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Economic Sanctions in Flux: Enduring Challenges, New Policies, and Defining the Future Research Agenda

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Abstract: Policymakers employ economic sanctions to deal with a wide range of international challenges, making them an indispensable foreign policy tool. While scholarship on sanctions has tended to focus on the factors affecting their success, newer research programs have emerged that explore the reasons for why sanctions are threatened and initiated, the ways they are designed and enforced, and their consequences. This scholarship has yielded a wealth of new insights into how economic sanctions work, but most of those insights are based on sanctions observations from the 20th Century. The ways that policymakers employ sanctions have fundamentally changed over the past two decades, though, raising concerns about whether historically derived insights are still relevant to contemporary sanctions policies. In this forum, the contributors discuss the scholarly and policy-relevant insights of existing research on sanctions and then explore what gaps remain in our knowledge and new trends in sanctions policymaking. This forum will inform readers on the state of the art in sanctions research and propose avenues for future research.

Resumen: Los legisladores emplean sanciones económicas para tratar diferentes desafíos internacionales, lo que las convierte en una herramienta de política exterior indispensable. Mientras que el estudio de las sanciones tendía a centrarse en los factores que afectan su éxito, surgieron programas de investigación más nuevos en los que se analizan los motivos por los cuales se amenaza con imponer sanciones y estas se llevan a cabo, las maneras en que están diseñadas y ejecutadas, y sus consecuencias. Este estudio generó una gran cantidad de ideas nuevas sobre el funcionamiento de las sanciones económicas, pero la mayoría de estas está basada en observaciones de las sanciones del siglo XX. Sin embargo, las maneras en que los legisladores emplean las sanciones cambiaron especialmente en las últimas dos décadas, lo que genera preocupación sobre si las ideas tradicionales siguen siendo relevantes para las políticas de sanciones contemporáneas. En este foro, se informa a los lectores sobre la vanguardia en la investigación de sanciones y propone vías para futuras investigaciones. Los colaboradores analizan las percepciones académicas y relevantes para la política de la investigación existente sobre sanciones y, luego, exploran cuáles son las brechas que existen en nuestro conocimiento y las nuevas tendencias en la legislación de sanciones.

Résumé: Les décideurs politiques utilisent les sanctions économiques pour faire face à un large éventail de problématiques internationales, ce qui en fait un outil indispensable de politique étrangère. Alors que les études sur les sanctions ont eu tendance à se concentrer sur les facteurs

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qui influent sur le succès des sanctions, certains programmes de recherche qui ont vu le jour plus récemment explorent les raisons pour lesquelles des menaces de sanctions sont lancées et des sanctions imposées, comment ces sanctions sont élaborées et appliquées, ainsi que leurs conséquences. Ces études ont été une mine de nouvelles connaissances sur le fonctionnement des sanctions économiques, mais la plupart de ces connaissances sont fondées sur des observations de sanctions du 20e siècle. Les diverses façons dont les décideurs politiques utilisent les sanctions ont toutefois fondamentalement changé au cours des deux dernières décennies, ce qui amène à s'interroger sur la pertinence des connaissances acquises par le passé par rapport aux politiques de sanctions contemporaines. Ce forum informe les lecteurs sur l'état de la recherche en matière de sanctions et propose des pistes pour les recherches futures. Les contributeurs discutent de l'éclairage scientifique et pertinent en matière de politiques qu'ont apporté les recherches existantes sur les sanctions, puis examinent les lacunes qui subsistent dans nos connaissances, ainsi que les nouvelles tendances en matière d'élaboration de politiques relatives aux sanctions.

Keywords: economic sanctions, sanctions threat and imposition, sanctions design, sanctions consequences, sanctions enforcement, sanctions effectiveness
Palabras clave: sanciones económicas, amenaza e imposición de sanciones, creación de sanciones, consecuencias de las sanciones, aplicación de sanciones, efectividad de las sanciones
Mots-clés: sanctions économiques, menaces et imposition de sanctions, élaboration des sanctions, conséquences des sanctions, application des sanctions, efficacité des sanctions

Introduction

Economic sanctions are coercive policies that leverage the imposition of economic costs and social stigma to compel changes in their targets' behavior or limit their ability to engage in undesirable behaviors. When the international community sought to address the nuclear proliferation threats posed by Iran and North Korea, for example, the United States, European Union (EU), and United Nations (UN) adopted broad sanctions packages to weaken the countries' economies and to coerce them into changing their nuclear policies. In response to Russia's territorial aggression against Ukraine, the United States and EU both adopted financial and sectoral sanctions as their primary response. To cease political violence in Eritrea and Sudan over the past several decades, the EU and UN imposed multiple arms embargoes against those countries. And lastly, the United States adopted the *Global Magnitsky Act* in 2017 to penalize and stigmatize corrupt and human rights-violating foreign officials—leveling sanctions on 196 individuals and entities since its passage.[1] The diverse set of cases noted above demonstrates that sanctions are a versatile coercive tool that can be employed in many different forms and for a multitude of reasons. At the same time, the wide range of ways sanctions are used makes it harder to understand when and why certain types of sanctions are employed, how they are implemented, what consequences they have, and what factors influence their success. Given that sanctions policies play a key role in almost every major global security challenge, it is imperative for both policy-makers and scholars to understand as much as possible about their use.

Despite the frequent use of economic coercion, a surprising amount remains unknown about how it works and what its consequences are. For a start, identifying

[1] This was the count as of January 20, 2020. The data was collected from https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/.

when coercive sanctions episodes begin can be challenging because the mere threat of sanctions can change their targets' behaviors. Furthermore, it is exceptionally difficult to define what constitutes success and failure for sanctions policies considering the myriad of instrumental and noninstrumental reasons for which they can be imposed. That challenge is matched by the complexity of accounting for the varied economic, political, and humanitarian costs for the states that impose them, their targets, and even third parties. Even when sanctions achieve their articulated goals, it can be difficult to assess whether they were worth the costs. Political scientists have brought a unique perspective to understanding the complexities surrounding economic sanctions, exploring a host of theories to explain why economic sanctions are imposed, how they are designed and enforced, what consequences they have, and what determines their likelihood of success. In this collection of essays, members of the Peace Science Society (International) have sought to take stock of the existing scholarship on economic sanctions, identify areas in need of new theory development and empirical study, and—to the extent possible—shed light on policy-relevant insights for the practitioner community.

The contemporary salience of sanctions and how these policies have evolved make it a particularly opportune time to reflect upon their use. The type of sanctions adopted by policy-makers has fundamentally evolved since the early 2000s in response to globalization and the increasing sophistication of information technology that has allowed for more sophisticated sanctions regimes to be crafted. Both national and international bodies now employ targeted sanctions against individuals and entities more frequently than comprehensive forms of sanctions. Sanctions also target financial transactions instead of trade flows more than ever before. The increased complexity of sanctions policies poses new challenges for both governments in implementing sanctions and for individual and entities in complying with them. This raises an important question about how much of the field's knowledge and theoretical frameworks based on the study of twentieth-century sanctions cases applies to the contemporary use of economic statecraft. In order to keep up, the scholarly research agenda for studying economic sanctions must also evolve alongside the policies themselves. In this forum, we outline the state of the art in the field of economic sanctions, discuss the extent to which the insights we have accumulated over the years can help us to understand evolving sanctions policies, and propose new avenues for future research.

Taking Stock of Existing Research and Charting a New Research Agenda on Sanctions

Our forum divides the study of economic sanctions into four principal research agendas related to how they are employed and what impact they have. The first topic that our forum explores is the threat and imposition of economic sanctions. Morgan, Radtke, Ragauskas, and Webb explain how the scholarly models for explaining sanctions episodes have evolved over time. One of the most important developments in understanding how sanctions work was the recognition that the sanctions threats alone could compel changes in their targets' behavior, meaning the most easily compelled targets never end up having sanctions imposed against them. With the introduction of the Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions (TIES) data set (Morgan et al. 2014), scholars could study threats as a distinct stage in coercive sanctions episodes—yielding a host of important new findings. The strategic model of sanctions that incorporates the choices made by senders and targets throughout the life of a coercive episode has emerged as the dominant framework for understanding how sanctions work. In their essay, the authors explore whether the strategic model's utility for explaining the contemporary use of economic sanctions is waning. Their essay discusses the blind spots of the strategic model, such as the fact that many sanctions targets are no longer states and suggests where innovative new theorizing is needed.

The second essay in the forum examines how economic sanctions are designed and enforced. Bapat, Early, Grauvogel, and Kleinberg argue that, while the design of economic sanctions has received at least some attention, the issue of how governments implement economic sanctions has only barely been explored. Their essay starts by discussing existing insights about how economic sanctions are designed to work. They then discuss the challenges inherent in effectively implementing sanctions and what existing research reveals about how governments and international organizations seek to enforce their sanctions. The authors offer a detailed research agenda for studying the enforcement of sanctions, highlighting the importance of studying the relationships between governments and the private sector and governments' strategies for obtaining firms' compliance. To better understand how sanctions are enforced and the impact that enforcement strategies have, the authors argue that scholars must adopt new, more interdisciplinary approaches to their research.

In the third essay in our forum, Allen, Cilizoglu, Lektzian, and Su evaluate the broad set of consequences that economic sanctions can have on those that use them, their targets, and third-party states. Beyond the instrumental objectives of economic sanctions, the policies have been found to have an array of additional intended and unintended consequences that can both help or hinder the success of sanctioning efforts. Understanding these consequences allows policy-makers to make informed decisions about when to impose sanctions and how to effectively design them. Continuing to evaluate the consequences of ongoing sanctions is also important. The authors of this essay suggest that future research should explore the consequences of economic sanctions on private firms and individuals in the sender and target states, the impact of financial sanctions on the relevant actors, and the systemic impacts of economic coercion in the long run.

The forum's final essay addresses why sanctions are so often unsuccessful and the factors that affect when they actually work. Jadoon, Peksen, and Whang analyze the characteristics of senders, targets, sender-target relations, and sanctions design features that are more likely to lead to policy concessions. They first discuss the complexity of defining sanctions success when sanctions policies vary widely in their desired outcomes and offer alternative definitions. Next, they identify the factors associated with sanctions success. Lastly, they address the shortcomings of the existing literature and offer avenues for future research. Importantly, the authors discuss why the costs imposed by sanctions should be considered in evaluating their overall success. They also argue that improvements are needed in the field's theoretical and empirical understanding of extraterritorial sanctions, sanctions imposed by powerful nondemocratic states such as China and Russia, as well as policies commonly used in conjunction with economic sanctions.

Broad Conclusions and New Directions for Sanctions Research

Collectively, our forum raises an important set of issues that frame the future research agenda on economic sanctions. Our contributors acknowledge that the types of economic sanctions employed in the twenty-first century have changed significantly from those relied upon in the twentieth century. However, most scholarly knowledge about sanctions policies primarily relies upon older sanctions cases. As a field, this means that political scientists will need to reassess whether theories based on older empirical evidence still hold up. Many insights will likely endure, as suggested by analyses of newer targeted sanctions data collected by Biersteker et al. (2016), but some may not. Another major change that our forum contributors observed in the past two decades is the increasing relevance of nonstate actors with regards to sanctions design, enforcement, consequences, and success. As discussed in all four of the essays from various angles, firms and individuals play an increasingly central role in explanations of contemporary economic sanctions policies. New models are needed to understand how economic coercion works against individuals, firms, and other nonstate actors instead of just other governments. Future research should also explore how governments convince firms to comply with their sanctions to improve our understanding of how the implementation of sanctions contributes to their success. We need a better theoretical and empirical understanding of the role these nonstate actors in sanctions episodes.

Another major change is the increasing use of sanctions that restrict states' and nonstate actors' financial transactions, as opposed to their trade transactions. Despite the fact that policy-makers are increasingly using financial sanctions more than trade sanctions (Drezner 2015), we know too little about how these targeted sanctions are different than trade sanctions. More research is needed on how these new types of sanctions work, what factors affect their success, and what consequences they have.

