

# **Alliance Theory: Balancing, Bandwagoning, and Détente**

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## ***Abstract***

Stephen M. Walt's "balance-of-threat" theory of alliance formation (1988) is examined as a focus theory. Walt's theory is compared with a Kenneth A. Waltz's "balance-of-power" as a supporting theory (1979), and supporting evidence for the focus theory is presented. Then, Walt's theory is compared with Randall L. Schweller's "balance-of-interests" as an opposing theory (1994), and supporting evidence for the opposing theory is presented.

## ***Summary of the Focus Theory***

Walt begins by asking, "When will states form alliances, and what determines their choice of allies?" More specifically, do states tend to balance against strong or threatening powers by allying against them, are they more likely to "bandwagon" by allying with the most powerful or threatening states? If states tend to balance, "aggressors will face numerous opponents and sustained efforts to expand are likely to fail." However, if bandwagoning is the dominant tendency, "threats and intimidation are more likely to work, and empires will both be easier to amass and more likely to fall apart."

According to structural realism, states are primarily concerned with their own security. In essence, Walt asks, "Security against what?" He contends that states seek security from threat rather than from power. The distinction between power and threat is appealing. Power in and of itself is neutral, and its consequences can be either benevolent or destructive. The forces of

nature afford any number of examples. The sun deals death to the unprepared in the desert, but calls the tundra to bring forth life in the spring. It is equally capable of either. Walt argues that balance-of-power theory's focus on capabilities ignores other factors that statesmen consider when making alliance choices. Threat, not power, is at the heart of security concerns.

According to Walt, balance-of-power theory does not well describe the observed behavior of alliance formation in the historical record. It cannot explain why balances often fail to form. His balance-of-threat theory gives a better description. In Walt's view, threat level is characterized by:

- Overall capabilities
- Proximity
- Offensive capability (vs. defensive)
- Perceived intentions

Other things being equal, states that are nearby are more dangerous than those that are far away. States with large offensive capabilities—defined as the capacity to threaten the sovereignty of other states—pose a greater threat than states whose capabilities are more suitable for defense. Lastly, states with aggressive intentions are more threatening than those who seek only to preserve the *status quo*. If balancing behavior is the norm, therefore, an increase in any of these factors—power, proximity, offensive capabilities, or aggressive intentions—

should encourage other states to ally against the most threatening power (Walt 1988, 281).

Walt characterizes the concepts of balancing and bandwagoning as ideal types, and that “actual state behavior will only approximate either model.” (Walt 1988, 282) Another problem of interpreting the historical record is distinguishing between bandwagoning and détente. In Walt’s view:

Bandwagoning involves *unequal exchange*; the vulnerable state makes asymmetrical concessions to the dominant power and accepts a subordinate role. Détente, by contrast, involves roughly equal concessions in which both sides benefit (Walt 1988, 282).

Thus Walt studies three types of state behavior:

- Balancing is alignment against the threatening power (rather than the most powerful one) to deter it.
- Bandwagoning is alignment with a dominant power, either to appease it or in the hope of profiting from its victory.
  - Unequal exchange, often coerced. Dominant power may extract significant, asymmetrical concessions.
  - High risk. Requires trust that the dominant power will be benevolent.
- Détente is the voluntary development of peaceful relations to reduce tensions.

- Equal exchange. Symmetrical concessions.
- Low risk. The dominant power's attempt to exploit the relationship will collapse the détente.
- The state remains aligned with the balancing power against the threatening power.

As evidence to support his balance-of-threat theory, Walt examines the history of alliance formation in Southwest Asia, involving Iran, Turkey, India, and Pakistan. He notes that all four are near what was then the Soviet Union, all of them are far from the United States, and two of them share borders with China. Thus the study of balancing, détente, and bandwagoning behavior is in the context of relations between these four states and the three major powers (but only in their role as power projectors within the region, not in their global geopolitical roles), and in the case of India and Pakistan, also with each other. Walt posits that since the United States had minimal involvement in the region prior to the Second World War, it had no legacy of commitment to bolster its credibility. Therefore, if bandwagoning were the dominant behavior of states, these four regional powers would likely candidates to do so, rather than balance against the closer and more threatening powers by allying with a distant and doubtful protector.

