals, public performances, and "entertainment."[22]

International-relations theory's engagement with popular culture is not only driven by the need to better understand processes and outcomes in world politics. Pedagogical considerations also play an important role. Courses on "politics and film" or "politics and literature" have long been popular among undergraduates. As teachers, we frequently find that popular culture provides an important medium for the communication of ideas, concepts, and theories of politics. Some scholars argue that changes in the way that our students process information will force us to make even wider use of novels, films, and music in our classes if we wish to remain effective teachers. If we are to do this well, we need to be more reflective about the uses and abuses, as well as the power and limits, of popular culture as a means of teaching international relations. Indeed, in their attempts to study and utilize popular culture, international-relations scholars are beginning to tread on territory already occupied by cultural studies, communications, anthropology, literature, and cultural sociology. This raises two important questions. First, what new insights and approaches can international-relations scholars bring to the table in the analysis of popular culture? Second, how can engagements with popular culture truly inform the study of international politics? If international-relations scholars cannot give good answers to these questions, then we should restrict ourselves to borrowing from the insights of others.

What do those trained in international relations bring to the analysis of popular culture? One answer is our comparative expertise in political processes: how world politics and international-political economy function, how actors legitimate foreign and economic policy, what constraints and opportunities cultural resources create for political action, the dynamics of transnational and national movements, and so on. This answer suggests a number of different ways in which popular cultural artifacts—such as Harry Potter—intersect with international relations. We argue that there are four ways through which international-relations scholars can engage popular culture, which we call *popular culture and politics, popular culture as mirror, popular culture as data, and popular culture as constitutive.* The distinctions between these categories are imperfect, but they have served us well as a starting point for thinking and writing. These approaches, their underlying assumptions, and the kinds of analysis they give rise to, are summarized in table I.1. We introduce them in turn.

Table I.1. International-Relations Approaches to Popular Culture

	Approaches			
	Popular Culture and Politics	*Popular Culture as Mirror*	*Popular Culture as Data*	*Popular Culture as Constitutive*
Status of Popular Culture	As a cause or outcome in world politics As an element of political processes in world politics	As a medium of inspiration for exploring themes/processes in international relations and international-relations theory	As evidence of the norms, beliefs, identities, etc.	As interactive with other representations of political life
Typical Mode of Analysis	Mainstream international-relations approaches	Pedagogical and analogical	Ethnographic, content analysis, etc.	Structural, post-structural, and other forms found in cultural studies
Key Questions	*Significance:* Are elements of popular culture a significant cause or outcome for international relations?	*Communicative:* Does the use of popular culture help to explain or elucidate issues in world politics?	*Quality:* Is the interpretation of the data correct; is it a good indicator of the existence of the norms, beliefs, identity, etc.?	*Relevance:* Are the interactions between popular culture and other representational system important to understanding international political process?

Politics and Popular Culture

In May 2005, *Newsweek*, a U.S. news magazine, wrote that a Defense Department report was about to confirm accusations that American interrogators had flushed a copy of the Koran down a toilet as part of an attempt to "break" a detainee suspected of being a terrorist. The report "set off the most virulent, widespread anti-American protests in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban government." *Newsweek* later retracted the story, claiming it was inadequately sourced and probably inaccurate.[23] In this case, a representation, now reportedly fictional, was the proximate cause of death, property destruction, and a setback for U.S. foreign relations.

In fact, one of the most straightforward ways to study the intersection between popular culture and world politics is to treat popular culture (and its artifacts) as causes and effects of the kinds of political processes familiar to any student of international relations. Popular culture itself, as well as the books, films, music, and merchandise produced for popular consumption, have a variety of relationships to concerns in international political economy. Examples include issues of copyright infringement, international marketing and licensing, cultural protectionism, and the integration and regulation of national and multinational media corporations. Similarly, works of popular culture shape the broader terms of political discourse, influence debates about specific policies, and galvanize movements. At the same time, popular culture itself is influenced by events central to the discipline of international relations, such as wars, terrorist attacks, political movements, and the like. Anti-Tutsi propaganda in Rwanda, D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, American protest music of the 1960s, Errol Morris's *The Fog of War*, and Tom Clancy's technothrillers can all be analyzed as causes and effects of political phenomena.

