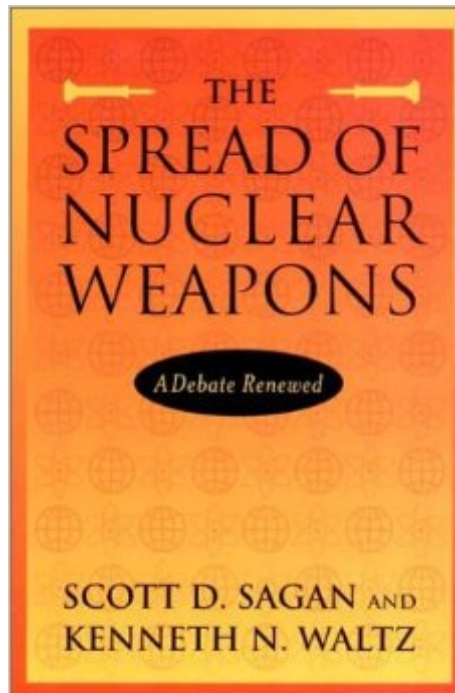


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# The Spread Of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed (Second Edition)



## Synopsis

In *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*, professors Waltz and Sagan resume their well-known dialogue concerning nuclear proliferation and the threat of nuclear war. Kenneth Waltz, Dean of Realist Theory in international relations at Columbia University, expands on his argument that "more may be better," contending that new nuclear states will use their acquired nuclear capabilities to deter threats and preserve peace. Scott Sagan, the leading proponent of organizational theories in international politics, continues to make the counterpoint that "more will be worse": novice nuclear states lack adequate organizational controls over their new weapons, resulting in a higher risk of either deliberate or accidental nuclear war. Treating issues from the "long peace" between the United States and Soviet Union made possible by the nuclear balance of the Cold War to more modern topics such as global terrorism, missile defense, and the Indian-Pakistani conflict, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* is an invaluable addition to any international relations course.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book puts together two colliding authors on whether the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a good idea or not. Waltz, one of the premier figures of realpolitik, argues (brilliantly, even though I disagree with him) that proliferation is a good idea. Sagan argues there are too many organizational risks in the proliferation system. The two present their arguments, and then respond to each other's argument. It is a fascinating argument, one that can be discussed in 1000 pages, but the authors do

a tremendous job of synthesizing it and pointing out the major strengths and weaknesses of each other's argument. In today's world, where we are willing to go to war to prevent proliferation, it is useful to take a step back and really understand what the main problems arising by proliferation are.

This book is presented in an academic debate style. Waltz begins with a discussion of why the spread of nuclear weapons is not detrimental to world peace. Sagan counters, after which both comment on the recent spread of nuclear weapons to both India and Pakistan. Both then write a conclusionary essay, essentially restating the arguments they made earlier. This is a wonderful book for people interested in this aspect of international politics. Sagan and Waltz both make deep arguments, peppered with numerous historical references and held together by a sound logical structure. Though this book is quite complex, neither author writes in an overly academic style, which allows for a wide potential audience. You'll read more here about the theoretical logic behind the threat of nuclear war than you will about, say, the technical makeup of nuclear weapons. My only complaint about this work is that Scott Sagan's responses to Waltz seem specifically devised to tear Waltz's argument apart, rather than constructing a logical argument of his own. This book also includes quite a deal of repetition. After reading both author's take on the potentiality of an India-Pakistan conflict, one feels exasperated to see Waltz merely reiterate what he said earlier. However, this is still the best book of its kind on this subject, one that any serious student of foreign policy should pursue.

Sagan and Waltz did this great little dance 4 times I think. And whichever side of the argument you fall on, one thing that's important to understand is that the Obama administration, through Drs. Walt and Mearsheimer, who are Waltz' students, actually does believe in Waltz' assertion that non proliferation is a bad and unstable situation for the world we live in. They are fans of a world where nations and near-nations should have atomic weapons, generally. Just something to keep in mind.

Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz are two of the most renowned political scientists of the last several decades. In the fourth edition of their seminal text: *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons* an enduring debate, the two giants of political science exchange rhetorical blows over whether more nuclear weapons are a good or bad thing for the world as a whole. Included in the fourth edition are expanded chapters on India-Pakistan, the Axis of Evil states (Iran, Iraq, and North Korea), and a debate over nuclear zero in the wake of President Obama's comments about the future of nuclear weapons.

If you are interested in international relations/security, this is a classic. It is short and understandable. If you read this book closely and take the time to consider its application, you will find yourself frustrated at the crap the talking heads on TV come up with when talking about war and politics.

If you want to know anything about the arguments surrounding nuclear proliferation, this book is the foundation. Both authors are leading scholars in the field with very different views on nuclear proliferation, giving the reader the choice to choose which side of the debate they fall on or to create their own combination of the two views.

Is nuclear proliferation good? Does it increase stability? Or is it unstable, either because of accidents or misuse? Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz play out this debate in this book that looks at the nuclear question through organisational and realist perspectives. If you thought the answer to this debate was obvious, think again - this book will certainly leave you with a lot of questions.

After reading this book one can really understand the understandings and misunderstandings of all those fears and worries of nuclear weapons and also their spread in the world a must read book for a wide audience

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