

Sanctions, Uncertainty, and Leader Tenure

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<https://wjspaniel.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/tenuresanctions140925.pdf>

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Why Sanctions?

- Expression
- Costly signals
- Coerce policy concessions
- Remove leaders (Marinov 2005)

Why Inefficiency?

- But still inefficient!
- Uncertainty matters. But how?
- Sanctions remove leaders \Rightarrow knowledge of power consolidation critical

Our Argument

- Uncertainty about power consolidation \Rightarrow sanctions
- Recent leaders \Rightarrow more uncertainty (Wolford 2007; Rider 2013)
- Recent leaders \Rightarrow more sanctioning

Our Contribution

- Formal model of consolidation, uncertainty, and sanctions
- Empirical results match theoretical results
- Explicit empirical modeling of origins of uncertainty
- Leader tenure important in non-security affairs

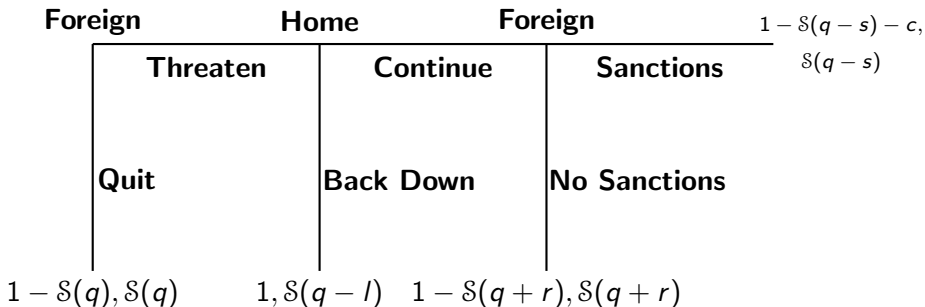
Game Tree

Foreign	Home	Foreign
Threaten	Continue	Sanctions
Quit	Back Down	No Sanctions

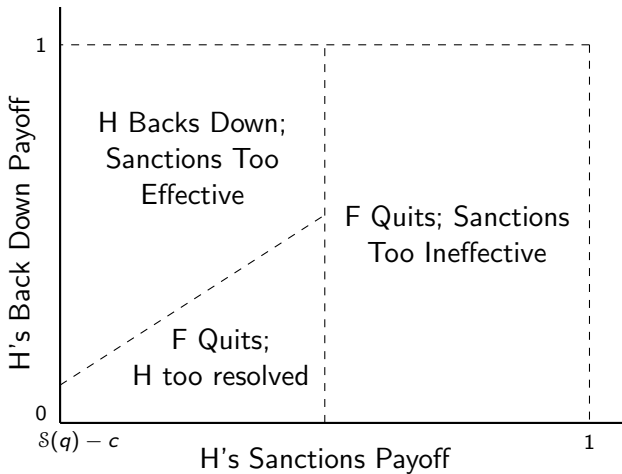
Preferences

- Home leader wants to stay in power
 - \mathcal{S} : strictly increasing function mapping sanctions outcomes to probabilities of retaining power
- Foreign wants a policy concession worth 1
 - Wins concession if Home gives up or is removed from power
 - Sanctions cost foreign power $c > 0$

Game Tree



Preferences



Adding Uncertainty

- Leaders know more about their power consolidation than foreign powers
- Two types of Home, varying levels of sanctions vulnerability
 - Strong type: $S(q - s)$
 - Weak type: $S(q - s')$, with $s' > s$

Bluffing

Proposition 1

Home likely weak \Rightarrow Foreign issues threat \Rightarrow strong types continue, weak types sometimes bluff \Rightarrow Foreign sometimes calls potential bluffs, sometimes does not

Deterrence Succeeds

Proposition 2

Home likely strong \Rightarrow Foreign quits immediately

Varying Uncertainty

Proposition 3

Uncertainty goes to 0 \Rightarrow probability of sanctions goes to 0

- Two measurements of uncertainty
 - Prior belief about Home
 - Sanctions payoffs $\mathcal{S}(q - s') - \mathcal{S}(q - s')$