The first substantive chapters in this volume reflect the politics and popular culture approach. Patricia M. Goff (chapter 1) argues that the worldwide popularity of the Harry Potter franchise cannot, ultimately, be divorced from the marketing power of an increasingly conglomerated global media. Maia A. Gemmill and Daniel Nexon (chapter 4) explore why Harry Potter provoked a highly mobilized backlash among members of the Christian Right. In both instances, the object of analysis is how a popular cultural artifact is causally influenced, or itself becomes a cause, of political processes.

Popular Culture as Mirror

This is how popular culture is often used in teaching: to illuminate various concepts and processes from IR. Whenever a professor shows a sequence

from *Monty Python's Life of Brian* to illustrate factional politics among revolutionary movements or has her class watch *Doctor Strangelove* to gain an appreciation of theories of nuclear deterrence, she uses popular culture in this way. The mirror approach is broader than simply deploying popular cultural artifacts as a teaching aid. IR scholars can examine popular culture as a medium for exploring theoretical concepts, dilemmas of foreign policy, and the like. Popular culture can also serve as inspiration, leading IR theorists to adopt terms or even develop theories as a result of engagement with books and films. One example would be "the Rashomon effect." Drawn from the title of an Akira Kurosawa film, the term refers to a situation in which people see the same event in entirely different ways. Uses of popular cultural texts and images as mirrors can force us to reflect on our theoretical and pedagogical assumptions.[24] Popular culture thus serves as a medium for what critical analysts of science fiction call "ontological displacement." Such works invite us to step back from our ingrained suppositions about a certain phenomenon and our vested interests in ongoing debates to gain a different perspective upon our social world.

We restrict the category of "popular culture as mirror" to the use of popular culture as a pedagogical or analogical tool. Nevertheless, important aspects of the mirror-quality of popular culture are at work in other categories of analysis. Sometimes, seeing historical events reflected in the mirror of popular culture gives plausibility to a particular interpretation of those events.[25] The same can be said of fictional accounts that appear to be analogies for current events, such as the debate over whether the film *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* betrays conservative fans by suggesting an analogy between George H. W. Bush's "War on Terrorism" and the transformation of the Galactic Republic into a Galactic Empire.[26]

Indeed, the effects of politics as mirror become perhaps clearest when the mirror fails to reflect the desired image. For example, when works of popular culture tell stories that a group sees as undermining their own stories about sacred realms, how to find them, and what to find there, trouble ensues. The case of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* turned on this issue. As Peter Beyer explains,

> The Rushdie affairs does more than demonstrate the link between religious faith and particularistic identity. On the whole, outraged Muslims are, in fact, not concerned that Rushdie's book will undermine their faith—all the less so since few devout Muslims will ever read it. What troubles them much more is the notion that they are being asked to surrender the core of that faith—the *immutable sacredness* of the Qur'ran—as the price

for full inclusion in a global system currently dominated by non-Muslims. Khomeini and many other Muslims equate the relativization of Islam declared by *The Satanic Verses* with the marginalization of Muslims in the overall society. Khomeini's condemnation of Rushdie is therefore part of a much larger Muslim effort to counter inequalities within the global system, through the revitalization of Islamic particularity.[27]

A number of chapters in this volume explore popular culture as a mirror for international-relations theory and scholarship. Jennifer Sterling-Folker and Brian Folker (chapter 5) argue that Harry Potter illustrates how realist accounts of international politics apply even in the absence of strong states. Harry Potter itself is treated as a kind of "case" to examine the naturalness of human in-group identification, and the reciprocal inevitability of intergroup conflict. Thus, they contend that realist theory will remain highly relevant even if the world becomes increasingly globalized. An important narrative in popular culture, in this chapter, is a vehicle for elucidating a particular approach to world politics. Torbjørn Knutsen (chapter 9) uses a similar form of analysis when he argues that Harry Potter is an important mirror for considering the pedagogical task of international-relations theory.

