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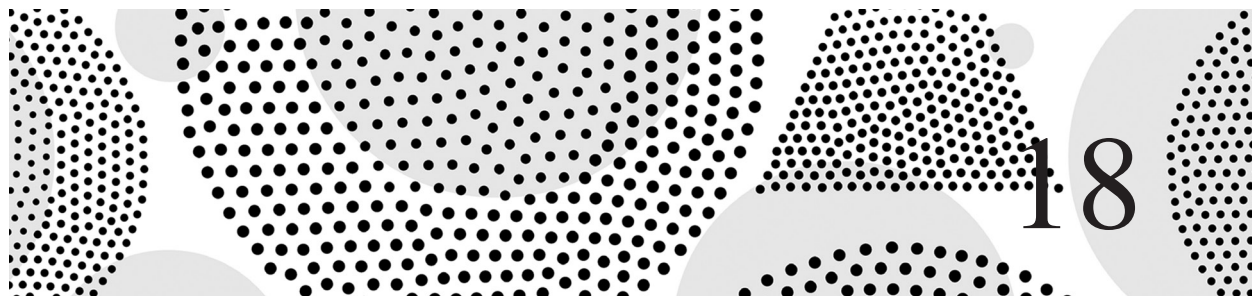Chapter 33 © W. Richard Scott 2017

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Power, Institutions and Organizations

Thomas B. Lawrence and Sean Buchanan

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between power and institutions is an intimate one. Institutions exist to the extent that they are powerful – the extent to which they affect the behaviors, beliefs and opportunities of individuals, groups, organizations and societies. Institutions are enduring patterns of social practice (Hughes, 1936), but they are more than that: institutions are those patterns of practice for which 'departures from the pattern are counteracted in a regulated fashion, by repetitively activated, socially constructed, controls – that is, by some set of rewards and sanctions' (Jepperson, 1991: 145). Thus, power, in the form of repetitively activated controls, is what differentiates institutions from other social constructions (Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004). The relationship between power and institutions is also bi-directional. A significant stream of research has documented the processes through which

actors, individual and collective, affect the institutional contexts within which they work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009). This brings agency and interests directly into the relationship between power and institutions (DiMaggio, 1988).

Even with the close connection between power and institutions, a longstanding critique of organizational institutionalism is that it tends to downplay the role of power (Clegg, 2010; Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997; Khan et al., 2007; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Munir, 2015; Suddaby, 2010). As the focus in institutional research shifted from isomorphism, legitimacy and institutionalization to change, interests and conflict in the evolution of organizational fields, it sparked a renewed interest in the relationship between power and institutions. Research on institutional entrepreneurship (Hardy & Maguire, 2008), institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006;

Lawrence et al., 2009), institutional logics (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012) and research at the intersection of institutional theory and social movement studies (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012) have assigned a more important and explicit role to power in their institutional analyses. As productive as these efforts have been, the explicit integration of existing theories of power in organizational institutionalism is still underdeveloped (Munir, 2015). Although recent theoretical developments in organizational institutionalism have created room for power and interests, there has still been little formal engagement with existing insights on power – a lamentable condition since new directions in organizational institutionalism offer the potential for integration in ways that could enhance both the power and institutional literatures.

Our objective in this chapter is to take a step in this direction by developing an organizing framework for understanding the multidimensional relationship between power and institutions, and exploring some of the implications of that framework. Specifically, we argue that there are two overarching dynamics that describe the

relationship between power and institutions – institutional control and institutional agency – each of which describes an aspect of how institutions and actors relate to each other in terms of power relations. Institutional control involves the effects of institutions on actors' beliefs and behavior; institutional agency describes the work of actors to create, transform, maintain and disrupt institutions. These two dynamics form the core of this chapter: we describe and illustrate each of them, examine the mode and forms of power with which each is associated and explore them in terms of three key dimensions – the role of decision-making, the presence or absence of conflict and the nature of resistance (see Figure 18.1).

We first outline the notion of institutional politics and introduce the concepts of institutional control and institutional agency. We then examine institutional control and institutional agency in more detail, with specific attention to how they connect to existing writing on power and politics. We conclude by exploring a set of issues that emerge from the framework and some future directions for research on power, organizations and institutions.
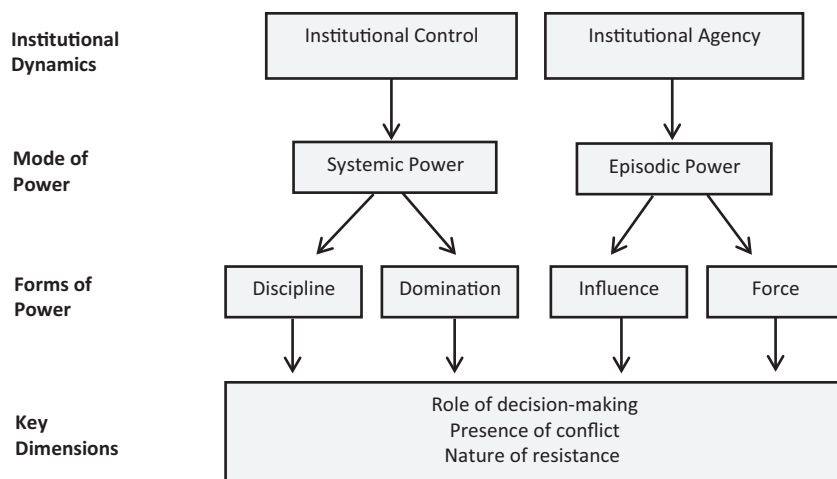
Figure 18.1   Institutional politics

THE POLITICS OF INSTITUTIONS

Overview

Holm's (1995) study of institutional change in Norwegian fisheries highlights the potential analytical power of adopting an explicitly political stance on institutions and institutional change, as well as suggesting the contours of what a political perspective on institutions might look like. Holm's (1995: 398) analysis explains the 'rise and fall of a specific institutional form, the mandated sales organization (MSO), in Norwegian fisheries', focusing on the 'interconnection between the practical and political levels of action' and the 'interaction of practices, interests and ideas'. This work highlights the power of a number of institutions and a range of political/institutional strategies. We draw on it here to illustrate the theoretical framework for connecting power and institutions that we develop in the rest of the chapter.

The central institutional battle in Holm's (1995) story is between the fishers and the fish merchants of Norway. Holm's (1995: 404) first example of institutional change in this battle provides a clear example of the relationship between power and institutions.

> The fishermen's common interest lay in restricting the supply of herring, which would bring better prices. As long as they acted individually, this option was not available. To solve their dilemma, the fishermen had to set up a rule system that allowed them to market their herring collectively. … If we simply assume that the fishermen in this situation were rational and acted individually, we cannot account for the fact that [the rule system] was established and successfully organized the herring trade for two years without legal protection. To explain this, we must look into the pattern of interaction among the fishermen. The herring fishery in question was largely concentrated both in time and geographically, and the fishermen largely came from the same area, had the same social background and operated the same type of technology.

The rule system enacted by the fishermen is a classic example of an institution – a set of practices, for which compliance is enforced through social and cultural mechanisms, in this case implicitly through mechanisms of surveillance and shaming that are made possible by dense patterns of interaction and common cultural backgrounds (Douglas, 1973). This institution effected a set of power relations, directly between the rules and the fishermen, and indirectly between the fishermen and the fish merchants who now faced a powerful, organized collective actor, rather than a set of relatively weak, unorganized individual fishermen.

In further describing this example, Holm (1995) points to a second type of relationship between power and institutions.

> A rule making all fishermen sell their catch through the organization, enforced by police and the legal apparatus of the Norwegian state, would immediately solve the free-rider problem. Mobilizing the state's power behind the fishermen's institutional project in this way was not a simple matter, however. It would require, first, that the fishermen's problem could be made so important that it warranted a place on the political agenda; second, that the fishermen's solution would survive through the various stages of the decision-making process; and third, that the required number of votes be cast in their favor.

Thus, the system of rules that would bind the fishermen together and unite them against the fish merchants did not just appear, but required significant, complex forms of institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In order to institutionalize the rule in law, the fishermen would need to engage in discursive strategies intended to frame the problem as important, as well as building and leveraging relationships with governmental actors who could shepherd the project through the bureaucracy. Thus, as much as institutions are connected to power through their impact on the beliefs and behaviors of actors, they are also connected to power through the strategies of actors that are intended to transform institutional arrangements through political means.

