H-**Diplo** ROUNDTABLE XXIII-48

Joslyn Barnhart. *The Consequences of Humiliation: Anger and Status in World Politics.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9781501748042 (hardcover, $47.95).

Contents

Introduction by Brian Rathbun, University of Southern California

Joslyn Barnhart's *Consequences of Humiliation* is a book for our time. As a number of our roundtable participants note, the recent departure of the United States from Afghanistan has been dubbed by many as a humiliating defeat for a military superpower. Yet, the Russian invasion of Ukraine is perhaps a much better example of the consequences of humiliation that Barnhart explores in her excellent book. Summarized by a number of roundtable reviewers thoroughly so that another distillation is not necessary here, Barnhart's main argument is that states that suffer unexpected defeats are inclined to strike out in the future out of anger and a desire to restore lost status, and not necessarily immediately or even against the country responsible. A reading of the Russian government's justification for its 'special military operation' reveals all the themes covered in Barnhart's book: the West unjustly took advantage of a great power's internal struggles to expand into Russia's sphere of influence, a status perk owed to Russia by virtue of its historical status and achievements.

All four of our roundtable participants have high praise for *Consequences of Humiliation.* Deborah Larson calls it a "rigorous, well-argued book," and Joseph Parent labels it a "standard bearer" that has made "enviable improvements" on existing work. Michael Masterson identifies its "important theoretical contributions." Kathleen Powers notes that the book "sets a high bar for multi-method research and will be required reading for current and future scholars who are interested in status, political psychology, and emotions in international relations."

Yet the purpose of a roundtable is never merely to praise but also to engage critically, the ultimate compliment for a piece of scholarship. All of the roundtable authors offer their own point-of-view, but a number of themes emerge. Barnhart argues that humiliated states often withdraw to lick their wounds; some come back (literally) fighting but others internalize their reduced social position. Precisely what determines the path at that crucial fork in the road seems hard to specify before the fact. Can we distinguish humiliation's effect from a number of other potential drivers of militarized aggression as we move from a survey of experimental context to real-world instances of war? And how do we differentiate humiliation and its attendant emotions from other related phenomena such as shame and mere status-seeking? A final vein of critique is whether we can identify *ex ante* what types of outcomes or behaviors will be regarded as humiliating and by whom. Not everyone is so sensitive.

For my part, as someone who endorsed the book on its back cover, these reviews are probing and insightful but also offer a sign of frustration that is more aimed at the social world we live in and its complexity than at the book itself. When we try to uncover the emotional bases of foreign policy behavior, we struggle to identify the precise motivating mechanism and feelings. This is part of mystery of emotion itself. We ourselves do not always understand why we do things when emotions are involved. It is precisely because of the difficulties inherent in measuring emotion and controlling for all of the other factors that might go into decisions about the use of armed force that Barnhart pursues a three-pronged methodological approach: historical case studies properly sourced, large-N analysis and survey experiments. I have seen, in very good books, two of these three, but never all three. *The Consequences of Humiliation* is one of the most insightful books I have read in some time.

Participants:

Joslyn Barnhart teaches International Relations at University of California, Santa Barbara and a Senior Research Affiliate at the Center for the Governance of AI in Oxford. She received her PhD from UCLA in 2013. Her research has been published in *International Organization, World Politics, Security Studies and Journal of Conflict Resolution,* among others. Her second book, *The Suffragist Peace*, with Robert F. Trager is forthcoming with Oxford University Press.

Brian Rathbun is Professor of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Southern California. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley in 2002. He has written four solo-

authored books, on humanitarian intervention, multilateral institution building, diplomacy, and rationality. His most recent manuscript, which takes an evolutionary approach to morality and explores the implications for the very nature of international relations, is forthcoming with Cambridge University Press.

Deborah Welch Larson is professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles. She received her Ph.D. at Stanford University. Her publications include *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); *Anatomy of Mistrust: US-Soviet Relations during the Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 1997); and "Status Seekers: Chinese and Russian Responses to U.S. Primacy," *International Security* 34:4 (Spring 2010): 63-95 (with Alexei Shevchenko). She recently published *Quest for Status: Chinese and Russian Foreign Policy* (Yale University Press, 2019), with Alexei Shevchenko, as part of her research on status in international relations. Her current research project is on decision making in American foreign policy.

Michael Masterson is a Rosenwald Postdoctoral Fellow in U.S. Foreign Policy and International Security at Dartmouth College and an Assistant Professor at Missouri State University. His work sits at the intersection of international conflict and political psychology with an area focus on China. He is the author of "Humiliation and International Conflict Preferences," which is forthcoming *in the Journal of Politics*, and, with coauthor Charles Chang, "Using Word Order in Political Text Classification with Long Short-Term Memory Models." *Political Analysis* 28:3: 395-411.

Joseph M. Parent is Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of *Uniting States* (Oxford 2011), *American Conspiracy Theories* [with Joseph Uscinski] (Oxford University Press, 2014), and *Twilight of the Titans* [with Paul MacDonald] (Cornell University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a project on status in world politics.

Kathleen E. Powers is an Assistant Professor of Government at Dartmouth College. Her research engages questions at the intersection of political psychology, foreign policy, public opinion, and international security. She is the author of the forthcoming book *Nationalisms in International Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2022), as well as articles in the *Journal of Politics, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Political Psychology,* and *Foreign Policy Analysis.*

REVIEW BY DEBORAH LARSON, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

The consensus of informed opinion is that the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan was chaotic and humiliating, but what that means for American foreign policy is unclear. *New York Times* correspondent Peter Baker charged that the "chaotic exit" "left the United States humiliated on the world stage."[1] While some observers, particularly in Europe, judged that the withdrawal in Europe severely damaged U.S. credibility, Richard N. Haass, president of the Council of Foreign Relations, and others in Washington suggested that defeat in Afghanistan might cause President Joe Biden to react more strongly to future challenges.[2] For historical parallels, some have argued that the humiliation of the terrorist attack on the United States on 11 September, 2001 provoked the initiation of the U.S. war in Afghanistan and the global "war on terror."[3] On the other hand, the aftermath of a 20-year failed war in Afghanistan might elicit a period of self-reflection in Washington D.C. and reluctance to engage in military interventions.[4]

Adopting a larger historical perspective, Joslyn Barnhart's research on the *Consequences of Humiliation* provides relevant insights into this debate. In line with the field of psychology, Barnhart defines "humiliation" as "the emotional response to the perceived undeserved decline of one's status in the eyes of others" (3). Barnhart seeks to determine what types of international events are most humiliating to states. She also tries to explain how humiliation may shape states' foreign policies, both in the immediate aftermath and over a prolonged period of time. Finally, she is concerned with the conditions under which humiliated states are likely to carry out aggressive acts. She argues that a state's failure to perform in accordance with international expectations for a state of its relative status can lead to feelings of humiliation. Unwillingness by other states to grant the state the rights and privileges that go along with its preferred status is also humiliating. Humiliated states are more likely to react assertively in order to restore their sense of self-efficacy, but are cautious about undertakings that might led to embarrassing failure. What these actions have in common is the goal of restoring a state's image by taking actions that are characteristic of the desired status.

Despite the historic role played by past humiliation in providing the public justification for wars—such as Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's purported desire to avenge the 'stab in the back' of the 1919 Versailles Treaty, Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic's 28 June 1989 invocation of the Serbian defeat on the 'field of blackbirds' at Kosovo,[5] or Russian President Vladimir Putin's speech justifying annexation of Crimea—few international relations theorists have analyzed humiliation. This research has been qualitative rather than utilizing statistics or experiments to test more general hypotheses.[6]

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[1] Peter Baker, "A Presidency and its Values Put to the Test," *New York Times*, 21 August 2021.