David Long's essay (chapter 6) does not fall neatly into any of our categories. He uses the relationship between Rowling's invented sport of Quidditch and the broader struggle between good and evil in the Harry Potter novels as a way of discussing the complicated relationship among sports, games, and international relations. Like the other two essays mentioned here, Long's chapter demonstrates how the mirror of popular culture and international relations can work in both directions; not only does the role of Quidditch in Harry Potter allow us to interrogate the use of sports and games metaphors in the theory and practice of international relations, but understandings of sports and games also illuminate tensions within the Harry Potter narrative.

Popular Culture as Data

Popular culture can be treated as evidence about dominant norms, ideas, identities, or beliefs in a particular state, society, or region. This approach draws on insights from hermeneutics, forms of content analysis, and ethnography, in which cultural texts and images are seen as storage places for meaning in a particular society. Popular culture is particularly useful in this context, in that it may reflect general cultural themes and assumptions better than elite discourse.

For example, in *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow 1955 and 1999*, Ted Hopf argues that scholars can predict a state's foreign-policy behavior by understanding its domestic identity. Rather than simply reading speeches by political officials, Hopf looks closely at the Soviet and Russian press, popular novels, and a variety of other "textual sources of identity" that are part of the popular culture of the Soviet Union and Russia in 1955 and 1999.[28]

Ann Towns and Bahar Rumelili (chapter 3) demonstrate how Harry Potter can be used as an important source of data about attitudes in Sweden and Turkey. They argue that the reception of Harry Potter confirms broader claims about key aspects of national identity in both countries. Many other chapters in this volume also deploy Harry Potter as data about cultural values, norms, and beliefs that are relevant to international politics. This should not be surprising, since treating popular culture as data is often a precondition for other forms of exploration into the relationship between popular cultural artifacts, such as Harry Potter, and international relations. One of the important things about the approach taken by Towns and Rumelili, as well as a number of other contributors to this volume, is that they study the interplay between the content of Harry Potter and its reception by various audiences. How a broader audience interprets and responds to a text or film, particularly one as popular as Harry Potter, should provide very good evidence about collective beliefs in a state, society, or political movement.

Popular culture does not only provide evidence about cultural values, however. It can also be used as a source of data about ongoing political processes. Patrick T. Jackson and Peter Mandaville (chapter 2) call our attention to the importance of localization in the overall process of globalization. By studying the translation (in multiple senses) of Harry Potter they find evidence for the ways in which localization works in the production of "global" popular culture. In doing so, they use popular culture to provide interesting insights into broader processes of significance to the study of international change.

Popular Culture as Constitutive

There is often a subtle, but important, difference between treating popular culture as "data" and looking at the ways in which popular culture may itself constitute beliefs about international politics. When popular culture is treated as data, we generally maintain a clear distinction between the different orders of representation. Popular culture is treated as a second-order

representation that, nonetheless, reveals important facts about collective beliefs. Thus, we use popular culture to give us good evidence about dominant norms, values, identities, and ideas. When we claim that, for example, a state's foreign policy is driven by its national identity, we can look to popular culture to get a better handle on the content of that national identity.

When we turn to the role of popular culture in *constituting* norms, values, identities, and ideas, however, we relax the distinction between first-order and second-order representations. This is because we want to understand how popular culture actively shapes first-order representations and thus plays a far more important role in the actual conduct of world politics. In international-relations theory, both constructivists and post-structuralists are most interested in this kind of approach. For instance, Michael Shapiro writes that:

> Part of what must be rejected is that aspect of the terrain predicated on a radical distinction between what is thought of as fictional and scientific genres of writing. In the history of thought the distinction has been supported by the notion that the fictional text, e.g., the story, play, or novel, manufactures its own objects and events in acts of imagination, while the epistemologically respectable genres, such as the scientific text, have "real" objects and events, which provide a warrant for the knowledge-value of those of the text's statements purporting to be about the objects and events.[29]

As we argue when we introduce the distinction between first- and second-order representations, scholars interested in the ways that second-order representations shape social and political life have often focused on religion and mythology. Myth, understood as founding stories that create and sustain a community, is at the center of *both* religion *and* popular culture.[30] Both give rise to beliefs and values that are, for individuals, "taken for granted" in the conduct of everyday life. Both, from a social-scientific standpoint, mix belief and make-belief. Indeed, Emile Durkheim famously argued that nationalism is, in essence, society worshipping itself,[31] and what is popular culture but the medium societies use to shape themselves a community through fact and fiction?