The contours of power and institutions in Holm's (1995) study illustrate the theoretical framework that guides the exploration of

power and institutions in the rest of this chapter. These contours represent what we refer to as the 'institutional politics' of a situation. The concept of institutional politics, we argue, involves two primary dynamics, each of which describes a role that power plays in shaping the relationship between institutions and actors. Institutional control describes the impact of institutions on the behaviors and beliefs of individual and organizational actors. In research that has highlighted this role, power is present but usually appears only indirectly, observable primarily through the compliance of organizational actors to institutional rules and norms (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983). Institutional agency is conceived of here as the work of individual and collective actors to create, transform, maintain and disrupt institutions. Research that has highlighted this role has made power explicit, highlighting the connection between power and agency and the influence of actors on institutional arrangements (DiMaggio, 1988; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004; Rojas, 2010; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). The interplay of these two roles in an organizational field can be described as the 'institutional politics' of a situation.

Power and Institutional Politics

Before exploring each dimension of institutional politics, we provide an overview of the approach we take to power and the terminology we employ. The study of power has long been a central element of organization studies, with a large and long-standing literature on what leads to individuals, groups and organizations gaining power relative to others (Bachrach & Lawler, 1980; Brass, 1984; Clegg & Dunkerly, 1980; Hickson, Hinings, Schneck, & Pennings, 1972; Jermier, Knights, & Nord, 1994; Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The variety of approaches and theories has meant

that the concept of power has been defined in a wide range of ways. In this chapter, we take the view that power is a property of relationships such that the beliefs or behaviors of an actor are affected by another actor or system. Thus, power is a relational phenomenon, rather than a commodity (Clegg, 1989; Clegg, Courpasson, & Phillips, 2006; Foucault, 1977): it is an effect of social relations, rather than something an actor can 'have', 'hold' or 'keep in reserve'. So, when we talk about power in this chapter, we do not refer to a capacity for effect, but rather the aspect of relationships in which there is an effect.[1]

This definition of power leads to a distinction between two basic modes in which power operates and which corresponds in large part to the dynamics of institutional politics described above. The first mode of power is 'episodic', which refers to relatively discrete, strategic acts of mobilization initiated by self-interested actors (Clegg, 1989). Historically, this mode of power has dominated the study of power in organizations through the development of two streams of theory (Hardy & Clegg, 1996), one focusing on power as domination through ownership and control of the means of production (Braverman, 1974; Burowoy, 1979; Clegg, 1975; Clegg & Dunkerly, 1980); and, one focusing on the role of power as an alternative to formal authority in organizations (Hickson et al., 1972; Mintzberg, 1984; Thompson, 1956). The second mode of power is 'systemic' – power that works through routine, ongoing practices to advantage particular groups without those groups necessarily establishing or maintaining those practices (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1977; Hardy, 1994; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Systemic forms of power are associated with a wide range of phenomena, including socialization and accreditation processes (Covaleski, Dirsmith, Heian, & Samuel, 1998), technological systems (Noble, 1984; Shaiken, 1984) and insurance and tax regimes (Simon, 1988). These forms of power tend to work in an ongoing,

prosaic fashion, such that they are often not apparent as forms of power (Covaleski et al., 1998; Townley, 1993).

As illustrated in Figure 18.1, we argue that institutional agency is underpinned by episodic forms of power. Institutional agency requires actors to mobilize resources, engage in institutional contests over meanings and practices, develop, support or attack forms of discourse and practice – all involving discrete, strategic acts of mobilization. We further argue that institutional control is associated with systemic forms of power. As discussed above, Jepperson (1991) argues that institutions are associated with automatic forms of regulation that enforce compliance, without involving episodes of action on the part of interested actors. Regulations, norms and taken-for-granted understandings have their roots, of course, in self-interested behavior, but once established and associated with sets of social, cultural or cognitive 'stakes' (Bourdieu, 1993), institutional control operates as if significantly independent of any particular agent, or at least independent of the interests of such an agent. The differences between episodic and systemic power are observable in the concrete ways in which power is exercised. In this chapter, we explore two forms of episodic power – influence and force – that we believe are fundamental to institutional agency and two forms of systemic power – discipline and domination – that we believe are fundamental to institutional control.

For each of the four forms of power that we examine, we explore three distinct dimensions (see Figure 18.1): the role of decision-making; the role of conflict; and the nature of resistance. Our interest in decision-making is rooted in Lukes' (1974) argument that the study of power should not be limited to concrete decision-making, but must also include non-decision-making, which refers to instances where potential courses of action are 'suffocated before they are even voiced; or kept covert; or killed before they gain access to the relevant decision-making arena'

(Bacharach & Baratz, 1970: 44), as well as broader forms of agenda setting and control. Lukes' central argument is that power is exercised not only when an actor's decision is influenced by another; but also when certain courses of action are prevented from entering the decision-making arena.

The second dimension – the role of conflict – is also drawn from Lukes' (1974), who argues that the exercise of power can involve observable conflict but can also exist without any directly observable conflict. Although the exercise of power often sparks some kind of contestation, in some cases power can be exercised in ways that prevent conflict from emerging in the first place. Lukes (2005: 27) suggests that 'the supreme exercise of power [is] to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have – that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires'.

The third dimension of each form of power we explore is its relationship to resistance. The first prominent recognition of institutional resistance was in Oliver's (1991) discussion of potential responses to institutional pressures: 'organizational responses [to institutional pressures] will vary from conforming to resistant, from impotent to influential, and from habitual to opportunistic' (Oliver, 1991: 151). Oliver argues that actors potentially respond to institutional pressures with five basic strategies that range from the most passive to the most active: 'acquiesce', 'compromise', 'avoid', 'defy' and 'manipulate'. All but the end points of this set involve attempting to impose limits on institutional control and thus constitute forms of institutional resistance. Despite Oliver's (1991) clear and influential statement regarding the importance of institutional resistance, it has remained the most neglected aspect of institutional politics. The 'acquiesce' strategy has been the dominant response described in studies of institutional control (e.g., Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983); and the 'manipulate' strategy has been the focus of research on institutional agency

(e.g., DiMaggio, 1988; Garud, Jain, & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Maguire et al., 2004). There is, however, a relative dearth of research on the 'middle ground' strategies of 'compromise', 'avoid' and 'defy'.

Although studies of resistance in the social sciences are not rare, they tend to focus on resistance to either broad, societal norms and values (Kirsch, 2000), or to managerial control in organizations (Jermier et al., 1994). Much less well understood is the resistance of individuals and organizations to field-level rules, norms and beliefs. In this chapter, we adopt Barbalet's (1985: 531) position, that 'resistance imposes limits on power. Indeed, it is through its limitations on power that resistance contributes to the outcome of power relations'. Thus, institutional resistance is understood as the work of actors to impose limits on institutional control and institutional agency.

Table 18.1 provides an overview of how each of the elements of power is related to institutional control and institutional agency. In the following sections, we discuss institutional control and agency in more detail with a specific emphasis on their relationship with the modes, forms and dimensions of power we have described.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL

Overview

The concept of institutional control parallels the classic sociological notion of 'social control', which 'referred to the capacity of a society to regulate itself according to desired principles and values' (Janowitz, 1975: 82). Working from an institutional perspective, our concern is not with the ability of societies to regulate themselves, but with the ways in which institutions organize, encourage and diminish particular forms of thought and action in organizational fields. Thus, there are two important conceptual shifts in moving from a focus on social control to institutional control. First, consistent with the more general shift in discussions of power (Clegg et al., 2006), institutional control is not understood as a capacity but as a relational effect of institutions on actors. The second shift is toward an understanding of social systems as fragmented, contested arenas in which coherent sets of 'desired principles and values' are less likely than are competing and conflicting principles and values enacted in discourse and action (Dyck & Schroeder, 2005; Hoffman, 1999).

In order to clarify the nature and scope of institutional control, we can contrast it with resource dependence as a basis for inter-organizational control. Drawing on exchange theory (Emerson, 1962), Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) argue that the critical determinant of power among organizations is the control of the flow of resources, such as money, physical resources, capital and human resources. Institutional theories also recognize the importance of resource flows as a control mechanism (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Scott, W. R., 2001), but resource dependence theory is not a theory of institutional control: theories of institutional control focus on those aspects of a field that regulate behavior on an

Table 18.1   Elements of power in institutional agency and control

Element of power	Institutional agency	Institutional control
Mode of power	Episodic	Systemic
Forms of power exercised	Force, influence	Domination, discipline
Conflict and contestation	Observable	Not observable (Latent)
Decision-making	Yes	No
Nature of resistance	Active (explicit)	Passive (implicit)

ongoing basis and set 'the rules of the game' (Holm, 1995; Lawrence, 1999), including coercive and resource-based forms of control, but also including many other forms of control, such as social and professional norms and taken-for-granted assumptions about the world. Resource dependence arguments also go beyond institutional concerns, dealing with any actor-to-actor relationship shaped by mutual resource interdependence, whether it is an institutional phenomenon or an ad hoc, momentary negotiation (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Thus, institutional and resource dependence theories constitute overlapping domains of concern rather than competing explanations; both approaches deal with resource-based institutional control, but each also includes other non-overlapping areas of interest.

