Risk and Realism: Using a Board Game Mobile App to Illustrate an International Relations Theory

Petra Hendrickson, *Northern Michigan University, USA*

ABSTRACT When introducing students to broad theoretical frameworks, simulations and games can help to make theoretical concepts clearer. One example is the use of the mobile app for the board game *Risk* to illustrate many of the concepts associated with realism. The mobile app has advantages over the physical board game in that the length of the games often is much shorter and allows students to experiment with the number of opponents to determine how that changes the dynamics of the game. Survey results from students in an introduction to international relations course who played *Risk* in proximity to lessons on realism report that playing iterations of the game clarified realist topics including the balance of power, the security dilemma, and the temporary nature of alliances.

A recurring challenge for instructors of introductory courses is to provide students with the necessary information to successfully progress in their major while also keeping them engaged and interested. One strategy is to use active-learning techniques, especially simulations and games. However, using a simulation or a game must provide learning results that exceed the costs of executing the activity, which are greater than the those of giving a lecture or facilitating a regular discussion. There are strategies for accomplishing this, including intentionality of the activity and facilitating reflection among students to ensure the intended lessons were learned. This article explores the use of the mobile app version of the board game *Risk* as a strategy for understanding the concepts and vocabulary underlying the international relations (IR) perspective of realism. I first discuss literature and evidence suggesting that games in particular can be useful teaching tools for IR and for the realist perspective in particular. Next, I provide an overview of the *Risk* mobile app and the class activity that uses it. I then describe the survey methodology used to gauge student learning, as well as quantitative and qualitative survey results. I conclude with additional thoughts on the use of board games and their electronic variants in the classroom.

Petra Hendrickson *is assistant professor of political science at Northern Michigan University. They can be reached at pehendri@nmu.edu.*

SIMULATIONS AND GAMES AS TEACHING TOOLS

Simulations and games are perhaps the predominant tools in the active-leaning toolbox. There is debate about what differentiates the two strategies and if they indeed are different, with many studies invoking both terms (Khan and Perez 2009; Oberle, Leunig, and Ivens 2020; Wheeler 2006). However, their basic premise —that is, to provide students with hands-on opportunities to experience course content and enhance learning—is identical. Recent (Harvey, Fielder, and Gibb 2023) and forthcoming (Glasgow et al. forthcoming) research is dedicated to illustrating specific implementation of a variety of simulations and games. In addition to coverage of simulation and game options, considerable research also explores the efficacy of games and simulations for various learning outcomes. These include increasing students' learning in general related to the simulated course content (Baranowski 2006; Lovell and Khatri 2021); longer-term knowledge (Wunische 2019); and more affective attributes such as empathy (Clark and Scherpereel 2024) and self-efficacy (Hendrickson 2021). If they are implemented carefully, simulations and games can have a significant and potentially long-lasting impact relative to other instructional methods (e.g., lecture).

GAMES AND REALISM

Finding ways to illustrate the IR perspective of realism has long been an area of concern for instructors. Whereas Asal (2005) described a bespoke game to teach classical realism, there are two off-the-shelf game-based avenues for teaching realism around

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which faculty seem to have coalesced: the game *Diplomacy* (Arnold 2015; Asal 2005; Bridge and Radford 2013; Mattlin 2018; Rittinger 2020) and the game *Risk* (Harvey 2023; Marks 1998).

Diplomacy, in which students compete to become the dominant power in Europe, is viewed as a way to teach the neorealist variant of realism because "its rules mirror neorealist theory so closely" (Asal 2005, 368) that it also has been used to experimentally test the balance of power (Van Belle 1998), which is another key concept within the realist domain. Two other instructors who use the game (Mattlin 2018; Rittinger 2020) also noted its close adherence to neorealism and that such adherence is indeed the starting point for making use of the game—although both want students to draw lessons beyond realism. Mattlin (2018) subsequently modified the game by having students play in teams, adding a team with the goal of mediating a peace, and altering win rules to help students better understand other aspects of IR deemphasized by neorealism. These aspects include domestic politics, peacemaking skills, and alternative outcomes when anarchy is recontextualized. Rittinger (2020) used debriefing worksheets to help students draw connections between neorealism and other theoretical perspectives. Asal (2005) noted explicitly, however, that *Diplomacy* is a long game—short games take two to three hours and longer games exceed three hours. Thus, to some extent, courses must be structured around the long-term playing of the game as opposed to being able to use the game for part of or even an entire single class period.

