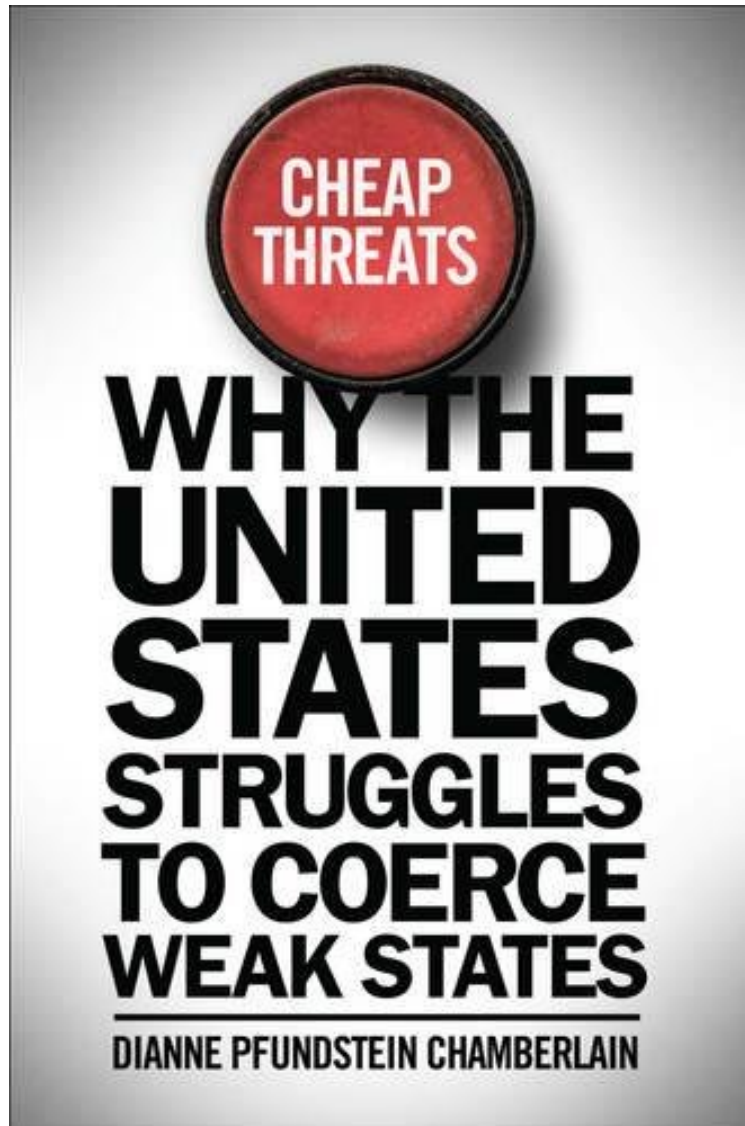


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Cheap Threats: Why the United States Struggles to Coerce Weak States

Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain
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Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain : Cheap Threats: Why the United States Struggles to Coerce Weak States before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cheap Threats: Why the United States Struggles to Coerce Weak States:

Why do weak states resist threats of force from the United States, especially when history shows that this superpower carries out its ultimatums? *Cheap Threats* upends conventional notions of power politics and challenges assumptions about the use of compellent military threats in international politics. Drawing on an original dataset of US compellence from 1945 to 2007 and four in-depth case studies—the Cuban Missile Crisis, the 2011 confrontation with Libya, and the 1991 and 2003 showdowns with Iraq—Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain finds that US compellent threats often fail because threatening and using force became comparatively "cheap" for the United States after the Cold War. Becoming the world's only superpower and adopting a new light-footprint model of war, which relied heavily on airpower and now drones, have reduced the political, economic, and human costs that US policymakers face when they go to war. Paradoxically, this lower-cost model of war has cheapened US threats and fails to signal to opponents that the United States is resolved to bear the high costs of a protracted conflict. The result: small states gamble, often unwisely, that the United States will move on to a new target before achieving its goals. *Cheap Threats* resets the bar for scholars and planners grappling with questions of state resolve, hegemonic stability, effective coercion, and other issues pertinent in this new era of US warfighting and diplomacy.

In this fascinating and carefully argued study, Pfundstein Chamberlain puts forward a "costly compellence theory." * *Foreign Affairs* * "In this carefully researched and forcefully argued work, Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain develops a compelling theory of why the United States finds it so hard to bend weak states to its will."?Robert J. Art, Christian A. Herter Professor of International Relations, Brandeis University"Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain identifies a major puzzle—why have weak states routinely ignored the compellent threats made by a powerful United States since 1945, in spite of the fact it does not bluff? Engaging game theory, quantitative studies, and postwar US history, she develops a far more sophisticated definition of resolve during crises than we've previously had—one that incorporates both a willingness to initiate war and to prevail as costs mount. Pfundstein Chamberlain reveals a great irony—that it is the very ease with which the United States can carry out its immediate compellent threats that make adversaries skeptical it is willing to pay the ultimate costs necessary to get what it says it wants. This is a timely, insightful, and well-researched study that will be of great interest to international relations scholars and policymakers alike."?Francis Gavin, Frank Stanton Professor in Nuclear Security Policy Studies, Massachusetts Institute of TechnologyAbout the AuthorDianne Pfundstein Chamberlain is a research fellow at the Arnold A. Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University.