

International Politics

POLS 240 Section 4

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Our Framework: Strategy Matters

- Why do states and leaders make certain decisions?
- Consider three core concepts:
 - Interests
 - Interactions
 - Institutions

Core of the Analysis

- Interests are the fundamental building blocks of politics.
- *Cooperation*: two or more actors working together to achieve a preferred outcome.
 - Depends on: number and size of actors, number of interactions, the accuracy of information

Core of the Analysis

- *Bargaining* is an interaction involving the distribution of a fixed value.
- *Institutions* are sets of rules.
 - Facilitate cooperation
 - Lower cost of decision-making
 - Bias policy outcomes

Interests: What do Actors Want from Politics?

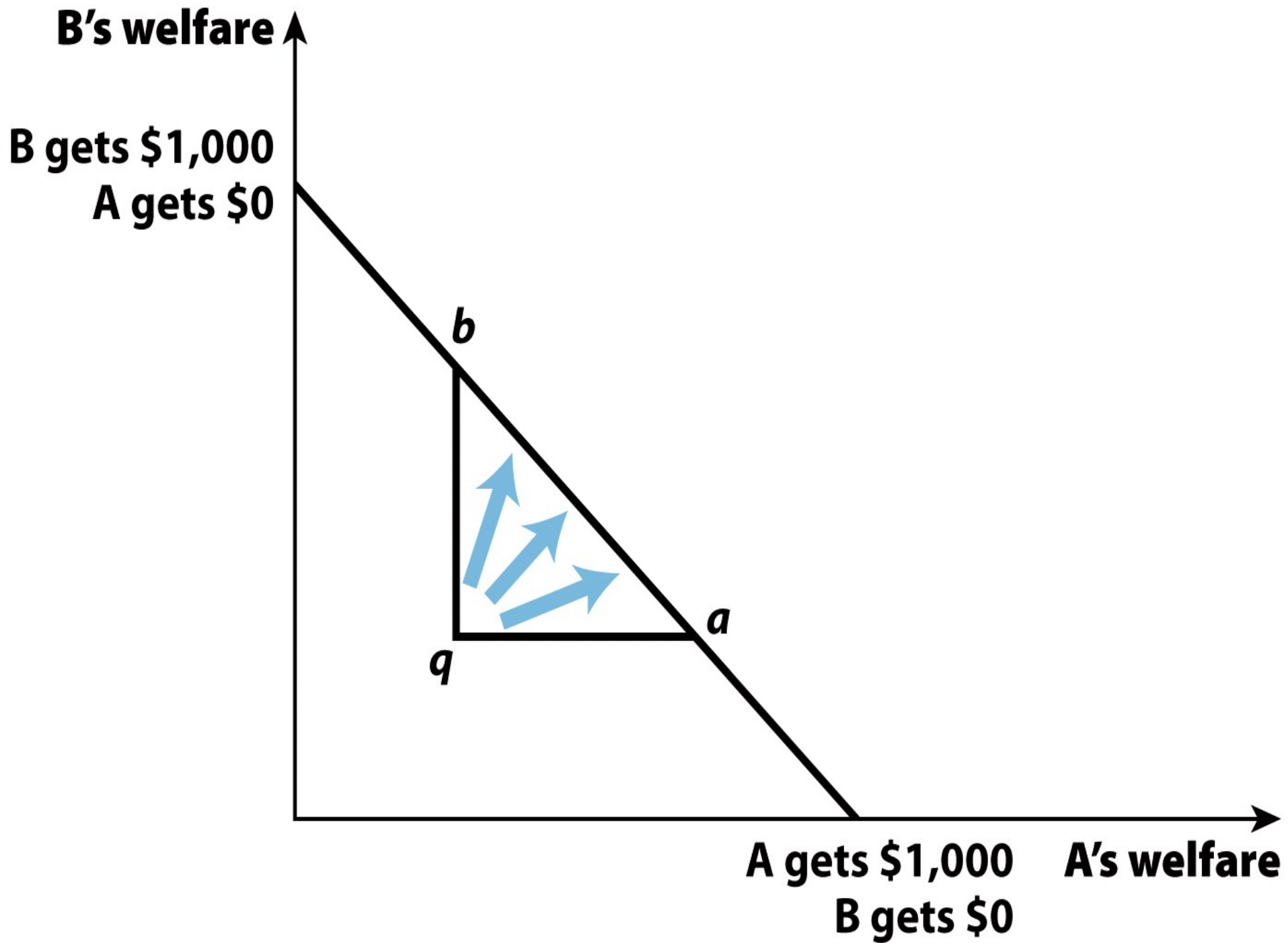
- ***Interests***: what actors want to achieve through political action.
- An example: US security interests might have led to its promotion of democracy in the Middle East.