Harvey (2023, 234) readily acknowledged the realist lessons that can be learned using *Risk*, noting that "it is essentially a zero-sum game, where one opponent's game is another's loss; where players must constantly build up armaments to avoid conquest," and "*Risk* perfectly illustrates the dangers—and perhaps the inevitability—of the security dilemma." He noted that because of its close alignment with realism, instructors may be concerned that students will interpret the lessons of *Risk* as the primary lessons to be learned about international politics, thereby minimizing the role that other perspectives can play in helping them to understand the international system. Thus, Harvey (2023) modified the game so that the instructor acts as a hegemonic power, using the game to illustrate liberalism instead of realism. He also acknowledged that the game is long and he therefore devotes two or three class periods to it, at which point the game ends—regardless of whether the game has been played to completion based on the original rules.

However, both Rittinger (2020) and Harvey (2023) modified the games they use so that they are no longer designed to illustrate realism in isolation of other theories. This perhaps lends greater understanding of those other theories, as well as the impacts of changes to state behavior in the face of changes to the international environment of the game. Indeed, with modifications of a realist game, anarchy truly does become what the "state" (i.e., student) makes of it, guided by the instructor toward particular theoretical outcomes. However, an unmodified playing of *Risk*, especially when it is controlled by a computer, maintains strict fidelity to realism, which also can be lost when students play against one another with the physical analog. This inserts a social aspect to game play that also may change how consistently people adhere to the spirit of realism, in part due to the bounds of their relationships with other players.[1]

Marks (1998) noted that across two semesters of play, students drew the strongest connections to realist concepts such as the security dilemma and deterrence and also noted more explicitly that *Risk* was realist in orientation.

Given these findings, using off-the-shelf board games can be a useful way to teach realism with little if any modification and also can be leveraged to teach other theories and concepts if various tweaks are made to the rules. The next section describes the implementation of *Risk*, without rule modifications, in an introduction to IR course to illustrate the conceptual building blocks of realism.

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ACTIVITY MOTIVATION AND DESIGN

I use the mobile app version of *Risk* in my introductory IR course as a way to highlight the vocabulary identified by the textbook (Nau 2007) as being associated with realism.

Learning Objectives

Whereas other scholars mentioned previously have been interested in *modifying* games that illustrate realism to make them more versatile, it is precisely the clear portrayal of realist mechanisms that led me to the game. Empirically-based realism is the perspective to which other empirically based perspectives have developed in response in terms of both intellectual history and literal textbook progression.[2] Therefore, a strong foundational understanding is necessary for students to be able to make sense of not only realism itself but also the other perspectives around which the course is centered: liberalism, constructivism, feminism, and Marxism. Indeed, much of the semester is spent highlighting various ways in which other perspectives deviate from the realist baseline.

As noted previously, the game is intended to provide visualization of the vocabulary of realism. For instance, included in Nau's (2007) realist vocabulary terms are "self-help," "power," "defense," "security dilemma," and "geopolitics." Self-help is demonstrated alongside anarchy because there is no institution in the game that is designed to stop aggression. Indeed, aggression is the entire point of the game because defense only prevents losses; it does not secure gains. Any informal alliances that emerge—between the student and a computer-controlled character in a three+-person game or between two computer-controlled characters against the student or an additional computer-controlled character—are strictly temporary, and they are broken as soon as the targeted character is eliminated. That is, the only player that students can count on to protect and assist them is themselves. Power is

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illustrated largely through the premise of the game: to dominate the globe using military means to do so. Military power is the most common conception of power and, indeed, the only form that matters in *Risk*. The game highlights defense by requiring players to have at least one troop in territories under their control. This will never be sufficient for attack because at least one troop must always remain behind; however, a single troop can and, indeed, must try to hold the territory in the face of an attack. The security dilemma manifests organically as students report building up their forces on the borderlands with another player once that other player begins amassing troops there. In the case of *Risk*, such a scale-up of military forces by another player means *only* an impending attack, and students must build up their own forces as a means of protection. (There is no real benefit in preventive defense because it only siphons troops away from attempts at global domination.) Finally, geopolitics are present in the game because some territories are more strategically advantageous than others. "Never start a land war in Asia" is good advice in *Risk* because attempting to claim territories on the continent from an entrenched opponent requires significant troop commitments. Furthermore, borderlands are the only places that can be attacked because there are no long-range weapons in the game to attack deep within another player's territory. Therefore, borderlands become the most fortified as the first and most important line of defense against the loss of large swaths of internal territory.