Lastly, the set of senders that actively employ economic sanctions is becoming more diverse. The United States is still the most prolific sender; however, actors such as China and Russia are using economic coercion as a foreign policy tool more frequently than they used to.[2] Examining the extent to which the insights we have about the threat and imposition, design, enforcement, and success of sanctions are applicable to cases initiated by powerful nondemocracies presents an important avenue for future research.

New data-collection efforts will continue to be instrumental in assisting scholars with exploring how the use of economic sanctions has changed over time. Having a deeper understanding of the role of nonstate actors in sanctions episodes, financial sanctions, and sanctions imposed by powerful nondemocracies necessitate significant data-collection efforts. Our findings suggest that it is imperative to update resources such as the TIES Data Set (Morgan et al. 2014) through contemporary times but also to collect new types of sanctions data as well. For example, data on sanctions enforcement actions and data on sanctions blacklists used to target individuals and entities will be important resources for understanding contemporary sanctions policies. As part of those new efforts, scholars should also take on the difficult tasks of rethinking how to assess the goals motivating sanctions and how that translates into defining their success—as difficult and contentious as that effort may be. In particular, new methods of conceptualizing and measuring the *failure* of sanctions could improve how we think about the utility of sanctions.

Insights about Economic Sanctions for Policy-makers

For policy-makers, our forum highlights the following important considerations. The forum's contributions suggest that the ease of sanctions' use in many circumstances should be counterbalanced by the significant challenges that exist for them to be successful and the possibility that they may do more harm than good. Before adopting sanctions, we recommend that policy-makers develop a clear set of expectations about the likely economic and political consequences at home, in the target state, and among third parties. Similarly, our analyses suggest that decisions about how sanctions will be enforced, and the resources invested in those efforts could be as important as the choice of sanctions design. Economic sanctions are policies that can inflict damages that are as severe—or even more severe—than the use of military force in some cases. As such, policy-makers should weigh

[2] For instance, most recently, Russia imposed financial sanctions on more than 322 members of Ukrainian elite and 68 businesses in November 2018. Similarly, in July 2019, China imposed sanctions on US firms affiliated with arms sales to Taiwan.

their use carefully and continuously reassess whether the policies are worthwhile to maintain.

Articles in This Forum

Essay 1: The Threat and Imposition of Sanctions

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Over the past forty years, we have seen significant advances in our understanding of how economic sanctions function as tools of foreign policy. Early analyses focused on the motivation, consequences, and efficacy of individual, long-standing sanction episodes.[3] Although this approach served as a useful basis for theory-building (Wagner 1988), it failed to provide generalizable inferences. The tenor of sanctions research changed in 1985 with Gary Hufbauer, Jeffrey Schott, and Kimberly Elliott's (HSE) *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered*. The first edition of the book systematically organized the case histories for 103 sanctions cases between 1914 and 1983 into the first data set that could be used for statistical analyses.[4]

Following the release of the HSE data, they became the default resource for international relations scholars conducting statistical analyses on economic sanctions. HSE based these data on a strategic model of sanction disputes. According to this

[3] For example, Galtung (1967) and Strack (1978) examine the imposition of sanctions against Rhodesia by the UK, Schreiber (1973) looks at the US sanctions against Cuba, Gordon (1983) and Doxey (1987) examine the US sanctions against South Africa, and Daoudi and Dajani (1983) consider the sanctions imposed by the US against Argentina during the Falkland Islands dispute.

[4] The book, and the cases, have been updated twice. There were 116 cases in the second edition, ranging from 1914 to 1990 (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990). There were 174 cases in the third edition, ranging from 1914 to 2000 (Hufbauer et al. 2009).

model, a sanction episode begins when sanctions are imposed by the sanctioning state (the sender). Once sanctions are imposed, the sanctioned state (the target) makes a choice to concede to the sender's demands or to resist. If the target resists, the sanctions' episode continues until the target or the sender chooses to relent. This strategic model proved fruitful for a time and lead to a wave of productive research. Because of the popularity of the HSE data set, the view of sanctions as a set of strategic decisions beginning with the imposition of sanctions became the standard view guiding sanctions research. Despite the important advances made using this form of the strategic model, the systematic research facilitated by the HSE data set highlighted a paradox for sanctions scholars.

A majority of the imposed sanctions catalogued by HSE were unsuccessful. Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1985) classify only 39 of the 103 cases (36 percent) as successful in the first edition of their study. After including more cases in the second and third editions, the success rate fell to 34 percent (Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990; Hufbauer et al. 2009), and there were some who argued that this figure was overly optimistic (Pape 1997).[5] This rate of success was widely perceived as suggesting sanctions seldom work,[6] and this served as the basis for a puzzle that drove the scholarship around economic sanctions for almost two decades: If economic sanctions are ineffective, why do states continue to use them? The answer to this paradox, as it turned out, lies more in the popular strategic model used by sanctions scholars than with the choices made by leaders and international organizations.

The apparent poor success rate of economic sanctions was attributed to the prevailing model's failure to account for the selection effect at the threat stage (Smith 1995; Nooruddin 2002). Sanctions are only imposed when the threat of sanctions is not sufficient to alter the target's behavior. If the *potential* costs of sanctions are sufficiently high, and the benefits of resisting the sender are sufficiently low, targets will acquiesce before sanctions are imposed (Drezner 2003). The incorporation of this insight into the strategic model of sanctions changed attitudes about the effectiveness of economic sanctions and helped unravel the sanctions paradox. Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi (2014, 546) reported that the success rate of economic sanctions increases from 27.2 percent to 40.8 percent when cases that end with a negotiated settlement prior to imposition are included and increases to 56 percent when one excludes cases where a final outcome has not been decided. This insight not only helped sanctions scholars understand why sanctions are used but also helped sanctions scholars develop a new means of understanding sanction events.

The revised strategic model posits that sanctions are continuous episodes that begin before sanctions are imposed (Smith 1995; Lacy and Niou 2004; Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi 2014). The episode starts with a precipitant event or behavior that motivates the sender's actions. In the first stage following the precipitant, the sender chooses to threaten the target or not. If the sender chooses to threaten the target, the sender makes a set of demands and the target chooses to concede to the sender's demands or resist. If the target resists, the sender and target are faced with the same decision tree offered by the original strategic model: the sender chooses to impose sanction or backs down, the target chooses to resist or concede, and the episode continues until either the sender or target relents.

[5] Pape (1997), referencing the case summaries from the second edition, argued that only 5 of the 115 cases outlined by Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990) could be classified as successes. This revision is a matter of controversy. Elliott (1998) points out that Pape's conclusions are based on a redefinition of sanctions and a change in the standard for what constitutes success.

[6] This, in itself, is somewhat puzzling. The inference appears to be based on the fact that sanctions "work" less than half the time. But why is that standard the basis for judgment? If the target changed its behavior in the face of sanctions 39 out of 103 times, that is probably 39 more "successes" than would have been achieved by doing nothing.

The practical utility of this revised model was not made manifest until 2006 with the release of the Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions (TIES) data set.[7] This was the first effort to incorporate the theoretical significance of sanctions threats into the data used to test hypotheses about the causes, consequences, and effectiveness of economic sanctions.[8] The release of these data sets produced a new generation of sanctions research that has led to a number of important insights. We now know that imposed sanctions are the least likely to be effective and that sanction imposition, design, and success are largely determined by the real and anticipated costs of sanctions for both the sender and target (Lektzian and Patterson 2015).

While it is widely agreed that the initiation of a sanction episode is driven by the initiator's disapproval of the target's policies (Barber 1979; Baldwin 1985; Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1985), we now have empirical evidence that some countries are more likely to be threatened than others. The decision to issue sanction threats appears to be influenced by the constraints of the international environment (Krustev 2010), the sender's ability to leverage the target (Peksen and Peterson 2016), how aligned the target's foreign policy preferences are with the sender (Cilizoglu and Bapat 2018; McLean and Radtke 2018), the target's degree of economic interdependence with both the sender and the international community (Cilizoglu and Bapat 2018; Peterson 2018), and the target's domestic political environment (McLean and Radtke 2018).

This new wave of research has also produced a number of important insights about the efficacy of sanction threats. Targets are more likely to concede if the potential losses due to sanctions are predicted to outweigh the benefits of current policies and when threats are specific and perceived to be credible (Eaton and Engers 1999; Morgan, Bapat, and Krustev 2009; Peterson 2013; Miller 2014). Target economic vulnerability augurs these cost-benefit calculations. Targets are more likely to concede if they do not have well-developed trade networks to offset costs (Peterson 2018), lack the capacity to substitute imports with domestic production (Akoto, Peterson, and Thies 2019), or are heavily reliant on the sender for foreign aid (Early and Jadoon 2019).

Sanction threats are not always successful. When the target state resists the sanction threat, the sender must choose to impose the sanction or back down. If the sender backs down, the sender bears reputation costs that undermine the sender's leverage against future targets (Lacy and Niou 2004). However, senders do occasionally back down, which suggests the following question: When are senders likely to follow through with sanction threats? The most consistent finding is that sanction imposition is more likely when the sender has economic leverage and can mitigate the economic costs (Lektzian and Souva 2007; Peksen and Peterson 2016; Cilizoglu and Bapat 2018; Early and Jadoon 2019). However, scholars have also demonstrated that regime type (Lektzian and Souva 2003), reciprocity (Cranmer, Heinrich, and Desmarais 2014), domestic political benefits (Whang 2011), and pressure from interest groups (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988) are important factors for sanction imposition.

It is clear that the revisions to the strategic model facilitated a major shift in thinking about the nature of sanction disputes and that this shift has been, and continues to be, a productive direction for applied research.[9] Despite these many advances, there are a number of important issues that have not been incorporated into the

[7] Morgan, Bapat, and Krustev (2009) describe the data.

[8] The original data set included 888 cases between 1971 and 2000. An updated version of the data set has been released that includes 1,412 cases between 1945 and 2005.

[9] The application of the strategic model has also led to an accumulation of a vast literature on the conditions for sanction success. For instance, sanctions that employ strong multilateralism (Bapat and Morgan 2009), prevent sanction-busting behavior (Early 2015), and impose high costs (Doxey 1980; Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott 1990; Drury 1998) are shown to be more effective. Bapat et al. (2013) conduct a systematic sensitivity analysis of sanctions research.

prevailing strategic model of sanction disputes. We discuss a handful of these issues briefly. First, the prevailing model assumes that the sender and target are weighing the costs and benefits of their actions in light of anticipated actions by the other party (i.e., these actors are interacting strategically). Morgan (2015) reports that there is little empirical evidence to show that the sender and target pay attention to one another, at least in the way assumed in the theory.

Second, the prevailing strategic model does not account for the fact that the individual, group, or institution that initially issues the threat of economic sanctions is not necessarily the same individual, group, or institution tasked with designing and enforcing the sanction.[10] There are a number of bureaucrats and lawyers who are charged with the day-to-day monitoring and enforcement of economic sanctions. We know from research in public policy (Moe 1984; Wood and Waterman 1991) that these individuals often have their own incentives and agendas that are not directly linked to the conduct of US foreign policy.

Third, the actual targets of many economic sanctions are specific individuals and firms within the target state. Consider the recent sanctions imposed by the United States against Russia. On December 19, 2018, the US Department of Treasury added the names of 15 Russian military intelligence operatives linked to efforts to interfere with the 2016 US election and the attempted assassination of a former Russian operative in the UK to a list of individuals that cannot travel to the United States or conduct business with US firms (Sink 2018). While pain is likely being felt by these sanctioned individuals, the costs of these sanctions are not necessarily incurred by the Russian state in a way that neatly fits into the prevailing strategic framework.

Finally, current formulations of the strategic model presume that the stated reason for sanctions is directly related to the motivation for imposing sanctions. This guided the coding of the issue variables in the TIES data set, but scholars have long understood that sanctions are sometimes threatened or imposed for reasons besides, or at least beyond, the stated goals of the sender (Barber 1979; Lindsay 1986).[11] For example, Schreiber (1973) argued that the US sanctions against Cuba were initially imposed to assuage public demands for action against Castro and signal to countries in South America that communism would not be tolerated in the US sphere of influence. In a similar vein, Whang (2011) argues that many sanctions have symbolic value. Politicians often "play to the home crowd" by issuing sanctions threats and supporting sanctions legislation to generate domestic audience benefits without concern for whether the sanctions will ultimately be effective (787). This work suggests that sanction threats, and even impositions, may be unrelated to the strategic interaction between the sender and target states.