[2] Edward Luce, "Biden's Afghanistan Fiasco," *Financial Times,* 21/22 August 2021; "Biden's Debacle," *The Economist* 21 August 2021, 11; Doyle McManus, "U.S. Standing Can Outlast Fall of Kabul," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 August 2021.

[3] Paul Saurette, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," *Review of International Studies* 32:3 (2006): 495-522. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210506007133.

[4] "Uncontained," *Economist*, 11 September 2021, 20-22.

[5] Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

[6] Saurette, "You 'Dissin Me'?"; Oded Löwenheim and Gadi Heimann, "Revenge in International Politics," *Security Studies* 17:4 (2008): 685-724. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410802508055; Robert E. Harkavy, "Defeat, National Humiliation, and the Revenge Motif," *International Politics* 37:3 (2000): 345-68. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ip.8890515.

Barnhart has drawn on several different theoretical literatures in psychology for hypotheses that are relevant to the effects of humiliation, including social identity theory,[7] philosophical psychology,[8] and cognitive appraisal theories of emotion.[9]

Barnhart's book contributes to scholars' understanding of both emotions[10] and status[11] in international relations. Humiliation has been neglected in studies of the role of emotions in international relations, even though it is intimately related to status, as it derives from loss of position, putting the state in its place, demeaning its dignity. Status refers to a state's position on valued attributes such as military power, economic productivity, and diplomatic clout. Status is difficult to measure in international relations, but it is exemplified in patterns of deference and expectations of rights and privileges.[12] Other states' unwillingness to accord the state these rights and privileges disparages its status.

Understanding humiliation requires distinguishing it from related concepts. In line with the arguments of relevant literature in psychology,[13] Barnhart declares that shame entails acceptance of one's responsibility for loss of status. A party who has been humiliated, however, regards its loss of status as unjust and the fault of the humiliating agent. Humiliation differs from anger in that it incorporates feelings of self-doubt and powerlessness. According to Barnhart, humiliating events in international relations fall into two categories. First, a state may fall short of international expectations in some domain that

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[7] Diane M. Mackie, Thierry Devos, and Eliot R. Smith, "Intergroup Emotions: Explaining Offensive Action Tendencies in an Intergroup Context," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79:4 (2000): 602-616. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.79.4.602.

[8] Daniel Statman, "Humiliation, Dignity and Self-Respect," *Philosophical Psychology* 13:4 (2000): 523-40. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09515080020007643.

[9] Saulo Fernández, Tamar Saguy, and Eran Halperin, "The Paradox of Humiliation: The Acceptance of an Unjust Devaluation of the Self," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 41:8 (2015): 976-988. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215586195.

[10] Jonathan Mercer, "Feeling Like a State: Social Emotion and Identity," *International Theory* 6:3 (November 2014): 515-535. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971914000244; Andrew A. G. Ross, "Coming in from the Cold: Constructivism and Emotions," *European Journal of International Relations* 12:2 (2006):197-222. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1354066106064507; Neta Crawford, "Institutionalizing Passion in World Politics: Fear and Empathy," *International Theory* 6:3 (November 2014): 535-557. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971914000256; Brent E. Sasley, "Theorizing States' Emotions," *International Studies Review* 13:3 (2011): 452-76. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2486.2011.01049.x; Emma Hutchison and Ronald Bleiker, "Theorizing Emotions in World Politics," *International Theory* 6:3 (November 2014): 491-514. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752971914000232.

[11] Anne L. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests* (Washington, DC: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009; William C. Wohlforth, "Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War," *World Politics* 61:1 (January 2009): 28-57. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887109000021; Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, "Status Seekers: Chinese and Russian Responses to U.S. Primacy," *International Security* 34:4 (2010): 63-95. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2010.34.4.63; Deborah W. Larson, T.V. Paul, and William C. Wohlforth, " Status and World Order," in *Status in World Politics*, ed. T.V. Paul, Deborah W. Larson, and William C. Wohlforth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 3-29; Jonathan Renshon, *Fighting for Status: Hierarchy and Conflict in World Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, *Quest for Status: Chinese and Russian Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); Michelle Murray, *The Struggle for Recognition in International Relations: Status, Revisionism, and Rising Powers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[12] Allan Dafoe, Jonathan Renshon, and Paul Huth, "Reputation and Status as Motives for War," *Annual Review of Political Science* 17 (2014): 371-93. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-071112-21342.

[13] Theodore D. Kemper, *A Social Interactional Theory of Emotions* (New York: Wiley, 1978), 61, 128.

is indicative of a desired status. Such comedowns include a state's rapid defeat by a militarily inferior state or the involuntary loss of homeland territory.

Second, and perhaps more frequently, a state may be denied privileges and rights that the state reasonably expects to receive based on its relative position in the status hierarchy. For example, great powers usually expect to have a sphere of influence in neighboring areas and to be consulted about issues of global importance. Refusal by other states to accept such privileges undermines the state's status, demonstrating to others that its claims are less than solid. Humiliation by others may not be intentional; a state may have an unrealistic conception of its position and the perquisites to which it is entitled. On the other hand, the reluctance of others to recognize a state's position may not be warranted by its objective capabilities, but based instead on ideology, prejudice, or ideology.

According to Barnhart, the intensity of a state's reaction to non-recognition depends on the size of gap between the state's aspirations and its treatment by others. This suggests that a would-be great power is more likely to be humiliated than a smaller state, which is less apt to inflate its importance. Repeated acts of non-recognition are more humiliating because they cannot be interpreted as unintentional. Particularly demoralizing are post-war treaties that impose lasting restrictions and inferior status on a defeated power.

Depending on the intensity of humiliation and the state's sense of self-efficacy, Barnhart identifies five possible responses. First, a humiliated state may withdraw or become passive in the face of repeated indignities that engender self-doubt. This passivity may be temporary, until the state has carried out domestic restructuring. Russian Foreign Minister Alexander Gorchakov famously commented that Russia was "concentrating" after the humiliation of the 1856 Treaty of Paris.[14] Second, a state may express outrage, demand an apology, or publicly oppose the policies of its 'humiliator.' Third, the state may try to demonstrate its technological capacity by acquiring status symbols, such as nuclear weapons, space programs, or aircraft carriers that could serve as the basis for admission to exclusive 'clubs.' Fourth, the state may act aggressively toward a weaker state. Fifth, in what is the most risky and satisfying response, the state may carry out direct military revenge toward the state responsible for the original humiliation. When a state does resort to force, it is for the emotional satisfaction of doing so, not any instrumental reasons, such as reinforcing deterrence.[15]

According to Barnhart, because humiliation involves feelings of self-doubt, humiliated states will be careful about taking aggressive action to avoid another failure. The need to acquire necessary capabilities often requires that a state wait to take action after a humiliating event. While conventional wisdom holds that emotions are short-lived and irrational, within states, the emotions engendered by humiliation may fester over long periods of time—even centuries.

Barnhart tests several hypotheses in survey experiments, cross-national statistical study, and historical case studies. She hypothesizes that states that have recently experienced a humiliating event will be more likely on average to engage in assertive and aggressive behaviors in the years after the event than will those that have not. But this depends on their ability to recover from material and political effects of defeats, such as domestic political instability and economic weakness. Humiliated states that suffer severe losses from which they have not recovered will adopt more avoidant strategies than states that did not experience a humiliating event. Finally, states that have been recently humiliated are more likely to be successful than other states because they will be more cautious about engaging in actions for which they are not prepared. Great powers that do not have a significant power advantage over their humiliator are likely to target weaker, third-party states.

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[14] Flemming Splidsboel-Hansen, "Past and Future Meet: Aleksandr Gorchakov and Russian Foreign Policy," *Europe-Asia Studies* 54:3 (2002): 77-96. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/09668130220129515.

