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Alexander Wendt

Alexander Wendt is the Ralph D. Mershon Professor of International Security Studies at the Mershon Center. His research interests include international relations theory, global governance, political and social theory, and the philosophy of social science.

Wendt is one of the most cited international relations scholars today. Based on a survey by the College of William and Mary of 2,000 international relations faculty, *Foreign Policy* named him the third-most influential scholar in the field over the past 20 years.

Wendt is so important because he was one of the first scholars to bring social constructivist theory to international relations. His book *Social Theory of International Politics* argues that international politics is determined not primarily by material concerns such as wealth and power, but by states' perceptions of each other as rivals, enemies, and friends.

Social Theory of International Politics has been translated into seven languages and was named Best Book of the Decade by the International Studies Association in 2006.

Wendt is currently working on a new book project that explores the idea of a quantum social science. In *Quantum Mind and Social Science*, Wendt looks at the implications for social science of recent claims in neuroscience that human consciousness is a quantum mechanical phenomenon - in other words, it behaves as both wave and particle. If these claims are true, he argues, then social science must shift its foundation from classical to quantum mechanics because consciousness is key to the social construction of reality.

As part of this quantum project, Wendt is revising a separate paper suggesting that the international system is a hologram. Unlike photographs, holograms store all their information in every part of the image. Thus, if a hologram is cut into pieces,



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each piece will still contain a smaller but intact version of the original image.

Wendt argues the same is true of the international system. Each person represents one point in the international system, and as such has all the information needed to recreate the system as a whole in his or her own mind.

Also this year, Wendt and co-editor Duncan Snidal at University of Chicago launched a new academic journal. *International Theory: A Journal of International Politics, Law and Philosophy*, published by Cambridge University Press, promotes theoretical scholarship about the positive, legal, and normative aspects of world politics.

International Theory (IT) is open to theory of all varieties and from all disciplines, provided it addresses problems of politics, broadly defined, and pertains to the international. *IT* welcomes scholarship that uses evidence from the real world to advance theoretical arguments. However, *IT* is intended as a forum where scholars can develop theoretical arguments without an expectation of extensive empirical analysis.

The journal's goal is to promote communication and engagement across theoretical and disciplinary traditions. *IT* puts a premium on contributors' ability to reach as broad an audience as possible, both in the questions they engage and in their accessibility to other approaches. *IT* is also open to work that remains within one scholarly tradition, although authors must explain how their arguments relate to other theoretical approaches.

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