These blind spots in the current strategic framework are not only a function of the theoretical development of the strategic model, they are also a function of the type of data collection and data analysis that have been the primary means of testing the elements and conclusions of the prevailing model. The actors in most models are states. As a consequence, analysts have relied on country-level political and economic variables such as regime type (Allen 2005; Cox and Drury 2006) and gross domestic product (Neuenkirch and Neumeier 2015) when analyzing economic sanctions. Most of these data are aggregated at the annual level, so that country-year

Only the t-statistics for target costs and IO involvement are consistently positive and statistically significant. When one sets a reasonable standard for sanctions threats and affords the sender a reasonable amount of time, the outlook on sanctions is less bleak.

[10] The initial threat of a sanction, for example, may come from an individual legislator but ultimately the Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) will have the responsibility of implementing the policy. As the distance between the people issuing the threat and the people implementing the sanctions becomes larger, the likelihood that the sanctions are born from a single strategic calculus seems less likely.

[11] We are not arguing that this is a deficiency of the data-collection effort. The only reasonable approach to identifying the motivation for sanctions is to take the individuals that issue sanctions threats at their word, but this approach may generate a substantial amount of noise in the estimates.

time series cross-section (TSCS) data have become, far and away, the most common data used in the analysis of economic sanctions.

This temporal and spatial aggregation is likely obscuring important variation. On the time dimension, the annual level of temporal aggregation masks variation that is relevant to domestic political dynamics. When a legislator makes a threat or the White House announces a change in existing sanctions, the economic and political responses to these shocks are likely to take place over days, weeks, or months, not years. The annual sampling interval may be sufficient to capture strategic decisions from year to year, but it is likely to miss much of the variation in these decisions. The TIES data contain information about the start date (month and day) of many of the episodes, but this information is rarely used in standard TSCS analyses. The focus on national level variables may also make it difficult to observe important political variation within countries. Economic sanctions, like other impediments to commercial activity, have distributional consequences (Lektzian and Patterson 2015; Pond 2017). Where the winners and losers reside and how the winners and losers are predisposed toward political leadership could have important effects on sanctions policies.

The structure of the prevailing formulation of the strategic model is also reflected in the types of statistical estimators that are typically employed in sanctions research. The standard model is built on a series of dichotomous decisions by the sender and target: threat versus no threat (S), concede versus resist (T), back down versus impose (S), concede versus resist (T). As a consequence, the decisions to impose and threaten sanctions have typically been conceptualized in terms of Bernoulli outcomes and modeled using maximum likelihood models that use log-logistic (Logit) or cumulative normal (Probit) link functions and multistage models designed to capture various stages of the strategic interaction.[12] While we have learned a lot from these models, there are theoretical reasons to suspect that the popular Bernoulli operationalization may be overly simplistic. At a basic level, we know that leaders have alternative policy options than "threaten," "sanction," "resist," or "back down." Morgan and Palmer (2000) discuss this foreign policy substitutability (see also, Most and Starr 1984). Faced with an international crisis, a leader considering economic sanctions can consider alternatives other than doing "nothing." It is possible to offer economic incentives, consult with allies, or intervene militarily. Existing models are useful in helping us isolate particular interactions between states, but ignoring alternative policy options can impede our ability to understand complex choices.

The prevailing strategic model has come to dominate the way we think about sanctions episodes. The focus on state-to-state interaction may be blinding us to potential avenues for future research. We are not suggesting that the prevailing model be abandoned or that conclusions based on current and previous formulations of the strategic model are necessarily incorrect. Rather, we believe that a reflection on what we have learned from this work highlights a number of new paths of inquiry and a number of plausible revisions to the prevailing strategic framework that could produce new insights. To conclude, we identify some areas we believe might be particularly fruitful avenues for future research.

First, future sanctions research should endeavor to develop more microlevel theories.[13] Current research focuses on state-to-state interaction. Less is known about

[12] Whang (2010) develops a structural model to accommodate the multistage nature of the strategic interaction. McLean and Whang (2014) use a Heckman Probit model to accommodate selection effects.

[13] We do recognize a pivot toward this direction. Some recent studies build their theoretic expectation and empirical strategies on interactions that include microlevel entities. For example, Pond (2017) demonstrates that sanctions create incentives to substitute previously imported goods with local products. During the after-sanction period, local import-competing producers seek market protection in the form of higher tariffs. Afesorgbor (2019) concludes that sanction threats nudge economic agents in both the sender and its target to resort to stockpiling in anticipation of potential imposition of sanctions.

the role of firms and individuals in economic sanctions. There has been a keen awareness among international political economy scholars for a number of years that firms, not governments, are important agents of international trade and finance. New research should focus on the consequences for sanctions on domestic firms and these firms' responses to sanctions in the form of internationalization, political engagement, and evasion.[14]

Second, future research should be open to the possibility that the threat to impose sanctions and the actual imposition of sanctions are not as interconnected as is assumed in existing models. The mechanisms that produce sanction threats might differ greatly from those factors that lead to sanction imposition or success. For instance, governments have far greater control over their ability to threaten sanctions than to impose them, where implementation depends on the decisions and behavior of firms.

Third, future research should incorporate a broader range of possible behaviors into their models and analyses. Prevailing models assume sanction episodes consist of a series of dichotomous decision points in which, for example, the only alternative to imposing sanctions is to back down. Future research may benefit from modifying the decision structures implied by prevailing models to allow for a broader range of behaviors.

Finally, new models should be flexible enough to accommodate a broader range of motivations. There are a large number of sanction episodes that can be understood in terms of their strategic utility. However, recent research suggests that there may be political costs and benefits to the imposition of sanctions outside of their utility as implements of economic statecraft (Whang 2011; Webb 2018). Incorporating these costs and benefits can yield new insights about enduring episodes and domestic politics and may enhance the performance of theoretical and empirical models.

Essay 2: The Design and Enforcement of Economic Sanctions

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Introduction

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been subject to a myriad of sanctions by the United States, United Nations (UN), and European Union (EU) dating back to the Islamic Revolution in 1979, making this one of the longest-lasting sanctions regimes in post-WWII history. The goals of the sanctioning efforts have changed over the years, starting with the release of hostages and then broadening to include counterterrorism, counterproliferation, human rights improvement, and regime change objectives. The sanctions have also taken on a variety of forms, ranging from measures

[14] For example, economists have accumulated vast literature disclosing the creative ways that companies use to evade tariffs (Fisman and Wei 2004; Javorick and Narciso 2008). Scholars could research if similar mechanisms apply to sanctions evasion.

designed to target Iran's energy, investment, and oil sectors in the case of the EU to an almost comprehensive embargo by the United States. Concerns about Iran's burgeoning nuclear program led the EU to begin cooperating closely with the United States in imposing enhanced trade and financial sanctions on Iran in 2010 (Patterson 2013). The multilateral sanctions regime was successful in forcing Iran into negotiations, leading to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2016 that achieved many of the sanctions' goals vis-à-vis Iran's nuclear program.

Yet, this success was short-lived. The multilateral coalition that worked together to create the JCPOA unraveled after US President Donald Trump withdrew from the agreement and reimposed sanctions against Iran in 2018. The Trump Administration thought that it could obtain a better deal with Iran via imposing more sanctions even after it became apparent that the EU did not support this strategy. President Trump announced that the United States would impose extraterritorial and secondary sanctions against foreign countries and entities that refused to cooperate with US sanctioning efforts (White House 2018). In response, EU members began openly planning how to save the JCPOA by undermining the enforcement of US sanctions. Many European companies have been left torn between risking penalties from the US if they fail to comply with its sanctions versus wanting to adhere to the EU's policy position (Geranmayeh and Rapnouil 2019).

The case of Iran illustrates the breadth of challenges associated with the use of economic coercion. Key debates concern the optimal design, implementation, and termination of sanctions regimes. The case also illustrates how the ability of sender governments to obtain private sector compliance plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of sanctions. While existing scholarship on economic coercion contributes much to our understanding of how and when sanctions "work," it overlooks many important issues related to how sanctions are designed and ultimately implemented and enforced. In this article, we argue that scholars should focus more of their attention on the challenges associated with obtaining the compliance of private-sector actors and target states with sanctions and present a set of essential topics in need of future attention. Studying these topics will not only require new data resources, but also the adoption of new methods of inquiry and interdisciplinary perspectives on how sanctions are implemented and the factors affecting compliance.

How Sanctions Work

Economic statecraft encompasses a wide range of policy instruments governments employ to influence the actions of other actors in international relations (Baldwin 1985, 32). These include both negative economic sanctions, such as trade embargoes and asset freezes, as well as positive incentives such as foreign aid, tariff reductions, purchases, and trade liberalization, and other policies that are less obvious tools for influence (Baldwin 1985, 42–50). We focus our discussion on economic sanctions, which have been the primary subject of the existing scholarship on economic statecraft. We define economic sanctions as actions taken by one or more governments to interfere with, reduce, or eliminate economic transactions involving targeted actors (i.e., individuals, organizations, or states) for political purposes (Morgan et al. 2014).

Governments use economic sanctions to influence policy-making in other states. Theories about how this influence is brought to bear vary in their assumptions about primary actors, causal mechanisms, and ingredients for coercive "success." Crawford and Klotz (1999, 26–29) distinguish four models of influence underlying much of the writing on economic sanctions. "Compellence" and "political fracture" seek to impose such economic costs on a targeted actor that compliance with the sender's demands becomes the preferable course of action. In the case of political fracture, also called the "naïve theory" of sanctions (Galtung 1967, 388), economic costs are imposed on the society rather than elites directly such that the target government may lose popular support and, as a result, face the choice between compliance and being overthrown. Alternative models focus more narrowly on how resource denial may limit the ability of targeted states to pursue objectionable policies or on the communicative functions of economic sanctions. The latter argue that sanctions can lead to desired outcomes through signaling the sender's disapproval (or approval) of the targeted actor and that the sanctioning state is willing and able to incur costs to make this point (also, see Giumelli 2011; Biersteker et al. 2016). In many instances, two or more of these logics of influence are at work simultaneously (Biersteker et al. 2016, 48, 226).

Independent of which model of influence underlies a particular sanctions regime, the impact of sanctions depends in part on the potency and credibility of the imposed (or threatened) economic costs. To this end, sender state governments must adopt policies that incentivize domestic firms and foreign governments to alter their decision-making. Meaningful sanctions create market imperfections; the harm caused by them is a function of both the sanctions' design and the effort governments are willing and able to expend to enforce market-distorting policies (Greenwald and Stiglitz 1993; DeGennaro 2005). Regardless of the assumed causal mechanism, threats to distort markets with sanctions are neither potent nor credible without effective enforcement. Yet, while existing scholarship has greatly increased our understanding of the effects of sanctions design on the effectiveness and consequences of economic coercion, we know less about sanctions enforcement. In the following section, we provide an overview of what research tells us about sanctions design and enforcement and how they relate to one another and to sanctions success.

State of the Art

The topics of sanctions design and enforcement have been addressed to some extent within existing literature, but not as part of a coherent research agenda. These studies have analyzed the importance of sender and target state characteristics,[15] the scope of sanctions, and the severity of costs imposed. However, very little research has explored how governments' enforcement of sanctions serves as a key intervening variable in determining how sanctions policies on paper translate into real-world costs and political outcomes.

Sanctions Design

Research on sanctions design departs from the premise that sanctions need to harm the broader population or politically and economically salient actors to be effective. According to the "naïve" (Galtung 1967; Nephew 2017) pain-gain logic, comprehensive sanctions that hurt the entire country fulfill this goal because targeted regimes would directly concede due to the unbearable economic burden or because the deprived population would pressure their policy makers into compliance (Barber 1979; Morgan and Schwebach 1997). Multilateral sanctions should thus work better as they "bite" more. Challenging this assumption, the microfoundations perspective (Kirshner 1997) suggests that it is not how costly sanctions are in the aggregate but rather the impact they have on key elites or support groups that determines their effectiveness.