[15] For the argument that use of force is instrumental rather than the product of frustration or emotion, see Renshon, *Fighting for Status*, 66, 73.

Barnhart conducted two survey experiments in which subjects read short descriptions of U.S. military failures or failure by others to respect U.S. rights. She found that the treatment group was more likely to favor assertive or aggressive foreign policy actions by the United States than subjects who were not given the historical descriptions. In addition, anger was a more powerful mediator of preference for aggressive actions than feelings of humiliation and shame.

Barnhart also tested her hypotheses in a statistical study based on the Correlates or War 4.2 and Dyadic Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) data bases. Consistent with her theory, Barnhart found that states that had experienced a military defeat were 42 percent more likely to initiate conflict in the ten years following a defeat than states that had not been defeated. Conflict initiation involves a range of behaviors ranging from threats to display of force to all-out war. After twenty years, great power aggression is more likely to be directed against third states that were not involved in the original conflict. In contrast, minor powers are more likely to seek vengeance against the state that is responsible for their defeat.

While humiliated powers may use force to bolster their reputation for resolve, it is difficult to explain why great powers should seek conflict with third-party states for instrumental reasons. Success in coercing or defeating a weaker state should not cause other states to increase their estimate of a state's credibility. Contrary to the assumptions of offensive realism,[16] she finds that humiliated states are likely to react strongly, regardless of whether there has been a change in the relative distribution of capabilities. More persuasive than data showing a correlation between military defeat and subsequent conflict initiation is historical evidence that leaders expressed their feelings of humiliation and linked them to the desire for some compensatory action to restore dignity and honor. This is provided by Barnhart's case studies of the Scramble for Africa and U.S.-Soviet relations during the Cold War.

Barnhart traces the origins of the Scramble for Africa (1881-1914) to France's 1871 defeat by Prussia and a coalition of smaller German states in the war that France had initiated with the expectations of a quick victory. France lost part of its territory, Alsace-Lorraine, to Germany. In an act of deliberate humiliation, Wilhelm I was crowned emperor of Germany in the Hall of Mirrors at the Versailles palace, after German troops marched through Paris. With encouragement from German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, who wanted to divert France from its revanchist ambitions, France annexed Tunis in 1881 as compensation. Acquiring an overseas colony allowed France to demonstrate its ability to project power, a defining characteristic of a great power.

This was followed by another humiliation when Britain unilaterally intervened in 1882 to put down an insurrection in Egypt, in which France had long taken a special interest due to its role in building the Suez Canal. To avoid falling to the second-rate status of Italy or Spain, the French government decided to annex part of the Congo. French actions had ripple effects, ultimately leading to annexations of African territory by Italy, Germany, and even Britain, which did not want to be left out, for fear of losing its preeminence as a naval power. Thus, Barnhart shows that status competition by one state can have systemic effects.

During the Cold War, nuclear weapons replaced colonies as status symbols, but Soviet officials were no less anxious than those in nineteenth-century France about achieving recognition by the West as a superpower.[17] Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and other officials had long resented secret U.S. U-2 surveillance flights over their territory, but said nothing because their air defenses did not have sufficient range. When a Soviet surface-to-air missile managed to shoot down a U-2 plane before the Paris Summit in May 1960, Khrushchev demanded an apology from President Dwight D. Eisenhower as a

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[16] John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

[17] On nuclear weapons as status symbols, see; Steven Kull, *Minds at War: Nuclear Reality and the Inner Conflicts of Defense Policymakers* (New York: Basic Books, 1988). On the need to impress oneself with nuclear weapons, to overcome self-doubt, see Robert Jervis, *Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Promise of Armageddon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 212-214.

condition for holding the summit—a condition that the U.S. leader would not meet. As a result, the budding U.S.-Soviet détente went into a deep freeze.

Soviet leaders undertook a major nuclear buildup in the late 1960s as a reaction to their humiliation in the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis when they were coerced into withdrawing their missiles from Cuba. After the signing of the SALT I agreements in 1972, some U.S, officials and members of Congress became obsessed with attaining equality or superiority in numbers of nuclear weapons, even though the United States already had more than enough nuclear weapons to destroy the Soviet Union in a retaliatory strike. They feared that the perception of U.S, inferiority might result in loss of U.S. status and influence.[18]

Barnhart's book is an important, original contribution to international relations theory on states' reactions to humiliating events, which seemingly occur regularly, affecting numerous states. The need to examine the dynamics of humiliation has been dramatized by the media uproar over the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. Her theory has intriguing real-world implications, for example, in explaining the origins of the U.S. 'war on terror.'

Still, several questions come to mind that could be further investigated. Does humiliation always lead to feelings of powerlessness? Barnhart stresses self-doubt as a driver of state reactions to humiliation whereas social identity theory emphasizes perceptions of inferiority relative to a reference group as motivating the desire to improve the group's position.[19] The U.S. reaction to humiliation seemingly has been more one of anger than a sense of limitations. Anger is associated with feelings of strength toward the out-group.[20] This would seem to contradict her theory that humiliation is characterized by self-doubt and powerlessness. There is a tension in Barnhart's theory between the self-doubt supposedly aroused by humiliation and the role of anger. Anger may be associated with humiliation and motivate vengefulness. The two emotions of humiliation and anger go together because they are linked by experience of injustice.[21]

Under what conditions does humiliation lead to withdrawal rather than assertive action? Is it solely a matter of relative capabilities? States that have experienced significant humiliation may carry out acts of vengeance even if they have not recovered from defeat. A case in point is Russia's meddling in 2016 U.S. presidential election. Weaker states may use asymmetric means that make life difficult for a more powerful state without challenging it directly. Related to this question, can humiliation be scaled or measured? Does it matter? Is greater humiliation likely to lead to more aggressive behavior? Or a self-reckoning that perhaps a state should scale back its ambitions and strive for domestic goals?

With this rigorous, well-argued book, Barnhart has shown the way for future investigations into the interaction between status, prestige, humiliation, and reputation.

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[18] On this point, see Jervis, *Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution*, 196-99; Kull, *Minds at War,* 117, 119, 229.

[19] Henri Tajfel, *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1978); Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel, eds., *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (Monterey: Brooks/Cole, 1979), 33-47.

[20] Mackie, Devos, and Smith, "Intergroup Emotions."

[21] Fernandez, Saguy, and Halperin, "Paradox of Humiliation."

Review by Michael Masterson, Dartmouth College and Missouri State University

Joslyn Barnhart's book, *The Consequences of Humiliation,* investigates the effect of national humiliation on a state's foreign policy. The book defines national humiliation as the emotional state in which "individuals who identify as members of the state experience humiliation as the overwhelming emotional response to an international event, which they believe has undeservedly threatened the state's image on the world stage" (3). Barnhart takes a multi-method approach to this question, combining a survey experiment with large-n cross-national analysis and case studies. She argues that humiliated states will be more likely than other states to initiate international conflict because they wish to regain their lost status (44).

Barnhart's work comes at the forefront of a newly reinvigorated interest over the last few years in the effects of humiliation on conflict.[22] The book makes several important theoretical contributions. First, it explains that while humiliation motivates actors to behave aggressively, because an important characteristic of humiliation is powerlessness, states may require a period following their humiliation to recover and regain power before this aggression manifests in conflict (45). This makes it possible to discover conflicts linked to past humiliations that could have otherwise gone unnoticed. Further, it opens inquiry to new questions about how humiliation might motivate domestic development and military spending policies to produce this recovery in capabilities. Second, Barnhart is the first scholar to predict that humiliation may motivate states to target actors other than their humiliator and to provide an explanation for this behavior through the desire of humiliated states to target states that they believe that they can defeat, producing a status restoring victory (48–49). This expands the scope of humiliation's effects beyond revenge to ways that humiliation might influence broader foreign policy decisions regarding other actors.