Early neo-institutional writing on organizations, beginning with Meyer and Rowan's (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) classic pieces, focused significantly on institutional control, but left out an explicit consideration of power. Meyer and Rowan's (1977) discussion of 'formal structure as myth and ceremony' provided a powerful set of images for understanding the nature of institutional control. Their central argument was that 'organizations are driven to incorporate the practices and procedures defined by prevailing rationalized concepts of organizational work and institutionalized in society' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977: 340). Most critical to how research on institutional control developed is their idea that organizational environments are constituted by powerful myths that are 'highly institutional and thus in some measure beyond the discretion of any individual participant or organization' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977: 344). DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) examination of institutional isomorphism and collective rationality extended the focus on compliance with powerful institutions, which led both to compliance and the homogenization of organizational fields. DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) three sources of institutional control – mimetic, normative,

coercive – have become a taken-for-granted feature of institutional theories of organization. Each of these describes a class of mechanisms that regulate the behavior of actors in a field through social and cultural systems rather than through enforcement by a self-interested actor.

The first stream of empirical research that emerged out of these theoretical discussions focused on the diffusion of innovation within fields and also largely ignored the role of power (Baron, Dobbin, & Jennings, 1986; Leblebici, Salancik, Copay, & King, 1991; Mezias & Scarselletta, 1994; Slack & Hinings, 1994; Strang & Soule, 1998; Tolbert & Zucker, 1983; Westphal, Gulati, & Shortell, 1997). This work demonstrated that the adoption of innovations depends significantly on the influence of social and cultural systems that reduce uncertainty and provide legitimacy and other resources to adopting organizations. The classic institutional argument regarding the diffusion of innovation has been that as new practices are adopted for technical reasons by leading organizations, the practices gain legitimacy that spurs adoption by other organizations who avoid cognitive uncertainty and normative sanction by mimicking the early adopters (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983).

Mode of Power

Looking across the theoretical and empirical writing on institutional control, it is clear that much of this work has left out any explicit consideration of power. There is, however, an image of power that is consistent with, though often implicit in, this work. Both the earlier institutional discussions of control that largely ignored power and the more recent work that brings it in directly are consistent with a conception of power as vested in social and cultural systems, rather than in individual actors. This approach to power is consistent with recent work in the sociology of power that describes it as 'systemic' –

power that works through routine, ongoing practices to advantage particular groups without those groups necessarily establishing or maintaining those practices (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1977; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Understanding power as potentially systemic is not intended to attribute 'will' or 'agency' to systems (social or technological), but rather to break any simple association between agency and power (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1977). From an institutional perspective, it seems important to embrace a definition of power that recognizes the power of the courts, professional associations, language and social customs, as well as the actors that occupy roles within these structures and who enact these routines. Indeed, a cornerstone of an institutional perspective is the idea that actors are subject to forms of power that are disconnected from the interests and actions of specific others (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Forms of Power

It is useful to differentiate between two major forms of institutional control, one of which has received attention in the institutional literature and one that has largely been ignored. The concept of power that is most closely connected to studies of institutional control is Foucault's (1977) notion of discipline; although not explicitly evoked in most institutional research, the idea of power exercised through mundane practices that revolve significantly around the constitution of identity is core to much writing on institutional control. Discipline as a form of power involves an ongoing, systemic engagement with the target of power and relies on the agency of that target to have an effect (Clegg, 1989; Covaleski et al., 1998; Jacques, 1995; Knights & Willmott, 1989). Discipline works through the micro-techniques, practices and procedures of everyday life (Sewell, 1998; Sewell & Wilkinson, 1992; Townley, 1993) and consequently is often overlooked as a

form of power in organizations. An aspect of discipline that is critical for its role as a basis for institutional control is its capacity to provide a basis for agency through the formation of identity (Knights & Willmott, 1989). Discipline is concerned with shaping the actual formation of the subject, such that: 'subjects come to recognize themselves as discrete and autonomous individuals whose sense of a clear identity is sustained through participation in social practices which are a condition and consequence of the exercise of power' (Knights & Wilmott, 1989: 538). Thus, disciplinary practices involve a form of power that can be understood as positive in its provision of identity and motivation to organizational actors (Foucault, 1984).

A wonderful example of discipline as a basis for institutional control comes from its use in the Ford Motor Company in the early 20th century, as recounted in Stephen Meyer III's (1981), *The Five Dollar Day*. Although Henry Ford ran the Ford Motor Company and was responsible for many of its effects, he was particularly aware of the need to embed power in institutions which could control the behavior of employees (and others) without direct episodes of managerial agency. The Ford Motor Company's use of discipline as a means of institutional control stemmed from the problems it was facing with respect to its employees that were created in part by the assembly line technology. In 1914, the company's annual turnover rate was 416 percent and daily absenteeism ran between 10 and 20 percent. In response, Ford established another corporate institution, when it launched the 'Five Dollar Day' – a profit-sharing plan that would apply to 90 percent of its workforce, a plan so out of the ordinary that the *Wall Street Journal* accused Ford of promoting socialism. A central aspect of the program was the set of conditions that dictated who was eligible to benefit from it. Ford would only provide the profit sharing to those it deemed to be living a moral life, including 'every male employee over 22 years of age who leads a clean, sober and industrious life,

and who can prove he has thrifty habits', and '[a]ll women employed by the company who are deserving and who have some relatives solely dependent upon them for support'. Alongside these rules, Ford established a Sociological Department, which investigated the home lives of Ford workers in order to ascertain eligibility and which actively intervened with training and advice intended to lift standards of morality and living conditions. The Sociological Department focused particularly on Ford's newly immigrated workers, who as Henry Ford expressed, 'must be taught American ways, the English language, and the right way to live'. To that end, compulsory courses at the Ford English School included 'industry and efficiency', 'thrift and economy', 'domestic relations' and 'community relations'.

Although disciplinary power is an important and pervasive mechanism underpinning institutions, other important forms of systemic power have been largely overlooked in institutional studies of organization. In particular, institutional research has tended to ignore systemic power that works by altering the range of options available to actors – a form of power we describe as domination[2] (Lawrence, Winn, & Jennings, 2001). This form of power can be embedded in a wide variety of social systems including material technologies (Noble, 1984; Shaiken, 1984), information systems and actuarial practices (Simon, 1988). In the context of institutional control, systems of domination often take the form of physical and social technologies that provide the context for action. The physical layouts of office building, factories and universities, for example, institutionalize particular patterns of interaction among workers and are often overlooked as political mechanisms (Brown, Lawrence, & Robinson, 2005). Winner's (1986) examination of the politics of artifacts examines numerous instances of this, with the most famous being the many overpasses on Long Island, New York, which are so low that they do not permit 12-foot high public buses to use the parkways over which those overpasses go. Winner (1986: 23) argues that this effect is not happenstance, but rather, that it was an intentional control strategy of Robert Moses, the chief architect of New York public works from the 1920s to the 1970s. Winner argues that Moses' specified the overpasses in this way so that: 'Poor people and blacks, who normally used public transit, were kept off the roads because the twelve-foot tall buses could not handle the overpasses' and were consequently limited in their access to 'Jones Beach, Moses' widely acclaimed public park' (Winner, 1986: 23).

A more subtle form of institutional control through domination is that which is embedded in systems that restrict the effects of action, rather than restrict action itself, as illustrated by a wide range of actuarial practices. Actuarial practices involve the use of statistics to represent the characteristics of a population, including the use of standardized tests of intelligence, aptitude or personality, the construction of probability tables reflecting life expectancies and other life chances and the definition of demographic categories (Simon, 1988). While these familiar practices seem relatively banal and benign, they represent a significant shift in the production and structuring of power relations in societies:

> Through the lens of representations thrown off by these practices, individuals, once understood as moral or rational actors, are increasingly understood as locations in actuarial tables of variations. This shift from moral agent to actuarial subject marks a change in the way power is exercised on individuals by the state and other large organizations. Where power once sought to manipulate the choice of rational actors, it now seeks to predict behavior and situate subjects according to the risks they pose. (Simon, 1988: 772)

Thus, actuarial practices involve a form of restrictive institutional control in which the lives of individuals are transformed, not through their own actions, but through their placement in a social order abstracted from their lived experiences.

Although discipline and domination both work though routines practices and systems, there is a critical difference between the two. Whereas disciplinary practices involve 'knowing' the individual through regimes of surveillance and training (Foucault, 1977; Townley, 1993), systems of domination work by 'knowing' the population. Disciplinary mechanisms of surveillance, normalization and examination all work to construct an image of the 'normal' subject in any defined social space, move actors toward uniformity and punish deviants. In contrast, systems of domination 'map out the distribution and arrange strategies to maximize efficiency of the population as it stands' (Simon, 1988). While the disciplinary practices replaced techniques of coercion and intimidation that were less precise and engendered overt conflict (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1977), systems of domination draw on our knowledge of populations to extend this process even further, constructing even more precise systems of institutional control which engender even less overt conflict.