Walt concludes that without exception, these cases support the contention that states prefer to balance against threatening states rather than bandwagon with them. When the level of threat increased, efforts to balance intensified. Balancing behavior required little encouragement and occurred even when the support of allies was uncertain. He found examples of bandwagoning to be “almost nonexistent,” and that movements toward the dominant power are more properly

characterized as examples of détente with a power that was perceived to have become less threatening. Although in some cases, movement toward the Soviet Union coincided with erosion of American support, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan remained US allies, and India remained nonaligned. Furthermore, while seeking détente, they simultaneously sought regional allies to balance against the dominant power and to compensate for the perceived lower level of American support. Walt also points out that increased intra-alliance tensions due to bilateral disputes were a luxury that could be afforded as the Soviet Union became less bellicose, which did not mean that the American commitment to defend its allies was any less than it had been earlier. Another interpretation of movement toward the dominant power is what might be called “faux bandwagoning,” a tactic by the client state to extract greater support from its patron, rather than to switch sides. Finally, Walt concludes that in the cases he examined, ideology has little influence on alliance formation.

Walt concedes that balancing as the dominant behavior does not hold in all cases. Balancing against the United States has been relatively rare in the Western hemisphere, but Walt points to this as the exception that proves the rule. The capabilities of other states in the hemisphere are tiny in comparison the United States, and the United States has historically been vigilant and effective in keeping external powers out of the hemisphere (the Monroe Doctrine). Walt contends that weak, isolated states have little option but to bandwagon. Also, most American interventions in the hemisphere occurred in a Cold War context, usually to put down leftist movements to the benefit of the traditional local elites, however illegitimate. For the most part, as long as a country did not “go Communist,” the United States could be counted on to stay out

of its affairs. Thus the threat represented by the United States was very low to traditional elites, in spite of its power.

### ***Supporting Theory: Balance-of-Power***

Walt stresses that his balance-of-threat theory “should be considered as a *refinement* of balance-of-power theory,” that it subsumes balance-of-power theory by incorporating capabilities as one of the components of threat (Walt 1988, 281). A prominent example of balance-of-power theory literature is Kenneth A. Waltz (1979). Balance-of-power theory addresses threat only peripherally and in terms of power alone (“it is the stronger side that threatens”), whereas Walt’s balance-of-threat theory includes power as one of four threat factors. The concept of threat can be read as collapsing to power alone in balance-of-power theory. According to Waltz:

Secondary states, if they are free to choose, flock to the weaker side; for it is the stronger side that threatens them. On the weaker side, they are more appreciated and safer, provided, of course, that the coalition they form achieves enough defensive or deterrent strength to dissuade adversaries from attacking. (Waltz 1979, 126-127)

Thus the two theories provide the same answers to the following questions:

**Table 1**

	Focus theory: Walt	Supporting theory: Waltz
Question 1: Do states more commonly balance against threatening (or powerful) states?	Yes	Yes
Question 2: Is bandwagoning risky?	Yes	Yes
Question 3: Are secondary states more appreciated by the weaker coalition?	Yes	Yes

### ***Evidence for the Focus Theory***

The balance-of-threat theory answers the following questions in the affirmative:

**Table 2**

	Focus theory: Walt	Supporting data
Question 1: Do states more commonly balance against threatening states?	Yes	Yes
Question 2: Do states more commonly seek détente with powerful but less threatening states?	Yes	Yes
Question 3: Do states more commonly bandwagon with non-threatening states?	Yes	Yes

Thorough evidentiary support of these questions would require the extensive compilation of examples to quantitatively establish that these behaviors are more common. However, important cases can be cited as being representative:

1. Balancing against a threat.
  - a. Walt suggests that the alliance against the Axis during the Second World War was an example of a stronger coalition forming against a more threatening one. However, this alliance formed in stages. When the war began in September 1939, the Axis was arguably the stronger coalition. Poland was overrun in a matter of days, France in a matter of weeks, and Britain hung by a thread under the assault of

the Luftwaffe and the U-boat fleet. It was not until two years later that the Soviet Union and the United States were forced into the war. (Leckie 1968, 686-733) At that point, it might be said, the Allies were stronger than the Axis in overall capabilities. Even so, given that it took five and half years to win the war in Europe and three and a half years to win the war in the Pacific, during which time millions of lives were consumed, it can hardly be said that this was a slam-dunk and that the winning coalition was overwhelmingly stronger. Walt's proximity factor addresses the question, "Who was more powerful where?" Also to be examined, in terms of the time-phasing of the formation of alliances, is, "Who was more powerful *when?*"

- b. The classic Cold War example is that of NATO versus the Warsaw Pact. Walt contends that the NATO alliance was the stronger, while the Warsaw Pact was the more threatening. However, power is contextual; it cannot be measured on the basis of raw nuclear ballistic missile throw-weight, tactical fighter aircraft or main battle tanks. One has to ask, where are the fighters and tanks in relation to the objective to be taken or defended? The power center of NATO was the United States, which was an ocean away from Europe. Given that the purpose of NATO was to defend Western Europe, and given that the Warsaw Pact had overwhelming numerical in-theater superiority in tactical fighter aircraft and main battle tanks, the idea that NATO balanced a stronger aggregation of states against a weaker but more threatening one must be questioned (Hackett 1979). Of course, Walt includes proximity as a factor in his balance-of-threat analysis.



## 2. Détente with a declining threat.

- a. Following a series of crises, beginning with the Berlin Airlift of 1948 (Nathan and Oliver 1989, 69-71) and continuing through the 1960 U-2 incident (Nathan and Oliver 1989, 176-178), the 1961 erection of the Berlin Wall (Nathan and Oliver 1989, 217-218), and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 (Nathan and Oliver 1989, 226-232), the United States and the Soviet Union concluded a number of treaties that lessened tensions, most prominent of which was the 1963 atmospheric Test Ban Treaty, which ended above-ground nuclear detonations (Nathan and Oliver 1989, 393). The USA and USSR entered into the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks in 1968, concluding the treaty in 1972. The buzzword of this period was “détente,” during which the Soviet Union was seen less as an implacable enemy and more as a responsible partner in peaceful coexistence. This optimistic impression of the Soviet Union began to unravel in the mid-1970s in the light of aggressive Soviet adventurism in Angola and the Horn of Africa. The fatal blow to détente came with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Jimmy Carter withdrew American participation from the 1980 Moscow Olympics; his successor Ronald Reagan branded the Soviet Union as the “Evil Empire,” and extended a military buildup begun by Carter to a level not seen since the early 1960s. The American response to the Soviet Union is entirely consistent with Walt’s theory; it engaged in détente when its adversary was perceived to be less threatening, withdrawing from it when it judged its trust to have been misplaced.

- b. Following the War of Independence and the War of 1812, the United States and Britain settled into what was at first an uneasy détente. They never seriously threatened each other again. Between 1818 and 1846, the two powers jointly administered the Oregon Territory, which encompassed what is now British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 divided the territory along the 49th parallel (Leckie 1978, 339-340). According to the tenets of classic realism, Britain should have sided openly with the Confederacy in order to permanently divide American power, and although it flirted with King Cotton diplomacy, intervention was never a seriously possibility.
3. Bandwagoning with non-threatening states.
    - a. Walt's theory addresses more successfully than classic balance-of-power realism the case of Latin America bandwagoning with the United States. While he states that weak, isolated states have little option but to bandwagon, he also points to the fact that, in the main, American interventions in the Western hemisphere have been in support of traditional elites against revolutionary challengers. Castro's Cuba and the Nicaraguan Sandinistas are the only cases of balancing against the United States, where leftist revolutions ousted the traditional elites that had bandwagoned with the United States. These revolutions by their very nature created the threat of American intervention, thus these regimes sought the support of the Soviet Union to balance against the American threat.

