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CHAPTERS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE NEWS | EBOOK | IR SIMULATIONS

1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10

IN THIS CHAPTER

Study Plan

Chapter Summary

Flashcards

Chapter Quiz

IR Focus Questions

IR Simulations

Video Exercises

Ebook

SHARE

CHAPTER 10
Transnational Issues

Chapter Summary

I. INTRODUCTION

- The standardized shipping container is an example of how simple changes can have complex consequences
- In the twenty-first century, more different kinds of actors than ever participate in international politics
- The growing importance of non-state actors signifies a significant power shift.
- These new actors address a great variety of issues. Two of the core issues, security and international political economy, have evolved in new ways:

    - State security is increasingly conceptualized as human security.
    - Economic decisions made by multinational corporations (MNCs) affect national balances of payments and ability of workers to make a living wage.
    - Global communications and the technology revolution undermines the primacy of territorial states.

II. HEALTH AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE—PROTECTING LIFE IN THE COMMONS

- Public health and disease are old issues that have never respected national boundaries. Eradication of diseases has always been a global challenge.
- The international community was caught unawares by the new realities spawned by globalization. Ebola, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), Avian bird flu, and HIV/AIDS outbreaks have been acerbated by increased global mobility.
- HIV/AIDS as a Transnational Issue

    - AIDS has rapidly become a major health and humanitarian problem with over 3.1 million deaths annually and between 33 and 46 million people living with the disease:
        1. AIDS is an _economic issue_, disproportionately affecting those in their primary productive years, between 15 and 45.
        2. AIDS is a _social issue_, as families are torn apart and children are orphaned. These children are often forced to turn to prostitution or join the military in order to survive.
        3. AIDS is a _human rights and ethical issue_ as well as a _security issue_. In 2000 the UN Security Council identified AIDS as a threat to global security, the first time that health has been so recognized.

    - Many different actors have responded to the AIDS problem, but individual states are key:
        1. Uganda, Botswana, and Brazil took initiatives very early on, and each has seen rates of infection decline.
        2. South Africa, China, and India have been slow to acknowledging the problem.

    - IGOs took the leadership role at the early stages:
        1. The World Health Organization (WHO) took steps to help states create national AIDS programs beginning in 1986.
        2. In 1996, the Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was created, which coordinates cooperative projects among numerous UN agencies.
        3. The United Nations initiated the practice of convening global AIDS conferences every two years to raise awareness and mobilize responses.

- Many NGOs have been actively involved. Some work at the grassroots level while others train health-care workers in AIDS care.
- With the development of antiretrovirals to extend the life of people living with AIDS, the multinational pharmaceutical companies have become a major actor, albeit a controversial one:

    - Indian drug companies began manufacturing generics reducing the cost of treatment, which a controversial practice.
    - Brazil took its case to UN human rights bodies, arguing that patients have a human right to treatment.

- Transnational communities of experts, or **epistemic communities**, are composed of experts from IGOs, NGOs, and states and

substate agencies.

- Beyond AIDS

  - Health issues also involve regulations to insure quality and control unhealthy behaviors.
  - Health is also recognized as a development issue.

- A Theoretical Tale

  - Health is an example of a quintessential functionalist issue, as health was one of the first areas of international cooperation.

- Where liberals, realists, and radicals may disagree is on the correct approach to addressing health issues.

  1. *Liberals* are more apt to focus on international responsibility for dealing with health issues.
  2. *Realists* are more apt to stress individual state responsibility and to acknowledge the importance of health when state security is threatened.
  3. *Radicals* see health as an issue that illustrates the economic differential between the wealthy developed world and the poor developing world.

