Inter-nation influence revisited

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Power Analysis and International Politics

Since 1950 social scientists have made impressive progress in clarifying and operationalizing the concept of power. The disciplines of psychology, sociology, and economics, as well as political science, have contributed to this undertaking. Strangely enough, students of international politics, who have traditionally invested so much time and effort in power analysis, have largely ignored this process. Although students of international politics have continued to analyze power relations and to reformulate the concept of power, they have remained relatively isolated from the thinking of other social scientists on this issue.

International theorists[2] have neither contributed to nor drawn on the power literature generated by other social scientists. Although there are exceptions to this rule, it is fair to say that one rarely finds references by students of international politics to the standard works on power by Lasswell and Kaplan (1950),[3] Dahl (1957, 1963), Simon (1953), March (1955), Bachrach and Baratz (1963), Riker (1964), Cartwright (1965), Harsanyi (1962), or French and Raven (1959).[4] One might, of course, try to excuse this by arguing that international theorists know so much about power that they could learn little from these latecomers to power analysis. Even if this were true it would not justify the failure of the international theorists to enlighten their fellow social scientists by explaining to them what power analysis is about. Those who know so much that they need not draw on the power literature have an obligation to contribute to it. Yet the bibliography on power in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968) contains the works of only two students of international politics —one by Friedrich Meinecke, published in 1924, and one by Hans Morgenthau, published in 1948. Even allowing for exceptions, it seems that international theorists have con-

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[2]In order to avoid overuse of the awkward phrase "students of international politics," in this paper I shall use the term "international theorists" interchangeably with that phrase.

[3]Although this book is seldom cited by students of international politics, it was reviewed for the *American Political Science Review* by the most influential power analyst in the international field —Hans J. Morgenthau (1952). His attack on the book indicated the magnitude of the intellectual gap between international power theorists and other power theorists.

[4]Most of the international theorists, cited later in this article, i.e., Rosenau, Deutsch, Singer, the Sprouts, McClelland, Holsti, and Sullivan, *are* exceptions to this rule. To the extent that I am critical of their work, my purpose is to improve, not to discredit.

tributed little to the veritable revolution in power analysis dating largely from the publication in 1950 of Lasswell and Kaplan's *Power and Society.*

There are some students of international politics who would justify such intellectual isolation on the grounds that international politics is a unique phenomenon requiring its own unique analytical concepts (cf. Aron, 1966, pp. 48–52). Concepts of social power developed by other social scientists are, therefore, not likely to be very useful. Although such views are worthy of debate, they are outside the scope of this discussion. This paper addresses itself mainly to those who believe that power relations permeate many aspects of social life and that international politics shares many common elements with politics in other arenas.

Rosenau seemed to be calling for more communication between international theorists and other social scientists when he criticized the reluctance of students in the international field to treat their subject as "local politics writ large" (1963, p. 2). His lament that students of international politics rarely cite either Dahl and Lindblom's *Politics, Economics, and Welfare* (1953) or Lasswell and Kaplan's *Power and Society* (1950) generated hopes that Rosenau would forge some links between thinking about international power relations and thinking about other kinds of power relations (Rosenau, 1963, p. 3). Instead of using the concepts of other students of power, however, he tried to improve upon them by building a parallel set of concepts.[5] Although admitting that the formulations of other social scientists underlay his discussion, he stated his preference to avoid explicit reference to them and argued that it seemed "worthwhile to develop our own formulation by searching anew for the behavior that is common to all kinds of politics" (p. 9). While Rosenau's analytical scheme was an impressive one that deserved far more attention than it received, it could have been even more valuable if it had been explicitly grounded in the power literature. If every physicist searched anew for the law of gravity, physics would progress at a much slower rate. A few, of course, must look for places to stand that provide a better view; but most scientists (social or otherwise) would see further by standing on the shoulders of others.

Some international theorists give the impression that they are rejecting the concept of power as a useful analytical tool. One must distinguish, however, between concepts and their labels.[6] Although Deutsch (1963, p. 124; 1968, pp. 17–47), Rosenau (1963, pp. 44–45), McClelland (1966, pp. 61–88) and the Sprouts (1962, pp. 136–77) sometimes seem to reject the concept of power, their objections are primarily semantic rather than conceptual. Since the word "power" has no verb form and has many misleading connotations, other power terms, such as influence, control, capability, etc., are often preferred. Dahl has recently observed that "power terms" (power, influence, force, coercion, authority, persuasion, control, etc.) in modern social science refer to "subsets of relations among social units such that the behaviors of one or more units . . . depend in some circumstances on the behavior of other units" (1968, p. 407; emphasis omitted). Few students of international politics would disclaim an interest in power relations so defined. Although the word "power" may be discarded, the power analysis approach to the study of international politics is likely to endure.

As a step toward linking discussions of power in the international arena with other discussions of power, this paper will attempt

[5]After lamenting the paucity of references to *Power and Society* and *Politics, Economics, and Welfare,* Rosenau cites the former only once and ignores the latter altogether.