- b. Canada is also a notable example of bandwagoning, not only in terms of the dominion as a whole, but the province of Quebec in particular. Although the Continental Army invaded Quebec in 1776 (before the United States declared independence), the War of 1812 was primarily motivated by a desire to annex Canada while Britain was locked in a death struggle against Napoleon in Europe, and there was some intemperate talk of an invasion of Canada in retribution for the British government's dalliance with the Confederate cause (Leckie 1968, 127-131, 234-246, 538), the United States has not seriously threatened its northern neighbor in nearly two centuries. Canada's bandwagoning with the far more powerful United States is thus fully understandable under Walt's theory. On the other hand, why did Quebec, which had been conquered by Britain only 15 years before, not only decline to join the American revolution when offered the chance, but in fact violently resist it? The history between French, Roman Catholic Quebec and Protestant, British America had been a long and bloody one involving no less than four wars over the course of a century and a half. There was great fear of Quebec as a semi-feudal, militaristic society on the part of the bourgeois, liberal American colonies, to say nothing of the great animus against Catholicism. Considered against this, Britain's Quebec Act of 1774 extended the province "to include French-speaking settlements in the Ohio and Illinois country, [and] the law also recognized French civil law and the Roman Catholic Church in Canada." (Leckie 1968, 92-93) The Quebec Act was one of the provocations that propelled British America toward revolution, but at the same time it decided the Quebecois to bandwagon with their recent conquerors.

- c. Egypt initiated détente with Israel following the 1973 Yom Kippur War, in which it achieved a draw, in contrast to the outright defeats Egypt suffered in 1948, 1956, and 1967. The 1973 stalemate allowed Anwar Sadat to perceive Israel as less of a threat and to negotiate as an equal.

### ***Opposing Theory: Balance-of-Interests***

Randall L. Schweller acknowledges Walt's contribution of expanding the realist explanation of state behavior by adding the variables of proximity, offensive capability, and perceived intention to that of overall power *vis à vis* a potential adversary; however, Schweller questions basic assumptions of Walt and his antecedent Waltz. In Schweller's view, both Waltz and Walt assume that states act to preserve what they already possess, that all states have a *status quo* orientation, as opposed to Morgenthau's earlier work that emphasized states' compulsion to maximize their power. But if all states were satisfied with what they had, what would be the motivation for aggression and war? Waltz claims that the primary cause of war is uncertainty and miscalculation, but in Schweller's view, it is clear that some states are revisionist.

Moreover, this *status quo* bias in structural realist analysis leads to the narrow interpretation of bandwagoning as the opposite behavior of balancing. Both are supposedly motivated by the quest for security, but bandwagoning is seen as a strategy for achieving it by giving in to threats rather than deterring them. Against this, Schweller argues that "the aim of balancing is self-preservation of values already possessed, while the goal of bandwagoning is usually self-extension: to obtain values coveted." (Schweller 1994, 74)

This might be drawing too sharp a distinction, for elsewhere Schweller states, “Alliance choices, however, are often motivated by opportunities for gain as well as danger, by appetite as well as fear.” (Schweller 1994, 79) In this latter statement, Schweller allows for both motivations. Also, to suggest that structural realists assume *status quo* orientation seems something of a strawman argument, for in Walt’s definition of what constitutes threat, the fourth factor is aggressive intentions. Can aggression be a *status quo* behavior? Walt does not think so: “... States with aggressive intentions are more threatening than those who only seek to preserve the *status quo*.” (Walt 1988, 281) So, while Schweller talks of “bringing the revisionist state back in” to international relations analysis, it is not clear that it was ever entirely “booted out;” rather, it is more a matter of emphasis. It might be thought that Schweller is “bringing in” the revisionist state of lesser power (as opposed to great powers, where the many notorious examples of revisionist behavior have been the cause of so much calamity), whereas realists assume lesser-power behavior to be primarily motivated by self-preservation rather than by gain. But even this is not the case, for Schweller mentions that “Walt himself claims [that] one of the primary motivations for bandwagoning is to share in the spoils of victory.” (Schweller 1994, 79; see also Walt 1985, 7)

