

Very Short Introductions online

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Peace

Oliver P. Richmond

Print Publication Year: 2014 Published Online: Nov 2014 Publisher: Oxford University Press
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Item type: book

Peace: A Very Short Introduction explores the evolution of peace in practice and in theory, exploring modern assumptions about peace and the different interpretations of its application. The concept of peace has always attracted radical thought, action, and practices. A term that has been taken to mean merely an absence of overt violence or war is, in the contemporary era, often used interchangeably with ‘peacemaking’, ‘peacebuilding’, ‘conflict resolution’, and ‘statebuilding’. The modern concept of peace has therefore broadened from the mere absence of violence to something more complicated.

The United Nations

Jussi M. Hanhimäki

Print Publication Year: 2015 Published Online: Jun 2015 Publisher: Oxford University Press
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Item type: book

The United Nations: A Very Short Introduction provides a brief history of the United Nations (UN), before examining its successes and failures as a guardian of international peace and security, as a promoter of human rights, as a protector of international law, and as an engineer of socio-economic development. The UN's various arms and organizations, such as UNESCO and UNICEF, are discussed along with a critical overview of the UN Security Council's involvement in recent crises in Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Ukraine, Libya, and Syria. Regardless of its obstacles, the UN is likely to survive for the foreseeable future, but it must confront new challenges in a rapidly changing world.

Diplomacy

Joseph M. Siracusa

Print Publication Year: 2010 Published Online: Sep 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780199588503 eISBN: 9780191777950 DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199588503.001.0001
Item type: book

Diplomacy: A Very Short Introduction introduces diplomacy from a historical perspective, providing examples from significant historical phases and episodes to illustrate the art

of diplomacy in action. Like making war, diplomacy has been around a very long time, at least since the Bronze Age. It was primitive with few rules, but it was a recognizable form of diplomacy. Diplomacy has evolved greatly, coming to mean different things, to different persons, at different times, ranging from the elegant to the inelegant. Whatever one's definition, few could doubt that the course and consequences of the major events of modern international diplomacy have shaped and changed the global world in which we live.

International Security

Christopher S. Browning

Print Publication Year: 2013 Published Online: Oct 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780199668533 eISBN: 9780191779930 DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199668533.001.0001
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International Security: A Very Short Introduction shows that the subjects of war and peace, military strategy, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and revisionist states remain central to the subject of international security, but burgeoning concerns such as climate change, migration, poverty, health, and international terrorism have complicated the field. So what really matters? The traditional prioritization of state security or the security needs of individuals, humanity, and the biosphere? Are states themselves as much a part of the problem as the solution for people's security needs? It outlines the nature of the key debates about contemporary international security challenges, and discusses the inherent difficulties that exist in tackling them.

Privacy

Raymond Wacks

Print Publication Year: 2015 Published Online: Mar 2015 Publisher: Oxford University Press
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Item type: book

While no brief book can hope to provide a comprehensive account of the manifold features of a concept as complex and controversial as privacy, this one introduces readers to the main features of what has become one of the most important rights or interests in contemporary society. In Britain the Leveson Inquiry Report of 2012 is the most comprehensive investigation into the ethics and practice of the media, with a significant section devoted to privacy and media intrusion. Its recommendations relating to media self-regulation continue to engender heated debate in Britain. The extraordinary revelations by the whistleblower, Edward Snowden, of the extensive surveillance conducted by the National Security Agency (NSA) in the United States (US) continue to generate an enormous international debate about the legitimate balance between security and privacy. And the courts—particularly in England and Strasbourg—have reshaped the protection of privacy afforded to individuals under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. New questions are routinely spawned about privacy on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. And, of course, novel forms of electronic and technological surveillance

devices pose almost daily challenges to privacy both online and in the 'real' world. The book attempts to describe the essential features of both the invasion and the protection of privacy in our digital world.

Neoliberalism

Manfred B. Steger and Ravi K. Roy

Print Publication Year: 2010 Published Online: Sep 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780199560516 eISBN: 9780191777448 DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199560516.001.0001
Item type: book

Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction explores the major political, economic, and social dimensions of neoliberalism. From its heyday in the late 1990s when it became the world's dominant economic policy, neoliberalism has suffered a major setback with the financial crisis. Who have been the key thinkers and political advocates of neoliberalism? Is neoliberalism doomed or will it regain its former ascendance? Is there a viable alternative to neoliberalism? This VSI examines these questions as it explores the origins, core claims, and the different ideas and leaders at the heart of one of the most debated 'isms' of our time.

The European Union

John Pinder and Simon Usherwood

Print Publication Year: 2013 Published Online: Sep 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780199681693 eISBN: 9780191778377 DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780199681693.001.0001
Item type: book

Illustrating how and why the EU has developed from 1950 to the present day, The European Union: A Very Short Introduction covers a range of topics, including the Union's early history, the workings of its institutions and what they do, the interplay between 'eurosceptics' and federalists, and the role of the Union beyond Europe in international affairs and as a peace-keeper. It examines the Lisbon treaty, the EU fiscal crisis, the state of the single Euro currency in its wake, and concludes by considering the future of the Union and the choices and challenges that may lay ahead.

International Relations

Paul Wilkinson

Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: Sep 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: 9780192801579 eISBN: 9780191775352 DOI: 10.1093/actrade/9780192801579.001.0001
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International Relations: A Very Short Introduction covers the topics essential to an understanding of modern international relations. It explains the theories and practice that underlie the subject, and investigates issues ranging from foreign policy, arms control, and terrorism, to the environment and world poverty. This VSI examines the role of organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union, as well as the influence of ethnic and religious movements and terrorist groups which also play a role in shaping the

way states and governments interact. It also considers how the international state system might be improved in order to improve relations between states.

Terrorism

Charles Townshend

Print Publication Year: 2011 Published Online: Sep 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
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Item type: book

Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction examines the historical, ideological, and local roots of terrorist violence and explores terrorism in relation to revolutionary power, nationalism, and religious extremism. How does terrorism end? Is one person's terrorist another's freedom fighter? Is terrorism crime or war? For many, the terrorist attacks of September 2001 changed the face of the world, pushing terrorism to the top of many political agendas, leading to a series of world events including the war in Iraq and the invasion of Afghanistan. This VSI considers complex issues related to the successes of specific terrorist and anti-terrorist campaigns in the distant past, and in recent years.

American History

Paul S. Boyer

Print Publication Year: 2012 Published Online: Sep 2013 Publisher: Oxford University Press
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Item type: book

American History: A Very Short Introduction spans the earliest migrations to the present looking at the United States's failures to live up to its oft-stated ideals. The establishment of the North American colonies had very different meanings for colonists, native peoples, and enslaved Africans. The late nineteenth century saw industrial expansion, appalling conditions, and an exploited labor force. The twentieth-century emergence of a suburban society of consumer abundance meant a better life for many, yet left behind crime-ridden inner cities and spawned a stultifying mass culture. While American popular culture has demonstrated global appeal, the projection of U.S. military power abroad has sometimes failed in its purpose and damaged the nation's international standing.