In the remainder of this review, I will first discuss how future research can build on this work theoretically by examining within-country variation in national humiliation and taking Barnhart's advice to study the domestic politics of national humiliation narratives (56, 182). Next I discuss the contributions of each of the empirical chapters. As in all research, there are inevitably tradeoffs in which a particular research design allows some advantages, such as a larger scope, at the cost of some potential limitations, for example, less direct measures of humiliation. I will highlight the opportunities these tradeoffs provide for future research to continue building on Barnhart's work.

One promising area for future theoretical developments is the effects of relaxing the consideration of "the state as a unitary actor" and the idea that humiliation can be thought of as a state-level variable (56). Barnhart's state-level theoretical expectations about humiliation's effects provide a foundation for future research to build on by exploring complications that arise as individual responses to events are allowed to differ. As Barnhart acknowledges, humiliation is subjective (16), so in the full complexity of reality, we would not expect all actors within a state to have the same emotional response to defeat in conflict. Barnhart has begun this investigation by finding that respondents who identify more closely with the United States have stronger humiliation responses to descriptions of international events that cause the United States to lose status (76). Future research could examine additional factors that may also be important, including individuals' conceptions of the nation and how they interpret the potentially humiliating events.

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[22] Joslyn Barnhart, "Status Competition and Territorial Aggression: Evidence from the Scramble for Africa," *Security Studies* 25:3 (2016): 385-419; Barnhart, "Humiliation and Third-Party Aggression", *World Politics* 69:3 (2017): 532-568; Yiqing Xu and Jiannan Zhao, "Collective Memory and Political Attitudes of Chinese Citizens," *egap Registry*, 2019. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/YBP32; Daniel Mattingly and Elaine Yao, "How Propaganda Manipulates Emotion to Fuel Nationalism: Experimental Evidence from China," available at *SSRN*, 2020. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3514716; Alexandra Homolar and Georg Löfflmann, "Populism and the Affective Politics of Humiliation Narratives," *Global Studies Quarterly* 1:1 (2021). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/isagsq/ksab002; Michael Masterson, "Humiliation and International Conflict Preferences," Forthcoming in the *Journal of Politics*, 2021. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1086/715591.

Relaxing the unitary state assumption could allow future researchers to examine whether all conflict defeats and involuntary losses of territory lead to humiliation, or whether this outcome only occurs under particular conditions. The Chinese case suggests that events alone might not tell the whole story and that how political actors interpret these events in the form of emotional narratives may play a key role. As Zheng Wang points out in his study of national humiliation in China, while China's 'Century of National Humiliation' is commonly dated as beginning with the First Opium War in 1839, the phrase "never forget national humiliation" (勿忘国耻) was not popularized until 1915.[23] The time lag of more than 70 years suggests room for domestic politics and social construction to play a role in when and whether events produce national humiliation. Future research could explore under which conditions political actors construct the nation as humiliated. This research could further investigate whether these constructions always increase the chance of international conflict or only do so under certain conditions. Recognizing the potential for this work, Barnhart calls in the book's conclusion for more research on the domestic politics of humiliation and offers some potential avenues for investigation, including whether actors are motivated by legitimacy concerns to develop narratives of national humiliation and potential differences in the motivation to produce humiliation narratives under different regime types (182).

Empirically, Barnhart's book provides evidence of humiliation's link to conflict at each level of analysis. Firstly, it breaks new ground by examining the effect of humiliation on individual-level support for conflict in a survey experiment in Chapter 3. The experiment assigns United States survey respondents to either read one of four foreign policy vignettes about threats to America's status or to a control group that receives no vignette. Afterwards respondents are asked to rate the extent to which they feel several emotions, including humiliation, and to answer outcome questions about their support for four different aggressive U.S. policies (67–68). Barnhart finds that the vignette-treated respondents are more supportive of aggressive polices. She further uses mediation analysis to suggest that some of this effect goes through the mechanism of increased humiliation (73).

The experiment has the advantage that the vignettes closely reflect the actual international conflict situations the author wishes to study. A cost of this design is that it does not manipulate humiliation directly, since the manipulations come through descriptions of different international situations. The potential risk is that information about the international situations could also affect respondents' foreign policy preferences through mechanisms other than humiliation. While the author makes a laudable attempt to address this in the mediation analysis by endeavoring to separate the emotional rationale for aggression from security and influence rationales, this requires the assumption that these rationales are not causally related to each other.[24] This assumption could be violated if, for example, respondents who reasoned that U.S. security is under threat felt more humiliated *because* of their beliefs about the U.S. security situation. The author's judicious use of multiple kinds of vignettes helps reduce this concern somewhat by ensuring that no one piece of information specific to a particular vignette is driving the effect.

Chapter 4 provides the first large-n cross-national evidence that humiliation increases the probability of conflict by examining the effects of conflict defeat and imposed territory loss on a states' subsequent likelihood of initiating a Militarized Interstate Dispute. This chapter also provides evidence for Barnhart's theory that there is a recovery period for humiliated states that precedes aggression by showing that these conflicts are initiated after a 10 or 20-year time lag (80).

The impressive scope of this analysis is made possible by using indirect measures of humiliation that are available cross-nationally: past conflict defeats and imposed territory losses. The price of this scope is that, to the extent that these events

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[23] Zheng Wang. *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politic and Foreign Relations*. Contemporary Asia in the World (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012,) 64.

[24] More broadly, this is part of the sequential ignorability assumption required for mediation analysis. To see how this assumption relates to this case, we can imagine observationally equivalent versions of Barnhart's directed acyclic graph (DAG) on page 72 that introduce causal pathways among the mediators as in the DAG in Figure 8 on page 787 of Kosuke Imai, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley, and Teppei Yamamoto. "Unpacking the Black Box of Causality: Learning about Causal Mechanisms from Experimental and Observational Studies," *American Political Science Review* 105:4 (2011): 765-789. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055411000414.

might not trigger humiliation or could influence a state's likelihood of future conflict through mechanisms other than humiliation, these measures will not accurately capture the effect of humiliation. While the author increases the plausibility that the effect found is due to humiliation by ruling out some alternative pathways (92, 104), wars and imposed territorial losses affect society in so many ways, including influencing demographics, economic development, domestic politics, military doctrine, and relations with other states, which could affect future conflicts that it is impossible to rule them all out.[25] One way future observational work could further increase our confidence about humiliation's effect on conflict is to move from the state-level of analysis to the analysis of individual political actors. This would allowing holding the country and post-conflict situation constant. The detailed examination required to produce individual measures of actors' humiliation and foreign policy positions would limit the geographic and temporal scope of this work.

Barnhart's case studies of France, Germany, and the Soviet Union in Chapters 5 and 6 are valuable additions to national humiliation case research, which has tended to focus on China.[26] These cases not only allow the analysis to take a comparative perspective but also demonstrate that national humiliation is not somehow peculiar to China. Barnhart shows it is possible to theorize generally about national humiliation and examine implications of this theory cross-nationally without denying that the way national humiliation manifests in each case may have important differences. The case studies also help address the concern that defeats might promote conflict through means other than humiliation by providing indicators of the causal process, for example, policy makers using the rhetoric of humiliation while advocating using force (125), that increase the plausibility that humiliation is playing the theorized role.