[15] In the following discussion, we set aside existing research on the influence of the political and economic structure of target states on sanctions effectiveness. This literature is summarized in a separate essay in this collection (See: "Essay 4: How can we improve our understanding of sanctions success?").

Unilateral and Multilateral Sanctions

Following the conventional logic to impose maximum harm on the target, multilateral sanctioning efforts should be more effective than unilateral ones as a coalition of states can impose greater costs on the target. Existing research shows that sanctions success becomes more likely as international cooperation increases (McLean and Whang 2010) and that multilateral measures are more effective than unilateral ones (Bapat and Morgan 2009). However, a number of earlier studies identified that unilateral sanctions produced greater success rates (inter alia van Bergeijk 1994; Bonetti 1998; Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999; Drury 1998). Among the different theoretical explanations developed to explain why this might be the case, coordination problems in the case of multisender measures without the involvement of an international organization feature prominently (Drury 1998; Drezner 2000; Miers and Morgan 2002). Interestingly, different senders vary with regard to the incorporation of review and expiry provisions when designing sanctions, which may also affect sanctions success. While a majority of UN cases includes review provisions, US sanctions only incorporate expiry dates in approximately 5 percent of their decisions and review provisions in around 10 percent of the cases (Attia and Grauvogel 2019).

The Scope of Sanctions

If sanctions are designed to economically coerce a target into compliance, costlier measures should work better. Accordingly, prior research has shown that higher target costs increase the probability of success for the sender (Morgan, Bapat, and Krustev 2009) while sanctions success is negatively correlated with the economic health of the target (Jing, Kaempfer, and Lowenberg 2003). Yet, the target costs are not simply a function of sanctions' comprehensiveness. Sanctions have diverse effects on the welfare of different groups in the target states (inter alia Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999; Jones 2015), including unintended humanitarian consequences (Allen and Lektzian 2013). In contrast, so-called targeted or smart sanctions, namely sanctioning efforts that specifically address individuals or specific government agencies, are generally associated with fewer economic costs (Drezner 2011, 2015). Targeted sanctioning strategies can be motivated by several interrelated but not necessarily complementary logics. The first logic is to concentrate the costs and stigma associated with sanctions on the party or group directly responsible for the policies sanctions are meant to change (Cortright and Lopez 2002). The second logic is to minimize the adverse indirect consequences of sanctions to minimize the broadscale suffering they inflict (Lopez 1999; Weiss 1999). The third is to minimize costs for sender states by imposing sanctions that are minimally disruptive to overall commerce but still have symbolic value (Early and Schulzke 2019).

Sanctions Type and Severity

Economic sanctions can be employed to disrupt and reduce the flows of imports, exports, arms sales, foreign direct investment, financial transactions, transportation networks, and foreign aid. To date, most of the existing research on the types of sanctions examines differences in their effectiveness and consequences. Financial sanctions, for example, appear to be more successful than other types of measures (Shagabutdinova and Berejikian 2007; Drezner 2015; Rosenberg et al. 2016). The higher the costs that sanctions inflict on their targets, and especially when those costs are delivered as concentrated shocks, the more likely sanctions are to achieve success (Hufbauer et al. 2009; Bapat et al. 2013). In contrast, little research has been conducted into what determines which type of sanctions policy-makers will employ in a given context.

Sanctions Enforcement

Sanctions enforcement constitutes the implementation stage of sanctions design. In other words, sanctions design and enforcement are two sides of the same coin. Yet, some factors are idiosyncratic to sanctions enforcement.

Enforcement differs for unilateral and multilateral sanctions. On the one hand, unilateral sanctions are *prima facie* limited to the sender's jurisdiction. Powerful unilateral senders such as the United States attempt use their economic leverage to compel foreign actors to comply with their sanctions through extraterritorial provisions (Rodman 2001), but enforcement of such measures can create strong political backlash among foreign governments. According to Mastanudo (2002, 295), "[e]xtraterritorial sanctions provoke greater outrage among US trade and alliance partners than arguable any other US foreign policy initiative." Third parties' sanctions-busting (McLean and Whang 2010; Early 2015) also undermines senders' efforts at enforcement. On the other hand, multilateral sanctions—especially those without institutionalized support—can also be plagued by enforcement problems (Drury 1998; Drezner 2000). Conversely, sanctions regimes implemented by international organizations can empower bodies, such as the UN Sanctions Committees, to play a role in monitoring and promoting compliance (Biersteker et al. 2016). Smaller international organizations may be more effective at promoting their members' compliance with sanctioning efforts (Early and Spice 2015).

Enforcement also varies for comprehensive and targeted measures. While effectively enforcing trade sanctions can be costly and difficult due to smuggling (Early 2015), subsequent studies have shown that smart sanctions are not less costly to enforce (Tostensen and Bull 2002, 398). The Interlaken, the Bonn-Berlin, and in particular the Stockholm reform processes accordingly focused on how to design, implement, and enforce more limited measures such as financial sanctions, arms embargoes, as well as travel and aviation bans. The United States and EU have also increased their reliance on sanctions blacklists for targeting specific individuals and entities subject to sanctions. Throughout the Trump Administration, for example, the US Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) has substantially increased the number of actors it has added to the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (SDN) list (Gibson Dunn 2019). As opposed to broadscale sanctions, sanctions blacklists require continual management and oversight as new actors are added or removed from their rolls. Similar challenges exist for states seeking to remain up-to-date in implementing the UN Consolidated Sanctions List (Portela 2010).

While effective sanctions design must consider the target's domestic political structure, enforcement is shaped by the respective senders' institutional characteristics. These are primarily shaped by the relation between those agencies responsible for the political coordination of sanctions and the customs and border patrol agencies responsible for monitoring and enforcing them at the border differs across sender countries. The more agencies that governments have involved in implementing sanctions, the more complicated it can be for the private sector to understand their compliance obligations and for a government's policy efforts to be successfully coordinated (Early 2016a).

This interplay between the government and private companies is a specific characteristic of sanctions enforcement. Governments usually design sanctions on their own, but enforcement is determined by the interaction between state and nonstate actors, which, in turn, is shaped by the domestic legal structure of the sender. Morgan and Bapat (2003) theorized that firms' compliance with government sanctions depends upon their perceptions of their likelihood of being caught and the prospective fines they would face for violations. Yet, how exactly governments seek to obtain their constituents' compliance with sanctions obligations has received little attention to date (Early and Preble, forthcoming). In the case of UN Security

Council sanctions, expert teams that are part of sanctions committees play important roles in monitoring and reporting on sanctions compliance (Brzoska 2003). Even in the case of sanctions sponsored by international organizations, though, sanctions enforcement occurs at the national level (Carisch and Rickard-Martin 2016). Governments can assign sanctions enforcement responsibilities to general law enforcement bodies or create dedicated agencies for that purpose. In the United States, for example, OFAC has jurisdiction over civil violations of sanctions policies while the other general-purpose enforcement bodies, such as the Department of Justice, are responsible for criminal violations (Sayre 2016).

Another particular feature of sanctions enforcement is the temporal dimension. While the design of sanctions is often a single decision or one that is only incrementally adapted, enforcement is much more volatile. Existing research shows there may be mixed incentives to enforce throughout the lifespan of a sanctions regime. "Sanctions fatigue" on part of the senders (Elliott and Hufbauer 1999, 407) can decrease their willingness to compromise trade opportunities for political motives over time as the domestic political costs of sanctions attract more attention (Krustev and Morgan 2011). However, there have been no systematic studies that have explored why governments invest greater efforts in enforcing some sanctions efforts than others and what factors influence governments' propensity to punish violations.

An Agenda for Future Research

Sanctions scholars have generated extensive research linking the design of economic sanctions to their prospects for coercive success. Yet, in many theoretical accounts of economic coercion, sustained and effective enforcement is assumed rather than discussed in its own right. At the same time, existing work on the activities and motivations of sanctions busters (McLean and Whang 2010; Early 2015), firm-level evasion of sanctions barriers using FDI (Barry and Kleinberg 2015), and problems of creating and maintaining multilateral sanctions coalitions (Martin 1992; Drezner 2000; Early and Spice 2015) suggests that enforcement is by no means to be taken for granted. This final section offers an agenda for future research on sanctions enforcement and its link with sanctions design.

A systematic investigation of enforcement must start with a more precise conception of the phenomenon of interest. To begin with, this requires a better understanding of the different forms of sanctions enforcement. While enforcement naturally occurs after the imposition of sanctions, implementing regulations and best practices can be adopted to facilitate it. For example, the "EU Best Practices for the effective implementation of restrictive measures" (2018) provide information on how to design the freezing, seizure, and confiscation of funds that take the specific EU law enforcement context in account. More descriptive knowledge about and comparative analyses of how governments implement sanctions could improve our understanding of sanctions enforcement and how this in turn shapes effectiveness.

Beyond enforcement-specific measures, governments can adopt numerous best-practices for promoting compliance with their sanctions. Sender governments can proactively reduce the number of unintentional sanctions violations that occur via outreach and awareness-raising activities (Early 2016a). Many individuals and smaller enterprises have difficulty understanding how to comply with sanctions and keeping up with new developments. Effective implementation strategies mitigate sanctions enforcement challenges through awareness-raising, education, and fostering cooperative working relationships with industry sectors. For example, OFAC provides extensive online resources, conducts an awareness-raising symposium, and produces an informational newsletter to facilitate compliance with US sanctions. The US government is an outlier, though, in terms of how much it engages in sanctions outreach. Effective industry outreach programs create trust and transparency between the agencies imposing sanctions and the parties subject to sanctions requirements, which can subsequently be leveraged to assist in the enforcement of sanctions. Differences in how countries design their sanctions to be implemented could help explain variation in their effectiveness, but we lack cross-country data on sanctions enforcement.

Another area for further study is the determinants of sanctions enforcement. At least three factors are suggested by existing research: sender costs, the issue under dispute, and the structure of relations between sender governments and home-country firms. Costs of enforcement to sender governments arise in at least two ways. On the one hand, economic sanctions generate costs to domestic individuals and firms from foregone economic exchange with targeted entities and from increased uncertainty; these costs are liable to generate both economic and political costs for the sanctioning government. On the other hand, sanctions enforcement itself is likely to generate direct costs for the government from monitoring and punishing potential noncompliance at home and abroad (Morgan and Bapat 2003). Governments have scarce resources to invest in sanctions enforcement, meaning they must make tradeoffs in the strategies they select for obtaining compliance (Early 2016a; Early and Preble, forthcoming). The extent to which governments have the administrative capacity to enforce sanctions also varies (Lorber 2017). Existing research has examined how the costs of economic sanctions to firms and national economies vary with the type of sanctions imposed (Hinz 2017). It stands to reason that the costs of enforcement are likely to vary along similar lines, potentially affecting the likelihood and efficacy of enforcement.

Another likely determinant of sanctions enforcement is the type of issue at stake in a sanctions episode. Prior research suggests that perceptions of issue salience influence the effectiveness of sanctions (Ang and Peksen 2007), but it remains unclear whether sanctions design and/or enforcement are key intervening variables that help explain why high-issue salience sanctions are more likely to succeed. Available data on sanctions enforcement actions suggests, for example, that US sanctions against Cuba and Iran have been far more vigorously enforced than US sanctions against Sudan (Early and Preble, forthcoming). To date, however, studies have not systematically linked the amount invested in sanctions enforcement to their overarching impacts or success levels. Beyond their salience, the nature of the policy issues under dispute may dictate which types of sanctions and enforcement mechanisms are most appropriate and most likely to succeed. Environmental disputes over the restriction of harmful emissions, for example, are liable to involve quite different sanctions enforcement strategies than those involving the punishment of human rights violators. At the same time, the type of issue under dispute can determine the extent to which enforcement efforts are necessary at all: some policy goals will be more likely than others to unify or divide sender governments and firms in the sender state or sender governments in multilateral efforts.

