

# Crisis Diplomacy

**Audience Costs in Crises**

March 24, 2015

# **Recap: Democracy and Diplomacy**

- 1. Domestic constraints and international negotiations**
  - Better settlements**
  - Less likely to reach them**
- 2. Regime pairings and cooperation**
  - Same type → more likely**
  - Different types → less likely**

# Democracy and Crises

**Extending these theories to the realm of crises...**

- 1. Do democracies or dictatorships have an advantage in crisis diplomacy?**
- 2. Between what kinds of states are crises most likely to end peacefully?**

# Crises and Audience Costs

## **Fearon's claims:**

- 1. Crises end better for democracies.**
- 2. War is least likely between states of similar regime types.**

**Mechanism for both: *audience costs*.**

# Audience Costs

- **Incurred for backing down from a crisis**
- **Get worse the longer the crisis goes on**



# Where do audience costs come from?

# Democracies and Audience Costs

**Folk wisdom about democracies:**

- Audience costs are greater**
- Generated more quickly**

# Crises as Wars of Attrition

## Fearon's model:

- States uncertain of each others' *resolve*
  - War costs
- Crises take place over *time*
- States' options every moment:
  - Wait (escalate)
  - Fight (pay war costs)
  - Back down (pay audience costs)



# The Conflict Horizon

**If a crisis goes on long enough, *war is inevitable*.**

# Choices in a Crisis

## Why escalate?

- **Reward: greater chance opponent backs down**
- **Risks:**
  - **Increase audience costs**
  - **Inch closer to horizon—more chance of war**

# Escalation as a Signal

**The more resolved a state is, the longer it is willing to escalate.**

**The longer your opponent keeps escalating...**

- the more resolved you think they are**
- the more willing you are to back down**

# Effects of Higher Audience Costs

- **Signal resolve more quickly**
- **Get locked in more quickly**

# Crises between Democracies

**Both states have high audience costs.**

- Short horizon**
- Unresolved states quickly back down**
- Least resolved state always reaches its breaking point first**

# Crises between Autocracies

**Both states have low audience costs.**

- Long horizon**
- Unresolved states slowly—but eventually—back down**
- Least resolved state always reaches its breaking point first**

# Crises in Mixed Dyads

**One states with high audience costs, one state with low audience costs.**

- Democracy signals resolve quickly**
- Autocracy signals resolve slowly**
- Unresolved autocracy → Backs down**
- Highly resolved autocracy → Danger!**



# Conclusions

- **"Tie your hands"**
- **Democratic advantage in crises**
- **Democratic peace**

# Sources of Skepticism

- Does it make sense for domestic audiences to punish their leaders for backing down?**
- Do these audience costs arise in reality?**
- Do leaders in crises seek to tie their hands?**
- Is there a democratic advantage in audience cost generation?**

# For Next Time

- **Read Snyder and Borghard, "The Cost of Empty Threats" (link in online syllabus)**

# Image Sources

— **Clock:** **Flickr** user followtheseinstructions