Schweller seeks to undermine the underlying premise of Walt’s balance-of-threat theory by supposing a case in which “war is coming, and a state caught in the crossfire must choose sides, but there is no imbalance of threat.” In this case, survival depends on being on the winning side, “thus power, not threat, drives the state’s choice.” (Schweller 1994, 82) First of all, this is a tautology. If there is no threat imbalance, how can a state engage in balance-of-threat behavior? Secondly, Schweller’s argument is specious because Walt’s theory explicitly subsumes balance-

of-power theory. If the other three components of threat in his theory are in balance, then the fourth component—power—is the only remaining one that a state can consider. But if a state were too weak to affect the balance-of-power, it would have no incentive to balance and no option but to bandwagon. This can hardly be a point of controversy.

A second argument that Schweller raises against Walt is that the motivation of sharing in the spoils of victory (as opposed to mere survival), while certainly correct, is inconsistent with his claim that balancing and bandwagoning are more properly viewed as responses to threats rather than to power imbalances. “Walt identifies this motive but then overlooks it because the logic of his theory forces him to conflate the various forms of bandwagoning into one category: giving in to threats.” (Schweller 1994, 83) Here Schweller has a good point, and it advances his contention that bandwagoning can have a variety of motivations. “Satisfied powers will join the status quo coalition, even when it is the stronger side; dissatisfied powers, motivated by profit more than by security, will bandwagon with the ascending revisionist state.” (Schweller 1994, 88)

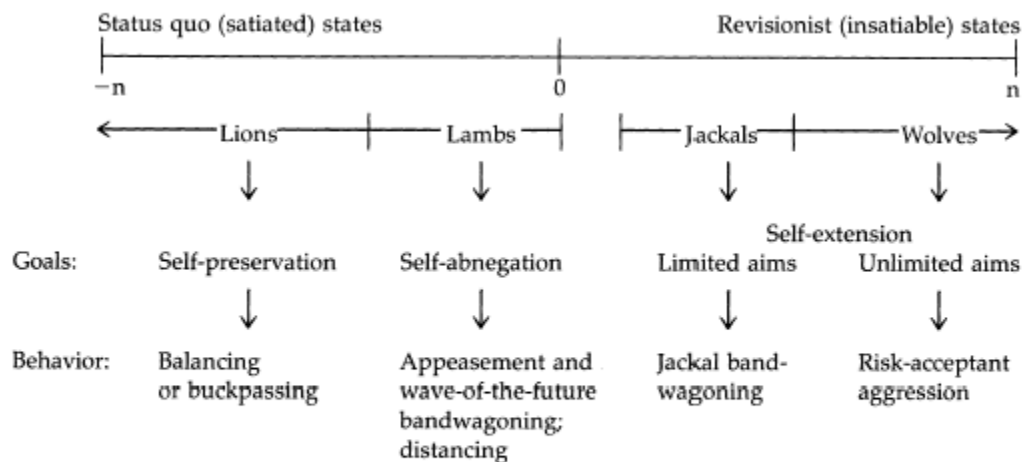
Schweller expands on this proposition to posit varying shades of bandwagoning.