I believe that having students play the game and organically observing these features clarifies the realist vision of the world. After all, it is one thing to read or hear the definition of the security dilemma and have an abstract sense of why it occurs and what it looks like; it is another thing to be drawn into it and it being the only reasonable reaction to a fortification on one's borders. Likewise, even if students are not explicitly thinking the word "geopolitics" as they play, the ways that they and the other almost perfectly implemented realist players succeed or fail in their attacks and advances shows in practice that some territories are easier to gain and hold than others. The game provides microlevel experiential learning of the realist anarchical state of nature without actual risk to a student's life, limbs, or sovereignty.

The Basic Training module divides the game into short tutorials covering the phases of game play: placing troops, attacking, fortifying after all attacks are completed, and trading in territory cards. During the attack phase, students can use (1) the default "Blitz Die Roll," in which the odds of success are calculated using all available troops in a territory for both offense and defense; or (2) a "Manual Dice Roll," which controls how many troops are sent into battle. The analog game limits this to three attacking troops and two defending troops per attack attempt.

There are other choices that students can make, including the specific map design and mode. The "Classic Map," based on the physical analog, is the first choice students see; the default mode is "World Domination," which is the mode students use for this activity. When students are setting up their first *Solo* game, they can adjust the number of opponents and the difficulty level. Default settings for the *Solo* game are "Auto Setup" (in which territories are allocated to players by the computer), "Fixed Card Bonuses," "Turn Timer Off," "Fog of War Off," "Blizzards Off," and "Portals Off." I ask them to play with all of the default settings except the number of opponents and difficulty level. This holds most of the logistics of the game constant for the class so they will have generally comparable experiences to discuss. Online appendix 2 illustrates a player's first turn in a game.

There are several advantages to using the mobile app version of *Risk*. First, it is free, which eliminates the need for the instructor or students to purchase physical copies of the game. Second, it is infinitely scalable because students play simultaneously but individually. This means that even if the activity ran for multiple class periods (which is not necessary, as discussed in the next advantage), it would not be reliant on which students attended class. Third, the mobile app version of the game, in which all players but the student are controlled by the app's AI, often plays more quickly than the analog version. A prior attempt to use physical copies of the game proved prohibitive on all three of these factors: (1) it was extremely costly to provide enough copies of the game for the entire class; (2) games often took more than one class period to play to completion; and (3) student attendance was unpredictable enough that it was not possible to guarantee that all of the students playing a particular version of the game would attend the subsequent class period to finish the game, making their experiences extremely uneven. The speed of play also means that students can iterate their experience, playing multiple games in the time allotted in order to draw comparisons between games based on the varying parameters (e.g., difficulty level and number of opponents).

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Risk Mobile App Details, Rationale, and Practical Benefits

For this activity, students download the *Risk* mobile app published by SMH Studios in collaboration with Hasbro, the publisher of the physical analog of the game. In the Apple App Store, a search for "risk hasbro" lists this version as the first non-advertisement result. Students can register with the app if they want to continue playing in the future; they also can play without an account. After entering the game portal, students receive 110 coins that can be exchanged for game plays, which cost 10 coins each. This initial number of coins is more than sufficient to carry students through the activity without having to make any in-app purchases. There are a variety of game choices, but I ask students to first play the required "Basic Training" tutorial and then *Solo*, in which all opponents are controlled by AI.

The mobile app version also provides opportunities for using the game in asynchronous online courses, in which face-to-face interaction with students is impossible. By guiding students through a specific set of game conditions, instructors can facilitate similar learning outcomes for online versus in-person students. If interaction among students—even remotely—is desired, they could play together using the "Casual" game type.[3] The "Pass and Play" game also could be used with an in-person class if the

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instructor wanted to compare whether and how their approach to the game changed when they knew and possibly had an existing friendship with an opponent versus playing an opponent to whom they had neither ties nor preexisting knowledge. Altogether, the mobile app version of *Risk* provides a more flexible experience for students and instructors alike by allowing for multiple iterations—even within a single class period—as well as working well with a variety of student enrollment types.