Interests: What do Actors Want from Politics?

- Three categories of interest:
 - Power or security
 - Economic or material welfare
 - Ideological goals

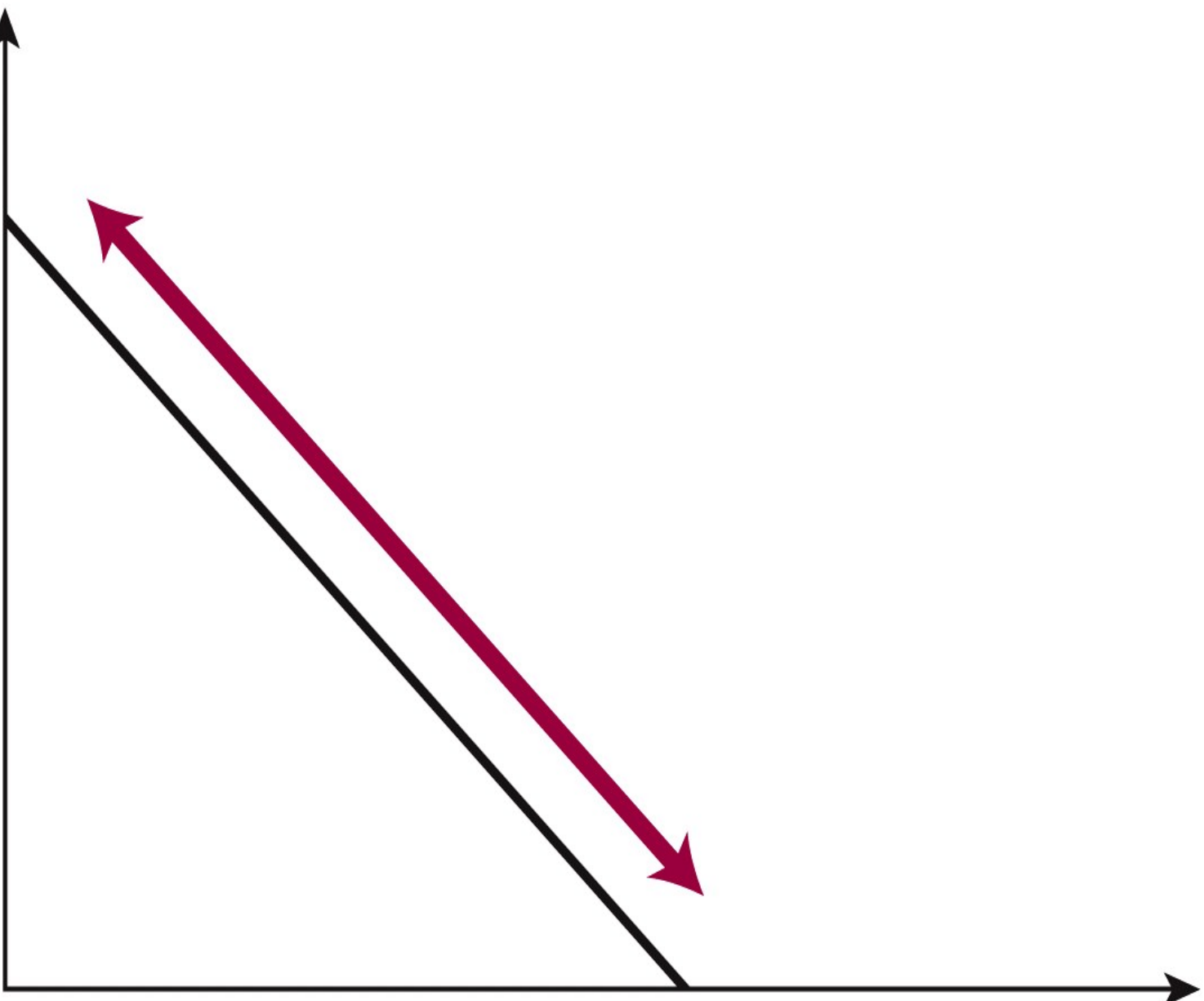
TABLE 2.1**KEY CATEGORIES OF ACTORS AND INTERESTS IN WORLD POLITICSSD**

Actor	Commonly ascribed interests	Examples
States	Security, power, wealth, ideology	United States, Canada, China, Switzerland, India, Uruguay
Politicians	Reelection/retention of office, ideology, policy goals	President of the United States, Prime Minister of Great Britain, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
Firms, industries, or business associations	Wealth, profit	General Motors, Sony, the pharmaceutical industry, National Association of Manufacturers, Business Roundtable
Bureaucracies	Budget maximization, influence, policy preferences; often summarized by the adage of “where you stand depends on where you sit”	Department of Defense, Department of Commerce, National Security Council, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
International organizations	As composites of states, they reflect the interests of member states according to their voting power. As organizations, they are assumed to be similar to domestic bureaucracies.	United Nations, International Monetary Fund, International Postal Union, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), often transnational or international in scope and membership	Normative, ideological, or policy goals; human rights, the environment, religion	Red Cross, Amnesty International, Greenpeace, the Catholic Church