- Jackal bandwagoning. “Just as the lion attracts jackals, a powerful revisionist state or coalition attracts opportunistic revisionist powers. The goal of ‘jackal bandwagoning’ is profit. Specifically, revisionist states bandwagon to share in the spoils of victory.” (Schweller 1994, 93)

- Piling on. “‘Piling on bandwagoning’ occurs when the outcome of a war has already been determined. States typically bandwagon with a victor to claim an unearned share of the spoils.” (Schweller 1994, 95)
- Wave of the future. “States man bandwagon with the stronger side because they believe it represents the ‘wave of the future.’” (Schweller 1994, 96)
- The contagion or domino effect. “... The domino theory posits revolutions as essentially external events that spread quickly because countries within a region are tightly linked and because revolutions actively seek to export themselves. Similarly, the contagion effect proposes regional linkages and cascading alliances as explanations for the spread of war.” (Schweller 1994, 98-99)

To explain why some states will tend to bandwagon while others will tend to balance, Schweller proposes a balance-of-interests theory that has dual meaning, one at the unit level and one at the systemic level. “At the unit level, it refers to the costs a state is willing to pay to defend its values relative to the costs it is willing to pay to extend its values. At the systemic level, it refers to the relative strengths of the status quo and revisionist states.” (Schweller 1994, 99) In developing his balance-of-interests theory, Schweller presents a linear scale to conceptualize the range of state interest. “Let  $x$  be the costs a given state is willing to pay to increase its values; and  $y$  be the costs the same state is willing to pay to defend the values it already has.” Schweller 1994, 100) From this, Schweller goes on to define a zoology of states (see Figure 1 on Page 16):

- Lions. “Lions are states that will pay high costs to protect what they possess but only a small price to increase what they value.... As extremely satisfied states, they are likely to be status-quo powers of the first rank.” (Schweller 1994, 101)
- Lambs. “Lambs are countries that will pay only low costs to defend or extend their values.... Lambs are weak states....” (Schweller 1994, 101-102)
- Jackals. “Jackals are states that will pay high costs to defend their possessions but even greater costs to extend their values.” (Schweller 1994, 103)
- Wolves. “Wolves are predatory states. They value what they covet far more than what they possess.” (Schweller 1994, 103)



*NOTE: The top line represents the state's calculation of its relative interests in the values of revision and of the status quo. Where the status quo outweighs revision (where  $n$  is negative), states are satiated; where revision outweighs the status quo ( $n$  is positive), states are revisionist.*

**Figure 1**



Three questions are considered to which Walt and Schweller give opposite answers:

**Table 3**

	Focus theory: Walt	Opposing theory: Schweller
Question 1: Do states more commonly balance against threatening states?	Yes	No
Question 2: Do unsatisfied powers join the revisionist coalition, even when it is the stronger (or more threatening)?	No	Yes
Question 3: Is bandwagoning risky?	Yes	No

1. Balancing against threatening states. One of the central propositions of Walt's theory is that states will balance against threatening states if credible allies are available. Schweller, on the other hand, identifies four varieties of bandwagoning behavior in which lesser states can engage, even with aggressive states or coalitions. Balancing is the behavior of satisfied, status quo states that value what they have more than they value what they covet.
2. Unsatisfied powers and revisionist coalitions. In particular, Schweller points out, unsatisfied states will prefer the revisionist coalition, hoping to profit from its victory. In Walt's universe, this motivation does not exist.
3. Risky business. Walt identified bandwagoning as a risky strategy, one that requires trust that the dominant power will be benevolent. To Schweller, however, the calculus of risk depends on values. Unsatisfied states value what they covet far more than what they have (especially in the case of states who may have little to lose), thus in their estimation there is little to risk and much to gain.

## ***Evidence for Opposing Theory***

Three questions are examined in support of Schweller's balance-of-interests theory:

**Table 4**

	Focus theory: Walt	Opposing data
Question 1: Do states more commonly balance against threatening states?	Yes	No
Question 2: Do states more commonly seek détente with powerful but less threatening states?	Yes	No
Question 3: Do states more commonly bandwagon with non-threatening states versus threatening states?	Yes	No

Again, thorough evidentiary support of these questions would require the extensive compilation of examples to quantitatively establish that these behaviors are more common. However, important cases can be cited as being representative:

1. Balancing. Robert G. Kaufman (1992) points to the failure of Britain, France, and the Soviet Union to balance against Germany in the 1930s, despite the growing threat posed by the Nazi regime. Although none of the three bandwagoned with Germany, the alternative behavior of buckpassing was much in evidence (Christiansen and Snyder 1990, 156-167). The United States and the Soviet Union did not ally with Britain until 1941, by which time Germany had declared war on all of them, and France had already been defeated.
2. Détente.
  - a. Israel was clearly too weak to be an offensive threat to the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s, and its military policy was one of defense, yet not a single Arab country sought détente during this period.