[6]Cf. hypotheses about the relationships among roses, odors, and names.

to: (1) review briefly the major focal points in contemporary power analysis, (2) give a critique of the most ambitious effort to construct a model of inter-nation influence, and (3) suggest a revision of this model.

Dimensions of Power and International Politics

Although consensus among analysts of power is far from complete, several basic distinctions continually emerge as foci of discussion (cf. Cartwright, 1965; and Nagel, 1968, p. 129). What follows is a review of such foci together with comments on the treatment they have received from various students of international politics.

POWER RELATIONS AND POWER BASES

No distinction is more vital to clear thinking about power than the distinction between power relations and the resources (power bases or base values) that can be used to create a power relationship. The observation that nation A[7] has power over nation B not only says something about A but about B as well. Two kinds of criticism have been leveled against the literature of international politics in this respect. First, international theorists are criticized for their frequent failure to define power in relational terms (Holsti, 1964, pp. 180, 186; Pruitt, 1964, pp. 166–68; McClelland, 1966, pp. 61–88; Sprout and Sprout, 1962, pp. 136–41; and Sullivan, 1963, pp. 99–141). And second, students of international politics are charged with ignoring the multiplicity of bases upon which power relationships may rest. The Sprouts have been especially vigorous in deploring the tendency to become preoccupied with military resources and to neglect nonmilitary power resources (1962, pp. 140–41, 158–60).[8] The recent *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* includes an article on "military power potential" but none on "economic power potential," thus suggesting that the Sprouts' criticism is still relevant.

Considering the difficulties international theorists have had in handling the distinction between power relations and power resources, Deutsch's suggestion that power be conceived of as money (1963, pp. 116–27; 1968, pp. 40–47) is a little like offering a drink to a former alcoholic. Since money can be possessed and used to exercise purchasing power, the analyst is tempted to revert back to considering power as something that can be possessed and used, instead of viewing it as a relationship between A and B. Money is more like a power resource than a power relationship (Baldwin, 1971b). Deutsch further suggests that force is to power as gold is to paper money, by which he implies that just as gold is the most tangible form of purchasing power, so force is the most tangible form of political power. Given the common tendency to regard gold as the ultimate determinant of the value of money, Deutsch's analogy could easily lead to viewing force as the ultimate determinant of political power, thus tempting the international theorist to revert to his old habit of becoming preoccupied with the military bases of power. The reformed alcoholic may take a drink and be a better man for having proved to himself that he can take it or leave it—but dare he risk it?

SCOPE

Defining power as a relationship in which A gets B to do something he would not otherwise do says little or nothing about *what* A gets B to do. Dahl (1963, p. 45; 1968, p. 408)

[7]Throughout this paper A will refer to the actor exercising or attempting to exercise power (or influence) while B will refer to the actor over whom A is exercising or attempting to exercise power (or influence). For purposes of this article the terms power and influence will be used interchangeably.

[8]For Lasswell and Kaplan (1950, p. 85) recognition that power may rest on various bases was of "crucial importance."

and Lasswell and Kaplan (1950, p. 76) regard statements about A's power over B as virtually meaningless if they fail to specify what aspect of B's behavior is being affected. Several students of international politics have taken a similar position (e.g., Sprout and Sprout, 1962, p. 164; Holsti, 1964, p. 186; and McClelland, 1966, pp. 69–70). The literature of international politics has been criticized both for failure to specify scope and for implying that the ability to defeat B in wars (especially wars similar to World War II) was the only scope of A's power that mattered (Sprout and Sprout, 1962, p. 141; McClelland, 1966, p. 70; and Sullivan, 1963, pp. 127–40). Dahl has observed that a typical question about a political system is whether power is generalized over many scopes or is relatively specialized (1968, p. 408). Although similar questions are sometimes asked by international theorists, they are not typical. Do some nations try to exercise a little influence on a lot of issues while others concentrate on exercising a lot of influence on a few issues? Does an attempt to influence many scopes tend to reduce the amount of influence on any one scope? What happens to balance-of-power theories if one allows power to vary in scope as well as amount? Such questions are not often asked by international theorists.

Once again Deutsch's concept of power as money appears risky. Money is often regarded as "generalized purchasing power." If one were to ask precisely what dimensions of the purchasing power of money are "generalized" (a question no one ever seems to ask), the answer would be scope and domain. Money has *generalized* as opposed to specialized purchasing power because we use the same money to purchase food, clothing, entertainment, transportation, shelter, and fire insurance. Because the scope of the purchasing power of money is so general (wide), social scientists rarely specify its scope. It is precisely because they believed that political power was likely to be specialized rather than generalized in scope that Dahl, and Lasswell and Kaplan, insisted on the specification of its scope. It is precisely because there is no very close political analogue to money that political scientists must be more careful than economists to specify the scope of A's power over B.