This is precisely the kind of approach taken by Michael Jindra in his studies of fandom in the United States and Europe. Jindra examined the fan cultures surrounding *Star Trek* and found a number of similarities between them and religious communities. As he argues, *Star Trek* fandom "is an example of play and ritual coming back together, back to their 'natural' condition of coexistence and ambiguity."[32]

Similarly, the social anthropologist Daniel Miller documents how the TV show *The Young and the Restless* meshed into the fabric of Trinidadian life.[33] Specifically, tailors, goldsmiths, and other craftsmen changed their products to reflect shifting popular tastes generated by the show. Miller also stresses that *The Young and the Restless*, which highlights flamboyant and carnivalistic consumption, reflected already existing preferences among Trinidadians.[34] Another American show, *Sex in the City*, has inspired—and been the explicit theme of—large-scale singles parties for the young and the restless in Oslo, Norway.[35] Here too, the popularity of the series both reflects previously existing cultural patterns—the mating activities of young, urban Norwegians—and alters them in demonstrable ways. In both cases, fictional second-order representations integrate into the actual practices of communities and, in the process, redefine those communities. Both cases also demonstrate the ways in which popular culture is an integral part of globalization, a theme taken up in many of the chapters of this volume.

Because Miller studies the impact of *The Young and the Restless* through the prism of consumption studies, he focuses on how acts of consumptions are strung together through the stories and narratives that lend meaning to the direction of social activity.[36] Miller pinpoints one of the effects of a particular kind of television show, and relates it to the overall patterns of everyday Trinidadian life. Many of the chapters in this book also seek to understand how one particular second-order representation, namely Harry Potter, intertwines with different first-order phenomenon. But this raises a problem faced by all international-relations scholars who seek to account for the constitutive influence of popular culture on international politics. Since Miller studies everything about Trinidadian life, he finds its effects everywhere. Indeed, many studies of popular culture tend to have a rather free-floating character precisely because they lack an obvious site to study. One way of managing this issue is to focus on three different aspects of popular culture: production, content, and reception. For serials such as *Star Trek*, this is particularly appropriate, inasmuch as they

> are distinguished as a narrative form by the discourse they trace between the producing industry and the readers/spectators/listeners who consume them. [Of particular importance is] the production and distribution of fragmented narrative in a mass medium that is consumed at regular intervals. Historically, for this to occur, one needs a social context characterized by three essential elements: a market economy, a communications technology sufficiently developed to be commercially exploited, and, as Barthes suggests, the recognition of narrative as commodity.[37]

International-relations scholars deal largely with the domain of "high politics." They study war, peace, trade disputes, diplomacy, international law, and so forth. It is much more difficult to establish the impact of popular culture on these kinds of issues—to establish the relationship between first-order and second-order phenomena. Some structuralists and post-structuralists assert a fundamental equality between orders of representation. For them, there is no difference between an episode of *Dallas* and a speech by Ronald Reagan.[38] While this position, or one like it, is acceptable for some in the discipline of cultural studies, many international-relations scholars and political scientists are rightly uncomfortable with collapsing different forms of representation into one another.

These conceptual problems should not stop us from trying. There are, as we have already argued, good reasons to believe that interactions between orders of representation play an important role in international politics. For instance, the growing attention to the role of stories and narratives in politics, even among scholars who once placed little emphasis upon them,[39] implies that international-relations scholars need to better understand why certain narratives are effective or ineffective in legitimating political action. There are undoubtedly a number of relationships between popular cultural and political narratives. Political narratives draw from and inform popular cultural stories, while the effectiveness of both kinds of narratives may derive from similar features; both politicians and entertainers need to tell "good stories" if they want to "sell" a product or a policy.[40]

We argue that there are roughly four different ways in which popular culture has constitutive effects on international politics. It can be *determining, informing, enabling,* and *naturalizing.*

