Realism and International Relations provides a critical yet sympathetic survey of political realism in international theory. Using six paradigmatic theories – Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Waltz, the Prisoners' Dilemma, Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes – the book examines realist accounts of human nature and state motivation, international anarchy, system structure and the balance of power, international institutions, and morality in foreign policy. Donnelly argues that common realist propositions not only fail to stand up to scrutiny but are rejected by many leading realists as well. Rather than a general theory of international relations, realism is best seen as a philosophical orientation or research program that emphasizes – in an insightful yet one-sided way – the constraints imposed by individual and national egoism and international anarchy. Containing chapter-by-chapter guides to further reading and discussion questions for students, this book offers an accessible and lively survey of the dominant theory in International Relations.

Jack Donnelly is Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Graduate School of International Studies at the University of Denver. He is the author of The Concept of Human Rights, Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice, and International Human Rights.
This new series of textbooks aims to provide students with authoritative surveys of central topics in the study of International Relations. Intended for upper level undergraduates and graduates, the books will be concise, accessible and comprehensive. Each volume will examine the main theoretical and empirical aspects of the subject concerned, and its relation to wider debates in International Relations, and will also include chapter-by-chapter guides to further reading and discussion questions.
Realism and International Relations

Jack Donnelly
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I began working on this book a decade ago, in the spring of 1989, at the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study. My long list of debts thus must begin with Peter Baehr, who invited me to participate in his research group, and Dirk van de Kaa, who as Director made the NIAS an incredibly supportive place for scholarly research. Had I been able to remain longer within the comfortable confines of Wassenaar I am sure that the gap between the start and finish of this project would have been much smaller.

Over the years, various incarnations of this work have been commented on, orally or in writing, by numerous friends and colleagues. Michael Doyle, Peter Euben, Daniel Garst, Alan Gilbert, Arthur Gilbert, Peter Haas, Barry Hughes, Micheline Ishay, Bob Jackson, Bob Keohane, Harold Koh, Steve Krasner, Steve Leonard, Andrew Linklater, David Lumsdaine, Terry Nardin, Clifford Orwin, Joel Rosenthal, Eduardo Saxe, Michael Smith, Terry Sullivan, Alex Wendt, and Jim White are the names that appear in my records. I thank you all. To those whom I have forgotten to record, my gratitude is compounded by guilt over my neglect.

I also thank Bassem Hassan and Jacek Lubecki for their fine work as research assistants. Bassem also did much of the work of checking citations. And I owe special debts to four additional people. Rhoda Howard’s careful and skeptical eye, as usual, forced me to greater precision. Beyond the particular contributions of her line-by-line criticisms, her position as a reader outside the debates of international relations theory constantly reminded me to write for the broader audience this book is intended to reach.

Cathy Donnelly read the entire manuscript with unusual care. More often than I might care to admit, she drew attention to bad writing habits and stylistic infelicities, as well as the occasional passage that could only be described as hopelessly obscure. She also regularly and forcefully reminded me that there is more to life than work.

Tim McKeown believed in this project early on and provided much appreciated encouragement as a series of early versions of what have
become chapters 2 and 6 were rejected by all the best journals in the field. More immediately, his detailed comments on the next to last draft of chapter 2 helped me to nail down arguments that were not yet sufficiently clear and to avoid some significantly exaggerated claims of my own.

Glenn Snyder’s thoughtful observations on the epistemological implications of my line of argument, as well as numerous helpful suggestions for clarifying particular points, greatly improved the final draft. I especially appreciate his help because I know that he disagrees with the substance of a number of my principal arguments.

Finally, I must thank more than a decade’s worth of graduate students in Chapel Hill and Denver. If I have succeeded in communicating clearly, it is in significant measure a result of their questions and puzzlement. By refusing to accept easy answers about either the strengths or weaknesses of realism, they have forced me to confront this material with a depth and precision that would have been impossible to achieve on my own.