AMOUNT OF POWER

The degree to which A can change the probability that B will do X is often referred to as the amount or weight of A's power over B. Whereas such a concept encourages one to discuss power in probabilistic terms, students of international politics have tended to rely more on the simple dichotomy of success or failure. Thus, Holsti argues that B's failure to do X despite A's influence attempt allows us to assume that A did not enjoy much influence over B (1964, p. 188). The trouble with such reasoning is that it makes it hard to distinguish between powerful nations, and seemingly powerful ones. Consider the following examples: (1) The powerful but unlucky nation that succeeds in changing the probability that B will do X from .1 to .9 but still fails to get B to do X. (2) The seemingly powerful nation that changes the probability that B will do X from .8 to .9, after which B does X.

Deutsch has compared attempts to promote probable and improbable outcomes as follows:

> The outcome, which is already moderately improbable . . . can be made highly improbable by the application of even a relatively limited amount of power. In such situations, the change in the probabilities of this particular outcome *will seem to us* quite drastic, and this limited amount of power *will seem to us* to have changed considerable uncertainty into near-certainty, and thus to have produced *spectacular* results.
>
> The same degree of power produces far less *impressive* results, however, when it is applied to promoting an outcome which is fairly improbable in the first place [1968, p. 26; emphasis added].

On the basis of such reasoning Deutsch sug-

gests the need to revise the concept of the amount of power. What really needs changing, however, is not the concept of amount of power but the concepts of success and failure. Granted that attempts to promote probable outcomes are likely to *seem* more successful than attempts to promote improbable outcomes, but it is the job of the power analyst to distinguish between what is true and what merely seems to be true. The sooner students of international politics begin to think in terms of degrees of success or failure in getting B to do X the better they will be able to distinguish between powerful and seemingly powerful nations (cf. Sprout and Sprout, 1962, p. 157).

Another reason why international theorists should give more attention to the amount of A's power over B is the tendency of inter-nation influence attempts to take the form of deterrence policies. As Deutsch has pointed out, deterring B from doing X is usually a matter of promoting a highly probable outcome, while compelling B to do X is usually a matter of promoting a much less probable outcome (1968, pp. 26–27). In other words, deterrent policies are usually aimed at keeping B from doing something he is not very likely to do anyway, e.g., rape, murder, and nuclear attack. Students of international politics are prone to cite nuclear deterrence as an example of a successful inter-nation influence attempt and economic sanctions against Rhodesia as an unsuccessful influence attempt. Yet the autonomous probability of the desired outcome is quite different in the two cases. The propositions that threatened force often works and that economic sanctions rarely work are almost axioms for many international theorists. Yet threats of force are usually used to *deter* while economic sanctions are usually used to *compel.* The tendency of inter-nation influence attempts to take the form of deterrent policies suggests that nations tend to *appear* to exercise a greater *amount* of power than they really exercise. Students of international politics should take this into account in assessing the power of various nations and instruments of statecraft.

COSTS OF POWER

For a long time the costs of power were virtually ignored by power analysts. Dahl (1968, p. 409) credits Harsanyi (1962) with having introduced the concept of costs into the analysis of power. International theorists, of course, had been making vague references to the need to balance resources and commitments for a long time, but there was little rigor or precision in their formulations.[9] Harsanyi argued that both the costs to A and the costs to B were essential ingredients in defining power (1962, p. 69). Since 1962 international theorists have almost never cited Harsanyi's article, and most have either continued their vague references to balancing resources and commitments or ignored costs altogether.

When Holsti sets forth a list of questions that policy-makers ask themselves in deciding whether to make an influence attempt, the question of how much it will cost seems to be omitted (1964, p. 182). When Rosenau sets forth his model of control, he observes that "the ultimate test of whether a control technique is sufficient lies, of course, in the response of the controllee [B]. If the latter undergoes the intended change, then control has occurred, and the techniques employed can be deemed appropriate" (1963, p. 37). Harsanyi's analysis, however, would suggest

[9]In the *Nerves of Government* (1963, p. 282), Deutsch claims to have preceded Harsanyi by introducing the concept of power costs in *Nationalism and Social Communication* (1953, pp. 46–59). This claim, however, cannot be upheld, since Deutsch failed in both books to distinguish clearly between *changes* imposed on A as a result of his influence attempt and the *costs* imposed on A as a result of his influence attempt. For a comparison of Deutsch and Harsanyi on this point see Baldwin (1971a).

that A's costs must be taken into account as well as B's response in determining the success of a policy technique. Few people would regard the American influence attempt in Vietnam as "appropriate" if the desired response were achieved only at the cost of domestic anarchy. When Deutsch wrote the *Nerves of Government* (1963, pp. 114–16), he emphasized the importance of considering power costs, but when he discussed power in the international context (1968, pp. 17–47), he virtually ignored costs.[10]

Consideration of the costs A incurs in influencing B could help students of international politics to conceive of power relations as two-way relationships, i.e., situations in which B influences A at the same time A influences B (cf. Nagel, 1968, pp. 135–36).