Determining Effects

In political science, one way of accounting for political action is to argue that actors relate to a given situation by following a "logic of appropriateness." People ask themselves: what kind of situation is this? Who am I, and what is my role in this situation? How can I act so that what I do is appropriate to that role?[41] In rare cases, however, decision makers lack the knowledge or experience to appropriately frame an issue. Under those circumstances, popular cultural representations—fictional or nonfictional—may fill the void and exercise a determining effect on policy making. For example, Kevin Dunn argues that, during the 1960 Congo crisis, U.S. policymakers acted on what

they held to be knowledge of the local historical and social context of the crisis. However, Dunn argues, closer scrutiny makes clear that this "knowledge" came largely from *Tarzan* films, texts such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Graham Greene's *A Burnt Out Case*, and the comic book *Tintin in Congo*.[42] The Congo case is a reminder that popular culture sometimes does supply the "knowledge" upon which even political elites base their decisions. The U.S. policymakers wanted to do what was appropriate, and in order to do that, they drew on the only sources of knowledge that were readily available to them. This is an extreme example, and such *determining importance* must be rare—if it may be found in pure form at all.

Informing Effects

Post-structuralists, such as Michael Shapiro, argue that the frames and narratives offered by popular culture mix inextricably with other aspects of political and social practice. The upshot is that, because "power often hides itself" by working through advertisements, fiction, and other apparently nonpolitical forms of communication and representation, one has to explore those social sites in order to understand the true contours of political power.[43] Indeed, the argument goes, both political and apparently nonpolitical representations must be studied if we want to understand world politics. In this view, popular culture can *inform* world politics without determining international political outcomes; popular culture provides diffuse knowledge that people bring to bear on political issues.

The *informing effects* of popular culture are thus more widespread than its determining effects, but they are also more difficult to assess. Harry Potter, we believe, is probably too new to have strong informing effects. In contrast, the informing effects of *Star Trek* on, for example, American space policy is well documented.[44]

Enabling Effects

Popular culture may lend metaphorical strength to the appeal of a certain policy and so take on *enabling importance* for political action. Political speeches are full of allusions to narratives already known to the public. By relying on familiar narratives, politicians draw analogies that make their positions intuitively plausible to their audiences. Because these narratives, and their significance, are widely accepted in a particular culture, the very act of linking them to the policy is sometimes sufficient to build support for a political movement's goals.

If one thinks of religion and politics as two separate systems of meaning, then in most historical cases the political function of religion seems to have been to enable politicians to perform in a given set of ways: "Religions can become the source of collective obligation, such that deviation from specific religious norms will bring in its wake negative consequences for adherents and non-adherents alike; and collective action in the name of these norms becomes legitimate."[45]

Popular culture often has this kind of importance. Ronald Reagan, for example, used popular culture to great effect in order to make his audiences more receptive to his positions. One of Reagan's speeches argued the case against trade protectionism by comparing it to a pie fight, a stock-in-trade of a certain kind of popular culture. When Reagan ended a speech delivered to NASA, he lifted the roof by tapping the potential of *Star Wars* in wishing them all well: "May the Force be with you." After 11 September 2001, a swathe of U.S. newspaper cartoons drew Bush as Harry Potter, with captions suggesting that producing a Voldemort-like enemy for his "war on terror" would be a smart move. However, we have not found any significant examples of the use of Harry Potter in speeches by Western officials to date. Thus, just as Harry Potter has not had demonstrable determining or informing effects, it also has probably not had much of an enabling effect on world politics either.

Naturalizing Effects

If there are similarities between the politics of an artifact of popular culture and other political representations, then popular culture may be said to "clear the ground" for the reception of political representations. For example, the more popular culture and political representations display a Manichean way of thinking about politics (in which good and evil are absolutes that always clash in any particular political moment), the easier it should be for a public to accept a Manichean message in a speech by a state official. Popular culture may thus have *naturalizing importance*: it makes a particular way of looking at the world appear to be part of the natural order, "just the way things are," and hence difficult to argue against.