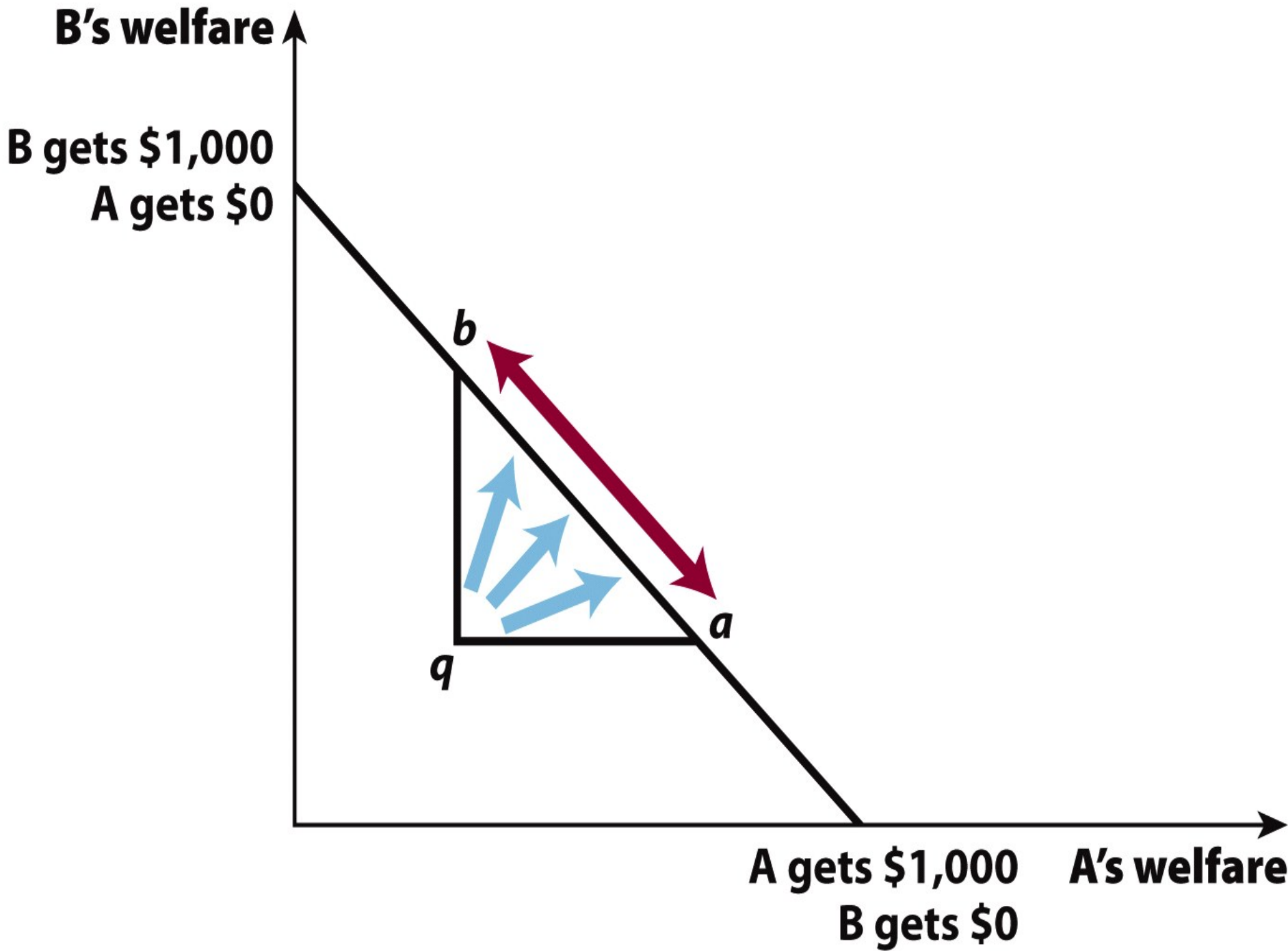
B's welfare

**B gets \$1,000
A gets \$0**



**A gets \$1,000
B gets \$0**

A's welfare



When Can Actors Cooperate?

- *Coordination*
- *Collaboration*

A Collaboration Problem

- **Public goods** are socially desirable products defined by two qualities:
 - *Nonexcludable*
 - *Nonrival* in consumption
- Some examples: national defense, clean air and water and environmental issues

Public Goods

- Efforts to produce public goods are hindered by **collective action problems**.
 - Each actor aims to benefit from the good without bearing the costs for it
- Each individual has an incentive to **free ride**:
 - Failing to contribute while benefiting from the efforts of others

Cooperation

- Factors that facilitate cooperation:
 - Institutions
 - Number and relative size of actors
 - Iteration, linkage and strategies of reciprocal punishment
 - Information

Who Wins and Who Loses in Bargaining?

- A core concept in international politics...
 - **Power:** the ability of Actor A to get Actor B do something that B would otherwise not do

The more power an actor has, the more it can expect to get from others in the final outcome of bargaining.

Who Wins and Who Loses in Bargaining?

- *Reversion outcome*: the outcome that occurs when no bargain is reached...
 - This influences power and the outcome of bargaining of any bargaining interaction
- Bargaining power belongs to actors most satisfied with, or most willing to endure, the reversion outcome.

Shifting the Reversion Outcome

- Power derives from the ability to make the reversion outcome better for oneself and/or worse for the other side.
- There are three basic ways of exercising power:
 - Coercion, outside options and agenda setting

Institutions: Do Rules Matter in World Politics?

- Institutions vary in their goals and rules, but they generally serve to facilitate cooperation.
- **Institutions:** sets of rules, known and shared by the relevant community, that structure political interactions in particular ways.