Activity Structure

The reading assigned for the day of the activity is Nau's (2007) introductory overview of realism in chapter 1 and the full chapter covering realism in more detail. In class that day, there is a discussion related to the reading and a relatively brief lecture that provides an intellectual history of the IR subfield; a short recap of the philosophy-of-science approach to theories (which condenses the previous class session's lecture and discussion to a single slide); a basic history of the emergence of the main IR theories (i.e., realism, liberalism, constructivism, and critical theories); and the primary assumptions of realism, including the role of anarchy. The remainder of the 100-minute class period, typically approximately 45 minutes, is devoted to the activity.

For the activity, students are instructed to play as many games as possible (typically three or four) during the time allotted. For the first game after the tutorial, I ask students to play against only one opponent. After this first game, they are instructed to (1) vary the difficulty level and/or the number of opponents that they play; and (2) observe how the process of game play or the outcomes differ from the game against one opponent on the default difficulty level. Often, the game against one opponent is relatively short whereas games against more opponents take longer. I encourage students to take notes about the number of opponents they faced, their strategy when they started, and how their game play progressed, as well as the extent to which they were successful. I also ask them to consider these questions as they play: (1) What is the first thing you try to do?; (2) When you are facing more than one other opponent, do you prioritize one over another?; (3) How do you make that choice?; (4) When you have more than one opponent, does it seem like you're being targeted by multiple opponents?; and (5) How do you react?

Debriefing

A key aspect of active learning is reflection (Asal and Blake 2006). I first asked students to complete the post-activity survey to obtain their initial reactions about the utility of the game. This was followed by a class discussion framed by questions about their general strategies and success. They were asked to consider how the number of opponents affected both their strategy and their success. They also were asked about which aspects of realism they thought *Risk* clarified and illustrated best and why. To answer these questions—with occasional prompting about some of the realism vocabulary terms—students offered specific illustrations of concepts that they encountered during game play. We then collaboratively tied those concepts back to a holistic understanding of the core tenets and mechanisms of realism.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

After the activity was completed, students took a post-activity survey that asked about the game and the textbook's realism vocabulary. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and exempt status for the project was granted by the Northern Michigan University Institutional Review Board. The text of the survey is included in online appendix 1. The survey listed the realism vocabulary terms in the textbook and asked students to identify which ones were represented in *Risk*, as well as the concepts that they understood better as a result of playing the game. Percentages totaled more than 100% across concepts because students could select multiple concepts for each of the first two questions. The survey also invited students to consider which concept(s) they thought was best illustrated by the game and why, as well as their experiences with different playing conditions (e.g., difficulty level and number of opponents). This survey was administered in the Winter 2021 and Winter 2022 semesters. Students were given time in class between the activity and the debriefing to complete the survey. A total of 70 students responded to the survey across the two semesters resulting in a response rate of 90.91%.

Quantitative Data

Table 1 displays the results of the post-activity survey. Defense and power were the two most-recognized concepts: 92.86% of students

Table 1

Risk and Realism Summary Statistics

Concept	Represented in *Risk* N and %	Understand Better as a Result of Playing *Risk* N and %	Best Represented by *Risk* N and %
Anarchy	30 42.86%	15 21.43%	3 4.29%
Self-Help	20 28.58%	13 18.57%	5 7.14%
States	48 68.57%	22 31.43%	2 2.86%
Sovereignty	25 35.71%	13 18.57%	0 0.00%
Power	62 86.57%	44 62.86%	11 15.71%
Geopolitics	48 69.57%	35 50.00%	10 14.29%
Security Dilemma	50 71.43%	47 67.14%	13 18.57%
Balance of Power	50 71.43%	32 45.71%	10 14.29%
Power Balancing	42 60.00%	36 51.43%	8 11.43%
Hegemony	36 51.43%	28 40.00%	11 15.71%
Power Transition	35 50.00%	29 41.43%	9 12.86%
Polarity	30 42.86%	18 25.71%	5 7.14%
Alliance	44 62.86%	31 44.29%	13 18.57%
Defense	65 92.86%	52 74.29%	17 24.29%
Deterrence	27 38.57%	16 22.86%	3 4.29%
Compellence	10 14.29%	5 7.14%	0 0.00%

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identified defense and 88.57% identified power as being represented in the game. Fifty-two students stated that they understood defense better as a result of the game, and 17 students thought it was the concept best represented by the game.

Defense and power were the two most-recognized concepts: 92.86% of students identified defense and 88.57% identified power as having been represented in the game.

