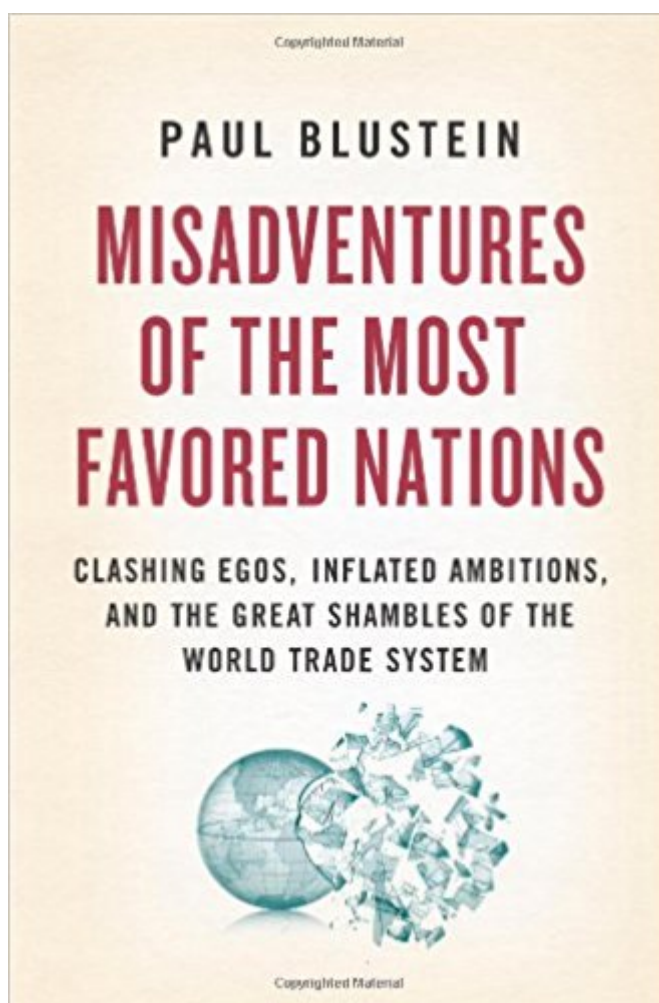


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Misadventures Of The Most Favored Nations: Clashing Egos, Inflated Ambitions, And The Great Shambles Of The World Trade System



Synopsis

As a linchpin of global capitalism, the World Trade Organization is both revered and reviled. In this book, financial journalist Paul Blustein tells the surprisingly entertaining and compelling story of how the WTO is sliding into dysfunctionality, which poses a new and grave menace to globalization itself. In more than seven years of global talks the WTO has struggled and failed to resolve contentious differences between rich and developing nations. Now, with a worldwide recession underway, the WTO's failure is contributing to a rise in protectionism; a sign that the world may not be so flat after all. *Misadventures of the Most Favored Nations* recounts, in vivid detail, how the highstakes negotiations went awry. At risk, Blustein argues, is the fate of the system that for six decades has opened the global economy and kept it from splintering.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Library Journal ["The World Trade Organization \(WTO\) is a mess. That's the unavoidable conclusion of Blustein's latest title](#) [".](#) Blustein does a remarkable job of getting behind the scenes of negotiations at the WTO, a controversial organization best known to the public as the object of violent protests during a WTO ministerial conference in Seattle in 1999. Despite the complexity of the topic, he avoids jargon, makes obscure issues accessible, and does a good job of capturing the essence of the many major players [".](#) With its insiders' views, Blustein's account will greatly intrigue those studying or working in international trade and

development. — William Bernstein, *Washington Post* — “Blustein has thoroughly mastered the craft of breathing life into intrinsically dull material with compelling thematic narrative and delicious character studies. Unlike many journalists, the author excels not only at the 800-word dash, but also at the long form, skillfully interweaving both his characters and engaging vignettes through the larger loom of world events. The further the author strays from the gilded, stilted venues of the trade negotiations, the more he sparkles. The few pages spent with Honduran textile worker Daunbia Rodriguez alone are worth the price of the book. A shimmering, essential read for those seeking a deeper and more nuanced perspective on the modern commerce of nations. — David Lynch, *USA Today* — “A richly nuanced analysis. Blustein’s even-handed mastery of his subject does justice to every important perspective, not just those of advanced economies. His thoroughly reported account will be must reading for those who wonder how and why global trade policy is made.”

Paul Blustein is Journalist in Residence at the Global Economy and Development Program at the Brookings Institution. For twenty years he was a staff writer at the *Washington Post*, where he covered business and economic issues. His work has won several prizes, including business journalism’s most prestigious, the Gerald Loeb Award. Blustein lives in Bethesda, MD.

I have now read this book for a second time, not only for enjoyment but to get more from it. The reviews of Paul Blustein’s previous books printed on the cover from the giants of financial periodicals (*Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times & The Economist*) apply equally to this book. He exposes such apparently arcane subjects as WTO & IMF to frightening (The Economist’s word) life to the unsuspecting public. I am currently reading Blustein’s book on the IMF, for a second time & I can say the same about it.

very much satisfied...

A great read that somehow makes trade talks an interesting topic! I would highly recommend this to anyone mildly interested in the world of trade and the WTO specifically.

One of the best books on the WTO I’ve ever read. Blustein explains in plain English the meanders and the technicalities of the world trade system and portrays the men and women who were ahead of the negotiations. Essential reading for understanding the WTO and the Doha round.

Veteran journalist Paul Blustein blames half the 2008 economic meltdown - the non-Wall Street half - on dysfunctional global trade policies, and then he explains why. World trade is an arcane topic, complete with mysterious acronyms, complex rules, and negotiators with huge egos and serpentine negotiating positions pushed by antagonistic nations. In an increasingly global economy, trade negotiations are never simple. Even so, Blustein manages to tell this provocative, complex, depressing story as engagingly as possible. At times the book bogs down in negotiating points that only trade technocrats will appreciate, but Blustein fleshes out the story by capturing the quirky, sometimes volatile, personalities involved. Accordingly, [getAbstract](#) recommends his book to those who can't get enough about world trade. If you want all the ins and outs, you'll be very happy here.

Most books about WTO are as stale as writing a short story with INCOTERMS. This is one of the few that provide insight into characters of the negotiators, hidden agendas and alliances, the trades of conditions that help craft final agreements, as well as presenting a global -- rather than just a US focus. Great work on the reporting of the Doha Round.

Blustein's book smacks of being on paid sabbatical since no reporter would include this much arcane detail in a book if they were not being paid by some trade think tank. The book is plodding and misses "the forest for the trees" since he concentrates on each failed proposal, number of Mercedes, affront, ploy, the furniture in a negotiating room, type of food, what was said and who responded to some ridiculous proposal. The real message here is that US trade policy is dictated by trade groups, lobbyists and technocrats who have no intent of protecting the jobs and livelihoods of US citizens. Blustein is a trade technocrat, not a reporter.

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