The amount that governments invest in sanctions enforcement is also likely to vary with the specific economic and political context of the sender state. A stronger focus on the study of sanctions enforcement puts the relationship between sender governments and firms front and center. To the extent that sanctions "work" by altering the activity of economic actors, we need to consider not only the sender government's incentives for enforcement but also firm's incentives for complying with (or evading) sanctions (Bapat and Kwon 2015). Firms, like governments, are strategic actors in the sanctions process. They may vary in their willingness and capacity to comply with restrictions on their profitable economic activities. Another relevant consideration is how relations between "the state" and "the market" are structured: are firms or industries centrally controlled or privately owned and operated? In most existing work, economic sanctions involve the interaction of governments and private—and at least in principle—autonomous economic actors. Yet, the level of independence of major firms and industries from their home governments varies greatly even among Western capitalist economies. Moreover, states with more centralized government-firm relations are increasingly engaged in "weaponized interdependence" (Farrell and Newman 2019), making this a promising area for future research.

More broadly, the design and enforcement of sanctions should also respond to changes in the structure of the global economy since the end of the Cold War. "Globalization," especially the extensive changes brought on by increasing economic and financial integration, is liable to affect strategic considerations of all actors involved. For example, increasing reliance on standardized paths for bank transactions has allowed governments to more tightly scrutinize and, in the case of Iran's nuclear sanctions, restrict the flow of money across borders. The US government has been able to exploit the fact that many global transactions rely on US-based financial infrastructure or US firms by adopting surprisingly effective financial sanctions (Drezner 2011; Rosenberg et al. 2016). At the same time, the spread of global value chains and multinational corporations has made the imposition and enforcement of economic sanctions more complex, both economically and politically. This has led to the adoption of increasingly sophisticated forms of sanctions that target highly specific types of transactions (e.g., insurance, transportation, and sovereign debt), relationships (e.g., foreign subsidiaries and corporate ownership limitations for blacklisted individuals), and activities (e.g., corruption, human rights violations, and terrorism).

A key issue requiring greater theoretical and empirical attention is the role of uncertainty in the sanctions process. Economic sanctions not only disrupt existing commercial transactions, they also increase the uncertainty associated with future transactions for firms and governments alike. Some research has already focused on this directly and considered how uncertainty and firm responses to it are likely to differ at different stages of the sanctions process (Biglaiser and Lektzian 2011). Conceptualizing and quantifying the uncertainty generated by (different types of) economic sanctions is necessary if we are to understand how it affects firm-level compliance and enforcement. For example, the US government has flip-flopped its positions on rolling back versus doubling down on its sanctioning efforts against Cuba and Iran during the past decade. Understanding how senders generate uncertainty and how firms respond to it requires significantly more research.

Equipped with a better understanding of the forms and dynamics of sanctions enforcement, we can ask how sanctions design and enforcement interact to influence sanctions effectiveness. Sender states have gotten very skilled at imposing sanctions that generate relatively small costs to their own economies (Morgan 2015), but the use of such sanctions may fail to impose significant pain on target states' economies. Existing explanations focus on the political influence of salient economic interests and constituents that may affect how costly senders are willing to make their sanctions (Bapat and Kwon 2015). Enforcement costs provide a complementary, and possibly alternative, explanation: sanctions that interrupt profitable commerce make evasion attractive, increasing the need for enforcement. This, in turn, likely acts as a constraint on the design and use of economic sanctions. Governments may be reluctant to impose sanctions that are costly and difficult to enforce, whether at home or abroad. Alternatively, governments may impose sanctions that look tough on paper in order to obtain domestic political benefits or engage in normative signaling that they have no intention of enforcing due to cost concerns.

In order to study sanctions enforcement and recent developments in how governments employ sanctions, both new data and new methods of research are required. Scholars can work to collect systematic data on countries' capacities to impose sanctions by evaluating whether they have laws on the books related to implementation and enforcement of sanctions and whether they have government agencies specifically tasked with sanctions enforcement responsibilities. In the case of UN sanctions, tracking whether countries have submitted their "mandatory" compliance reports to the various UN Security Council Sanctions Committees may allow for the evaluation of whether UN members are implementing the body's sanctions at the most minimal level. Focusing on the enforcement of sanctions, collecting and analyzing data on enforcement actions, such as interdictions or the imposition of financial penalties for sanctions violations, can provide insight into the efforts that government are investing into enforcing sanctions and their potential impact (Carisch and Rickard-Martin 2016; Early and Preble, forthcoming). More cross-national data on sanctions enforcement—to the extent that it occurs—would be very useful. Tracking the use of sanctions blacklists that target individuals instead of countries also constitutes a new an important topic that could benefit from the systematic collection and analysis of new data. Notably, existing data sets (Hufbauer et al. 2007; Morgan et al. 2014; Biersteker et al. 2016) are not designed to track sanctioning efforts at the individual level of analysis—suggesting that an entirely new approach is needed.

Beyond just data resources, scholars can also benefit from engaging in more rigorous qualitative research that involves outreach with the legal, policy, and business communities involved in sanctions. Corporate compliance with sanctions requirements now has billion-dollar implications after OFAC began imposing enormous fines for violating US sanctions. Exploring the issue of sanctions compliance from the perspective of firms requires a different orientation and different approaches than the state-centric quantitative analysis that has dominated how the political science field has tended to study sanctions. Lawyers are the dominant practitioners that are involved in the design and enforcement of sanctions and who handle sanctions compliance on behalf of firms. More interdisciplinary outreach to the legal and business sectors will be critical for developing improved understandings of the design and enforcement of sanctions.

Conclusion

How sanctions are designed and enforced play central roles in determining sanction consequences. To date, much of the political science literature has focused on the issue of sanctions design rather than the issue of how governments obtain domestic and international compliance with them. As we have highlighted, understanding the challenges that governments face in implementing sanctions, the strategies they adopt, and the resources they invest in implementing sanctions can determine what impact they have. Additionally, sender governments and international organizations have adopted increasingly sophisticated forms of sanctions and blacklists that state-based theories and data-collection efforts cannot effectively capture. Future research on sanctions design and enforcement will require scholars to become increasingly interdisciplinary and multimethod in their approaches. The promise of this research agenda is that the topics presented here are highly policy-relevant and that numerous communities outside of political science are becoming increasingly interested in research that explains practical issues with respect to implementing and complying with sanctions.

Essay 3: The Consequences of Economic Sanctions

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At a basic level, sanctions are intentionally designed to inflict harm on a targeted country's economy as a whole, or to the economic well-being of certain influential groups, in an effort to raise the costs of pursuing a policy that the sender objects to. As the economic costs of sanctions increase, the targeted government is expected to make policy concessions in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. Supported by a host of empirical studies concluding that the economic impact of sanctions is the single most significant predictor of their coercive impact (Drury 1998; Crawford 1999; Hart 2000; Dashti-Gibson, Davis, and Radcliff 2007; Bapat et al. 2013), policy-makers and scholars emphasized strategies to maximize the economic cost to the target in order to maximize their coercive power. For example, when the United Nations imposed economic sanctions against Iraq in response to the invasion of Kuwait (UNSC 661), the primary consequences considered were the desired economic effects. Would sanctions curtailing Iraqi oil sales be sufficient to compel Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait? Would the comprehensive trade and financial restrictions that followed the Gulf War force the Hussein regime to disclose and eliminate any weapons of mass destruction?

Nearly a decade later, the UN Security Council had a much different debate about Iraqi sanctions—then considering whether unintended humanitarian consequences were sufficiently high to warrant lifting the sanctions. Between the time that sanctions were imposed against Iraq and when the Ba'athist regime was overthrown in 2003, both the policy and scholarly considerations of the consequences of sanctions have shifted greatly. Beyond the intended economic harm that sanctions are designed to inflict on targeted countries, scholars and policy-makers began to focus on the unintended adverse consequences—both economic and political—of sanctions that undermine the coercive efforts. While this shift was due in part to humanitarian impulses concerned with minimizing the suffering of ordinary citizens in comprehensive sanctions such as those against Iraq (Garfield 1999), there was also a growing belief that increasing the economic harm to the target's economy was not always directly related to improving the likelihood of sanctions success (Van Bergeijk 1995; Nincic 2005).

Anticipating the range of consequences sanctions can create ex-ante is the first step in sanctions policy-making. Evaluating the potential consequences of sanctions policies can allow policy-makers to make an informed decision about the most cost-effective way to achieve their intended foreign policy goals and better assess the utility of sanctions relative to other foreign policy tools at their disposal (Baldwin 1999). In addition to informing the decision to impose economic sanctions, the research on sanctions consequences influences sanctions design. Specifically, the relevant scholarly findings reviewed in this essay can help policy-makers design sanctions in a way that would have an economic and political impact in the target country conducive to policy concessions while minimizing the unintended consequences that would hinder the effectiveness of their sanctioning efforts. Continuing to evaluate the impact of sanctions once they are in place is equally important for policy success. Once sanctions are in place, policy-makers should continuously evaluate the impact of sanctions and whether their sanctioning efforts are creating the intended consequences and decide if the sanctions regime needs to be strengthened, relaxed, or abandoned entirely.

In this essay, we have three objectives. First, we offer a review of advances in the scholarly literature on the consequences—intended and unintended—of economic sanctions and outline the state of the art in the field. Second, we aim to highlight the policy implications of the existing findings. Lastly, we propose new productive avenues of research that can allow scholars to address important and evolving foreign policy challenges.

Understanding the Consequences of Sanctions

The Economic Consequences

Analyzing the consequences of sanctions requires an understanding that any interruptions in economic relations brought about by sanctions are likely to have both intended consequences as well as unintended consequences. The intended purpose of economic sanctions is to curtail economic activity with a target state sufficiently to make policy concessions more appealing than continued economic pressure from sanctions. National economies, however, are complex, and the economic relations between nations are even more complex. The effects of imposing artificial barriers to trade and finance cannot be easily isolated to a single group that should be punished in order to end some objectionable policy by the target's government. Some domestic groups within the targeted country will be hurt by sanctions, while others will benefit. Likewise, there will be those in the sender nation that benefit from the sanctions and those that are hurt. Unfortunately, the economic effects of sanctions tend to cut across groups that the sender wishes to hurt and those whom the sender wishes to protect.

An example of this can be found in the sanctions and currency crisis literature (Peksen and Son 2015). On the one hand, undermining the stability of the targeted country's currency increases the costs to the target for failing to comply with the demands of the sender of sanctions. Even if inducing a currency crisis was not a goal of sanctions, it helps to achieve the political objectives of the sender nation by destabilizing the target's economy and hurting the target's leadership and core supporters. This example helps demonstrate that not all unintended consequences are undesirable from the sender's perspective. On the other hand, a currency crisis can harm average citizens in the targeted country producing both unintended and undesirable consequences. If an unintended humanitarian crisis arises, this may weaken potential opposition to the government and decrease the sender's ability to accomplish its political goals. Thus, only some of the economic effects of sanctions will lead to intended political effects, while some are destined to be detrimental.

The most notable unintended economic consequences often weaken the effectiveness of sanctions. These measures often lead to the creation of informal economies and black markets. The sanctions-induced economic hardship makes firms and individuals more risk-tolerant to informal markets (Early and Peksen 2019). One result is that economic sanctions can lead to the criminalization of the state, economy, and civil society of target states and their neighboring countries (Andreas 2005). During the UN sanction, Serbian merchants circumvented the sanction by importing Russian oil through the Montenegrin port of Bar. Small traders there also engaged in organized smuggling operations, crystallizing the currency through the black market (Andreas 2005). Moreover, Kaempfer and Lowenberg (1999)'s work demonstrates that multilateral sanctions are more likely to facilitate the formation of a black market than unilateral sanctions. The underlying logic is that multilateral sanctions make it more difficult for target states to secure alternative markets. As seen in the international sanctions against Iraq, only illegal channels remain to escort the embargoed goods to target states (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1999). The emergence of these underground activities can, in turn, affect tax revenues, state competitiveness, and overall welfare of target states, thereby enabling the targets to offset the costs of sanctions.