Selecting cases based on the dependent variable of conflict ensures that the case studies vividly accomplish their goal to "illustrate" the theory by providing observations of humiliation in the lead up to conflict (108). However, this case selection strategy does limit the ability of the cases to test the causal claims of the theory because we do not know whether war would have been absent in cases that were similar on potentially confounding variables in which humiliation was absent. Future research could further increase our confidence in humiliation's causal role by using control cases that are matched on potential confounds. The indicators of humiliation and descriptions of the causal process that Barnhart provides will be invaluable to future researchers who wish to employ such a strategy.

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[25] This challenge is particularly difficult, since these factors are all post-treatment to conflict defeat, meaning they cannot be addressed by simply adding covariates. On post-treatment covariates, see Avidit Acharya, Matthew Blackwell, and Maya Sen, "Explaining Causal Findings without Bias: Detecting and Assessing Direct Effects," *American Political Science Review* 110:3 (2016): 512-529 DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055416000216.

[26] William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29, no. 2 (2004): 199–218; Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); For an exception, see Blema S. Steinberg, *Shame and Humiliation: Presidential Decision Making on Vietnam* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996).

Review by Joseph M. Parent, University of Notre Dame

Sing, Muse, the anger of Peleus's son Achilleus and its devastation… Emotions have played a central role in explaining conflict for a very long time.[27] So it is all the more surprising that, Joslyn Barnhart's *The Consequences of Humiliation: Anger and Status in World Politics* humiliates other works on humiliation. I jest, of course. But an array of admirable scholars has written on the topic,[28] and Barnhart has made enviable improvements on them. This book will be a standard bearer for some time.

Summary of the Work

Barnhart's basic argument is that some international events humiliate states, and humiliated states tend to get angry and respond in a variety of ways: "diplomatic opposition, the pursuit of symbols of high status… and the use of force against the state responsible for one's humiliation or against third-party states" (4, cf. 39-41). Which response they undertake and when depends "on the capability of the state" and "whether the state has sufficiently recovered from losses incurred as a result of the humiliating event." (4-5) In short, leaders in humiliated states work to rehabilitate their pride within parameters set by their state's relative capability and history, but above all within the gap between domestic expectations and international reality (19-21, 64).

Humiliation "is the emotional response to the perceived undeserved decline of one's status in the eyes of others." (3, cf. 16-17) And it comes in two types: a failure to live up to international expectations of a state's performance, and denial of expected rights and privileges (3, 15). Barnhart is careful to note that humiliation need not result in hostility (39, 46, 59, 101), but she "focuses on aggressive status-seeking acts" because there is "reason to believe that states are more likely to respond to humiliating events with aggressive rather than… [non-aggressive] strategies." (10)

The empirical sections deploy an exemplary panoply of methods: a survey experiment, a massive analysis of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) data, and two chapters of case studies: French and German expansion in Africa, 1882-1885, and Soviet humiliation at the height of the Cold War. Causal mechanisms are clearly elaborated (18, 60-61), and hypotheses are appropriately laid out (44-49). The hypotheses find broad support, and the policy recommendations that follow are that states should speak more sensitively, apologize, provide peaceful outlets and leadership roles to states that have suffered setbacks, increase inclusion, multilateralism, and social creativity, and avoid implying inferiority or codifying it (174, 180-1).[29] Barnhart is aware of the difficulties in these recommendations: states may not see eye-to-eye that an event was

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[27] Intriguingly, the anger that drives the plot of the *Iliad* deviates explicitly from the heroic pattern. Extrapolating from such a prominent example may not only misrepresent ancient Hellenic culture, but also the general connection between emotions and violence. See Jasper Griffin, *Homer:* Iliad *Book IX* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 19. More broadly, see N.R.E. Fisher, *Hybris: A Study in the Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1992), 1, 6. My thanks to Aldo Tagliabue for the point.

[28] See Michelle Murray, *The Struggle for Recognition in International Relations: Status, Revisionism, and Rising Powers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 208-211, 215-219; Paul Saurette, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," *Review of International Studies* 32:3 (July 2006): 495-522, here, 512-21; Ahsan I. Butt, "Why Did the United States Invade Iraq in 2003?" *Security Studies* 28:2 (January 2019): 250-285, here, 265, 268, 270, and 276. See Deborah Welch Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, *Quest for Status: Chinese and Russian Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); and Steven Ward, *Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017); in their indices, Larson and Shevchenko mention humiliation on 59 pages, and Ward on 162 pages.

[29] For the classic work on international apologies, see Jennifer Lind, *Sorry States: Apologies in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

humiliating, may not agree that a response to a humiliating event is retaliation for that event rather than just a pretext for a power grab, and may not want to defer to others or face greater demands from a more confident opponent (175, 182).

Assessment of the Work

Overall, the book is impressive. It is an ambitious and thoughtful examination on how states deal with their insecurities, emotional or otherwise. It is voluminously researched and judiciously written. The theory includes masses and elites, foreign and domestic, in its gaze, and the empirics inspect the evidence in the round. Barnhart has crafted something durable in the crowded, sprawling literature on status.[30]

The next generation of status scholarship will likely build off Barnhart's platforms, but not all of them are equally sturdy and some deserve flagging. The fount of many potential problems is the indefinite scope. How does one identify a case of international humiliation? Barnhart explains that humiliation does not have to be intentional, can come from inferiors, peers, and superiors (though most likely the latter), and is often unrelated to states' relative capabilities or shifts in the distribution of power (27-28, 50-55). This implies that any state at any time can be humiliated by any one, which may well be true, but it leads to enormous problems in recognizing the universe of cases and its tendencies. If humiliation is regularly divorced from objective measures, then we need criteria by which subjective humiliation can be measured – for there are always people in every nation who claim that their nation has been humiliated and deserves revenge or recompense – or else humiliation becomes everything and nothing.

The scope problems bedevil the theory. In trying to explain a lot, Barnhart has to theorize a lot, which may capture too much in her net. She builds a credible case that humiliation's effects are longer lasting than other emotions (38), and can lead to a lengthy menu of anti-humiliation options (40-42). But the consequences of humiliation could manifest themselves as nearly any form of self-assertion, and play themselves out over decades. Although Barnhart works valiantly to account for why states try exorcizing their humiliation demons one way versus another, this is a tough act to pull off. States assert themselves for many reasons, and it is not easy to extricate how much or how often is due to humiliation, especially given the broad time span and choice set. This builds tensions into the theory that are hard to falsify. For instance, recovery of relative capability is central to reversing humiliation (5, 48), but relative capability means relative more to a state's previous levels than to other states' present capabilities (53, 171), but humiliated states' expectations of influence are "often uncoupled from… relative capabilities" (54). All of this may be true at once, but it is difficult to generalize it.

The theory problems slip into the evidence. Barnhart's strategy is to zoom in on a wide range of humiliations. In the survey experiment: policy failures and international disrespect (67). In the MIDs analysis: involuntary territorial loss or defeat to a weaker state (12). In the case studies: defeat and involuntary territorial loss, colonial privileges (108), violations of airspace, and failure in crisis diplomacy (138). Although these are most-likely places to find the consequences of humiliation, one must start somewhere. Yet this empirical strategy makes theory differentiation problematic. Barnhart takes alternate arguments seriously, but the results show "that group identification, perceptions of group efficacy, levels of other-directed outrage, support for aggression, and outcomes affecting one's group are all correlated and difficult to disentangle" (76). Likewise, involuntary loss of territory is likely to trigger retaliation for many reasons, which the MIDs data is not well suited to unravel. The case studies labor under equal burdens. Late nineteenth-century imperialism looks very similar across empires, only one of which lost the Franco-Prussian War.

