Lecture 14  
16 May 2019  
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# Introduction

## Young and Osherenko, “Testing theories of regime formation: findings from a large collaborative research project”

### Example of how one does research in the social sciences: like natural sciences: set up hypotheses based on theory and see whether real world evidence supports or refutes hypothesis

### Three types of hypotheses

#### Power-based -- institutional formation requires a single “hegemonic” power who sees it in their interest to create an institution that can promote general cooperation. But little support for this hypothesis.

#### Interest-based: Evidence supported the notion that leaders are necessary for institutional formation and that equity, salience, effective compliance mechanisms, integrative bargaining, uncertainty, and catalytic events/crises also contribute significantly

#### Knowledge-based: values and ideas matter as ways to foster common agreement, need for common understanding and consensual knowledge, and existence of epistemic community

## Mearsheimer article:

### Realist critique of theory that “institutions are a key means of promoting world peace” (Mearsheimer, 1995, 5). Argues rejecting balance of power politics makes more war more likely

### His distinctions among threads of institutionalist theory NOT important for this class

### Compare Mearsheimer’s response to Grieco (next class), also a Realist, in the same year that argues that the EU really requires a re-assessment of the validity of Realist theory.

### Parts from 5-26 are very helpful (rest of article less so). Nicely summarizes Realist theory on page 10 of article. Good summary of institutionalism as well.

### States always concerned about relative gains and evidence doesn’t support institutional claims

# Theory of international institutions

## Regimes / international institutions -- a means by which states attempt to overcome collective action problems. States see suboptimal outcomes from independent decision-making and seek to develop collective decision-making and collective behavior to achieve better outcomes.

## Definition: System of governance for a particular issue area.

### “International regime” / “international institution” are interchangeable terms

### “Norms, procedures, and rules agreed to in order to regulate an issue area” (Haas, 1980, 397).

### “A set of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other” {Mearsheimer, 1995 #2020, 8}.

## Example of domestic “regime” / institution: drunk driving

### Norms: vague, general SOCIAL sense of what is right and wrong

### Rules: LEGAL proscriptions and prescriptions

### Organizations and actors: networks of friends, MADD, general social pressure, explicit laws

### Monitoring and enforcement: authorized and non-authorized

## Example of international “regime” / institution: human rights

### Norms: how government should treat its citizens generally

### Rules: specific requirements about what can and can’t do, in treaties and conventions

### Organizations and actors: treaty secretariats, human rights organizations, individuals

### Monitoring and enforcement: public perceptions, diplomatic pressure, economic pressure

## Realist view: international institutions have no influence. Behaviors only reflect short-run self-interest. Power and interests cause behaviors and cause structure of international institutions:

### E.g., membership in UN Security Council and decisions reflect power and interests.

/------------------> Outcomes

/ ^

P & I but NOT ^

\ ^

\ ------------------> International Institutions

## Institutionalist view: international institutions matter. Outcomes can reflect long-run self-interest.

### First, what are the causes of institutional formation? Second, what are the effects of institutions?

/------------------> Outcomes

/ ^

P & I but ALSO ^

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\ ------------------> International Institutions

### International institutions lead to outcomes that differ from what power and interests dictate

### But institutions do NOT lead actors to do things against their interests!!

#### Influence evident when states do things that are contrary to their SHORT-RUN interests

#### Over long term, institutions lead states to view interests differently, to include long-term and interdependent (not just short-term and independent) concerns in their rational calculus

# Problems international institutions arise to resolve

## General: one or more states see status quo as suboptimal and believe that contingent behavior coordinated with other states will leave them better off

## Basic types of problems international institutions arise to address:

### Coordination:

#### Show Berlitz video on disk at: BerlitzWeAreSinkingVideo.mov

#### All states view themselves as worse off if they do not make their behavior contingent on that of others. But, once rules agreed to, no reason to cheat.

#### Some involve few distributional problems; others involve major distributional problems

#### Distributional issues may exist but enforcement issues don’t exist

### Collaboration: Standard PD game and Tragedy of the Commons

#### All states view themselves as worse off if they do not make their behavior contingent on that of others. But, once rules agreed to, still reasons to cheat.

#### Fear of cheating raises distributional issues as well as enforcement issues

### Upstream-downstream problems

#### Some states prefer the status quo while others prefer a change. The latter have to convince the former to change their behavior.

#### Distributional issues are explicit & must be addressed either with sanctions or rewards.

#### Enforcement issues remain for both sides

### Normative problems

#### One/more states seeks to get other states to adopt/accept their views of right/wrong

#### E.g., human rights agreements

# Functions of institutions: because they offer states ways of achieving better outcomes than could accomplish independently, states may invest in them (if they can get out of relative gains perspective!)

## Generally, attempt to make it more likely that others behave as you desire and less likely that they don’t.

### Increase costs of noncompliance

### Increase benefits of compliance

### Clarify what is expected.

## **Manage complexity:** reduce decisions to be made, e.g., tariff levels, environmental legislation

## **Reduce transaction costs:** easier to negotiate single multilateral trade or environment treaty, rather than multitude of bilateral ones. One long agreement within single forum (e.g., oil pollution regulation) rather than string of separate agreements.. GATT/WTO is perfect example

## **Create rules:** distinguish “good” behaviors from “bad” behaviors

## **Increase reciprocity:** specific (arms control, tariff levels) and diffuse (human rights)

### Increase iteration: single behavior seen as part of larger game, e.g., political dissidents

### Formalize linkages: financial mechanisms in ozone treaty

### Reciprocity through operation of norms

### Receive and review reports; consider interstate complaints; Commission on Human Rights investigations or focus spotlight on certain states

## **Improve information:** joint information has more credibility, can’t collect information individually. Reduces misperception and miscommunication. Informational - gather data on general indicators, monitor performance, exchange information, do research and publicize issues

## **Create/strengthen norms:** Establish normative expectations and increase costs of certain rhetorical strategies relative to others. Changes legitimacy of actions: need to justify certain actions in different ways. General declarations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Specific resolutions about certain countries’ violations: Condemned Israel re: occupied territories after 1967 war

# Institutional effectiveness: **some institutions succeed and others fail**. Why?

## Defining effectiveness: different definitions

### Goal achievement -- Did institution lead to achievement of goals?

### Counterfactual definition of effectiveness - Did institution lead to outcomes that were different than would have been otherwise?

### Glass is half empty, Glass is half full: often institutions fail at goal achievement effectiveness but succeed at counterfactual effectiveness. E.g., whaling, endangered species, tariffs (not yet zero)

### Whaling graphic: see slide presentation during class

## Why they might fail

### Aims and goals are lofty, but power and authority are modest

### Normative and rule-creating activities have no teeth

### Voluntary agreements among states - Saudi Arabians objected to clause in Universal Declaration of Human Rights calling for equal rights for women.

### Democratic deficit mentioned by Keohane -- not transparent or accountable

### Realist critique: the strong disobey, weak obey, no different than no-institution.

### Feminist theory perspective:

#### International institutions ignore or reinforce gendered roles in domestic & international society

#### But, institutions may offer ways to overcome some elements of gendered structure of society.

# Conclusion

## Definition: what they are

## Functions - what they do

## Effectiveness - definitions of success

## Strategies - how they accomplish it