- b. Cuban troops assisted Soviet machinations in Africa in the 1970s, and Cuba supported coups in Grenada and Nicaragua, as well as insurgencies elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere in the 1980s. Since then, however, Cuba has caused little mischief. Despite this, the United States has made no substantive moves toward the normal relations that Cuba enjoys with the rest of the world.

### 3. Bandwagoning

- a. As mentioned earlier, the War of 1812 war primarily motivated by a desire to annex Canada while Britain was locked in a death struggle against Napoleon in Europe. The United States has grievances against both belligerents. Although France was an aggressive, revisionist power, one that would later seek to reestablish a presence in the New World (Napoleon III exploited the American Civil War to install Maximilian as Emperor of Mexico), the United States seized the opportunity (albeit ineptly and unsuccessfully) to profit from Napoleon's tying down of British forces in Europe, an example of jackal bandwagoning (Leckie 1968, 234-246, 538).
- b. Numerous Central European states bandwagoned with aggressive Nazi Germany before and during the Second World War rather than with the less-threatening Anglo-French coalition (examples of jackal and lamb behavior, the former emboldened, the latter dismayed, by Anglo-French weakness at Munich).
- c. Israel's participation in the 1956 Anglo-French attempt to seize the Suez Canal, after Egypt had been unilaterally nationalized it, can be viewed as jackal bandwagoning,

in that Israel hoped to profit from a reinvigorated Anglo-French presence in the region.

- d. Indochina bandwagoned with the Communist Bloc during the Cold War *à la* “domino effect.” Once South Vietnam fell to communist North Vietnam in 1975, communist forces quickly came to power in Cambodia and Laos.

## **Conclusion**

Walt’s balance-of-threat theory seeks to refine realist balance-of-power theory while retaining the same level of parsimony. It is more plausible in that it maintains that states react not to power alone, but to the credible threat that power will be used against them. While not specifically addressing domestic factors, it can accommodate the observation that democracies readily ally with each other. Pluralistic, transparent political processes tend to make power less threatening. However, Walt’s theory narrowly defines bandwagoning as coerced, thus it offers no logic for voluntary bandwagoning, and therefore neither looks for nor finds evidence of it.

While Schweller’s balance-of-interests theory is certainly less parsimonious, its fuller explanation of bandwagoning and its various motivations is more plausible and more intellectually satisfying. It points up the prevalent bias in structural realism that assumes *status quo* motivation. Also, it partially addresses domestic factors in terms of a state’s values, but only to the extent of “bringing the revisionist state” into the analysis of bandwagoning behavior. It does not dive deeper into the “billiard ball” of the unitary, rational actor of the nation-state to address other factors, such as ideological, historical, or institutional ties. Also, its increased complexity renders the prediction of state behavior more problematic. In the social sciences,

more so than in the physical sciences, it is difficult to choose between Occam's Razor, "All things being equal, the simplest explanation is the best," and H. L. Mencken's antithesis, "For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong."

In closing, I would like to offer a slight refinement to Schweller's theory. His  $x$  and  $y$  variables—the costs a given state is willing to pay to increase its values, and the costs the same state is willing to pay to defend the values it already has—would seem to be two different sets of values as he has defined them, rather than the opposite values he portrays in his linear scheme; thus it might be more appropriate to represent them as orthogonal axes, and the mixture of state interests can then be depicted on a Cartesian plane, as shown in Figure 2 on page 22. Moreover, an additional variable might be added to represent states in three-dimensional space: relative power (great, secondary, or weak).