Troublingly, "assertive acts taken by states in the wake of humiliating events often fail to raise the profile of the state in the eyes of others or to augment the state's influence" but they do seem to boost "collective esteem at home" (169). A book about international standing increasingly looks like a book about domestic standing. Fair enough, but if such anti-

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[30] See, for instance, Allan Dafoe, Jonathan Renshon, and Paul Huth, "Reputation and Status as Motives for War," *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 17 (May 2014): 371-93; Paul K. MacDonald and Joseph M. Parent, "The Status of Status in World Politics," *World Politics* 73: 2 (April 2021): 358-391.

humiliation policies primarily work on domestic audiences, then publics are not sophisticated enough to tell placebos from real pills, and elites are not sophisticated enough to prescribe placebos all the time. Barnhart never makes these claims, but they appear to be the logical terminus of the book's scope, theory, and evidence.

Finally, one ought to be wary of humiliation rhetoric. Barnhart encourages readers "to understand such rhetoric as an honest presentation of the emotional state of leaders and their publics and as an important driver of the states' behavior toward others" (170). This is a bold claim. These are political *actors* we're talking about. No group in politics is famed for honesty or self-awareness, and large literatures start by assuming a dramaturgical perspective.[31] Calling an action humiliating justifies extreme responses, and citizens and policymakers have honest, dishonest, and self-motivated reasons to use the language of humiliation.[32] In politics, especially world politics, no one should be presumed innocent.

Indignation at Humiliation

Despite its title, this book is not about humiliation. For conceptual and causal reasons, what Barnhart and many others call humiliation is usually something else. Conceptually, humiliation is a domestic, not an international, phenomenon, and a rare one at that. In his seminal book on humiliation, William Ian Miller points out that feelings of shame come from a "degradation of status," while those of humiliation are the result of a "deflation of pretense."[33] Richard Posner illustrates: "The exposure is the shame, and you don't put a dunce cap on his head. The purpose of the dunce cap is to humiliate, to make a person an object of public ridicule and execration…the more the penalty involves just exposure the more apt the term 'shaming' is."[34] Shame appears repeatedly in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Ethics*, but humiliation never does.[35] Recently, Jon Elster declared: "I now think that the emotion of shame is not only a support of social norms, but *the* support."[36]

Humiliation presumes a thick society with deep shared values, against which an actor's false pretenses can be ridiculed, a condition that sometimes occurs in domestic societies but seldom in anarchic societies. In anarchy, there is "only one

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[31] See, for instance, Keren Yarhi-Milo, *Who Fights for Reputation: The Psychology of Leaders in International Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 12; Ayşe Zarakol, *After Defeat: How the East Learned to Live with the West* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 13; Austin Carson, *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 21; Vincent Pouliot, *International Pecking Orders: The Politics and Practice of Multilateral Diplomacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 2; and Andreas Wimmer, *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3-6.

[32] Compare the public use of "preemptive" vs. "preventive" strikes. See Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* 118:3 (Fall 2003): 365-388, here 369, n. 18.

[33] William Ian Miller, *Humiliation: And Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 137. My thanks to Paul MacDonald for discussions on this section.

[34] Richard A. Posner, *Frontiers of Legal Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 239.

[35] Aristotle, *Ethics*, J.A.K. Thompson trans. (New York: Penguin, 1976), 170 (1128b); Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, H.C. Lawson-Tancred trans. (New York: Penguin, 1991), 158 (1384a). More broadly, "humiliation" merits no entry in the index of Cairns' survey of classic Hellenic writing. See Douglas L. Cairns, *Aidōs: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 473.

[36] Jon Elster, *Alchemies of the Mind: Rationality and the Emotions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 145; cf. Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010), 194.

noteworthy ground of pretension: pretending to be courageous when one was really a coward."[37] In nutshells, shame happens in anarchy; humiliation rarely does. Shame is about status; humiliation is about pretense. Shame is an ordinal phenomenon; humiliation is cardinal. Shame is common; humiliation is not.

Causally, humiliation and shame are more likely to spur non-aggression than aggression. Elster distinguishes between evaluative emotions (like shame or humiliation), deserving emotions (like envy or indignation), and prospective emotions (like joy or grief), and argues that evaluative emotions push people *away* from conflict.[38] One can deal with humiliation and shame in many ways: misperception ('they mock me because they fear me'), misinformation ('membership in their stupid club is not really beneficial'), adaptation ('life is simpler this way'), or apathy ('whatever'). But none of these responses incline people to fight. Status scholars focus on fighting for rank, but omit the emotions that tend to fuel it: envy, jealousy, and indignation.

In short, humiliation is not a good conceptual or causal foundation to explain status-based international conflict. If one agrees with Pierre Bourdieu that it matters "just how a social norm holds us in its grip,"[39] then we need to get emotions right. This does not much hobble Barnhart's enterprise: anger appears in the book's subtitle, after all. Certain kinds of international interactions tend to lead to certain shared emotional responses that tend to lead to particular policies. Though the details are a work in progress, the basic model is progress.

Conclusion

We all know that when people get mad, they like to get even. What Barnhart has done better than anybody is to map out the complex emotional and political chain from mad to even. That there are still blank and blurry spots on this map is the nature of exploration, but with a better sense of where they are we can begin to fill them in.[40] Thanks to Barnhart, the work is neatly cut out for us.

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[37] Miller, *Humiliation*, 198-199; cf. K.J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 226-242, 313.

[38] Jon Elster, *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 142-146.

[39] Paraphrased in William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 250.

[40] See Hans Vaihinger, *The Philosophy of As-If* (Eastford, Conn.: Martino Fine Books, 2009).

Review by Kathleen E. Powers, Dartmouth College

The 20-year U.S. war in Afghanistan ended abruptly in 2021. As the U.S. military departed, the Taliban quickly returned to power. The world's leading superpower failed to achieve its goals despite holding a substantial capabilities advantage. Analyses of the chaotic exist and the absence of progress since 2001 featured a common refrain: The U.S. loss and retreat was humiliating.[41]

Some social scientists might dismiss such rhetoric as the domain of pundits and politicians, and mark it as unimportant for future U.S. foreign policy. *The Consequences of Humiliation* takes the titular emotion seriously. Joslyn Barnhart's excellent book shows that humiliation is pervasive – appearing frequently in historical accounts of surprising defeats (22) and in policymakers' accounts of their own motivations from the nineteenth century to today. Moreover, her book shows that humiliation motivates actors to recoup their rightful status with often deadly consequences.

Barnhart's book asks two related questions about national humiliation, and her answers highlight the book's impressive contributions. First, which events causes national humiliation – the feelings of inadequacy and outrage in international politics? Asking whether humiliation represents a specific discrete emotion requires isolating its antecedents from other related psychological and material states. Barnhart marshals an impressive array of evidence to support her argument that humiliation stems from "undeserved threats" to a state's status (17). She identifies two factors that create the humiliation-related feelings of impotence and indignation: surprising military defeats and national sovereignty violations. Building on rigorous conceptualization and theory, Chapter 3 validates the theory's causal microfoundations. Experiments show that Americans who read about surprising failures and disrespect in U.S. foreign policy report more humiliation than their control group counterparts (73).

Armed with causal evidence that defeat and disregard prompt humiliation, Barnhart presents in-depth case studies in Chapters 5 and 6 to examine humiliation in the real world. She shows that unexpected defeats are especially powerful: France's rapid 1871 defeat by Prussia planted the seeds of national humiliation that would plague leaders for a decade (112). Defeats and stalemates should not inspire humiliation when the two sides have relative power parity or when the weaker power loses while punching above its weight class. But when a powerful state initiates conflict with a weaker actor and loses, the result feels undeserved. Chapter 6 pivots to disrespect, analyzing several Cold War events—like U.S. spy planes entering Soviet air space—to show that Soviet leaders felt humiliated by U.S. infringements on their country's sovereignty (140-44).