III. THE ENVIRONMENT—PROTECTING THE GLOBAL COMMONS

- Conceptual Perspectives

  - The notion of **collective goods**: Collective goods help conceptualize how to achieve shared benefits that depend on overcoming conflicting interests.
  - **Sustainability:** Employing the criterion of sustainability forces individuals to think about policies to promote change that neither damage the environment nor use up finite resources so that future generations will benefit.
  - Over time, principles and norms have evolved in customary international law:

    1. *No-significant harm principle*: states cannot initiate policies that cause significant environmental damages to another state.
    2. *Good-neighbor principle*: cooperation between states.
    3. *"Soft law principles"*: expressed in conferences, declarations, declarations, or resolutions. They are nonbinding but informally describe acceptable norms of behavior. These include:

       1. Polluter-pays principle
       2. Precautionary principle
       3. Preventive-action principle

- Population Issues

  - In 1798, Thomas Malthus posited that population increases will outstrip food production. This is referred to as the **Malthusian dilemma**.
  - An independent report, *The Limits to Growth*, issued by the Club of Rome in 1972, concluded that the Earth would reach natural limits to growth within a relatively short period of time.
  - Malthus did not predict the **demographic transition**—that population growth rates would not proceed unchecked.
  - Population growth rates have increased dramatically, though not unchecked. Three key observations make these populations growth rates disturbing:

    1. The population increase is not uniformly distributed. The developing world has much higher population growth rates than the developed world.
    2. Both rapid rates of overall population growth and high levels of economic development mean increased demands for natural resources. For certain countries like China and India with large populations already, the problem is severe.
    3. High population growth rates lead to numerous ethical dilemmas for policy makers: how can population growth rates be curbed without infringing on individual rights to procreate?

  - Population becomes a collective good problem: what is economically rational for a family is not environmentally sustainable.
  - What actions can be taken with respect to population to alleviate or mitigate the dilemmas just discussed?

    1. Prohibiting procreation is politically untenable and pragmatically difficult.
    2. Relying on group pressure to forces changes in behavior will not work in the populous states.
    3. Some individuals desire smaller families but family planning methods may be unavailable to them.

- What is clear about the problem is that it is an international one, affecting states, IGOs, and NGOs.
- Natural Resource Issues

  - The belief in the infinite supply of natural resources was a logical one throughout much of human history. Trading for natural resources became a necessary activity as it was recognized that those resources never uniformly distributed.
  - Freshwater is a key natural resource for all forms of life. Agriculture accounts for two-thirds of the use of water; industry, about one-quarter; and human consumption, about one tenth.

    1. It is estimated that by 2025, two-thirds of the world's people will live in countries facing moderate or severe water shortage.
    2. International controversies regarding water have occurred in the United States with irrigation of the Colorado River, Israel's control of scarce water on the West Bank, and China's rechanneling of the Yangtze River to northern cities.

- Pollution

  - In the 1950s and 1960s, several events dramatically publicized the deteriorating condition of the commons. The natural world was being degrade by human activity associated with agricultural and industrial practices.
  - Economic development both in agriculture and industry has negative **externalities**—costly unintended consequences—for everyone, as well as positive effects:

1. *Environmental damage*
2. *Ozone depletion*
3. *Climate change*

- The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 provided for stabilizing the concentration of greenhouse gases and delineated goals for reducing emissions by 2010. Developed countries are to reduce their overall emissions, and provide flexibility mechanisms designed to make reaching the emission targets more cost-efficient.

    - Trading of international emission shares is permitted.
    - Credits can be earned from "carbon sinks." States can offset their emissions by gaining credits for planting forests.
    - Joint implementation permits countries to participate in projects for emission reductions and allows each to receive part of the credit.

- In the United States, the George W. Bush administration refused to agree to any binding commitment on emissions, objecting on several grounds:

    - The economic costs of moving away from a fossil-fuel based economy are too high and an unacceptable number of jobs would be lost.
    - The administration believes that markets will bring about the necessary changes, and opposes international regulations imposed by an unrepresentative and unaccountable body.
    - Both European states and Japan have signed the protocol and are making efforts to reduce emissions.

- In 2009 President Barak Obama attended a follow-up conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Copenhagen Accord provided little in the way of specific commitments.

- Environmental NGOs in Action

    - NGOs perform a number of key functions in environmental affairs:

        1. They serve as generalized critics, often using media to publicize their dissatisfaction and to get environmental issues on the agenda.
        2. NGOs may function through IGOs, working to change the organization itself.
        3. NGOs can aid in monitoring and enforcing environmental regulations, either by pointing out problems or by actually carrying out on-site inspections.
        4. NGOs may function as part of transnational communities of experts, serving with counterparts in IGOs and state agencies to try to change practices and procedures of an issue.
        5. NGOs can attempt to influence state environmental policy directly, providing information about policy options and lobbying directly through a state's legislature or bureaucracy.

