The Selectivity Gap in United States Responses to Human Rights Violations
Personal Integrity Rights Violations between 1991 and 2001
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Introduction
Following the end of World War II, the new leaders of world politics gathered to create the United Nations and subsequent international human rights laws with the goal of maintaining international peace and stability and eradicating genocide. However, almost a century later, it is clear that these goals have not been met, as human rights violations continue to be a pervasive global problem.

Recent quantitative scholarship on international human rights law has revealed a trend in which countries ratify human rights law in order to improve their international standing but do not make the policy changes necessary to implement the law because the policy changes would be more expensive than the costs of noncompliance. This raises the question as to in what circumstances international law enforcement costs are enough to force countries to comply with international human rights law.

Previous quantitative research regarding international law enforcement leaves open gaps regarding what factors influence military intervention into human rights violations. Choi and Yoon successfully demonstrate the importance of security concerns in determining US decisions to intervene but find that economic concerns are not as impactful. However, as Fordham points out, it is clear that these goals have not been met, as human rights violations continue to be a pervasive global problem.

Results
Regarding hypothesis one, the data confirms that the United States is less likely to intervene in personal integrity violations in countries that are more closely diplomatically aligned with the United States. The data shows mixed results regarding hypothesis two. The regression results indicate that higher levels of democracy correspond with higher levels of respect for human rights, while the logit regression results indicate that the United States is less likely to intervene in human rights violations in countries with high levels of democracy. This is likely a result of spuriousness in the relationship between democracy and human rights violations.

Hypotheses
Hypothesis 1: The United States will be less likely to intervene in personal integrity violations in countries with medium to high levels of democratization.

Hypothesis 2: The United States will be more likely to intervene in personal integrity violations in countries with more similar voting patterns in the United Nations.

Hypothesis 3: The United States will be less likely to intervene in personal integrity violations in countries with more integrated economies.

Conclusion
The results of this study indicate that the likelihood of intervention has a statistically significant relationship with diplomatic alignment. My data indicates that in instances of human rights violations, the choice to intervene is influenced by political considerations and likely also economic considerations to some extent.

The data from this study additionally has implications for the strain of research which focuses on the growing trend of countries ratifying human rights law without any apparent intention of compliance. Based on the data from this study, I would expect to see that countries’ abilities to ratify treaties that they do not expect to implement are influenced by their relationships with the United States. Thus, researchers may want to focus on external as well as internal indicators of compliance.

Operationalization
The explanatory variables are diplomatic alignment, levels of democratization, and economic indicators. Diplomatic alignment with the United States is measured by Vooten’s ideal point distance taken from UN voting data. Levels of democratization are measured by the Polity Score which provides scores from -10 for full autocracy to +10 for full democracy. Economic integration with the United States is measured through trade balance, exports, US foreign direct investment, gross domestic product, and oil exports as a percentage of merchandise exports.

The response variables are personal integrity violations and humanitarian intervention. Personal integrity violations are measured using the Political Terror Scale and the Cingranelli and Richards Human Rights Data Project. Humanitarian intervention is measured using the Ksangani and Pickering International Military Intervention data.

Table 1: Multiple Regression Results

Table 2: Logit Regression Results

References

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