Second, how does humiliation shape foreign-policy behavior? Barnhart argues that humiliated people and states behave differently than their non-humiliated counterparts. Humiliated actors support aggressive foreign policies and costly arms races when they have sufficient resources and a reasonable chance at recouping their dignity, though they may lie low if they fear that such action will end in further humiliation. Here, the book's multi-method empirical approach offers a paragon for political psychology research in international relations. The book combines experimental, cross-national, and case study evidence to illustrate that humiliation carries consequences. The experiments show that humiliation increases support for assertive foreign policies. Barnhart takes advantage of the gains in measurement and causal inference from survey

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[41] See, for example, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "The Right Lessons from Afghanistan: America and its Allies Cannot Abandon the Fight for Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, 1 September 2021, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-09-01/right-lessons-afghanistan; The Editorial Board, "The Kabul Airport Massacre," *Wall Street Journal Opinion*, 26 August 2021, https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-kabul-airport-massacre-taliban-afghanistan-joe-biden-11630016714; David E. Sanger , "For Biden, Images of Defeat he Wanted to Avoid," *New York Times*, 15 August 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/15/us/politics/afghanistan-biden.html; Adam Serwer, "What the War in Afghanistan Could Never Do," *The Atlantic*, 5 October 2021, https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/10/afghanistan-humiliation/620045/.

experiments. But she also joins a growing group of IR scholars[42] to show how her psychological argument 'scales up' to conflict initiation and costly status competition in later chapters.

Studying emotions presents unique challenges for quantitative and historical work – we cannot administer a retroactive survey experiment to Prussian Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck to assess whether humiliation drove his pivot from anti-imperialism to colonizing Togo (12-26). Barnhart tackles these challenges with aplomb. She first explains that defeats inspire humiliation and aggression, and she then leverages her theoretical expertise to offer hypotheses about *which* defeats should be especially humiliating and *when* such humiliation produces aggressive action. The result is an impressive set of observable implications that scholars might attribute to other factors if treated in isolation. But when viewed collectively, this set discriminates between national humiliation and alternative material arguments outside the tightly controlled experimental environment. For example, unrealized political aims could explain quantitative evidence that recently defeated states initiate disputes at higher rates (79-81) but provide a less compelling explanation for why the probability of conflict increases when states lose to weaker powers (89).

The book's empirical chapters convincingly rebut "alternative models of conflict" rooted in material capabilities (52) and advance a theory that self-consciously shares many assumptions with other psychological and non-material theories about foreign policy behavior (54-56). Indeed, the synergies between Barnhart's work on humiliation and other research on status and nationalism[43] raise two important questions for future consideration. First, how can we distinguish the effects of humiliation-induced status-seeking from general status-seeking a priori? Second, when national humiliation becomes a nationalist rallying point, do new dynamics replace humiliation as the causal force?

With respect to the first question, the book's eloquent argument might benefit from additional clarity about whether humiliation provides the *mechanism* that relates disrespect and disappointment to foreign policy behavior, or whether humiliating events represent a *subset* of status threats with unique effects. It's worth emphasizing that Barnhart addresses many questions about the link between humiliation status directly. As her introduction states, "humiliation and status are intertwined" (16). Humiliation stems from the disconnect between expectations and experiences – if great-power status implies sovereign rights, repeated violations degrade the self-concepts of people who identify with the nation. The theory and evidence specify several status-seeking strategies that humiliated states might pursue, from nuclear-arms races to conflict initiation. The book's key contribution relative to other work on status is its ability to predict when status will matter most (54).

The evidence in the book supports the view that humiliation is a mechanism. Feelings of humiliation mediate the effect of status threats on assertive foreign policies in the survey experiments (73), Soviet leaders lamented that the U.S. subjected them to repeated "indignities" by sending spy planes into Soviet airspace (142), and the large-n analysis shows that unexpected defeats increase the probability of conflict initiation.

Yet when the book implies that humiliating events represent a subset of status challenges – i.e., national humiliation occurs only when a state concludes that they did not deserve the slight or failure – the tests produce equivocal conclusions. The case studies each center on humiliating events, for example, and the experimental treatments exemplify Barnhart's criteria for national humiliation. As a result, we lack a "non-humiliating" comparison case to assess how states respond to deserved

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[42] See, for example, Joshua D. Kertzer, *Resolve in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); Johnathan Renshon, *Fighting for Status: Hierarchy and Conflict in World Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Keren Yarhi-Milo, *Who Fights for Reputation: The Psychology of Leaders in International Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

[43] For example, Kathleen E. Powers, *Nationalisms in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022); Renshon *Fighting for Status*; Steven Ward, *Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Reinhard Wolf, "Respect and Disrespect in International Politics: The significance of Status Recognition," *International Theory* 3:1 (2011): 105-142.

disrespect or failure. Since equals expect reciprocity,[44] such that tit-for-tat exchanges could signal disregard for sovereign status without engendering humiliation. Should we expect distinct behavior from China if the U.S. violates its maritime rights after news that China sponsored sensitive cyberattacks? The U.S. action would meet the book's conceptual criteria but reciprocal-status competition between great powers may lack the humiliating elements identified in Barnhart's case studies.

Indeed, the book presents some evidence for observational equivalence between humiliation-induced and generalized status competition: In the case of the scramble for Africa, the systemic effects show that status concerns beget status races, but humiliation only motivated the first movers. Italy and England sought to match France and Germany by rapidly colonizing African territory, though only the latter experienced humiliation. Similarly, we might accept that humiliation motivated rapid vertical proliferation in the Soviet Union. But the U.S. desire to ignore material sensibilities and match the Soviet nuclear arsenal stemmed from the same status dynamics without national humiliation. In short, the book provides compelling evidence that national humiliation explains one pathway through which status considerations motivate foreign policy behavior, but other pathways may be equally pervasive.

Second, the book emphasizes that humiliation has staying power. Barnhart presents persuasive psychological evidence that humiliation has unusual durability, but the argument risks overweighting residual humiliation once it becomes part of nationalism. Many cases in the book grapple with long time horizons. France waited a decade after its humiliating 1871 defeat to muster enough resources to launch its imperialistic agenda. Unexpected defeats correspond to more conflict 20 years after countries experience defeats or coerced territorial losses.

Yet the fact that a leader cites historical humiliation in advancing a policy may also reflect nationalist norms, suggesting a path for additional synthesis between Barnhart's work and research on nationalism in international politics. An illustrative case in the book's conclusion provides a useful discussion point: Barnhart argues that contemporary China has "internalized a sense of national humiliation" after the "century of humiliation" led to a "precipitous decline over one hundred years ago" (165). The country observes an annual national humiliation day and invokes its lack of recognition when advancing an activist foreign policy agenda.

That China and its leaders emphasize humiliation is unquestionably true. But can we pin today's foreign policies on long-ago humiliation, or does another unifying historical moment provide the explanation? National identities have content[45] -- people commit to groups, but also to a set of norms about how group members should behave.[46] Memories of historical humiliation emphasize the group's unity against outsiders and prescribe that 'we' must assert our superiority by demonstrating our power and influence. But replacing this with another set of unifying norms, like maintaining unity within the Chinese kinship network, suggests similar patterns. In this respect, we might think of humiliation narratives as illustrating a certain type of nationalist idea rather than uniquely causing the state's foreign policy. Indeed, Barnhart's theory assumes that national humiliation should have its most pervasive effects among nationalists (9-10), suggesting possibilities for fruitful engagement with nationalism research to further isolate historical humiliation as a specific impetus for later activism versus one among several possible unifying nationalist narratives.

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[44] Alan P. Fiske, "The Four Elementary Forms of Sociality: Framework for a Unified Theory of Social Relations," *Psychological Review* 99:4 (1992): 689-723.

[45] Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott, "Identity as a Variable," *Perspectives on Politics* 4:4 (2006): 695-711.