In addition to A's costs, Harsanyi suggested including in the concept of power the costs to B of failure to comply with A's demands. He called this the *strength* of A's power over B. Such a concept could be useful to students of international politics in describing situations in which A cannot get B to do X but can make B pay a high price for refusing to do X. North Vietnam may not be able to get the Americans to withdraw from Vietnam, but they can certainly raise the costs to America of failing to comply with North Vietnamese desires (cf. Nagel, 1968, pp. 134–35). Economic sanctions may not change the actual behavior of the Rhodesian government, but they make it more costly for that government to pursue its policies. Perhaps students of international politics would be less hasty in disparaging the power of economic sanctions if they were to consider the *strength* as well as the *amount* of A's power over B.

The concept of the strength of A's power over B can also help international theorists to think more clearly about techniques of statecraft. A can increase or decrease the probability that B will do X by manipulating B's perceptions of the opportunity costs of doing X relative to the costs of alternatives to X. One way to do this is with *unconditional* rewards and/or punishments. Despite the fact that Dahl and Lindblom (1953, pp. 98–106), Cartwright (1965, pp. 16–21), and Harsanyi (1962, p. 71) have all described influence techniques based on manipulation of B's cost calculations by unconditional rewards and punishments, international theorists either have great difficulty in discussing such techniques or ignore them altogether.[11] With the important exception of war, the idea that A can intentionally get B to do X without making a demand on B just does not seem to fit into the conceptual framework within which many international theorists work. The attempts to discuss the political aspects of foreign aid transactions, for example, usually seem to assume (explicitly or implicitly) that aid is

[10]A significant exception to the tendency of international theorists to ignore the costs of power is provided by the Sprouts' current work on British foreign policy (1968). As an example of actually plugging the concept of costs into empirical theorizing about power relations, their work could be read with profit by other social scientists as well as by international theorists. See also an earlier study in which the Sprouts discussed power costs (1956, pp. 43–44, 53). Another notable exception to the tendency to ignore power costs in international political analysis is Sullivan (1963, pp. 99–141, 256–91).

[11]It is especially ironic that Harsanyi's comments on the unconditional influence attempt have been so ignored by international theorists because his cogent illustration was in terms of international politics: "For example, country A may be able to induce country B to attack some third country C, simply by supplying arms to B, even if A supplies these arms 'without any strings attached'—and in particular without making it a condition of her arms deliveries that B will actually attack C. . . . More generally, A may provide for B goods or services complementary to some particular policy goal X, or competitive to policy goals alternative to X, so as to decrease the net utility of its alternatives; or A may achieve similar results by depriving B of goods or services either competitive to X or complementary to its alternatives."

political if, and only if, the donor makes a demand on the recipient. The public statements on the goals of aid policy, however, are almost always phrased in terms of the donor's desire to change the opportunity costs to the recipient of acting contrary to the desires of the donor. International theorists would find it easier to understand the variety of ways in which A can get B to do X if they would consider A's ability to affect B's perceptions of the opportunity costs of doing X.

MEANS OF POWER

Mere possession of power resources does not suffice to enable A to influence B. A must mediate between his resources and B's actions, a job that A may do either skillfully or clumsily—as the Israelis are constantly reminding the Arabs. This distinction between resources and their use seems to correspond to the Sprouts' distinction between the instruments and techniques of statecraft (1962, pp. 144–45).

Dahl states that the main problem in power analysis is "not to determine the existence of power but to make comparisons" (1957, p. 205). For Dahl this is primarily a matter of comparing actors rather than actions. "Who governs?" rather than "How?" is the question that concerns Dahl and many other recent power theorists. Students of international politics, however, are likely to be more interested than students of community power in comparing the power of various influence techniques. Perhaps because the range of relevant techniques is wider in the international arena, international theorists have traditionally taken more interest in comparing the ways in which actors use their power resources. After all, no one runs for mayor in New Haven by threatening to drop atomic bombs on those who vote for his opponent. The ideas of the community power theorists can and should be transferred into international political analysis, but this must be done with care since their research interests differ from those of the international theorists.

The distinction between influence attempts based on positive and negative sanctions[12] illustrates the diverging concerns of the community and the international power analyst. There is an asymmetry between promises and threats in that the former usually cost A more when they succeed while the latter usually cost A more when they fail. (See Schelling, 1960, pp. 36, 177–78; Parsons, 1963, p. 239; and Baldwin, 1971a; 1971c.) Thus A's incentive to use promises varies *inversely* with his perceptions of the probability of success; while A's incentive to use threats varies *directly* with the perceived probability of success. In a well-integrated, stable community the probability that B will comply with A's wishes is greater than it is in a state of near anarchy. In a well-integrated society most people will obey the law most of the time, thus making it very costly to reward all law-abiding citizens. Threats to punish lawbreakers, however, are relatively cheap precisely because there are so few lawbreakers. It is understandable (but not necessarily forgiveable) that community power theorists have tended to think in terms of negative sanctions. It is harder to understand such a concern in international power analysis.