Role of Decision-Making

To better understand the ways in which different forms of power affect the dynamics of institutional control, we explore three key dimensions of each, beginning with the role of decision-making. The two forms of power we have argued underpin institutional control have very different relationships to decision-making. Key to discipline is the assumption of agency, and in fact the construction of agency (Lawrence et al., 2001). This affects the assumptions about decision-making under conditions of discipline: disciplinary techniques involve ongoing interaction with the subject in ways that shape their subjectivities such that the decisions they make and the decisions they do not make conform with the institutions that underpin power (Foucault, 1977). As Lawrence et al. (2001: 636) state, disciplined actors are 'those that have internalized the external demands and made them their own'. Thus, an objective of discipline is to prevent some issues from entering the decision-making arena; shaping the identities of targets such that certain courses of action are not considered, either because they simply seem impossible or because they are so repugnant as to be outside of the realm of serious contemplation. At the same time, discipline also works by ensuring that when decisions are made, they are done so intuitively in institutionally prescribed ways (Lawrence, Mauws, Dyck, & Kleysen, 2005). Thus, through surveillance, examination and other disciplinary practices, discipline affects decision-making through the continuous shaping of people's identities.

In contrast, domination constructs the target as an object, excluding the potential for agency (Lawrence et al., 2001), avoiding issues of decision-making not through the shaping of identities but through the shaping of circumstances. In systems of domination, including the layout of physical spaces, actuarial practices and some production technologies, power works by restricting the choice set available to people. Thus, domination controls targets in ways that render the ability of people to make decisions irrelevant.

Presence of Conflict

Although conflict and decision-making have been historically linked in the study of power (community power studies) contrasting the presence of conflict associated with discipline and domination shows the potential disconnect. A consistent and important finding in studies of institutional control has been the lack of visible conflict associated with successful instances of institutional control (Covaleski et al., 1998; Lawrence et al., 2001; Oakes et al., 1998; Townley, 1997). We argue that a lack of visible conflict is associated with institutional control based on both discipline and domination, but that this is achieved in very different ways.

In the case of discipline, the prevention of visible conflict is rooted in people's experience of discipline as a positive, productive form of power. As Foucault argues,

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1980: 119)

The relationship between discipline and conflict is inherent in the multiple, related meanings of the term: discipline as a form of power is tightly tied to its meanings connected to knowledge (the discipline of sociology), professions (accounting as a discipline) and self-regulation (disciplined bodies). It is not that discipline as a basis for institutional control does not involve any conflict, but rather that the kinds of conflict we associate with discipline are not so much overt, visible conflict among parties, but rather the internal conflicts and tensions that are associated with individuals struggling with tensions between their self-identities and the prescribed identities that are engendered by the disciplinary system. In organizations, conflict stemming from discipline is similarly likely to involve internal tensions and contradictions rooted in the differential attachment of subgroups to the values in play, and differential exposure of subgroups to surveillance and examination. In Oakes et al.'s (1998) study of business planning as a mechanism of discipline in museums and cultural heritage sites in Alberta, Canada, they found that the pedagogic function of business plans in this field helped to prevent conflict that would have likely arisen if the changes engendered by the business planning had simply been implemented. The introduction of business planning made the managers actively involved – and complicit – in practices that reduced their organizational power and cultural capital.

Conflict in institutional control underpinned by domination is similarly invisible, though for different reasons and with different dynamics. Domination works through structures and systems that limit the range of alternatives available to people as they confront different situations. Such structures and systems by their nature limit the scope for people to engage in conflict. Structures of domination rule out conflict by limiting potential interactions with other people: the creators and sponsors of physical infrastructure, information systems, actuarial systems and material technologies are often well removed from people's experience of those structures and systems, making conflict, at least in terms of social conflict between human actors, difficult or impossible to effect. Moreover, systems of domination often appear as 'technical' solutions rather than 'political' moves. In Noble's (1984) study of machine automation, the particular system of automation that was implemented – numerical control – wrested control from skilled workers, but did so immediately and silently, such that potential workplace conflict never emerged significantly because the technology appeared both neutral and inevitable. Similarly, actuarial practices are likely to be viewed as apolitical statistical systems (Simon, 1988) and physical layouts can appear as practical responses to organizational requirements (Gieryn, 2002). An understanding of systems as neutral and apolitical can prevent conflict because they are constructed as part of the technical environment that evolves in ways rational and inevitable (Holm, 1995). Although we argue that systems of domination are associated with relatively little overt conflict, we are not suggesting people necessarily 'like' or accept them, only that they tend not to engender direct, visible conflict. People's negative reactions to such systems are not without consequences, however, as we discuss below in terms of resistance.

Nature of Resistance

Scholarly attention to resistance to institutional control has increased significantly with the emergence of institutional pluralism and complexity (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011; Kraatz & Block, 2008) as important areas of institutional research. This stream of research has pointed to the potential, and even necessity, for organizational actors to strategically and creatively resist as they negotiate among competing sources of institutional control (Pache & Santos, 2010; Smets, Morris, & Greenwood, 2012). These studies, however, underplay the importance of resistance to institutional control regardless of the level of institutional complexity. We have known since Oliver's (1991) articulation of strategic responses to institutional control that organizational actors respond heterogeneously, including engaging in multiple forms of resistance. Our focus on discipline and domination as bases of institutional control helps to clarify how and under what conditions people will resist institutional control. The dynamics of resistance to discipline and domination stem from the role of decision-making and the presence of conflict tied to each.

When looking at resistance to discipline as a form of institutional control, space for potential resistance strategies is opened up by two key requirements of discipline: enclosure and surveillance. A key aspect of disciplinary systems is that they are 'inward' looking: discipline works through routine practices and structures that shape the choices of actors by establishing boundaries of appropriate and inappropriate behavior, but only for actors who understand themselves as members of the community, society or field within which those norms apply (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Douglas, 1986). In the Ford example, the Sociological Department developed powerful systems and routines that shaped the identities and actions of Ford employees, but for the most part, it only affected Ford employees (and perhaps their families), and in fact only those who were both eligible for and desirous of the Five Dollar Day. So, to the extent that Ford employees were professionally mobile (based on skills or family connections), they would have been able to avoid or deny the control of the Five Dollar Day and its associated disciplining systems.

A second requirement of discipline is continuous surveillance or members' perceptions of continuous surveillance (Barker, 1993; Sewell, 1998). The range of forms and intensities of surveillance associated with institutions is wide, but consistent across the range is the potential for noncompliance to be registered by systems that will automatically punish, shame, embarrass, or penalize. In describing the role of surveillance in the historical development of discipline, Foucault (1977: 175) argues that as large factories developed, it became 'a decisive economic operator both as an internal part of the production machinery and as a specific mechanism in the disciplinary power'. The importance of surveillance in effecting institutional control has only become more important and more effective since the industrial revolution described by Foucault. As Sewell (1988: 401) argues,

> New technology has enabled the erection of a surveillance superstructure throughout society that unobtrusively influences almost all aspects of daily life, especially work life. … The impact of this surveillance, especially its ability to instill a profound sense of self-discipline and self-control in many social settings, is so subtle that it often goes unnoticed.

Sewell's argument notwithstanding, surveillance cannot be taken for granted in systems of institutional control. It must be effected in some manner and to the degree that actors can avoid or ignore it, institutional control will be undermined. An example of this dynamic and the potential for institutional resistance it raises comes from Fox-Wolfgramm, Boal and Hunt's (1998) examination of the reaction of two West Texas

banks with distinct strategic orientations (one defender, one prospector) to new regulation which demanded the banks not 'discriminate against any so-called red-lined areas considered high risk in terms of loan repayment' (Fox-Wolfgramm et al., 1998: 91). Both banks resisted the institutional pressure associated with the new law, but in different ways and seemingly with distinct motivations. Fox-Wolfgramm et al. argue that the defender bank initially engaged in 'identity resistance' – an attempt to ignore the new regulation, operating on a 'business as usual' basis, because of a lack of congruence between the regulation and the bank's current and envisioned identity and image. The bank resisted by adopting a strategy of 'minimal technical compliance', so that 'the bank complied with the letter of the law', spending 'minimal time and effort' (1998: 104). Although the bank then moved some way towards accepting and implementing the new regulations, it reverted to old routines once it had passed the regulatory inspection associated with the new laws. The prospector bank also initially resisted the new regulation, again minimally complying with the letter of the law and largely carrying on with business as usual. The motivation for this resistance, however, differed significantly from that of the defender bank: in the case of the prospector bank, it 'seemed to resist change because top management believed that the bank was already fulfilling institutional expectations consistent with its "first to lead the way" identity and thus did not think change was needed' (1998: 117). The prospector bank's approach to the legislation changed significantly, however, when it failed a formal test of its compliance:

> management interpreted the examination performance as an indication of identity and image incongruence … [and] responded by internalizing the changes needed to pass the test and incorporating these into [the bank's] ideology, strategy and other organizational and issue aspects of its 'community leadership' so as to be isomorphic with institutional forces. (1998: 120)

The resistance of the banks described by Fox-Wolfgramm et al. (1998) illustrates the limits of surveillance in many institutional systems, and especially those that are highly distributed and involve large numbers of actors. In this case, managers in both banks were able to simply avoid making any substantive changes in their operations for significant time periods with no significant repercussions, largely because the processes through which compliance was monitored occurred only periodically and with substantial prior warning.