The game helped 44 students to better understand power, with 11 students identifying it as the concept best represented by game play. Balance of power and the security dilemma had 50 students each (71.43%) noting their representation in the game. The security dilemma was better understood by 47 students (67.14%) and 13 (18.57%) stated that it was best represented. The game helped 32 students (45.71%) to better understand the balance of power and 10 (14.29%) identified it as the best-represented concept. At least 40 students stated that four more concepts were represented in the game: states (N=48, 68.57%), geopolitics (N=48, 68.57%), alliance (N=44, 62.86%), and balance of power (N=42, 60%). Of those concepts, 36 students (51.43%) better understood balance of power, 35 students (50%) better understood geopolitics, 31 students (44.39%) better understood alliance, and 22 students (31.43%) better understood states. Thirteen students (18.57%) thought that alliance was best illustrated, 10 students (14.29%) thought geopolitics, eight students (11.43%) thought balance of power, and only two students (2.86%) thought states was the best-represented concept.

Four additional concepts were identified by at least 30 students as being represented by the game: hegemony (N=36, 51.43%), power transition (N=35, 50%), polarity (N=30, 42.85%), and anarchy (N=30, 42.86%). Of those four concepts, 29 students (41.43%) understood power transition better after playing the game and 28 (40%) stated the same of hegemony. Eighteen students (25.71%) better understood polarity, followed by 15 students (21.43%) who stated that they better understood anarchy. The number of students who identified these concepts as the best represented declined: 11 students (15.71%) identified hegemony, nine (12.86%) indicated power transition, five (7.14%) noted polarity, and only three (4.29%) stated the same of anarchy.

Another three concepts had at least 20 students stating that they were represented in the game: deterrence (N=27, 38.57%), sovereignty (N=25, 35.71%), and self-help (N=20, 28.58%). Deterrence had the most students (N=16, 22.86%) stating that they understood it better as a result of playing the game, and self-help and sovereignty each had 13 students (18.57%) stating the same. There was a substantial decrease from the previous set of concepts in terms of being best represented, with only five students (7.14%) stating that self-help was best represented and three students (4.29%) stating that deterrence was best represented; none indicated that sovereignty was the best-represented concept.

Finally, there was a dramatic decrease for the last concept, with only 10 students (14.29%) indicating that compellence was represented in the game, five (7.14%) stating that they better understood it, and none stating that it was the concept best represented by the game.

Although there may be a concern about the survey—perhaps students marked all possible responses—this did not happen. None of the students marked all 16 concepts on the first question. They identified an average of 8.87 concepts as being represented in the game and an average of 6.26 concepts as being better understood as a result of the game. The number of concepts identified as the best represented decreased markedly, with an average of 1.7 per student. The concepts that they thought were best represented in the game were drawn from qualitative responses, which most often used the vocabulary term directly but occasionally described a concept without using the technical term for it.

Qualitative Data

Students were asked to provide commentary on why they thought particular concepts were the best illustrated and to describe their games in detail, especially regarding the number of opponents and the length of time needed to play the game.

Best-Illustrated Concepts

Because they were the three most commonly identified vocabulary terms as best illustrated in the game, I focus on students' commentary on alliances, defense, and the security dilemma. Students who provided written responses about alliances noted that even with the computer controlling the other players, it was possible to coordinate their actions with another player to target a third player. One student particularly noted "how important it is to create alliances to increase your power. This will help you take down the strongest opponent but then you do eventually have to turn on each other to win." This statement highlighted the fact that alliances also are ultimately a matter of convenience for states and when they cease to be useful or begin to undermine a state's own power, they will be abandoned. Writing about defense, another student stated: "Clearly defense, since you have to try to make sure that your borders are safe and strong and can't be attacked easily"—a theme echoed by other students who responded defense. With respect to the security dilemma, students remarked that when opponents began adding troops to territories adjacent to their own, they could not know with certainty what the opponent's motivations were. Therefore, they had to assume that their goal was to launch an eventual attack, leading them to add their own troops to the adjoining territory. As one student stated with respect to the security dilemma, "This is because as an enemy began fortifying along my border, I responded by fortifying the same border to maintain balance. Had I not, my opponent could have easily invaded my territory." One student also took a slightly more "bird's-eye view" of the game, writing the following:

> The best concept illustrated by playing *Risk* was the Realist Perspective. In order to feel secure of your dominance in the game, you had to possess the most land. In addition, it was more ideal to possess land in areas where you could easily proceed to invade nearby (usually weaker) countries. By starting off with invading smaller countries, your army would drastically multiply, which lead [sic] to international dominance. The Realist Perspective took precedence, because in the game one does not know the identity of the other participants, nor do there exist any international

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> organizations. The game of *Risk* simply portrays a "state of nature" where all entities will simply look out for themselves and their own survival. Thus, no other armies can be trusted except for your own.