Deutsch, for example, notes the distinction between positive and negative sanctions, claims that the latter usually cost less, and justifies this by pointing out how costly it would be to reward law-abiding citizens in a society full of law-abiding citizens (1968, p. 18). But what relevance has this to the international arena? Are we to believe that this arena is filled with law-abiding citizens? Is the probability that B will comply with A's demands roughly the same in both the inter-

[12]Positive sanctions are defined as actual or promised rewards to B; negative sanctions are defined as actual or threatened punishments to B. See Baldwin (1971c).

national and domestic political arenas? Since threats and promises are asymmetrically related to the probability of success, any statement about the relative expense of positive and negative sanctions implies an assumption about the probability of making a successful influence attempt. What assumption does Deutsch imply? Let us postulate, for the moment, that the probability that A can get B to do X is greater in domestic than in international politics.[13] Other things being equal, positive sanctions would be used more frequently in making inter-nation influence attempts, while negative sanctions would be used more frequently in making intra-nation influence attempts. If the real world does not reflect this, the international theorist should ask himself which "other things" are not equal. Are inter-nation influence attempts limited primarily to situations in which the probability of success tends to be high, e.g., deterrence? Our purpose here is only to raise, not to answer, such questions. If influence techniques based on positive and negative sanctions relate to domestic and international politics in radically different ways, then international theorists dare not leave power analysis to the students of well-integrated, stable communities.[14]

ANTICIPATED REACTIONS

A classical difficulty in analyzing power relations is accounting for situations in which B (rightly or wrongly) anticipates rewards or punishments from A for behaving in a certain way and modifies his behavior accordingly. This phenomenon, often associated with Friedrich (1941, pp. 589–91), is rarely discussed by students of international politics, although it is often considered by other social scientists. The Sprouts seem to have excluded it from consideration by defining political interaction in terms of A's demands and B's responses (1962, pp. 139–41).[15] Clearly, the rule of anticipated reactions refers to situations in which B responds despite the absence of a demand from A. Rosenau takes up the question and discusses it without relating his remarks to other works and ends up concluding that in such situations B controls A rather than vice versa (1963, pp. 42–43).[16] Holsti makes a specific attempt to incorporate anticipated reactions into international political analysis but severely distorts the concept in the process (1964, pp. 183–84). Whereas most analysts use the term "anticipated reactions" to refer to situations in which B modifies his behavior because of what he anticipates A will do, Holsti portrays anticipated reaction situations as those in which A modifies his behavior because of what he expects B to do. Although Holsti may be directing attention to an important set of

[13]Many students of international politics would regard this as a realistic assumption (cf. Rosenau, 1963, p. 16).

[14]One of the anonymous referees for this article makes this point well: "In discussing differences between power relations in international and in national politics, one should perhaps mention how the absence of legitimate authority in international relations, and the value placed on national independence in modern times, affect the parties' cost calculus. In domestic politics people will often readily accept orders from governmental authorities, so long as these are considered as exercising their legitimate authority. Even pressure by private individuals (say, pressure groups) may not be very much resented if it is felt that they do not go beyond certain customary limits. In contrast, in the international arena, attempts by a stronger country A to influence a weaker country B are often regarded as illegitimate, and it may be quite costly to the government of country B, in terms of internal and international prestige, to submit 'too readily' to country A's demands."

[15]The Sprouts' most recent book was published just before this article went to press. Although I have not had time to read it carefully, they seem to have modified their analysis to take account of "anticipated reactions" (Sprout and Sprout, 1971, pp. 168–70).

[16]For a "solution" to the paradox in which A and B seem to switch roles, see Dahl (1968, pp. 412–13).

phenomena, it is misleading for him to apply the label of "anticipated reactions" to such phenomena.

The concept of anticipated reactions can and should be incorporated into international political analysis. The attitudes of the third world nations toward the United States would be easier for students of international politics to understand if they were more familiar with the concept of anticipated reactions.

The above discussion was not intended as a comprehensive survey of the literature on power; it was intended instead as an attempt to show how various international theorists have treated or failed to treat some of the more important aspects of power analysis. Its purpose is to suggest a need for more communication between the students of international power and those who analyze power in other arenas. I suspect that international theorists have as much to contribute as they have to learn.

Singer's Model: A Critique

The remainder of this paper is devoted to a critique and proposed revision of J. David Singer's model of inter-nation influence (1963). Before proceeding to focus our discussion so narrowly, it would be wise to consider a prior question—"Why bother?" Why single out an article published in 1963 for intensive review at this late date? First, Singer's article is one of the few attempts by an international theorist to undertake formal power analysis. He not only strives for rigor and precision but also introduces concepts developed by other social scientists into international political analysis. And second, the article has not been allowed to fade into the obscurity of old journal pages but has been reprinted (at least partially) in influential textbooks by Deutsch (1968, pp. 136–37), Rosenau (1969, pp. 380–91), and McClelland (1966, pp. 79–82). Any serious student of international power relations must come to terms with this article. One caveat—no attempt at an overall assessment of the article will be made; the discussion starts from the assumption that the article is a valuable contribution to the literature and proceeds to concentrate on its weak points.[17]

UNDERTAKINGS AND OUTCOMES

Power analysis has usually focused on the reasons for A's success or failure in attempting to influence B. The dependent variable in most studies of influence relationships is the *outcome* of A's influence attempt. Both the title of Singer's article and his stated purpose —to present a "formal, analytic model of bilateral inter-nation influence" (p. 420)—lead one to expect a model that will explain why A was able (or unable) to get B to do X. In order to understand Singer's model, however, it is important to realize that: *Singer's model explains undertakings, not outcomes.* It explains why A makes an influence attempt and why that influence attempt takes the form it does. A more appropriate title for the article would be "Inter-Nation Influence *Attempts:* A Formal Model."