- A Theoretical Tale

    - What has made many environmental issues so politically controversial at the international level is that states have tended to divide along the developed-developing—North-South—economic axis.
    - The challenge in addressing globalizing issues is to negotiate a middle ground that reflects the fact that both sides are correct.
    - Realists, liberals, and radicals do not have the same degree of concern for environmental issues.

        1. Realists' emphasis has been on state security
        2. Radicals are apt to see the costs borne disproportionately by those in the South and by the poorer groups in the developed North.
        3. Liberals see the environmental issue as appropriate to the international agenda.
        4. Constructivists are interested in how political and scientific elites define the problem and how that definition changes over time and new ideas become rooted in their belief sets.

IV. HUMAN RIGHTS—PROTECTING HUMAN DIGNITY

- Conceptualizing Human Rights and the Development of a Regime

    - Three different kinds of rights have been articulated:

        1. **First-generation human rights**: Rights possessed by an individual that the state cannot usurp. Political and civil rights dominate first generation rights: the right to free speech, free press, and freedom of religion. These rights are within the liberal tradition and by realists.
        2. **Second-generation human rights**: developed under the principles of Marx. This view emphasizes minimum material rights that the state must provide to individuals, such as education, health care, housing, and social security. These are referred to as positive rights.
        3. **Third-generation human rights**: specify rights for groups, such as ethnic or indigenous minorities within a polity or designated special groups such as women or children. Some have even added individual human rights.

    - The UN General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948
    - These wide ranging human rights standard have led many scholars to conclude that there is an international regime of human rights-agreed upon rules, norms, and procedures that emerge from high levels of cooperation.
    - Two main questions emerge from the debate over human rights have proven to have enduring resonance:

        1. Can human rights principles survive threats to national security?
        2. Is there a set of rights that should be **universal rights**?

    - Pundits from different regions of the world have argued for **cultural relativism**, that is, rights are culturally determined.

- The Human Rights Regime in Action

    - States traditionally have argued that human rights is primarily the sovereign prerogative of the state.
    - A contending position emerged during the twentieth century: how a government treats its own citizens can affect the larger global community.

- What can the international community actually do? The UN's activities and the activities of other IGOs have been confined to several areas:

  1. The United Nations has been involved in the setting of the international human rights standards articulated in the many treaties.
  2. The United Nations and the European Commission on Human Rights have worked to monitor state behavior, establishing procedures for complaints, compiling reports from observers, and monitoring civil rights.
  3. The United Nations has taken measures to promote human rights by assuring fair elections and providing a focal point for human rights activity.
  4. States and the international community are the primary enforcers of international human rights.
  5. UN enforcement is also an option.

- The international community's approaches to human rights enforcement are fraught with difficulties.

  1. A state's signature on a treaty is no guarantee of its willingness or ability to follow the treaty's provisions.
  2. Monitoring state compliance through self-reporting systems presumes a willingness to comply and to be transparent.
  3. Taking direct action by imposing economic embargoes may not achieve the announced objective, and may actually be harmful to those very individuals whom the embargoes are trying to help.

- While the enforcement of human rights standards by the international community is clearly the exception rather than the norm, important precedents were established in the late twentieth century.

  - Some kind of international action is acceptable, though such actions are not always taken. But the international community may be closer now to saying it has a responsibility.
  - Most policy makers and theorists would agree that genocide should elicit a concerted international response.
  - In the aftermath of the Holocaust, the Convention against Genocide was negotiated. It elucidated clear principles that systematic killing of a group based on race, gender, or ethnicity is prohibited under international law and norms.
  - However, since then, using the word genocide implies an obligation to act. If states do not want to act, they can deny that genocide is occurring, as the United States did in Rwanda in 1994.

- Advocates of each of the three theoretical perspectives might argue different responses on the part of states.

  - *Realists* would generally focus on a state's national interest in the situation. If genocide committed in one state jeopardizes another state's national interests, then it should act.
  - *Liberals'* emphasis on individual welfare and on the malleability of the state makes such intrusions into the actions of other states less offensive to them.
  - *Radicals* have few qualms about states' taking actions. For them, the real culprit is the nemesis of an unfair economic system and so the target in their view is much more diffuse.