[46] Powers (2022).

The Consequences of Humiliation substantially advances knowledge and provides sophisticated answers about a pervasive phenomenon in international politics. It sets a high bar for multi-method research and will be required reading for current and future scholars who are interested in status, political psychology, and emotions in international relations.

Response by Joslyn Barnhart, University of California, Santa Barbara

I am incredibly grateful to Brian Rathbun and to these four dedicated and insightful reviewers for their time and attention to the book. I only wish the book had benefited from their questions and insights prior to publication – it would have been a much better book. As it is, I believe their comments define numerous useful future directions for research on how status, collective emotion, and national humiliation more specifically shape international affairs. In this response, I will first address some of core questions posed about the book and then turn to promising lines of research.

First, both Deborah Larson and Joseph Parent question whether anger – and not humiliation – is really the true motivating force described in the cases in the book. Indeed, anger and humiliation are closely related. They both involve a sense of wrong-doing and injustice. But humiliation is distinct from anger in meaningful ways. It shares important dimensions with another negative emotion -- shame. Like shame, humiliation is a self-conscious emotion involving a painful sense of self-doubt. An important difference between anger and humiliation, then, is a sense of efficacy. Anger empowers. Humiliation's effects are more complex and depend on an actor's confidence in the wake of a humiliating event. At one extreme, repeated humiliation over long periods can collapse confidence entirely, arousing withdrawal tendencies. At the other extreme, humiliated actors may regain a confidence that mimics the angry – leading to aggression and conflict. Between the extremes, states may engage in smaller acts aimed at re-establishing collective esteem and efficacy in the eyes of the state and in the eyes of others.

Another way to differentiate anger and humiliation is to consider how such emotions might be mollified. Anger can frequently be assuaged through apology or redress. Humiliation may fade somewhat in response to apology, but is unlikely to fade completely since apology resolves only the sense of injustice. To shake humiliation, one must also prove one's efficacy – to oneself and to others. The need to remove self-doubt can push actors to behave in ways that anger and outrage do not explain. It can lead to caution rather than rashness and can explain half-steps like targeting weaker third-parties in the effort to achieve success as a path to the restoration of self-concept and identity.

A big question then lingers: what effectively restores feelings of collective efficacy and national confidence following a humiliating event? If I were to write the book again, this topic would receive considerably more attention. Military and economic capacities clearly underlie national esteem, but they are not the only drivers. For evidence, one need only look to the contemporary United States, where collective esteem is undoubtedly lower than in some states with vastly fewer material capabilities. Domestic political competence must also therefore play a role. Citizens can also likely gain a sense of collective efficacy through international diplomatic victories, sophisticated technological advances, or large public works projects that demonstrate pride of place, among others. Such acts may ultimately fail to significantly alter external perceptions of the state. But such acts are not mere placebos, as Parent suggests. Collective confidence does not rest solely upon the judgment of others.

Kathleen Powers also very rightfully calls for clarification on the relationship between humiliation and status. Does humiliation provide the underlying mechanism for all status-seeking behavior or does humiliation-motivated behavior represent a subset of all status-seeking cases? I believe the answer is closer to the former: humiliation, or fear of it, is a motivating force for all status-seeking behavior. States are spurred into status-seeking acts by the desire to overcome painful humiliation elicited by disrespect or disappointment. States may also seek to proactively ward off future humiliation. The cases of Italian imperialism in the Scramble for Africa and US nuclear investments in the late 60s can be understood in this way. Italy foresaw that a failure to imitate the actions of status peers and behave as a state of its expected status was expected to behave would constitute a disappointing and painful national failure.

On Michael Masterson's incisive points about methodology: I can only say that I agree with the depiction of the tradeoffs involved in relying on indirect measures of humiliation such as humiliating international events. Such analysis requires incredibly well-informed assumptions about complex subjective experiences, which is a tall order. No matter how well-informed, this approach will never fully rule out plausible alternative explanations. A multi-method approach, drawing on evidence across time and place, helps boost confidence in our empirical assumptions and conclusions. The more diverse the

basis of evidence for a similar mechanism, the harder it becomes to fit the data to alternatives. But clearly this approach is not definitive.

What is gained in the reliance on more indirect measures of humiliation, however, is the ability to test a wider array of behavioral implications. Are humiliated states more likely, for instance, to target the actor responsible for their humiliation or to target a third-party state? It is difficult to gain firm insights into such questions by solely priming the emotion of humiliation at the individual level. As Masterson notes, any evidence gathered through such an approach would confront questions about external validity. Thus, we should use as many empirical approaches as possible to confidently estimate the nuanced and varied effects of complex concepts such as national humiliation. I look forward to seeing how the research trajectory described by Masterson builds upon and even potentially undermines the findings in my book, hopefully advancing us to a more accurate model of the world.

On future directions of research: both Masterson and Powers point to relaxing the unitary actor assumption and again, I completely agree. In their quest to make a case for the importance of status in international affairs, scholars have tended to overemphasize the universality of status hierarchies and status-seeking behavior. But clearly status does not matter equally to all; the loss of status is felt more acutely and painfully by some. We need to better understand which subgroups care most about international status and under what conditions. One potentially fruitful area for inquiry here relates to gender and status concerns. Existing evidence in psychology shows that women value individual status, dominance and competition less than men.[47] But do these differences carry over into the international realm? The evidence presented in Chapter 3 of the book suggests that women respondents are less likely to support aggressive policies. But the effects of humiliating international events on foreign policy attitudes does not appear to vary systematically by gender. How do we square this with prior work on attitudes at the individual level? How might levels of status concern change as women gain political power?

Evidence in Chapter 3 also points to potentially systematic differences in the effects of humiliation according to political ideology or partisanship. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 (69 - 70) suggest that the effects of being primed with a humiliating international event on support for hawkish policies are more pronounced among Democrats than Republicans. While baseline support for aggressive policies is lower, on average, among Democrats than Republicans, Democrats exposed to humiliation primes supported aggressive policies at roughly the same levels as humiliation-treated Republicans. Future research should investigate how domestic partisanship and ideology might affect perceptions not only of when a state has been humiliated but also attitudes about appropriate status-seeking responses. Democrats would presumably, for instance, assign more weight to diplomatic strategies involving international organizations than Republicans.

Finally, Masterson and Powers both also question how leader rhetoric might play a role in shaping national humiliation. Elite references to past humiliating international events are frequent in many countries. Scholars of nationalism from Stephen Van Evera to Isaiah Berlin have noted the near universality of national humiliation and historical grievance within nationalist narratives.[48] But we know little about how such rhetorical references work. Three core mechanisms seem possible. In the first, opportunistic leaders sense and reflect existing sentiment in the population in order to win elections. In the second, leaders' references to past humiliations, such as surprising military defeats, underscore and maintain established nationalist myths alongside history books and educational campaigns. In the third, leader references to national humiliation have more acute effects, heightening collective humiliation and us-versus-them distinctions in the near term, potentially bolstering popular support for assertive foreign policies and the popularity of the leader as the primary defender of national honor. An accurate model of the world likely involves all three mechanisms, but we know little about the magnitude of their effects, how they might interact or what precise near and long-term effects elite references might have. Uncovering this

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[47] Rachel Croson, Rachel, and Uri Gneezy. "Gender Differences in Preferences." *Journal of Economic Literature* 47:2 (2009): 448-474.

[48] Stephen Van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War." *International Security* 18: 4 (1994): 5-39; Isiah Berlin, "The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism." *Foreign Affairs* 51:1 (1972): 11-30.

model would tell us, among other things, about the degree to which 'humiliation entrepreneurs' may be able to activate collective sentiment with potentially disastrous international effects.