Varying Leader Incentives

Proposition 4

Decrease leader's payoff for backing down \Rightarrow increase probability of sanctions

Leader Tenure

Hypothesis 1

Increase leader tenure \Rightarrow decrease in probability of sanctions

Institutions

Hypothesis 2

Use of institution \Rightarrow decrease in probability of sanctions

Democracy

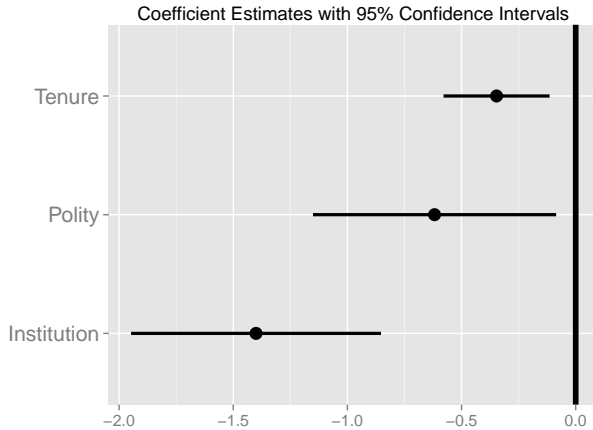
Hypothesis 3

Increase democratic institutions \Rightarrow decrease in probability of sanctions

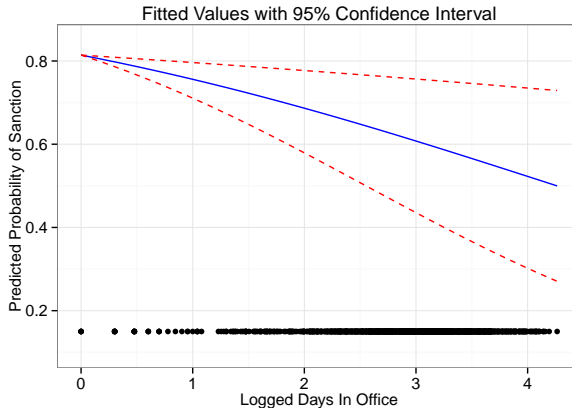
Data

- Scope: TIES (Morgan et al 2014)
 - Unit of analysis: Sanctions threat incidences
- Leader data: Archigos (Goemans et al 2009)
 - Tenure length: logged days since taking office
- Democracy: POLITY IV
- Controls
 - Method of office entry, number of senders, CINC scores, S scores

Coefficient Estimates of Logit Model



Substantive Effects

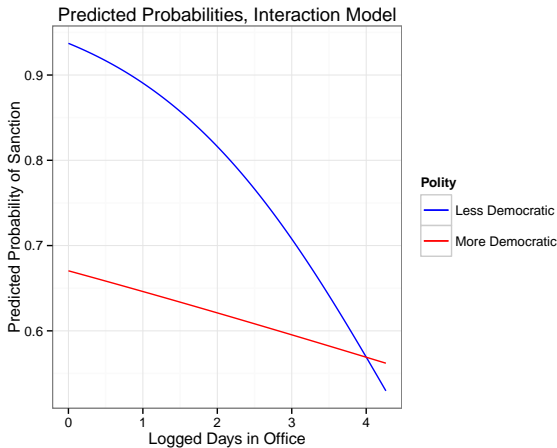


Leader Tenure

Hypothesis 4

Marginal effect of tenure in reducing the probability of sanctions is greater for more autocratic targets.

Democracy vs. Autocracy



Robustness Checks

- Alternative measurements of leader tenure
- Issue controls (human rights, economics, security), dummies and subsetting
- Estimated cost of sanctions
- Selection model

Conclusion

- If costly, why sanction?
- Uncertainty is one mechanism
- Consider the origins of uncertainty
- Use tenure as a proxy for incomplete information
- Full paper [here](#)