In addition, third-party firms as private rent-seekers have incentives to seek long-term capital gains by investing in sanctioned states. Firm-level sanctions-busting behavior not only offsets the economic losses of target states but also increases the economic costs of maintaining sanctions. Biglaiser and Lektzian (2011) indicate that economic sanctions create short-run risks of operating in the sanctioned market. However, foreign direct investment (FDI) often bounces back to the levels near the presanction period. Their study further shows that global FDI from the third-party states also swoops in after the US firms disinvest (Lektzian and Biglaiser 2013). Moreover, even firms from sender countries are eager to shift investments to states with current and potential sanctions-busting records. From the perspective of those investors, these third-party states are attractive because they have existing business networks that can reduce transaction costs for the shifting investment (Barry and Kleinberg 2015). As a result of sanctions-busting behavior, sanctions can become ineffective when target states find reliable sources of capital to survive sanctions.

Economic sanctions also lead to market distortion and further exacerbate income inequality in target states. By restricting international trade flows, sanctions trigger the rent-seeking behavior of import-producers (Pond 2017). Due to the imposition of sanctions, these import-intensive sectors no longer need to compete with foreign firms. With the increasing bargaining power, those import-intensive producers exercise a higher level of pressure on the government to adopt protectionist policies. For example, in the wake of the US and EU sanctions, Russian President Putin responded with a counter sanction and termination of foreign competitors in Russia (Pond 2017). Afesorgbor and Mahadevan (2016) demonstrate that sanctions heighten income inequality in target states, but, interestingly, financial sanctions produce more profound damages on income inequality than trade sanctions. Because trade sanctions can be selective on products and are more difficult to enforce, trade sanctions are less likely to hit the pocket of the general population in target states. Financial sanctions, by contrast, often disrupt global trade and interrupt commercial finance as well as access to the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) network (Early 2015). Accordingly, only those in the higher income groups can sustain and circumvent financial sanctions.

Finally, targeted governments are not static. They will adjust their policies to minimize the economic costs of sanctions and whenever possible shift the burden of sanctions to marginal elements of society. This is why critics of sanctions have noted that the simple economic pain to political gain formulation is too simplistic (Galtung 1967; Renwick 1981), as it disregards the ability of targets to make economic adjustments. Even if sanctions create a range of distortions in the targeted economy, target states will take both domestic and international measures to counter the adverse effects of sanctions (Bolks and Al-Sowayel 2000). For instance, targets can find alternate trading, investment, or business partners (McLean and Whang 2010; Early 2015; Giumelli 2017), resort to international financing (Cilizoglu and Bapat 2018), or pursue economic diversification strategies.

By shifting the burden of sanctions to shield regime supporters, countermeasures adopted by targets often weaken the effectiveness of economic sanctions by diminishing the value of the promise of lifting sanctions relative to the benefit of continuing their offensive behavior. In addition to shielding the target's economy from the harm senders intend to inflict, target's adjustment strategies and behavior stimulate additional unanticipated consequences that can undermine the utility of sanctions.

The literature shows that it is insufficient to evaluate the effect of sanctions by focusing on the intended economic consequences alone. As a result of target states' ability to make an economic adjustment and nonstate actors' rent-seeking behavior, sanctions often fail due to unintended economic consequences. First, when leaders in sanctioned states are isolated from the general population they can shift the burden of sanctions to the general population and away from their core constituents. When this occurs, sanctions are unlikely to extract concessions from the target (Lektzian and Souva 2007). Furthermore, firms have agencies to circumvent or violate sanctions and possibly seek underground activities to sustain their economic activities. Third-party firms can also take advantage of the distorted market in sanctioned states by increasing their market share after foreign competitors are required to leave. These undesired economic consequences, therefore, reduce the overall utility of sanctions.

Desired Political Effects

Economic sanctions also aim to make political conditions in target states less stable. At the societal level, the threat of international sanctions sends a credible signal of support for the opposition groups. After perceiving potential foreign allies, domestic collective movements are therefore energized to address the issues such as human rights violations (Grauvogel, Licht and Von Soest 2016). For example, the Zimbabwean opposition forces took advantage of the EU sanction threats in 2001 to mobilize antigovernment protesters. Consequently, Zimbabwe witnessed a series of mass movements throughout 2002 (Grauvogel, Licht, and Von Soest 2016).

At the state level, economic sanctions are more effective in extracting concessions if the political leaders in target states are likely to lose office. When the costs of noncompliance outweigh the costs of concessions, political leaders under pressure have to concede to some demands by senders of sanctions. The implication is that policy-makers in sender countries always have an incentive to destabilize the target regimes (Marinov 2005). Not all targeted regimes may be easy to destabilize with sanctions, however. The leverage that senders will have is contingent on the nature of the support for the leader, especially in authoritarian regimes (Escribà-Folch and Wright 2010). The political institutions will also influence the likelihood of political concession by the target (Allen 2005, 2008). In other words, not all sanctions regimes are capable of harming elites, empowering the opposition, and creating political pressure for the leadership to make policy concessions. In fact, sanctions can also create undesired and unintended political effects that can weaken the sanctions regime and undermine senders' efforts to induce target compliance.

Undesired Political Effects

One of the undesired and unintended political consequences of sanctions is its effect on the level of democracy in the target state. When sanctions are imposed, the quality of democracy seems likely to be degraded. Economic hardship and increased control by the regime in light of the scarcity is often harmful to individual freedoms (Peksen and Drury 2010). The question of whether or not sanctions can be used as a tool for encouraging autocratic states to democratize is less clear. For sanctions with the stated goal of increasing the level of democracy in the target state, Von Soest and Wahman (2015) find some preliminary support for the idea that sanctions can be an effective tool for democratization. On the other hand, Marinov and Nili (2015) suggest that there may be some normative reasons to avoid imposing economic hardship via sanctions in order to achieve this goal.

Similarly, the literature has also shown that sanctions' ability to empower the opposition can also be limited. This desired effect is conditional on the regime type of the targeted state, as antigovernment activity is most likely to occur in politically unstable states rather than consolidated democracies or strong autocracies (Allen 2008). In some states, Wood (2008) finds that autocratic states increase repression against potential opposition activists under sanctions in order to minimize protest behavior. Sanctions may also lead to increased political violence in the target state as well (Peksen and Drury 2010; Lektzian and Regan 2016). Moreover, sanctions can also allow leaders to consolidate power at the expense of the opposition, using legitimization and blaming strategies while under sanctions (Grauvogel and Von Soest 2014). As we see in Russia, Iran, or North Korea, leaders often attempt to exploit the sanctions for political purposes by revving up public anti-Western sentiment, blaming economic problems on the Western sanctioners, and portraying the policies that initially triggered sanctions as existential matters for the country (Frye 2019; Grossman, Manekin, and Margalit 2018). In addition to their common failure to empower the opposition, the ability of sanctions to harm influential elites can also be limited. For instance, leaders in targeted states can increase the military budget in order to enhance the state's coercive capacity and redirect public resources to key domestic constituents to maintain their loyalty (Peksen 2017). Leaders can also embark on legitimization strategies to minimize antigovernment sentiment related to the sanctions (Grauvogel and Von Soest 2014).

One other motivation for implementing sanctions is to improve the human rights of a target country. The United States, the European Union, and the United Nations (all of whom are among the most prolific sanctioners) have frequently imposed sanctions for this purpose. Unfortunately, the repression and the consolidation of power in authoritarian countries described above can lead to further degradation of human rights in the targeted states (Peksen 2009; Peksen and Drury 2009; Peterson 2014). The bite of sanctions may also further damage women's rights (Drury and Peksen 2014), press freedoms (Peksen 2010), and nascent democratization (Peksen and Drury 2010).

Another unintended consequence of sanctions that has political implications is the negative impact these measures have on public health and well-being (Peksen 2011; Allen and Lektzian 2013; Kokabisaghi 2018). The case of Iraq and Haiti demonstrated these effects in stark relief, but sanctions do appear to downgrade many health indicators across target states. Acknowledging the growing need of target states for humanitarian and developmental assistance while under sanctions, Early and Jadoon (2016) show that aid flows to target states significantly increase after the UN sanctions.

Finally, sanctions may also increase the probability that a conflict between states will become militarized (Lektzian and Sprecher 2007). This is particularly problematic if sanctions were implemented as a substitute for force rather than intended as a complement. In civil conflicts, sanctions (and the threat of sanctions) increases the intensity of conflict (Hultman and Peksen 2017).

All of these unintended political consequences can undermine the effectiveness of sanctions and reduce their expected utility. Moreover, the imposition of sanctions can create considerable political repercussions for the sender country when it unintentionally erodes the normative foundations of world society. Additionally, leaders are often skillful at exploiting the sanctions for political purposes. With the increase in their power facing sanctions, they may consider the exercise of sanctions as a signal of weakness and indecisiveness as opposed to the use of military force (Lektzian and Sprecher 2007). Consequently, sanctions can eventually make it more difficult for target states to acquiesce and create additional political costs for the sender.

Avenues for Future Research

As outlined above, we have seen significant advances in our understanding of the consequences of economic sanctions over the years. As policy-makers' interest in the use of economic sanctions grows, and as sanctions policies continue to evolve in the face of new foreign policy challenges, opportunities for new scholarly inquiries related to the consequences of economic sanctions arise. What follows next is a discussion of these productive avenues of research. These areas include the impact of economic sanctions on private firms and individuals both in the sender and the target country, as well as on third parties, the consequences of targeted sanctions, and the systemic impacts of economic coercion in the long run.

The vast majority of the scholarly literature treats economic sanctions as coercive interactions between the imposer and the targeted country, with a few notable exceptions (Morgan and Bapat 2003; Biglaiser and Lektzian 2011; Bapat and Kwon 2015; Barry and Kleinberg 2015). Even though sanctions are in fact state-level activities, economic transactions restricted as a result of sanctions have major implications for firms, businesses, special-interest groups, and individuals of the sender and the target country. In most cases, companies and targeted individuals are major stakeholders that absorb the costs of sanctions. What are the economic consequences of sanctions for these major stakeholders? Do these implications vary based upon the sector the stakeholders are active in or their international trade, financial, and investment portfolio? How do firms attempt to shield themselves from the costs of economic sanctions, and what are the implications of these adjustment efforts on sanctions imposition, enforcement, and outcomes? How do firm-level and individual-level consequences of sanctions shape the relations between private actors in the domestic economy and their governments or the relations between the influential elites and the government? In other words, what firm-level and individual-level consequences can translate into credible pressure on the leadership for policy concessions?

In addition to facing third-party consequences by absorbing the costs of economic sanctions imposed on the countries that they are based in; companies and individuals are increasingly becoming the targets of economic sanctions via direct coercive measures such as asset freezes and travel bans. As the negative externalities of comprehensive trade sanctions became apparent in the 1990s, many scholars have advocated for sanctions designs that will minimize the impact of sanctions on the population, while maximizing the pressure on the leadership (Drezner 2003, 2011; Brzoska 2003). Concurrently, we have observed a shift toward targeted sanctions that aim to target companies that are instrumental for the government's pursuit of their policies and individuals that are influential actors in government decision-making.[16] As a part of their targeted sanctions repertoire, governments also increasingly restrict targets' financial transactions, instead of their trade transactions (Kittrie 2014; Carter and Farha 2013).[17]

The increasing use of targeted sanctions can be attributed to the desire to minimize the unintended consequences of sanctions that undermine sanctioning efforts and to increase sanctions effectiveness. This begs the following questions: Do targeted sanctions create distinct consequences from comprehensive trade sanctions? Is the economic and political environment altered by targeted sanctions more conducive to policy concessions by the target state? Are targeted sanctions more humane or are they a better alternative to trade sanctions for sender countries or institutions seeking to minimize the adverse consequences of economic coercion? These questions are still largely left unanswered. Biersteker, Eckert, and Tourinho (2016)'s Targeted Sanctions Consortium Database (TSC) is a valuable scholarly resource that provides some empirical insights for these questions. Interestingly, their data suggests that many of the trends identified for broad-spectrum trade sanctions are associated with targeted sanctions as well. For instance, they estimate 27 percent success rate for targeted sanctions imposed by the UN in the years 1991–2013. This is comparable to the low success rates presented by Hufbauer et al. (2007)

[16] For instance, most recently, the sanctions regime on Russia in response to their annexation of Crimea and meddling in the US elections is primarily targeting government officials and Russian oligarchs.