Resistance to discipline may also take more active forms, as documented in Symon et al.'s (2008) study of academic publishing. In their study, Symon et al. show how academics resist the institutionalized practices of quantitative research by publishing qualitative research. The engagement in qualitative research, the authors argue, is a form of legitimate resistance to the illegitimate institutionalization of the academic working practices which favors quantitative research. In contrast to Fox-Wolfgramm et al.'s study, this study shows that resistance to discipline goes beyond avoidance and instead highlights the importance of active, albeit legitimate resistance to disciplinary practices.

Resistance to domination has distinctly different dynamics than does resistance to discipline. These differences stem from the differential effects of discipline and domination on actors, and particularly groups of actors. When systems of domination are effective, the potential for actors to resist, at least directly, may be significantly reduced in comparison to disciplinary systems. Taking actuarial practices as an example illustrates this dynamic. The most central technique in the development of actuarial practices is the classification of the individual within a population based on some set of relevant variables. The relevance of these variables is dependent, however, on the task at hand, rather than on any phenomenological significance for the individuals so classified. The same is true for physical and technological

infrastructures, which effect power relations based on 'objective' characteristics of populations, which may or may not connect to their lived experiences. Simon (1988: 744) argues that this aspect of actuarial practices has significant consequences for our politics and our identities: 'By placing people in groups that have no experienced meaning for their members and therefore lack the capacity to realize common goals or purposes, … [people] may be stripped of a certain quality of belongingness to others that has long played a role in our culture'. These classifications provide little basis for political action and even potentially work to usurp the political foundations of existing groups. Lawrence and Robinson argue that an important effect of this dynamic is the potential to provoke more significant, destructive resistance, because in contrast to discipline, it can 'entail a greater loss of autonomy, pose more serious threats to organizational members' identities and, may be perceived as less procedurally just'. Because direct, assertive resistance is problematic in reaction to systems of domination, Lawrence and Robinson (2007) argue that domination will be associated with relatively severe, 'deviant' forms of resistance directed at organizations or society as a whole, what Robinson and Bennett (1995) refer to as 'property deviance', which involves harmful behavior directed at the organization as a whole, such as theft, sabotage or intentional mistakes.

Institutional resistance to systems of domination, thus, present a paradox – although the ability of actors to compromise, avoid and defy institutional control based on domination may be less than it is under systems of discipline, the resistance that actors engage in is likely to be more severe and potentially more destructive. It may be difficult to avoid the effects of overpass heights, but it is possible to vandalize overpasses and buses. This dynamic is an unexplored one in institutional studies of organization, but could be a major issue when trying to understand the effects and side-effects of forms of institutional control that might seem benign to the designers and implementers of those systems.

INSTITUTIONAL AGENCY

Overview

The second dynamic of institutional politics is 'institutional agency' – the work of actors to create, transform, maintain or disrupt institutions. Power and agency have been tied tightly to each other in organization theory, and more generally in the social sciences (Giddens, 1976, 1984). The capacity of individual and collective actors to attempt to realize their own interests was centrally important to the 'old institutionalism' and has re-emerged as an important focus for institutional research, particularly with respect to institutional entrepreneurship and social movements (see Hardy and Maguire, Chapter 10 and Schneiberg and Lounsbury, Chapter 11 this volume). Significant findings in this literature include the importance of relational and discursive strategies in effecting institutional change (Garud et al., 2002; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire et al., 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), the impact of field development (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Maguire et al., 2004; Munir & Phillips, 2005), the role of actors' identities in affecting their institutional strategies (Fligstein, 1997; Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002; Hensmans, 2003; Lok, 2010) and the processes through which practices move across space and time (Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996).

Research on institutional entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1988; Eisenstadt, 1980) describes the process through which new institutions are created when 'organized actors with sufficient resources (institutional entrepreneurs) see in them an opportunity to realize interests that they value highly'

(DiMaggio, 1988: 14). Power in this stream of research is tied to the ability of actors to create new institutions, through the mobilization of resources. This work has examined the processes and practices associated with the creation of practices (Boxenbaum, 2006; Lawrence, 1999; Munir & Phillips, 2005), technologies (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Hargadon & Douglas, 2001; Leblebici et al., 1991) and forms of organizing (Greenwood et al., 2002; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005) that go against the institutional norms or rules within which they are embedded. Research on institutional entrepreneurship has shown that actors effect institutional agency in a broad set of ways, including technical and market leadership, lobbying for regulatory change and discursive action (Fligstein, 1997; Garud et al., 2002; Hoffman, 1999; Maguire et al., 2004).

A more recent stream of institutional research in this vein focuses on institutional work, which expands the scope of actor/institution relations by incorporating the ways that institutions are created, maintained and disrupted by actors (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2009; Lawrence, Leca, & Zilber, 2013). Like institutional entrepreneurship, the concept of institutional work emphasizes the deliberate strategies of actors as they skillfully and reflexively engage in activities to influence the institutional environments in which they operate (Lawrence et al., 2009). The study of institutional work, however, more clearly highlights the ways in which the agency of actors is shaped and influenced by the institutional environment(s) in which they are embedded (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009). The literature on work thus views institutional agency as less 'heroic' than research on institutional entrepreneurship and seeks to uncover the ongoing, routinized and often mundane ways in which actors exercise power in their institutional environments (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Research on social movements has many similarities to the work on institutional entrepreneurship, particularly in their shared focus on the role of agents in effecting changes in institutional arrangements and a tendency to examine this role through the deep analysis of individual cases of institutional agency. What separates the two literatures, however, is their understandings of the form and the roots of that agency. Whereas institutional agency focuses significantly on the traits, strategies and positions of individual actors (Battilana, 2006; Maguire et al., 2004), social movements research highlights the role of collective action motivated by structural inequalities (Clemens, 1993; McAdam, 1988). The strategies that each literature highlights differ in ways that reflect their emphasis on individual versus collective action. While institutional entrepreneurship research highlights strategies focused specifically on institutional rules (Garud et al., 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, 1999; Maguire et al., 2004), research on social movements focuses on strategies aimed at fostering and leveraging collective action, such as framing (Snow & Benford, 1988; Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986) and resource mobilization (Jenkins, 1983; McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

What is common across studies of institutional entrepreneurship, institutional work and social movements is a concern for how interested actors work to affect the institutions and fields that provide the institutional context within which they operate. More clearly than in the case of institutional control, the study of institutional agency is the study of a set of political processes and practices in which power in many forms is necessarily and obviously implicated.

Mode of Power

Most research and writing on institutional agency is explicitly political in its accounts of how actors create, transform and disrupt institutions (Beckert, 1999; DiMaggio, 1988; Hensmans, 2003). The dominant image of power in this work is as an 'episodic'

phenomenon, constituted in relatively discrete, strategic acts of mobilization initiated by self-interested actors (Clegg, 1989). Research on institutional entrepreneurship and social movements both describe actors mobilizing resources, engaging in institutional contests over meanings and practices, developing, supporting or attacking forms of discourse and practice – all practices involving discrete, strategic acts of mobilization. Similarly, the research on institutional work has tended to concentrate on episodes of power, in which actors marshal resources and engage in tactics that allow them to shape their institutional environments. Thus, a key distinction between institutional agency and institutional control is the mode of power: whereas institutional control involves systemic forms of power, institutional agency represents episodic power.

Forms of Power

Although institutional agency is described by a single mode of power, it manifests in multiple forms. And like institutional control, the study of institutional agency has maintained a relatively narrow focus with respect to forms of power, in this case focusing primarily on influence. The concept of influence is typically described as the ability of one actor to persuade another actor to do something they would not otherwise do (Clegg, 1989; French & Raven, 1959; Lukes, 1974). It potentially involves a wide range of tactics, including moral suasion, negotiation, rational persuasion, ingratiation and exchange (Clegg, 1989; Lawrence et al., 2001; Maslyn, Farmer, & Fedor, 1996). The literatures on institutional entrepreneurship and social movements provide numerous examples of influence as a basis for institutional agency. Fligstein's (1997: 398) essay on the importance of social skills in institutional entrepreneurship, for example, positions influence as central to institutional entrepreneurship, which, as a form of 'skilled social action',

'revolves around finding and maintaining a collective identity of a set of social groups and the effort to shape and meet the interests of those groups'. Fligstein goes on to articulate a list of tactics available to 'strategic actors', most of which are examples of either influence or establishing conditions under which influence is possible: 'agenda setting', 'framing action', 'wheeling and annealing', 'brokering', 'asking for more, settling for less', 'maintaining goallessness and selflessness', 'maintaining ambiguity', 'aggregating interests', 'trying five things to get one', 'convincing people one holds more cards than one does', 'making others think they are in control' and 'networking to outliers'.