The naturalizing effects of popular culture are not limited to domestic politics, but also may operate transnationally. Audiences not used to Manichean views of political conflict, for example, will have an easier time grasping Manichean politics generally if they are already familiar with the Manichean aspects of the Harry Potter series. If an American TV show

may shape mating practices in Oslo, Norway, then it stands to reason that a global blockbuster like Potter may shape thinking about the political.

Iver B. Neumann's essay (chapter 7) explicitly takes up the issue of naturalizing effects. He argues that the spatial geography of the Potter universe represents as natural a world in which savagery and barbarity emanate from the north and from the east. Martin Hall (chapter 8) "explores structural similarities and differences between the mythmaking prevalent in the fantasy genre, Christian monodemonologicalism (the view that evil stems from a single figure, Satan) and that deployed in realist theory." In doing so, Hall explicitly studies the interaction between different kinds of representations of political conflict, with an eye toward how the assumptions of all three frameworks do and do not naturalize one another.

It follows that, when we try to make sense of a certain phenomenon, we will draw on representations whose origins are uncertain. We contend that a number of these representations emanate from the realm of popular culture. If this is so, then it should be a scholarly task to assess how popular culture impinges on global politics. In this introduction, we suggest some general ways to think about this. The rest of the book substantiates these speculations by looking at some of the enjoyable evidence.

Abbreviations

Throughout this book the following abbreviations of Harry Potter titles are used in parenthetical citations:

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	PS
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	CS
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	PA
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	GF
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	OP
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince	HBP

Notes

1. Weldes 2001; 2003a; 2003b.
2. See, for example, Lipschutz 2001; McAlister 2001.
3. Anatol 2003; Heilman 2003; Whited 2003.
4. Associated Press 2005a; Associated Press 2005b.
5. *The Nation* 2000.
6. *Straits Times* 2003.
7. Data from www.thenumbers.com.
8. MacCarthy 2004.

9. Nathan 2003; Wines 2003.
10. Reuters 2005.
11. Lawrence 2001; Morrison 2002; Osnos 2003.
12. Goff 2000, 2002.
13. See the chapters in this volume by Goff and by Jackson and Mandaville.
14. Turner-Vorbeck 2003.
15. Jentsch 2003; Nel 2002. Many of the chapters in this volume take up these themes.
16. Shapiro 1992a, 1992b; Enloe 1996; Hopf 2002.
17. Berger and Luckmann 1966.
18. Mills 1959, 45. See also Luhmann 2000.
19. Barthes 1972; Hoenisch 1996.
20. As Erving Goffman 1990 [1959] famously argues, social and political life can be likened to a series of performances, in which individuals, like professional actors, act out roles such as "doctor," "wife," "child," and "firefighter."
21. Winch 1988.
22. Foucault 1994 [1968].
23. Hauser and Seelye 2005.
24. Weber 1999.
25. Weldes 2003a.
26. Burr 2005.
27. Beyer 1994, 3.
28. Hopf 2002.
29. Shapiro 1988, 7.
30. Kottak 1990; 106; Laustsen and Wæver 2000, 717; Hall in this volume.
31. Durkheim 1965.
32. Jindra 1994, 47. Jenkins 1992, 45, 41, documents that fandom is a multimedia phenomenon both in its expressive dimension "friends and letters and crafts and fanzines and trivia and costumes and artwork and filksongs [fan music-making] and buttons and film clips and conventions" and where the object of desire is concerned. Thus, "To focus on any one media product—be that *Star Trek* or [the pop song] 'Material Girl'—is to miss the larger cultural context within which that material gets embedded as it is integrated back into the life of the individual fan." These are, however, not problems for a symptomatic reading such as this one. Jenkins's and Ang's attacks on traditional audience research follow Michel de Certeau's work on how readers and listeners "poach" texts, i.e., edit and rework them for their own purposes. Inasmuch as de Certeau pinpoints Lévy-Strauss's "bricoleur" approach, where actors are seen simply to pick pieces and rearrange them without really adding or subtracting anything, Jenkins's and Ang's moves are part of a broader move from structuralism to post-structuralism.
33. It is instructive to compare Miller's work to that of the one scholar of literature who has made his name during the final decades of the last century by grappling with the circulation between text and public. Steven Greenblatt 1988, 5 refers