Models that explain how and why A undertakes to influence B are needed; and, as such, Singer's model is useful. The unwary reader may be misled, however, if he fails to realize that the model is designed to explain A's actions rather than a relationship between A and B.[18]

[17]The reader is hereby warned that this critique is based on a reading of Singer's article that Singer regards as inaccurate. Although this author has tried to interpret Singer's article fairly and accurately, the reader would be well advised to read the article for himself.

[18]Singer does note the distinction between undertakings and outcomes (p. 422), and a careful reading makes his purpose clear. But given the importance of the distinction, he has not made that purpose clear *enough.* On the importance of distinguishing clearly between foreign policy analysis (explanation of undertakings) and capability analysis (explanation of outcomes), see Sprout and Sprout (1965, esp. pp. 8–12).

CONCEPT OF POWER

Instead of using Dahl's conception of power in terms of A's ability to modify B's behavior, Singer objects to it on three grounds, none of which is justified (p. 421). First, he claims that Dahl's concept of power excludes situations in which A is "reinforcing" B's propensity to do something that he is now doing (p. 421). Singer thus fails to distinguish clearly between two kinds of modifications in B's behavior: (1) modification relative to what B is doing at the present time and (2) modification relative to what B would do in the future in the absence of an influence attempt by A. Whereas Singer's concept of reinforcement refers to the former, Dahl's concept of power refers to the latter. Dahl's concept of power does not exclude influence attempts that modify B's future behavior by reinforcing his present behavior.[19] The fact that B may now be doing what A would like him to do in the future is relevant in only two ways: (1) as it may affect A's predictions of B's future behavior and (2) insofar as B reacts differently to attempts to get him to continue his present behavior than he does to attempts to get him to do something he is not now doing. Neither of these considerations is relevant to *defining* the concept of power. Many things affect A's predictions about B's future behavior in addition to A's perceptions of B's present behavior. The difference between reinforcing ongoing behavior and promoting new behavior can be accounted for as a matter of the *scope* of A's influence attempt. Since all influence attempts are future-oriented, one can describe them adequately in terms of what A wants and expects B to do in the future. Although B's present behavior may be quite relevant to *explaining* why A makes an influence attempt or why B reacts the way he does, it is irrelevant to *describing* influence attempts. All we need to know in order to say that an influence attempt has occurred is that A has acted intentionally so as to increase the congruence between his prediction of B's future behavior and his preferences regarding B's future behavior. The distinction between reinforcement and other kinds of influence attempts may be useful to the international theorist, but it is not a necessary component of the concept of power.

Singer's second objection to Dahl's concept of power is that it "implies no difficulty in A's prediction of what B will do in the absence of the influence attempt" (p. 421). Once again Singer has failed to distinguish between explanation and description. Although A's information and his confidence in his own predictive abilities are certainly relevant to explaining why A makes his influence attempt, such considerations are not required for description. Dahl's concept of power implies nothing about *why* A or B act the way they do. Dahl merely suggests that the label of "power" should be used to identify situations in which A gets B to do something that he would not otherwise do.

The third difficulty Singer finds in Dahl's concept of power is less clear, but it concerns the failure to consider the probabilistic nature of all human behavior and of predictions about such behavior (p. 421). In the absence of specific citations by Singer, this writer can think of no reason why such a difficulty should be associated with Dahl's concept of power.[20]

Dahl's concept of power can be immensely useful to the student of international politics. It is unfortunate that Singer is so critical of

[19]"Of course this definition also includes instances in which actor A induces actor B to go on doing something he is now doing, though B would stop doing it except for A's inducement" (Dahl, 1963, p. 40).

[20]Dahl's concept of power is vulnerable to the charge that it ignores changes in B's internal propensities to comply that are not made manifest in B's behavior (Nagel, 1968, pp. 133–35). This is not among Singer's objections, however.

that concept, especially since Singer's objections are ill-founded.

COSTS OF POWER

Actor A's costs play little or no role in Singer's model. In describing A's behavior when he is pessimistic about B's compliance, Singer claims that A will tend to use his "available resources" to influence B "until the point is reached where A predicts that *no* influence attempt would be successful" (p. 421). If "available resources" are unemployed and therefore costless, Singer might be right; otherwise, his statement is surely false. A will continue to apply resources to influencing B *only* up to the point at which his estimated marginal return equals his estimated marginal cost.[21] Singer's observation would hold only if the estimated marginal cost were zero—a fairly unlikely circumstance. A more important example of ignoring A's costs is found in Singer's identification of the determinants of influence attempts (pp. 423–24). In Singer's model A's decision to try to influence B is determined by (1) A's perceptions of B's present behavior, (2) A's predictions about B's future behavior, and (3) A's preferences regarding B's future behavior. A's perceptions of what an attempt to influence B is likely to cost play no role at all.