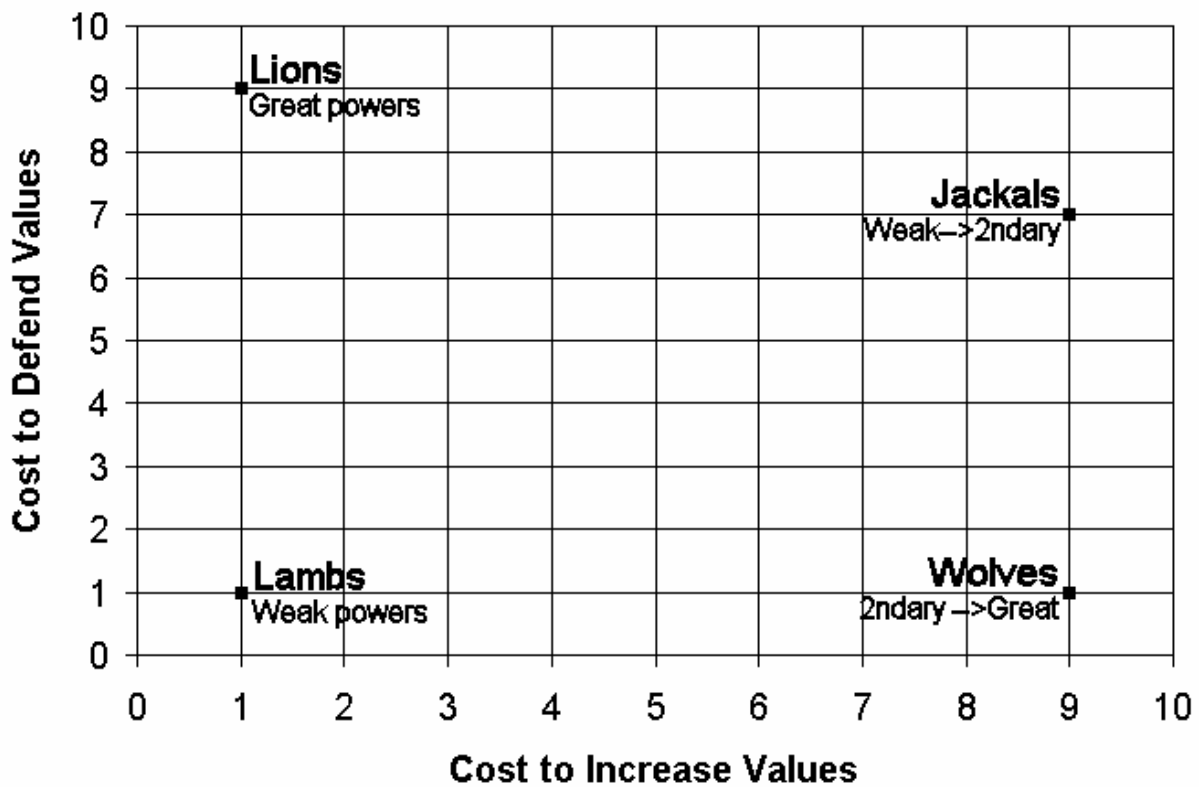


Figure 2

Thus, while the lambs and jackals are juxtaposed on Schweller's linear scale, they are quite far apart on the  $x$ - $y$  plane. "Lambs are countries that will pay only low costs to defend or extend their values," whereas "jackals are states that will pay high costs to defend their possessions but even greater costs to extend their values." (Schweller 1994, 101-103) Lambs are thus low  $x$  and low  $y$ , while jackals are high  $y$  and even higher  $x$ . In Figure 1, it can be seen that jackals have more in common with the wolves (high  $x$ , low  $y$ ) than with the lambs. At the same time, the lambs are equidistant from the lions (low  $x$ , high  $y$ ) and the wolves, and may align with one or the other as preservation dictates. Just as Schweller contends that balancing and bandwagoning

are not opposite behaviors, and uses his balance-of-interests theory to explain why they are not, it can be seen that the values that underlie his theory are not opposites either.

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