- Other Human Rights Actors

  - NGOs have been vocal and sometimes very effective in the area of human rights. Of the 250 organizations, there is a core group that has been the most vocal. It includes Amnesty International, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Human Rights Watch.
  - The work of NGOs has become more effective with the use of the Internet and the World Wide Web. Individuals and groups are able to voice their grievances swiftly and to a worldwide audience, and can disseminate information quickly.

- Women's Rights as Human Rights: The Globalization of Women's Rights

  - Evolving Political and Economic Rights

    1. Women first took up the call for political participation within national jurisdiction, demanding their political and civil rights in the form of women's suffrage.
    2. Conventions on the Political Rights of Women in 1952
    3. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
    4. Women in Development (WID) Movement

  - From Political and Economic Rights to Human Rights

    1. By the 1990s, the discussion of women's rights was clearly viewed as human rights. This shift was solidified at the 1993 Vienna Conference on human rights.
    2. Included in the Vienna Conference was not only human rights protection in the public sphere but protection against human rights abuses in the in the private sphere, notably gender-based violence against women.
    3. Three examples illustrate the widespread and controversial problem of violence against women:

       1. The usurpation of women's rights in Taliban-run Afghanistan.
       2. Rape, including rape by soldiers in war.
       3. Trafficking in women and children.

  - Different feminist groups have placed different priorities on the various types of human rights protection. Liberal feminists have found solace in granting political and civil human rights while social feminists point to the economic forces.

V. TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

- Trafficking in women and children is illegal under international law.
- Criminal networks engage in sex trafficking, which has become more serious and widespread since the collapse of the USSR.
- Narcotrafficking—the transportation of large quantities of narcotics—has always been a problem, but has become a focus since the end of the Cold War

  - Narcotrafficking has survived as demand for drugs has been relatively stable over time while transport costs have

fallen.

VI. THE IMPACT OF TRANSNATIONAL ISSUES

- Transnational issues have shifted from tertiary and moral issues to primary and vital issues since the end of World War II.
- Transnational issues have effects on four major areas of international relations theory and practice.

  - The interconnectedness of the plethora of subissues within health, environmental, and human rights issues affect international bargaining.
  - These globalizing themselves may be the source of conflict. Issues of resource depletion and degradation, usually attenuated by population increase and pressure on resources, are apt to result in conflicts when some groups try to capture use of the scarce resource.
  - The norm of noninterference in the domestic affairs of other states was embedded in the UN Charter. Yet the rise of nonstate actors and the forces of globalization undermine Westphalian notions of state sovereignty.
  - Transnationsl issues pose critical problems for international relations scholars and for the theoretical frameworks introduced in the text.

    1. For *realists*, the very core propositions are made problematic by globalizing issues. Realists have adopted a more nuanced argument—they contend that state primacy is not in jeopardy.
    2. For *liberals*, the globalizing issues can be more easily integrated into their theoretical picture.
    3. *Radicals* have never been comfortable with the primacy of the state and the international system that the dominant coalition of states created
    4. *Constructivists* have alerted others to the nuances of the changing discourse embedded in discussion of health, the environment, and human rights.

VI. WILL TRANSNATIONAL ISSUES LEAD TO GLOBAL GOVERNANCE?

- The processes of interaction among the various actors in international politics are now more frequent and intense, ranging from conventional ad hoc cooperation and formal organization collaboration to NGO and network collaboration.

  - These changes have led some to think of there being pieces of **global governance**. Global governance implies that through various structures and processes, actors can coordinate interests and needs although there is no unifying political authority.
  - Skeptics of global governance do not believe that anything approaching it is possible or desirable.

VII. IN SUM: CHANGING YOU

- A citizenry able to articulate these arguments is a citizenry better able to explain the whys and hows of events that affect our lives. A citizen who can understand these events is better able to make informed policy choices.
- In the globalizing era of the twenty-first century, as economic, political, social, and environmental forces both above and within the state assume greater saliency, the role of individuals becomes all the more demanding.