Oddly enough, Singer portrays costs as quite important in B's decisional calculus but not in A's. In elaborating what he calls a "sub-model" of B's decisional calculus, Singer depicts B as taking account not only of his own costs but of A's costs as well (pp. 425–26). The prominence Singer accords to costs in this sub-model makes it all the harder to understand the omission of costs from the main model.

[21]For elaboration on the process of calculating marginal costs and benefits, see any introductory economics text or see Dahl and Lindblom (1953, pp. 164–68).

STAKES

The other side of the cost coin is benefits. In order to decide whether an influence attempt on B is "worth it," A will want to compare the estimated costs with the estimated benefits. What does A have at stake? How important is B's compliance on this particular issue? Although A would presumably want to consider the stakes in deciding whether to try to influence B, A's perceptions of the stakes are not among Singer's "determinants" of influence attempts.

PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS

A's estimates of his costs and benefits will depend on his estimates of the probability of success. Although Singer includes A's prediction as to what B is likely to do in the *absence* of A's influence attempt among his "determinants" of influence attempts, he omits reference to A's prediction as to what B is likely to do in the *presence* of A's influence attempt (p. 423). Surely A's estimate of his own ability to change B's future behavior is an important factor in his decision as to whether to make an influence attempt. A's perceptions of the probability of success are also relevant to his decision as to whether to use threats or promises. As was noted above, the costs of threats and promises are asymmetrically related to the probability of success. The prospects of success are thus relevant not only to Singer's attempt to explain why A tries to influence B but also to his attempt to explain why A uses threats and/or promises.

UNCONDITIONAL REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

Singer's model is incompatible with Harsanyi's description of the way unconditional rewards and punishments can be used to affect B's cost calculations (cf. Harsanyi, 1962, p. 71). In Singer's model rewards and punishments are supplementary to, but not coequal with, promises and threats (pp. 426–27). Al-

TABLE 1
SINGER MODEL: HYPOTHESIZED RELEVANCE OF INFLUENCE TECHNIQUES

	Persuasion situations: A Prefers X				Dissuasion situations: A Prefers O			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Preferred future behavior	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O
Predicted future behavior	X	X	O	O	O	O	X	X
Perceived present behavior	X	O	X	O	O	X	O	X
Reinforce or modify	R	M	R	M	R	M	R	M
Punish?	No	P*	No	Yes	No	P	No	Yes
Reward?	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Threaten?	P	Yes	Yes	Yes	P	Yes	Yes	Yes
Promise?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*P = Perhaps

though Harsanyi's scheme suggests the feasibility of using rewards, punishments, promises, and threats either simultaneously or separately, Singer's scheme hypothesizes no situation in which all four techniques would be employed at the same time to promote the same goal or in which rewards or punishments would be used without promises or threats (cf. p. 427).

Consider the case of nation A that wants to get nation B to produce fewer war planes in the future than it otherwise would produce. Presumably, nation B's decision as to how many war planes to produce will depend in part on B's estimates of the (opportunity) costs of producing war planes. A can thus influence B if he can change B's cost calculations. A can do this by: (1) *Punishing* nation B by depriving it of raw materials essential for the production of war planes through preclusive buying (cf. allied purchases of wolfram during World War II). (2) *Rewarding* nation B by giving it raw materials that can be used to produce automobiles but not war planes. (3) *Threatening* nation B with armed attack if more than x number of war planes are produced. (4) *Promising* nation B future economic aid if less than x number of war planes are produced. In such a situation, it is quite feasible for nation A to consider simultaneous or separate use of the four techniques in making its influence attempt, since they all constitute ways to increase the opportunity costs to nation B of producing war planes.

A model may have a number of weaknesses and still be the best that is available. Singer's model was a great advance relative to most of its vaguely defined predecessors. The question now is whether Singer's model can be modified to take account of the foregoing criticisms.

Singer's Model: A Proposed Revision

Table 1 is Singer's model, and Table 2 is the proposed revision.

As Table 1 indicates, Singer's model concerns undertakings rather than outcomes. It is designed to describe the conditions under which A will make an influence attempt on B and the techniques that are "relevant" or "applicable"[22] to such an undertaking. The revised model also concerns undertakings, not outcomes. The stakes, costs, and probabilities of success in the revised model are, therefore, all in terms of A's perceptions. The revised model assumes that A will undertake an influence attempt if, and only if, the expected

[22]The precise meaning of "relevance" or "applicability" is not clear in Singer's article. I interpret them to mean that there is a higher probability that A will use relevant or applicable influence techniques than that he will use irrelevant or inapplicable ones (cf. Singer, 1963, p. 427).

