

Crucible of beliefs

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Résumé ou extrait : How do foreign policymakers learn from history? When do states enter alliances? Why have some small powers chosen to enter alliances whereas others have stayed neutral? In *Crucible of Beliefs*, Dan Reiter uses work in social psychology and organization theory to build a formative-events model of learning in international politics. History does inform the decisions of policymakers, he suggests, but it is history of a specific sort, based on firsthand experience in major events such as wars. Tested against balance-of-threat theory, the leading realist explanation of alliance behavior, Reiter's formative-events model of learning emerges as a far better predictor of states' decisions. *Crucible of Beliefs* shows that, contrary to balance-of-threat theory, state leaders ignore the level of international threat and focus instead on avoiding past mistakes and repeating past successes. A serious blow to realism, these findings demonstrate that to understand the dynamics of world politics, it is essential to know how leaders learn from history.

Sujet - Nom commun : Relations internationales
Relations internationales -- Philosophie

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