[17] Financial sanctions involve the withdrawal of global banks and financial institutions from the target countries' markets, harming the target's ability to obtain foreign credit and loans and finance domestic projects, production of export-oriented goods, and imports.

and Morgan, Bapat, and Kobayashi (2014). Additionally, using the TSC data set, Carneiro and Apolinario (2016) find that targeted sanctions have an adverse impact on the level of protection of rights to physical integrity in target countries, just like conventional trade sanctions do. These early trends and results are puzzling and beg the question of why targeted sanctions are being more frequently used by policy-makers, if they are not more humane or have a higher rate of success than conventional sanctions. Answering these questions require further theory-building about how different types of sanctions work, what their consequences are, and how they are different from one another.

A main challenge the scholars of economic sanctions face in answering these policy-relevant questions is the lack of fine-grained data on firm-level decision-making and activities, as well as financial sanctions.[18] This challenge does not only restrict the set of questions scholars can explore, but also prevents scholars from keeping up with the evolving policy-making on economic sanctions, thereby limiting their ability to contribute to policy debates. Firms and individuals are increasingly becoming central stakeholders in sanctioning processes, both as actors that absorb the costs of sanctions and influence policy-making in target countries and as the actual targets of economic coercion. However, answering research questions on their role and impact in sanctions processes require scholars to undertake a very comprehensive data-collection effort, possibly in partnership with the sender governments and institutions. In the absence of such data, scholars will have difficulty subjecting their theories to systematic and rigorous empirical testing.

Second, the theories of sanctions consequences can go further to better assess the consequences of economic sanctions for the sender country. There are some notable examples of work theorized from the vantage point of the senders, such as the literature on the link between sanctions and presidential approval in the sender country (Webb 2018; Whang 2011; Drury 2001), work focused on the costs of US sanctions to the US economy (Hufbauer et al. 1997), and the literature on the distributional effects of economic sanctions (Pond 2017; McLean and Whang 2014). Beyond these two main lines of inquiry, the vast majority of the literature assumes that sanctions are imposed only when they are expected to be affordable by the sender's economy. This assumption leads scholars to assume that the impact of sanctions on the sender country is negligible, while in reality this assumption has received relatively little empirical attention.

Similarly, further research is also warranted on the impact that sanctions have on other states with extensive ties to sanctions targets, such as allies, trading partners, and neighboring states. Do these states benefit from the shifting economic patterns, filling gaps in trade and finance created by the sanctions? Or do these states suffer, despite being bystanders on the sidelines of the conflict? Can political implications of economic sanctions in target countries have spillover effects? Early (2012) explores some of these issues in his efforts to explain sanctions-busting trade, but there is a great deal more room for additional consideration of the third-party consequences of sanctions.

Lastly, another productive avenue of research relates to systemic level consequences of economic sanctions. Even if economic sanctions are known to directly affect the economies of the sender and the target country and create economic externalities in other countries; they can also be conceptualized as protectionist shocks at the systemic level. Understanding the consequences of economic sanctions beyond the country-level and a focus on systemic effects of economic sanctions can be a productive avenue for future research. How do sanctions affect global trade and

[18] The UN Targeted Sanctions Database is undoubtedly a valuable scholarly source and a step in the right direction, however, it also poses some limitations for scholars using it. See Early (2016b) for a review of the TSC Database.

integration? How do strategies that governments and firms undertake in order to adapt to sanctions affect international trade and financial systems?

Conclusion

The UN sanctions against Iraq did much to change the way that scholars and policy-makers view sanctions as a tool. Prior to this point, sanctions were seen as a kinder, gentler form of coercion, but reports of deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children altered that perspective (Daponte and Garfield 2000). With the unintended consequences of sanctions on full display there, discussion of the ethics of sanctions (Gordon 1999; Mueller and Mueller 1999) and the place of sanctions within a notion of a "just war" doctrine began in earnest (Pierce 1996; Winkler 1999; Weiss 1999; Early and Schulzke 2019). This attention and much of the research discussed above has informed the ongoing debate about the utility and ethics of targeted sanctions and whether or not these measures can minimize the unintended aspects of sanctions. Future research aiming to improve our understanding of the consequences of economic sanctions also has the opportunity to engage with important ethical discussions and dilemmas surrounding the use of economic sanctions as a coercive foreign policy tool.

Essay 4: How Can We Improve Our Understanding of Sanctions Success?

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The purpose of this essay is three-fold: to review how current sanctions scholarship defines and measures the success of sanctions; to discuss factors that contribute to explaining outcomes of sanctions; and, finally, to outline potential research avenues that can improve our understanding of sanctions success.

How Do We Measure Sanctions Success?

Despite ongoing debates about their effectiveness, economic sanctions remain a popular instrument of coercion among policy-makers in pursuit of a wide variety of foreign policy objectives. Measuring the utility of sanctions, more generally or in specific cases, entails drawing upon a clear definition and measurement of sanctions success. The scholarly literature on the effectiveness of economic sanctions generally agrees that success involves some degree of concessions from the target state, in line with the sender's demand. Yet, an increasingly richer and more nuanced literature on the motivations, outcomes, and unintended consequences of economic sanctions often complicates the meaning of success and failure of sanctioning efforts. In order to better navigate the landscape of factors associated with sanctions effectiveness, we briefly discuss the traditional measurements of sanctions success and review other factors that may or may not be considered a part of the definition.

In identifying the components of successful outcomes of sanctions, there are several dimensions to consider. First, the diversity of goals that users of economic sanctions seek to attain, from restraining nuclear proliferation to encouraging democratic reforms to containing violent nonstate entities can make it difficult to devise a general definition of success. In some cases, contribution or progress toward a senders' ultimate goal could be considered as partial success of a sanctioning effort; this requires careful consideration of the lines between contributions toward a goal verses a sanctions' outcome. Secondly, the availability of more nuanced data on a *sanctions episode* (Morgan et al. 2009), which includes two distinct stages of a sanctioning effort (the threat stage and the sanctions imposition stage), means that a sanctions regime can attain success at two different points: when a sender state first issues a threat to a target state and when a sender state imposes a sanction. The transition from one stage to another does not necessarily imply failure of the sanctioning episode as a whole. Third, a large body of literature on economic sanctions has identified a number of counterproductive effects associated with sanctions, such as increased state repression (Peksen 2009) or women's economic and political rights abuses (Drury and Peksen 2014). While such negative externalities are undesirable and may have long-term adverse effects, from a sender's perspective, such effects do not directly factor into measurements of success or failure. Finally, sender states may use sanctions symbolically, to express disapproval toward a policy of the target state (or to dissuade others from adopting similar policies) rather than elicit policy concessions (e.g., Galtung 1967; Eland 1995). This raises questions about whether we can apply the traditional definitions of sanctions success in the context of symbolic sanctions.

Defining Success

The definition of sanctions success is tied to the underlying logic of using sanctions as a tool of statecraft. Sender states impose economic sanctions to inflict costs upon a target state, with the intention to make the target state's objectionable policy too costly to sustain. In essence, a sender state imposes economic costs on another country to induce change in their behavior. Although outcomes in distinct sanctioning cases, such as security versus trade disputes, are unique in qualitative terms, much of the literature on economic sanctions views a sanctions episode as successful where the outcome includes (a) complete compliance by the target state, (b) a partial concession by the target state, or (c) a negotiated settlement between the sender and target states. Bapat et al. (2013) have argued that this measure of success captures the majority view among sanctions scholars with regards to the conceptualization of success. However, it is possible to take a more stringent view of success by excluding negotiated settlements as a favorable outcome from the sender's perspective—depending on the gravity of the matter. For example, can it be considered a successful outcome if a target state alters its policy of providing a safe haven to only some terrorist groups on its soil? Additionally, given that not all negotiated settlements are equal, it may be prudent to include an indicator of the number of concessions given by either party to capture whether the sender or the target gained more from a negotiated settlement outcome.

Succeeding at Different Stages

Senders can experience sanction success at the stage of issuing threats of sanctions, or at the imposition stage. Several scholars have argued that sanctions threats are a critical part of sanctioning episodes (e.g., Drezner 2003; Krustev 2010); restricting success as an outcome to only imposed sanctions introduces selection bias issues since doing so overlooks cases where threats of sanctions triggered favorable changes in targets' policies. In order to examine the success of a sanctions case holistically and perhaps more accurately, it is valuable to account for both the threat and imposition stage. The introduction of the Threat and Imposition of Economic Sanctions (TIES) introduced by Morgan et al. (2009) allows researchers

to
examine outcomes of sanctions at both stages. Viewed as a negotiating process between two parties, distinguishing between the two stages of the sanctioning episode can help understand how the determinants of success vary at different phases of the bargaining process.

The definition of sanctions success discussed above has been typically applied to outcomes of imposed sanctions and can be reasonably extended to threats outcomes as well. However, some distinctions are noteworthy. While imposed sanctions intend to result in success by inflicting actual costs upon target states, in comparison, targets are likely to concede at the threat stage if they can anticipate the costs of imminent sanctions and/or perceive the seriousness of the senders resolve prior to imposition. Moreover, while threats are considered to *fail* if they do not elicit a change in the target's behavior, a sender's progression from the threat stage to the imposition of sanctions does not mean a failure of the entire sanctioning episode, especially if the imposed sanctions result in the target's acquiescence. Target states fail to learn anything new about the sender's credibility from sanctions threats while they believe that sender states will actually carry out their threats by imposing sanctions (i.e., sanctions threats are credible but not informative) (Whang, Mclean, and Kuberski 2013). Success of a sanctioning effort, defined as a target's complete or partial compliance, or a negotiated settlement, can take place at either the threat or the imposition stage.

Other Considerations

An important strand in the economic sanctions literature has identified a series of negative consequences associated with sanctioning efforts. For example, sanctions might adversely affect targets' human rights policies (Wood 2008; Peksen 2009), public health (Peksen 2011; Allen and Lektzian 2013), democracy (Peksen and Drury 2010), and women's rights (Drury and Peksen 2014). Yet, from a sender's perspective, while such externalities may indirectly contribute to the target's behavior in the medium- or long-term, they do not constitute success or failure of sanctioning efforts.

Many scholars of sanctions attribute the popularity of the instrument, at least partially, to the symbolic role of sanctions (e.g., Galtung 1967; Eland 1995) rather than its instrumental use. This view is rooted in the idea that economic sanctions are public acts of reprobation against target states, observable by the broader international community. While expressing disapproval is a feasible explanation of the motivations of some sanctions, difficulty in operationalizing the symbolic utility means that success can be difficult to measure. Defining success in symbolic sanctioning efforts requires adopting measures, which transcend the traditional concepts of sanctions success and failure (Whang 2011).

When Do Sanctions Work?

Sanctions Threats

There is considerable evidence in the literature that sanctions episodes that end at the threat stage tend to have a higher success rate than imposed sanctions (Drezner 2003; Peterson 2013; Whang, McLean, and Kuberski 2013). Sanctions threats are more effective than the actual imposition because target regimes that are willing to concede to external pressure are more likely to do so when they face threats of sanctions to prevent economic and other costs of the imposition of sanctions. In explaining the conditions associated with a higher likelihood of successful threats, scholars find that targets that are economically dependent on sender countries, anticipate significant costs from sanctions imposition, or have relatively weak capabilities are more prone to compliance prior to the imposition of sanctions. Further, the lack of strong strategic and alliance ties between targets and senders increases the prospects for success at the threat stage. The absence of close ties encourages targets to accept their senders' demands at the threat stage because of the anticipation that senders are likely to follow-up their threats with actual sanctions if they resist (Whang, McLean, and Kuberski 2013). Targets are also more likely to withstand sanctions threats issued by senders that have recently backed down against other targets resisting their sanctions threats (Peterson 2013). That is, a recent history of capitulation by senders at the threat stage undermines the credibility of their future sanctions threats.