to the "study of the collective making of distinct cultural practices and inquiry into the relations among these practices" as a poetics of culture, and uses the concept of "social energies" to investigate this. Greenblatt's investigations often focus on Shakespeare. He asks what it was and is in his plays that fascinates the audience—which energies circulated between the play and the public and gave the text the force to come alive. His answer is that there are parallels between the form and subject matter of the dramas, and the form and subject matter of political life at the time. Tensions of everyday life are played out, and he does not deny an element of mimesis and a possible effect of catharsis, and Shakespeare makes this happen in such a way that the lines between the stage and everyday life are blurred. The social energies of everyday life circulate to the production of reality on stage. The play in turn fascinates and animates the public. For Greenblatt, as a literary scholar, the main point is to demonstrate how this circulation may account for the power of the plays. For an anthropologist, in contrast, the main point will be how the representations offered in plays, novels, television series, etc. contribute to the constitution of the social.

34. Miller 1995.

35. *Aftenposten*, 11 February 2002.

36. He gives as one reason for studying the narratives offered by television that, whereas narrative is ubiquitous in social life, the ones he has singled out for study approach an ideal type: "Ricoeur provides a substantial argument for the centrality of narrative to modernity. . . . Ricoeur's study is largely based in 'high' rather than popular traditions; the conflict over the place of narrative is first posed as a conflict between St. Augustine and Aristotle. The sense of the event and recapitulation are evoked with Proust not soap-opera. In many ways this is a pity. It is precisely in the semi-industrialized massive production field of soap opera and its multiple readings that perhaps a better sense of the actual place of narrative in human relations could be revealed" (Miller 1995, 229).

37. Hagedorn 1995, 27, 29.

38. It seems to us that these post-structuralists have not really taken to heart the gist of the break with structuralism, which was exactly a dissatisfaction with the view held by Lévi-Strauss and others that any observable structure was simply a manifestation of a latent or deep structure. Since any manifest structure—be that a novel or a political debate on a specific question—was ultimately a configuration of the same latent structure, the same code was on display in all loci of social life. The post-structuralist project was to discard the very idea of a latent structure, not to reinscribe it by arguing in favor of identity between different kinds of cultural artifacts.

39. Tilly 2002.

40. Jackson and Nexon 2003; Weldes 2003a.

41. March and Olsen 1989.

42. Dunn 2003, especially chapter 3.

43. Shapiro 1988, 29.

44. One extant study that aims to demonstrate this kind of connection is Constance Penley's 1997 *NASA/Trek*, which aims to tease out the interdiscursivity between American space travel and *Star Trek*: "NASA first began its *Star Trek* makeover in the mid-seventies when the space agency yielded to President Gerald Ford's demand prompted by a *Star Trek* fan letter-writing campaign to change the name of the first shuttle from Constitution to Enterprise. Many of the show's cast members were there as the Enterprise—an experimental model used only to practice takeoff and landing—was rolled out onto the tarmac at Edwards Air Force Base to the stirring sounds of Alexander Courage's theme from *Star Trek*. After *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry dies in 1991, NASA let an unnamed shuttle astronaut carry his ashes—classified as 'personal effects'—into space. And NASA actually hired Nichelle Nicols at one point in the late seventies to help recruit women and minorities into the astronaut corps. Mae Jemison [a female astronaut] later invited Nicols to her launch and began every shift of her shuttle mission with Lt. Uhura's famous line, 'hailing frequencies open.' Even the Smithsonian's national Air and Space Museum, which produces and houses the historical record of U.S. space flight, has made a point of including *Star Trek*. In March 1992 the museum mounted *Star Trek: The Exhibition*, a show that turned out to be wildly popular (much to the surprise of many): in response to the question of what a pop-culture phenomenon like *Star Trek* was doing in a place which honors real-life conquests of air and space, the curator said, simply 'There is no other fantasy more pervasive in the conceptualization of space flight than *Star Trek*.' One might conclude from these examples that *Star Trek* is the theory, NASA the practice." Penley 1997, 51.

45. Beyer 1994, 71. See Beyer 1994 for a Luhmannian discussion of the degree in which we now see a return of this state of affairs.