Fligstein (1997: 403) goes on to argue that the use of these influence tactics will depend significantly on how 'organized' the fields are in which they operate. He argues that:

> When fields are less organized, their tactics are to bring together disparate groups in a large number of ways. As a frame begins to cohere to organize the field, they act to propagate that frame and the social order it implies. Once in place, skilled strategic actors defend a status quo by deftly manipulating accepted meanings and making sure that the 'goods' are being delivered to those who dominate the organizational field. Under situations of crisis, actors committed to the status quo will continue to try to use dominant understandings to structure action as long as they can. Skilled strategic actors in challenger groups will offer new cultural frames and rules to reorganize the field.

Studies of institutional entrepreneurship (e.g., Garud et al., 2002; Maguire et al., 2004) have demonstrated the importance of influence tactics similar to, or a subset of, those delineated by Fligstein (1997). Moreover, the issue of field development has become an important theme in examining different forms of institutional agency and the question of what kinds of actors will engage in such action (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Maguire et al., 2004).

In organization studies, a significantly overlooked form of institutional agency is the use of force, which works by directly

overcoming another actors' intentions or behavior (French & Raven, 1959; Lukes, 1974). The legitimate use of physical force is generally restricted by communities and societies to specific agencies, such as prisons, psychiatric hospitals, the military and police forces. Other organizations, however, use what might be described as 'bureaucratic force' on a regular basis: corporations fire employees; bars forcibly remove disruptive patrons; schools confiscate contraband substances; universities expel poorly performing students; and editors reject the submissions of aspiring authors.

The use of force, and especially of physical force, is perhaps the most under-examined aspect of institutional politics in the organizational literature. Although explicit physical force may be relatively rare in many of the institutional settings we study, this may be more of a reflection of the constrained empirical focus we have adopted in organization studies, than the relative importance of force in creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions. If we consider institutional change from a historical perspective, it is clear that force has been a critically important means by which states and state institutions have been created, maintained and disrupted (Mann, 1993), and not only in the past (Mann, 2003). In a broad array of institutional arenas, including health care, education and, more obviously, policing and the prison system, the use of force by the state or state-sanctioned agencies maintains many contemporary institutions.

The use of force as a basis for institutional agency is associated both with attempts to disrupt institutionalized practices and with attempts to maintain institutions. On June 26th, 2010, thousands of protesters, including many prominent organizations including the Canadian Labour Congress and Greenpeace International, gathered in downtown Toronto to protest the G-20 Summit. As the protest began, a small number of protesters broke off from the main march and began to engage in property damage aimed at retail locations for large corporate outlets such as Nike, Starbucks and American Apparel as well as the headquarters of media outlets such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and CTV News. This triggered a response from the Toronto Police Service that included the use of tear gas – the first time in the city's history – as well as rubber bullets and pepper spray aimed at protesters. By the end of the summit, 1,118 people had been arrested. Over 800 of these individuals were held in temporary holding cells for the duration of the summit and then released without charge afterwards.

The events at the G-20 summit reveal a number of insights about the use of force as a form of institutional agency. For protesters, the specific targets of the vandalism (Nike, McDonald's, Toronto Dominion Bank) were significant in their symbolic connection to global capitalism and its connection to the G-20 organization; at one level, the protesters' use of force was focused on effecting property damage, but it was done with broader institutional rules and assumptions in mind. In turn, the Toronto Police Service used force to subdue the protestors, but in doing so were protecting the institutional arrangements symbolized and enacted by the G-20. Although the most dramatic uses of force by the police involved tear gas and rubber bullets, the most important use of force by the police was the mass arrests that kept more than 1,100 protesters in holding cells for the duration of the summit. The arrests and incarceration prevented people deemed potentially disruptive from participating in demonstrations without the police having to formally charge them; indeed, the vast majority of those arrested were later released without charges being laid. So, although it is rarely the focus of empirical attention in organizational institutionalism, force can be an important form of power used in institutional agency: at the 2010 G-20 summit in Toronto, as in many other clashes between anti-globalization protestors and transnational trade meetings, force was used by

protesters to disrupt institutions while police services and other government agencies used force to try to maintain those same institutional arrangements.

Role of Decision-Making

Institutional agency is primarily associated with intentionality, purpose and interests (Lawrence et al., 2009). As a result, in studies of institutional agency, the use of power is often displayed within the decision-making arena. In other words, actors make conscious and strategic decisions to exert or resist power and are largely aware of the potential outcomes of doing so. This differs from institutional control that tends to focus on the realm of non-decision-making, in which power prevents particular choices from entering the agenda. The role of decision-making varies, however, between different forms of institutional agency. With regards to influence, the objective is to shape both decision making and non-decision-making (Bacharach & Baratz, 1962), affecting the decisions actors make as well as suppressing certain courses of action from entering the decision-making arena (Lukes, 1974). Maguire and Hardy's (2009) study of DDT use in the US chemical industry illustrates both of these possibilities, providing a rich example of how influence in organizational fields can disrupt or defend the pillars that underpin existing institutions as a means of influencing other actors in the field.

Influence can also exist outside of the decision-making realm (Bacharach & Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 1974). Barley (2010) details how US corporations sought to influence government policy through the creation of an 'institutional field' around government. Barley highlights the role of corporations in funding and structuring of organizations such as trade and peak associations, ad hoc organizations, foundations, think-tanks, Political Action Committees (PACs), public relations firms, lobbying firms and public affairs

offices. This 'field' of organizations works to influence government by lobbying, staffing, funding, providing personnel and testifying for different government branches including Congress, administration and advisory committees. The outcome of this diverse and complex realm of corporate political influence not only influences the decisions of government; it also prevents certain courses of action from entering the realm of decision-making. For instance, potential policies that are deemed as potentially harmful to corporate interests are unlikely to be considered given the embeddedness of corporate interests in and around government. In this way, influence is not confined to the realm of decision-making and may also be observable in situations of non-decision-making.

The use of force as a form of institutional agency also has an important relationship to decision-making but one distinctively different from that of influence. The use of force works by denying agency on the part of its target, removing them from decision-making opportunities. It shares this quality with domination, but force prevents decision-making in more direct and overt means. When a company dismisses an employee, for instance, the company prevents that individual from making a decision to stay (or not stay) in the organization. At the 2010 G-20 summit, the police arresting protesters and incarcerating them in holding cells for the duration of the summit rendered the potential decisions of protesters irrelevant; the relationship of protestors to the institutions in question was structured not by their aims or desires, but by the physical force exerted on them by the police.

Thus, institutional agency tends to focus on the realms of decision-making and non-decision-making. But, influence and force differ in the role they assign to decision-making. Influence is based on the assumption that targets of power can make decisions and thus focuses on shaping their decision-making by affecting their interpretation of the choices available, sometimes affecting the costs and

benefits of potential choices and sometimes moving those choices out of the decision-making arena. The use of force works by removing the ability of targets to make decisions and so is less concerned with how those targets might interpret the value of choices or the composition of choice sets.

Presence of Conflict

Research on institutional agency has tended to include detailed descriptions of visible and, often dramatic, conflict in organizational fields (Hoffman, 1999; Maguire et al., 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Rojas, 2010; van Wijk et al., 2013; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Hoffman (1999: 352) notably argues that organizational fields often witness periods of 'institutional war' in which field members 'compete over the definition of issues and the form of institutions that will guide organizational behavior'. Institutional research that focuses on influence tends to portray competing sets of actors all working to influence the actions of other actors in an organizational field. Battilana's (2011) study of institutional change in Britain's National Health Service illustrates these dynamics and demonstrates the important role of differential social positions in affecting who and how influence is effected in relation to institutionalized rules and practices. Similarly, Zietsma & Lawrence (2010) document a series of battles for influence in the British Columbia coastal forestry industry, in which activists, First Nations, forestry companies, government agencies and corporate buyers all engaged in influence strategies in order to transform or protect existing approaches to logging and the right to make decisions about BC forests.

Although studies of influence tend to focus on observable conflict, influence – in the form of manipulation – can also be used as a means to prevent conflict from arising (Lukes, 1974; Oliver, 1991). As Oliver argues, organizations may use a number of strategies, including co-optation, influence, or controlling, in response to institutional pressures. In cases of successful manipulation, no conflict will be present because the target will be controlled by the party exercising power. Although a number of studies have shown how corporate political activity and lobbying can effectively ensure compliance without overt conflict (Barley, 2010), there is still little research in organizational institutionalism on the exercise of influence as a means to prevent conflict and contestation.