International Cooperation

International cooperation is considered a key condition in explaining imposed sanctions success. Studies find that multilateral sanctions, especially the ones led by international institutions, are more effective than unilateral sanctions (Martin 1992; Drezner 2000; Bapat and Morgan 2009; Early and Spice 2015). The enforcement of sanctions under the auspices of international institutions is considered relatively easier as institutionalized coalitions suffer less from free-riding and defections issues. International institutions might specifically create committees and other mechanisms to monitor the enforcement of sanctions and publicly name and shame the sender partners that fall short of enforcing the sanctions. Collective sanctions are considered more effective also because the involvement of multiple countries is likely to increase the extent of the harm on the target economy to induce compliance. Further, targets under multilateral sanctions face more difficulties in mitigating the cost of the coercion to remain defiant as it becomes harder to find alternative trade partners and markets to replace their senders.

Economic Severity of Sanctions and Domestic Interest Groups in Target

Studies also find that sanctions that inflict major economic costs on the target economy are more likely to induce concessions, especially when targets feel the economic pain immediately after the imposition of sanctions (Hufbauer et al. 2007; Dizaji and van Bergeijk 2013). Major economic damage caused by sanctions might create more incentives for target leaders to comply with the external demands to cease the economic suffering and return to presanctions conditions. Building on the cost arguments, others analyze whether it matters which segments of the target society bear the costs of sanctions (Kirshner 1997; Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988; Lektzian and Patterson 2015). According to the public choice approach (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988), sanctions are more likely to elicit concessions if powerful political and economic interest groups that support the government's objectionable policy significantly suffer from the coercion. Growing economic pressure on powerful groups would incentivize them to lobby their government to seek a resolution with senders regarding the issue under dispute rather than continue to defy sanctions.

Political Regime Type and Domestic Political Dynamics

There is substantial evidence in the literature that autocracies are less likely to concede to sanctions than democratic targets (Brooks 2002; Allen 2008; Lektzian and Souva 2007; Grauvogel and von Soest 2014). Autocratic regimes, with the exception of personalist regimes (Escribà-Folch and Wright 2010; Peksen 2019), are less vulnerable to foreign pressure as they are usually able to develop effective policies to withstand the pressure. They might be able to survive sanctions by providing selective incentives and rewards, such as access to scarce luxury goods, to their relatively small support base in exchange for their allegiance to the regime. Autocratic regimes might also use repression to oppress dissent and growing opposition in the shadow of sanctions. Democratic targets, on the other hand, are unlikely to provide selective inducements to help their supporters given their large support base that includes the entire electorate or a significant portion of it. Because democratic governments are restricted by the rule of law and other institutional mechanisms, they are also unlikely to use repressive means to eliminate the growing opposition. They are, therefore, more inclined to capitulate in return for the lifting of sanctions. Removal of sanctions would subsequently stop the economic suffering and help governments avoid losing more public support essential for their political survival.

Strategic Ties and Alliances

Studies show that alliances and strategic ties between sender and target countries might affect the outcome of imposed sanctions. Targeted allies tend to be more compliant with the external demands for change compared to targeted rivals (Hufbauer et al. 2007; Drezner 1998). Target countries that have strong strategic ties with sender countries might have more incentives to acquiesce to de-escalate a crisis and thus avoid harming their shared interests. On the contrary, future conflict expectations and likely negative reputational impacts of concessions would prompt targets with a history of rivalry with sender countries to remain defiant against sanctions.

Issue Type and Significance

Scholars also note that ambitious policy objectives such as political regime change and military impairment are harder to achieve with sanctions than modest ones such as releasing a political prisoner and resolving a trade or environment-related dispute (Hufbauer et al. 2007).

Targeted Sanctions

Other research analyzes the effectiveness of targeted or smart sanctions. Targeted sanctions have become the most popular coercive instruments used by the United States and United Nations in the post–Cold War era. Targeted sanctions include such measures as asset freezes, financial restrictions on international banking activity, denial of luxury good sales, sector-specific sanctions, and travel restrictions. Given that targeted sanctions attempt to put direct pressure on specific individuals or economic sectors, the expectation has been that, in addition to being more effective than conventional sanctions, they would also avoid major adverse effects on the target public in general. There is, however, no major evidence that targeted sanctions are significantly more potent tools than traditional sanctions (Cortright and Lopez 2002; Drezner 2011; Biersteker et al. 2016; Rosenberg et al. 2016). For example, UN targeted sanctions since 1991 have worked in only 19 percent of all cases (Biersteker et al. 2016). Financial sanctions initiated by the US appear to be the most effective type of targeted sanctions. Specifically, US financial sanctions that involve asset freezes and denial of access to global banking activity were effective in 40 percent of the cases since 2001 (Rosenberg et al. 2016).

What Should We Do to Improve Our Understanding of Sanctions Success?

In this section, we suggest two areas of research based on actors and outcomes of sanctions, which can help us improve our understanding of sanctions success and bridge the gap between academic researchers and policy-makers.

Actors

Typically, sanctions studies assume two unitary actors, the sender and the target. In particular, current scholarship has focused on the *sender* country that is democratic, which is not surprising because the primary sender in the data is the United States, and the *target* country as a unitary actor. However, there is a growing tendency in recent episodes of sanctions that new types of sender and target states have emerged, and there is a lack of studies on the conditions of success of sanctions in these cases.

First, recent sanctions against North Korea and Russia show that sender countries target nonstate actors directly whether or not they are located within the territory of target countries. For example, President Obama issued Executive Order 13722 on March 15, 2016, to impose sanctions against private companies and banks outside of North Korea, which had been accused of aiding Pyongyang's efforts to develop nuclear weapons. This executive order, known by the name of extraterritorial sanctions or secondary boycott, is constructed to enforce North Korea Sanctions Enhancement Act, which was passed by the US Congress a month before, and United Nations Security Council resolution 2270, which was adopted about 10 days before. Most targets are nonstate actors doing business in third-party countries such as China. There are concerns about violating sovereignty of the third-party countries because the US government seeks to punish private businesses that are within their territory. At the same time, the secondary measures have been considered to be more effective in deterring third-party countries from pursuing sanction-busting behaviors as well as aiming at the target regime's sources of finance more directly without affecting people of the target country. Earlier examples of sanctions that restrict economic exchanges targeting specific private entities include the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Act of 1996 and the Iran/Libya Sanctions Act of 1996. While there are some pioneering studies of extraterritorial sanctions (Graves 1997; Clark 2004; Meyer 2008; Rosenberg et al. 2016), more systematic studies are needed in the academia given their frequent use and importance as an effective measure to coerce the target.

Second, current data sets of Hufbauer et al. (2007) and Morgan et al. (2014) show that it is the United States that uses sanctions most frequently. As shown in the previous section, many studies have sought to explain how democracy or a variety of characteristics of democracy affect the success of sanctions (Kaempfer and Lowenberg 1988; Lektzian and Souva 2007; McLean and Whang 2014). However, recent cases show that sanctions are also imposed or counterimposed by nondemocratic countries, notably by China and Russia (Harrell, Rosenberg, and Saravalle 2018). What are the implications for these authoritarian sanctions in terms of their success? For example, China imposed sanctions against South Korea over the issue of Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), which was agreed to be deployed in 2016 between the United States and South Korea. The ways in which China uses economic instruments are demonstrably different from those of the United States in many respects. Russia also used countersanctions in 2014 against the United States' and European Union's food exporters as a response to Crimea sanctions. Although the frequency of sanctions and sanctions threats by nondemocratic states is smaller relative to democratic senders, these cases are gaining more attention in the policy area. However, partly due to a lack of data, there are few studies that analyze the circumstances and factors, which contribute to the success or failure of sanctions when the sender country is not a full-fledged democracy. There is limited information accumulated to gain a systematic understanding of nondemocratic senders' behaviors, but it may be in the interest of policy-makers to gain an understanding of how such sanctions are designed and implemented.

Outcomes

Our first section shows that it is not simple to define and measure the success of sanctions. There are a number of issues that need to be considered such as the stage at which sanctions have contributed to outcomes or how we can evaluate the role of sanctions. Current sanctions data sets (Hufbauer et al. 2007; Morgan et al. 2009; Biersteker et al. 2016) that are widely used by researchers are based on episodes. The episode-based data help us understand the beginning and end of sanctions, the identities of sender and target countries, the issue at stake, the type of sanction used, and finally the outcome of sanctions. However, sanctions are often viewed better as a bargaining process especially from a policy-making standpoint since there is never a one-shot deal between sanctions and outcomes for most cases. How can the bargaining approach make a difference in terms of studying *successful* and *failed* outcomes of sanctions? First, defining success of sanctions is not easy if we focus on bargaining process of sanctions. For example, what defines the success of UN sanctions against North Korea is not identical between the United States and China. For China, resuming a multilateral negotiation that is similar to the six-party talks is sufficient evidence of success, while the United States requires more concrete evidences of denuclearization. This implies that the definition of sanctions success itself can be used strategically among sender countries. For Chinese policy-makers, a decade of UN sanctions imposed since 2006 can be assessed as success if they play a critical role in breaking a long-standing deadlock to start a new round of negotiation.

Second, when we take a bargaining approach as most policy-makers do especially when they initiate sanction against state actors rather than nonstate entities such as drug cartels, we need to consider sanctions as part of comprehensive efforts to coerce the target and not isolate them as a single policy. Sanctions are one of many foreign policy instruments for coercion and, thus, are used mostly in combination with policies that produce costs and benefits. These policies include promises of economic aid or incentives in exchange for target's concessions as well as more punitive measures such as the use of military force or severe sanctions in case of target's resistance. Whether these policies are credible is one issue but, more importantly, these policies have domestic implications in the target country, which can complicate the dynamics of calculating costs and benefits. If sanctions are successful, the target regime must have calculated to a reasonable degree the utility of concessions considering all these counterfactuals, domestically and internationally. Although scholars may have to simplify sanctions for analytical purposes as isolated episodes, we need to make more effort to ensure that other policies that typically accompany sanctions in the bargaining process or in the form of issue-linkage politics are incorporated into sanctions study.

The third shortcoming of literature pertains to evaluating the failed cases of sanctions. There are a couple of areas of research in the literature that need scholarly attention. One line of research is the negative externality of sanctions for target countries. There are a number of unintended consequences of sanctions most of which have negative implications for target countries politically, economically, and socially. The primary objective of economic coercion is to extract policy concessions from their opponents. While the stated objective may or may not be achieved, imposed sanctions disrupt economic links between the states and, as a result, may generate unintended consequences. There have been a few prominent studies that demonstrated sanctions' detrimental impact on the target country's population (Peksen 2009, 2011; Allen and Lektzian 2013; Drury and Peksen 2014). These negative externalities need to be explored further since they are not considered systematically when we evaluate the outcomes of sanctions. We posit that policy-makers should take into account these unintended effects prior to sanction implementation. The second line of research is how the costs of sanctions are generated and evaluated in the study of sanctions, which is associated with unintended consequences of sanctions. The costs of sanctions should include analytically both macroeconomic indicators such as reductions in trade and GDP per capita and distributional implications of sanctions. On the one hand, one may want to estimate the size and portion of black markets in target countries to infer the possibility of rent-seeking (Andreas 2005; Early and Peksen 2019). Furthermore, it matters to figure out whether and how seriously sanction-busting efforts are being made by third-party countries. On the other hand, and no less importantly, existing studies are limited in studying distributional consequences of sanctions. Who is paying the costs of sanctions? This question should be addressed in order to explain the failure of sanctions because the target leaders can find a way, for example, to transfer the costs of sanctions to their citizens. It may be the first step to know how much sanctions decrease the overall resources of the target country. However, given that sanctions fail in many cases despite increasing costs in terms of macroeconomic indicators, what seems to be lacking is to explain the ways in which the target governments protect their "selectorate" groups from the damage, often at the expense of the most vulnerable and politically weak groups in the population.

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