

Deterrence and Foreign Policy

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- Main Argument

: The authors mainly agree with the claim of Achen and Snidal(A/S) which emphasizes the contribution of empirical case studies to deductive theory. However, they argue that it is necessary to develop more elaborate framework for deterrence theory.

1) to disaggregate the existing deterrence

2) to reconceptualize the different level of conflict

- The criticism against A/S

: Even though A/S address the relations with empirical studies and deductive theory, they do not state how deductive theory can be improved based on these empirical studies.

* The development/elaboration of existing deterrence theory

1) “to disaggregate the existing theory into ‘initiation theory’ ‘commitment theory’ and ‘warning and response theory’ for much richer and more complex deterrence theory” (p.172)

2) “reconceptualize the different level of conflict” (p.172)

(a) the deterrent relationship of the two superpowers’ strategic forces

(b) the deterrence of local and limited wars

(c) the deterrence of nonmilitary challenges and sublimated conflict at the lower level of the spectrum of violence

=>With the existing deterrence theory focused on (a), (b) and (c) cannot be well explained.

3) “to state inadequacy of rational deterrence theory’s current formulation of the utility framework for dealing with the cost-benefit calculations of a state contemplating whether to challenge deterrence” (p.173)

* The problem relating to levels of analysis in constructing deterrence theory and in utilizing it in policy-making context.

(a) “A/S prefer to hold fast to a deductive theory, on that “black box” both the decision-making and strategic interaction levels of analysis”(174) However, they do not clarify how to deal with the deterrence phenomenon a different levels of analysis.

(b) A/S provides no explanation how axiomatic-deductive theory makes the predictions of deterrence outcomes in specific cases.

(c) need to operationalize deductive theory

* Three major limitations of deterrence theory (pp.181-182)

1) The theory cannot define its own scope and relevance as a means of achieving foreign policy goals.

2) The exclusive preoccupation with threats of punishments as a means of persuading an adversary not to challenge a situation in which there is disagreement.

3) Deterrence theory ignores the frequent need to regard deterrence, even then it is necessary and effective, as a strategy to buy time.