The use of force as a form of institutional agency differs from influence with regards to the presence of conflict in that force can be accompanied by, result from, or trigger significant, overt conflict. Although many instances of firing employees, arresting citizens and expelling students go off without a hitch, other instances involve or trigger noisy or even violent clashes between the actors involved. The use of force, much like domination, can provoke strong emotional reactions on the part of targets, but unlike domination the source of power in cases of force are more visible and identifiable, making direct resistance more likely (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007). To return to our example of the G-20 meetings, although police were using force against protesters in the form of tear gas and rubber bullets, the protesters were also using force as a means to disrupt the meetings. Thus, force can be used by a wide variety of actors in organizational fields; not just the largest and most powerful.

Nature of Resistance

Resistance to institutional agency involves reaching compromises with institutional agents, avoiding their gaze or their ability to punish non-compliance, or defying their aims. Although its basic nature is similar to resistance to institutional control, the flux and uncertainty tied to institutional agency opens up more room for resistance and more potential for creativity in effecting forms of

resistance. Dirsmith, Heian and Covaleski (1997) provide a detailed description of resistance to institutional agency in Big Six accounting firms. This study focused on the attempt by large, professional accounting firms to shift internal power relations by importing 'a legitimated form of formal organizational practice, MBO … in the hope of legitimating the actual application of control to the firm's professional cadre' (Dirsmith et al., 1997: 20). Dirsmith et al. (1997: 20) argue that the use of MBO as a tool is important because it represents a 'familiar, abstract, objective, proceduralized, client-sanctioned form of control' and thus challenges traditional, professional autonomy based on a discourse of 'business focus' and 'meritocracy'. Institutional resistance, in this case, emerged from the professionals in the firms who recognized MBO as a political tool, rather than a neutral technology. Interestingly, resistance did not involve direct refusal, but rather an indirect subversion of the aims and effects of MBO through the use of mentor relationships:

> mentors recognized MBO for the political as opposed to instrumental practice it was and transformed it into a means for advocating for their protégés, by enabling them to game the formal system, as in partnership proposal orchestration to display the 'right numbers'. (Dirsmith et al., 1997: 21)

This study highlights the need for both resources and skills in effecting institutional resistance. The mentors who helped their protégés game the MBO system had access to the information necessary to know when and how to manipulate the MBO system and held senior enough positions in their firms that their subversions would likely go unpunished.

Resistance to institutional agency also differs depending on the form of power that is being exercised. For example, the potential for resistance to institutional agency based on influence stems significantly from the uncertainty and complexity of attempts to create or transform institutional arrangements.

Attempts to create, maintain or disrupt institutions through influence are fraught with unintended consequences. These stem from the often indirect nature of institutional agency, as actors affect institutions by, for instance, working through third parties such as the state or professional bodies (Orssatto et al., 2002; Russo, 2001), or developing (or delegitimating) vocabularies of action and belief which are only effective to the extent that they are picked up and adopted by others (Angus, 1993; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Unintended consequences also result from the intersection of multiple organizational fields and sets of institutional arrangements (Phillips et al., 2004).

Dirsmith et al.'s (1997) study of resistance to the implementation of MBO in accounting firms illustrates these dynamics. First, the MBO system that senior management attempted to implement in the accounting firms provides a good example of a complex, multi-party system in which the sponsors of the innovation are significantly dependent on a range of other parties if it is to be successfully implemented and institutionalized. Such situations invite the possibility of resistance from others who perceive these new systems as not serving their interests. In this case, resistance came significantly from professionals in the firm who saw the introduction of MBO as an opportunity to advance their own interests and resist the aims of the system sponsors. The resistance evidenced in this case also hinged on the interaction of MBO with an existing institution – mentoring – in the firms. The institutionalized positions and practices associated with mentoring provided both the motivation and the means for actors to compromise the newly implemented MBO system: the mentoring process provided a set of interests to actors that were in conflict with the MBO system and became the tool through which professionals gamed the new system. We describe this as an example of institutional resistance, rather than institutional agency, because it seems that the accountants who

were gaming the system were not so much attempting to either create or disrupt an organizational institution, as compromise and avoid its effects on themselves and those whom they supported through mentorship programs.

More generally, the reliance of institutional agency on third parties and its situation within overlapping fields and institutions provides the foundation for a range of strategies for institutional resistance. The problems of surveillance associated with reliance on third parties opens up space for avoidance by institutional actors. Influence depends on the ability of one actor to observe the degree of compliance of another (Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978) and so working through the state or other third party to effect institutional change or maintain a set of institutional arrangements may necessitate developing some complex scheme for surveillance. The involvement of third parties also invites the possibility of co-optation where targeted actors are able to influence the actions of the third parties and thus undermine institutional agency. Social movement organizations, for instance, often attempt to transform institutional arrangements by influencing the state, which might in turn enact new legislation or enforce existing laws and rules (Benford & Snow, 2000). These attempts, however, can lead to resistance on the part of targeted actors and result in framing contests in which each party attempts to convince the state agencies of the greater legitimacy of their own claims. A range of institutional resistance strategies is also connected to the webs of organizational fields and institutions within which institutional agency occurs. These webs provide space for targeted actors to reposition themselves when institutional pressures change.

While institutional agency based on influence engenders resistance because of its attendant uncertainty and complexity, we argue that the use of force as a basis for institutional agency has its own distinctive effects on institutional resistance. The nature of institutional resistance to force as a basis for institutional agency stems from the reaction that force can tend to engender in its targets. The use of force treats the targets of power as 'objects' in the sense that the exercise of power is not dependent on the agency or potential agency of targets (Lawrence et al., 2001; Scott, J. R., 2001). Unlike influence, the use of force does not shape the will of the target, but rather achieves its ends despite that will. Such forms of power, we argue, tend to lead to greater resistance on the part of targets, because they 'entail a greater loss of autonomy, pose more serious threats to [actors'] identities and may be perceived as less procedurally just' (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007). Moreover, unlike systems of domination, which also treat targets as objects, the episodic nature of force means that it is easily associated with specific agents, at whom the resistance will likely be directed. This is because targets of force tend to aim their resistance at the perceived source of the harms that they perceive themselves as suffering (Berkowitz, 1993; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin, & Glew, 1996). The resistance that the use of force tends to engender may limit its potential as an effective tool for institutional agency, both because targeted actors will attempt to compromise, avoid or defy the aims associated with its use and even when direct resistance is difficult, they will tend to quickly revert to previous behaviors (Lawrence et al., 2001).

STUDYING POWER AND INSTITUTIONS

The framework we have described here suggests that the institutional politics of an organizational field can be conceived of in terms of an interplay between institutional control and institutional agency. In the sections above, we attempted to provide a set of ideas from the literatures on power that can

inform a more sophisticated political analysis of institutions and organizations, focusing particularly on the forms of systemic and episodic power that underpin institutional control and institutional agency, and the role of decision-making, the presence of conflict and the nature of resistance associated with each. We conclude by exploring a set of issues that emerge from this analysis.

Revisiting Institutional Control

A perhaps overly simplistic narrative of organizational institutionalism since Meyer and Rowan's (1977) and Zucker's (1977) seminal works is that after several years of examining stability, isomorphism and institutionalization, the literature was criticized for not being able to explain change in organizational fields. A sea change followed these criticisms, where the preponderance of institutional research focused on incorporating change and with it came a re-injection of agency, interests and conflict into the literature. Interpreting this shift with power in mind, the dominant focus of the literature shifted from institutional control to institutional agency, and with this shift a new understanding of institutions as more malleable, dynamic and contestable (Suddaby, 2010). This shift also helped re-establish a more explicit consideration of power in organizational institutionalism, but this renewed focus on power centered on institutional agency, largely overlooking the relationship between power and institutional control. Yet, the work of scholars such as Foucault and Winner (and many others) on discipline, domination and other forms of systemic power suggests otherwise; it suggests that the role of power in institutional control is more significant and more complex than current institutional writing acknowledges and that many important details regarding the dynamics of institutional control remain to be worked out.

Thus, it is time for a renewed focus on institutional control with more explicit acknowledgment of power. Although early institutional research emphasized institutional control, it did so without any formal consideration of power. The shift in focus to institutional agency demonstrated the compatibility between institutional research and power, but research has only begun to bring this incorporation of power to the study of institutional control. We believe that a more explicit integration of power in the study of institutional control could offer insights into some of the foundational arguments of organizational institutionalism and rebalance the control/agency dichotomy in the literature. A starting point would be the development of empirically grounded analyses of how discipline and domination support institutions, how specific instances of those forms of power work in different contexts and the overall limits of their effectiveness. Fully incorporating discipline domination into our research on institutions and organizations may require an expansion of both our conceptual frameworks and our research methods. We discuss these opportunities and the challenges associated with them below.