TABLE 2

REVISED MODEL: HYPOTHESIZED RELEVANCE OF INFLUENCE TECHNIQUES

Type of influence technique	High probability of success				Low probability of success			
	High stakes		Low stakes		High stakes		Low stakes	
	High cost	Low cost	High cost	Low cost	High cost	Low cost	High cost	Low cost
Threaten	?*	Yes	No	Yes	No	?	No	No
Promise	No	?	No	No	?	Yes	No	Yes
Reward	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Punish	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

*? = Perhaps

benefits from the attempt are larger than the expected costs. Five corollaries of this assumption also underlie the relationships hypothesized in the revised model. Other things being equal: (1) The higher the stakes perceived by A the more likely he is to make an influence attempt; (2) The lower the opportunity costs perceived by A the more likely he is to make an influence attempt; (3) The higher the probability of success perceived by A the more likely he is to make an influence attempt; (4) A's incentive to use *promises* increases as the perceived probability of success decreases; and (5) A's incentive to use *threats* increases as the perceived probability of success increases.

One weakness found in both the original and revised models is the emphasis on dichotomies (cf. Levy, 1969, p. 95). The variables of probability of success, stakes, costs, and propensities to use threats, promises, rewards, or punishments, can and should be considered as continuous rather than dichotomous variables.[23] The revised model presents them as dichotomies in order to preserve some continuity with the form of the original model. In effect, the revised model changes Singer's main model into a rational choice model involving cost–benefit calculations very much like those in Singer's sub-model of B's decisional calculus (pp. 424–26). Once this change is made, then it is a relatively simple matter to present A's decisional calculus in terms of the standard expected utility formulae instead of the unwieldy charts employed by Singer.

The differences between the original and revised versions of Singer's model can be summarized as follows:

(1) The distinction between persuasion and dissuasion is dropped. This distinction is unnecessary since, as Singer admits (p. 423), both can be described as attempts by A to get B to do X. The most frequently heard justification for the distinction is that it is usually *easier* to deter than to compel. Simply including the probability of success in the model seems to be a more straight-forward way of taking account of this.

(2) The distinction between reinforcement and modification is omitted. For reasons explained above, this is a potentially useful but hardly essential distinction.

(3) Perceived present behavior is eliminated because it is not needed after the distinction between reinforcement and modification has been dropped.

(4) Preferred and predicted future behavior have been retained but subsumed by the assumption that A will make an influence attempt if, and only if, the expected benefits

[23]The size of the various threats, promises, rewards, and punishments should also be allowed to vary. Neither the original nor the revised model permits this.

exceed the expected costs. In making such calculations A would have to take account of his preferences and predictions as to B's future behavior.

(5) A's perceptions (predictions) of the probability of success have been added to the original model.

(6) A's perceptions of the benefits of success (stakes) have also been added.

(7) A's perceptions of the opportunity costs of attempting to influence B have been added.

(8) The variables of reward, punishment, threat, and promise have all been retained; but the hypothesized relationships have been changed to allow for the asymmetrical way in which threats and promises are related to the prospects of success and for the use of rewards and punishments to manipulate B's cost calculations.

The proposed revisions in Singer's model are intended to do two things. First, they are intended to strengthen the explanatory power of the model while economizing on the number of variables used. And, second, they are intended to increase the degree of correspondence between this model and models developed by students of power relations outside the field of international politics.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this paper is to present a plea for international theorists both to draw on and to contribute to the literature on power analysis. In general, today's students of international politics are at least ten years behind the community power theorists in the sophistication with which they handle the concept of power. More exploratory work anchored in the literature of power analysis, such as Singer's article, is desirable. The perspective of the student of international politics can provide a useful corrective to the biases of the student of stable, well-integrated communities. For example, the international theorist is less likely to confuse the concepts of authority and power, since the two rarely go together in the international arena.

There are a number of reasons why international theorists should attempt to use both the terminology and concepts of other power analysts. In science a consensus on terminology is worth a great deal (cf. Haas, 1969, pp. 168–70). We must, therefore, be willing to make some sacrifices in order to achieve such a consensus. Agreement cannot be attained if everyone insists that his pet word is essential to a clear understanding of power relations. Although it is often asserted that there is no consensus on power concepts or terminology, this is simply not true. The consensus may be far from complete but it certainly does exist. The significant thing is not that Dahl (1968) and Cartwright (1965) found it difficult to summarize the power literature but that they were able to do it so well. There is also a self-fulfilling prophecy aspect to the consensus. Every time we affirm the existence of the consensus, we strengthen it. Given the head start that other social scientists have in formal power analysis, they are unlikely to follow the lead of the international theorists at this late date. If students of international politics want to communicate with power theorists in other disciplines or in other subfields of political science, they must familiarize themselves with the terms and concepts used by these theorists. In scholarship, as in international relations, one's desire to communicate with foreigners is partially measured by one's willingness to learn their language.

Power analysis has recently been severely criticized as an approach to the study of politics. Regardless of what one calls it, students of international politics are likely to continue to be interested in answering the question, "How can A get B to do X?" The answer to this question, as Riker (1964) says, is not a complete explanation of power relations; but it is a very important partial one.

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