Game Play

Students also commented on their game play, taking note of the number of opponents, the average length of the game, and their general strategy. In general, games with more opponents took longer. Students also played against a range of additional opponents, from two to as many as six. Students met with varying degrees of success in their games. A student who lost wrote the following:

> I played against a total of four other computer AI opponents. I used a strategy of mass obtainment. I tried to capture large areas of land piece by piece. For example, I conquered all of Africa before deciding to move elsewhere. This in the end failed. I spent so much of my supplies and troops on attacking that the land I just conquered was quickly taken. This went on repeatedly for almost 25 minutes and was the cause of my downfall.

Conversely, students who described successful strategies noted that they built up large numbers of troops and led advances that could "snowball" with reinforcements and fortifications until they faced opponents with forces so large that they were functionally unstoppable. A student who took this approach described their games as follows:

> I played against two players each time. I was able to win the first couple rounds because I didn't attack first, I focused on building my armies [sic] strength. I would attack when I had enough power to wipe out large areas and take control.

In general, students who astutely adhered to realist prescriptions for state survival (e.g., power for the sake of survival and being wary of other states' intentions, especially along shared borders) fared better than those who were too aggressive or less knowledgeable in how to attack strategically and fortify their troop positions. However, on reflection, students who were less successful during the game also recognized what had hindered their success, thereby reinforcing the lessons of realism.

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

Although the evidence suggests that the *Risk* mobile app exposed students to realist concepts and helped them to better understand those concepts, this study does have limitations. First, the survey was completed only as a post-activity survey and relied on students' assessment of their own learning, which may not be accurate. However, the discussion followed the activity and survey so that students' reactions to the game were not influenced by any understanding or connections gained during the debriefing. It was centered around their concrete examples and commentary not only on the realist vocabulary in general or abstractly but also how they experienced it during the game and how their opponents' actions affected their own. Aligned with the survey results, some of the concepts most frequently mentioned by students were power and the security dilemma.

A second limitation is that the research design was not strictly experimental. One reason for this was practical: I teach only one section of this course each year. Without a second course in the same semester to hold constant for all other aspects of course delivery, it would be difficult to rule out confounding factors that vary by semester. Another constraint related to an experimental design is an ethical concern in teaching research, where it is difficult to justify withholding from a group of students an activity that an instructor believes will benefit their understanding. Although it would be required to scientifically verify an effect, that scientific requirement is in tension with the pedagogical imperative to provide all students with the most robust learning experience possible. Future research could use focus groups or other voluntary gatherings of students to test particular outcomes without withholding actual instruction from them.

CONCLUSION

The mobile app version of the board game *Risk* can be used in introductory IR courses to illustrate and demonstrate to students the basic principles of the realist perspective. Research by other scholars suggests that *Risk* also can be leveraged to provide insight into other IR aspects. However, they all acknowledge that realism is the game's starting point and that it illustrates that perspective especially well. Across two semesters, 70 students completed post-activity surveys that asked them to identify whether realist vocabulary terms were present in the game; which concepts they understood better as a result of playing the game; the concepts that they thought were best illustrated by the game; and how they interpreted their own playing of the game and their success. Results indicate that the game was an effective vehicle for experientially exposing students to realist vocabulary terms and that their understanding of realist tenets increased as a result of playing the game. Students who were more successful were able to describe their successful strategies and students who had less successful game outcomes were able to identify their strategic mistakes. The mobile app version of the game is extremely flexible in terms of time commitment and accommodating classes of widely varying size, making it a potentially useful tool for a variety of classroom circumstances.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit http://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096524001318.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares that there are no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research. ■

NOTES

1. I thank a reviewer for suggesting this line of discussion.
2. As intellectual exercises, neoliberalism builds on neorealism's basic assumptions but emphasizes that war is not the inevitable outcome of anarchy. Constructivism arose much later than both and is a reaction to the shared basic assumptions of neorealism and neoliberalism. In terms of the textbook, realism and liberalism are largely presented together (although realism always comes first in related chapters), followed by constructivism—or the "identity perspective" as Nau (2007) dubbed it—with critical theories such as Marxism and feminism coming last.
3. I thank a reviewer for suggesting this line of discussion.

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