The lack of attention to domination in particular and systemic power in general might arguably be connected to a view of institutions as primarily cognitive or discursive phenomena (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Phillips et al., 2004), which might suggest that social practices held in place by physical or technological systems are not 'real institutions'. Such an argument, however, overlooks the distinctions between institutions, the mechanisms that underpin those institutions and the streams of action that create them. Phillips et al. (2004: 638) argue that institutions are best understood as 'social constructions constructed through discourse' that are associated with 'self-regulating socially constructed mechanisms that enforce their application'. Thus far institutional research has maintained

a relatively restricted understanding of what those socially constructed mechanisms might involve, with a distinct focus on 'social' systems that rely on normative and regulative mechanisms to maintain compliance. We argue that our analysis of those socially constructed institutional mechanisms needs to expand to include the built environment, including mechanical and technological systems. Such systems, whether built from concrete or silicon, are often a critical element in the institutionalization of social practice.

This relates to a broader conceptual issue that is largely a holdover from early work in the area. Specifically, foundational organizational institutional research created an analytical distinction between 'technical' and 'institutional' environments (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Meyer & Scott, 1983) that was useful for showing how organizational actors, striving for legitimacy in their institutional environment, were likely to be constrained in their actions by various institutional pressures that could be seen as not rational from some kind of technical standpoint (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Meyer & Scott, 1983). The widely adopted distinction between the technical and institutional environments in early organizational institutionalism (Dacin, 1997; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Meyer & Scott, 1983; Zucker, 1987) may have led to the marginalization in institutional analysis of phenomena more obviously associated with technical environments. This marginalization is problematic because, as Holm (1995) argues, separating the institutional and technical environments 'excludes some of the most important phenomena in modern societies – market forces, competition, professionalization and science – from institutional analysis' (1995: 417). In revisiting institutional control achieved through forms of systemic power like discipline and domination, we believe it is critically important to focus on the practices, procedures and systems that appear to be neutral, apolitical and technical in nature.

Unintended Consequences, Marginalized Actors and Problematic Uses of Power

For all the progress that organizational institutionalism has made toward a more formal consideration of power, research in the area still tends to focus primarily on the actions of powerful actors in organizational fields with strong strategic intentions aimed at shaping existing institutions. As a result of this focus, three areas tend to be kept at the margins (Munir, 2015). These include the unintended consequences of institutional politics, the role of marginalized actors and problematic uses of power.

All institutions affect the distribution of power, resources and risk in the organizational fields they structure (Bourdieu, 1993; Clegg, 1989; Douglas & Wildavsky, 1983). This is a central tenet of this chapter and is consistent with much of the research on institutional entrepreneurship and social movements that has informed the study of institutional agency. Studies of institutional control have also moved toward recognizing the power effects of competing logics and institutional change (Amenta & Halfmann, 2000; Amenta & Zylan, 1991; Bartley & Schneiberg, 2002; Stryker, 2002; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). What none of these studies accounts for in any detail, however, are the 'side effects' of institutions – the impacts of institutionalized practices and structures on the myriad of actors who are neither party to their creation nor are contemplated in their design. While it is clear, for instance, that the institutions that emerge out of occupational contests (e.g., between medical doctors and midwives) have a direct impact on the practitioners of those occupations, there are a host of other actors, such as patients and their families, other medical practitioners, nurses, public health officers and health policy-makers who are also affected but whose interests are less well attended to institutional research. Similarly, research on the work of HIV/AIDS activists and advocates

has documented the significant impacts on the power of doctors, pharmaceutical companies and HIV/AIDS community groups (Maguire et al., 2004). Missing in this analysis, however, is the impact on HIV-positive individuals who were largely left out of this process, such as intravenous drug users, as well as its impact on other individuals living with other diseases. This example points to the heterogeneous nature of institutional side-effects. Although intravenous drug users were largely sidelined in the institutional contests around HIV/AIDS treatments, they later gained significant discursive resources in their attempts to construct drug addiction as a health, rather than a criminal, issue. Similarly, members of other disease groups benefited from the lessons learned in the HIV/AIDS arena and from the templates for action and collaboration that the HIV/AIDS community forged in their struggles for rapid access to new treatments and alternative experimental designs. Others, however, seem to have fared less well in this institutional battle. People living with HIV/AIDS in the third world, for instance, continue to suffer without the political resources to effect institutional change that the community had access to in the North. Moreover, research and treatment dollars are a scarce resource which shifted significantly toward work on HIV/AIDS, potentially incurring significant costs to advancement in other disease areas.

Khan et al. (2007) provide a vivid example of attending to the unintended consequences of institutional agency for marginalized actors in their study of child labor in the manufacturing of soccer balls in Pakistan. They show how institutional entrepreneurship aimed at disrupting rules, norms and practices that supported child labor in manufacturing soccer balls in Pakistan, ignored broader issues related to widespread poverty and women's issues. Although the institutional entrepreneurs in Khan and colleagues' (2007) study eliminated child labor in ball stitching, an unintended consequence of doing so was worsening the economic conditions of families involved in the industry: the new rules intended to protect children forced women to work in factories rather than at home, which limited their job flexibility and ultimately drove them from the workforce. This example highlights three important issues. First, it focuses on the unintended consequences of institutional agency which are so often neglected. Khan et al. could have developed a case study of successful institutional entrepreneurship aimed at disrupting practices relating to child labor, but by focusing on the unintended consequences of these actions, they open up an unexamined aspect of the institutional environment. Second, the study incorporates the voices of marginalized actors – the families involved in the ball stitching – in addition to the large corporations, NGOs and other actors involved in the process. That most of these families were opposed to the changes underscores the importance of including their voices because it illustrates the potential costs of ignoring the wisdom of the people institutional entrepreneurs may be intending to help. Third, it sheds light on problematic uses of power. As Munir (2015: 91) argues, for all the advances of organizational institutionalism, our studies end up 'painting a rather sanitary view of the world, skirting around, or simply accepting at face value, what more critical theorists consider to be highly problematic uses of power'.

Attending to these 'side effects' in institutional research would require a much widened lens in our research designs and data collection and analysis strategies, and could be facilitated by drawing across boundaries on work focused on issues of gender, race, age and class. Research designs that would be sensitive to the effects of institutions on marginalized actors would need to ask broader questions than how did particular institutions emerge and how do they control specific groups; instead, they would need to seek out the consequences of institutions more broadly in a society, following the traces of institutional impact outwards, as well as 'inverting' the process by taking on perspectives well

outside of the assumed fields of influence to try to see the institutions from the margins. Data collection and analysis in such a process would need to be flexible enough to capture unexpected sets of findings and follow them through to their natural conclusions, a process that might be difficult in tightly designed qualitative or quantitative studies. Attending to and understanding the side effects of institutions might demand a long and deep engagement in a field, not only observing a population of organizations, but also connecting with the individuals, groups and communities affected by those organizations.

CONCLUSION

Since the initial publication of this chapter in the first edition of the Handbook, there have been significant advances in the incorporation of power into institutional research, stemming particularly from the emergence of vibrant discussions of institutional logics, institutional complexity and institutional work, all of which point to the importance of power and politics in fields and organizations. Even with these advances, however, we believe that the analysis of power and institutions remains underdeveloped, especially in terms of explicit empirical studies of this fundamental relationship. We have tried in this chapter to provide a framework that might encourage and facilitate such studies, beginning with the articulation of a situation's institutional politics – the interplay of institutional control and institutional agency in organizational fields. Institutional control represents the impact of institutions on the behaviors and beliefs of actors; institutional agency involves the work of actors to create, transform, maintain and disrupt institutions. Together, these describe the forms of power in play in organizational fields; their interaction significantly determines the evolution of institutions, networks and subject positions that structure the experiences and opportunities of actors.

Notes

1 A relational understanding of power is in part an attempt to avoid the distraction of a physical metaphor for social power, as established by French and Raven's (1959) distinction between power (capacity) and influence (the use of that capacity). This distinction provides a problematic foundation for discussions of power and institutions, since discussions of power easily become conflated with resources or other sources of power and the forms of power become narrowed to those that occur through influence.

2 Although the concept of domination has a long and varied history in the social sciences and has been used in a wide variety of ways (Arendt, 1970; Marx & Engels, 1906), we use it here to describe a general category of forms of power. While the term has been used in reference to 'false consciousness' (Jermier, 1985; Marx & Engels, 1906), 'manipulation' (Clegg, 1975; Lukes, 1974), the overwhelming use of power, we use it simply to describe forms of power that support institutional control through systems that restrict the range of options available to actors (Lawrence et al., 2001).

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