How Do Institutions Affect Cooperation?

- Institutions promote cooperation through enforcement, or imposing punishments on actors who fail to cooperate...
 - But they generally lack the capacity to impose punishments due to **anarchy**
- Anarchy: the absence of formal government.

How Do Institutions Affect Cooperation?

- Cooperation at the international level has to be self-enforcing.
- Institutions make self-enforcement easier by:
 - Setting standards of behavior
 - Verifying compliance
 - Reducing the costs of joint decision-making
 - Resolving disputes

Why Follow the Rules?

- Actors comply with institutions for two reasons:
 - They facilitate cooperation
 - Maintaining an institution may be less costly than creating a new one
- Countries occasionally violate rules, but institutions do make international cooperation more likely.

Why didn't the United Nations Security Council endorse the preventive war against Iraq in 2003?

- 1) Since the Security Council oversaw humanitarian programs in Iraq, it decided to remain neutral rather than risk a conflict of interest.
- 2) Several permanent members of the Security Council opposed going to war against Iraq and could veto any endorsement of war.
- 3) The Security Council is unable to endorse military action against sovereign countries.

Why are countries more likely to cooperate when there is *iteration* (i.e., repeated interaction over time)?

- 1) Countries are better able to threaten reciprocal punishment in the future.
- 2) Countries are more likely to comply with treaties when their commitments are clearly specified.
- 3) Countries are more likely to cooperate when no country is more powerful than any others.

Why is enforcement by international institutions actually "self-enforcement"?

- 1) Institutions can force their members to comply with their agreements without outside help.
- 2) To force members to cooperate, states pay dues to their institutions to create their own enforcement agency.
- 3) There is no central authority forcing states to cooperate.