

DELEGATION AND AGENCY IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Edited by Darren G. Hawkins, David A. Lake,
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Why do states delegate certain tasks and responsibilities to international organizations rather than acting unilaterally or cooperating directly? Furthermore, to what extent do states continue to control IOs once authority has been delegated? Examining a variety of different institutions, including the World Trade Organization, the United Nations, and the European Commission, this book explores the different methods that states employ to ensure their interests are being served and identifies the problems involved with monitoring and managing IOs. The contributors suggest that it is not inherently more difficult to design effective delegation mechanisms at the international level than at the domestic level. Drawing on principal-agent theory, they explain the variations that exist in the extent to which states are willing to delegate to IOs. They argue that IOs are neither all evil nor all virtuous, but are better understood as bureaucracies that can be controlled to varying degrees by their political masters.

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Preface

This volume began with a set of questions asked at Park City, Utah, in May of 2002. The conference was titled “Delegation to International Organizations” and was organized by Scott Cooper, Darren Hawkins, Wade Jacoby, and Daniel Nielson, all of Brigham Young University. The conference asked why governments delegate authority to IOs, how they structure delegation relationships, and what problems result from such delegation. In many respects, this volume reflects the basic architecture of that early conference on the topic. We are thus grateful to the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies; the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences; and the Department of Political Science at Brigham Young University for making possible that initial exploration of ideas about international delegation.

While the broad themes of the volume were laid out in the spring of 2002, the scope of the project was narrowed and refined considerably during two conferences organized by Lisa Martin and held at Harvard University in December 2002 and April 2003. These meetings focused participants specifically on agency theory as a tool for understanding delegation to IOs. For funding and sponsoring these conferences, we are grateful to Harvard’s Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study and its Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

To sharpen contributions to the volume, David Lake organized a final conference in Del Mar, California, in September of 2003. This meeting helped make clear the unifying themes of the volume. We are grateful to the Department of Political Science and the Institute for International, Comparative, and Area Studies at the University of California, San Diego; the University of California’s Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation and BYU’s Kennedy Center for enabling that conference. We gathered a final round of commentaries and critiques during two

Preface

linked panels at the International Studies Association meeting in March 2004. We also thank the Reves Center for International Studies and the program on the Theory and Practice of International Relations at The College of William and Mary for financial support and maintenance of the project website.

We are grateful to many scholars who served as discussants at the various meetings. For their help in improving the ideas in this volume, we thank Ken Abbott, Michael Barnett, Jee Baum, Bill Bernhard, Tim Bütthe, J. R. DeShazo, Peter Dombrowski, Daniel Drezner, John Ferejohn, Marty Finnemore, Jeff Frieden, Judy Goldstein, Peter Gourevitch, Lloyd Gruber, Miles Kahler, Robert Keohane, Barbara Koremenos, Beth Simmons, Kenneth Schultz, Ken Stiles, and Mike Thies. Anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press and *International Organization* (for the individual chapters submitted there) also provided useful feedback. While these scholars certainly do not agree with all the arguments we advance in this volume, the arguments and supporting evidence are much stronger because of their critiques.

With remarkably good cheer, all of the volume's contributors wrote multiple drafts of their papers in response to the comments received at the several conferences and lengthy comments from the editors. In addition, they served multiple times as discussants and commentators on one another's chapters. More than most academic projects, this volume represents the very best type of collaboration, where the joint efforts greatly outweigh the sum of the individual contributions. We are grateful to all of the authors for going that second (and third) mile on behalf of their co-contributors. This process has greatly strengthened our faith in the value of such collaborative scholarly endeavors.

We are also indebted to Randy Calvert, the series editor, and John Haslam at Cambridge University Press for their support and commitment to this project. Lynne Bush at the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation did an outstanding job in preparing the manuscript for review and publication.

PART I

Introduction

