An Institutional Grammar of Mores[1]

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Abstract
Theories and results in various subfields of politics point to the importance of norms in political behavior. Attention to norms and the impact of norms on political behavior emerges in institutional analysis work in the Workshop tradition, in advocacy coalition theories of policy choice, in evidence for commitment theory in interest groups, in regime theory in international relations, in work on social capital, and in formal analysis of behavior in collective choice situations, to name just a few. Tocqueville considered "mores" to be key to the success of the American experiment with democracy and recognized the influence of religion on these mores. This paper applies the grammar of institutions to analyze a few ways in which norms and religious institutions currently influence political choice and social change.

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An Institutional Grammar of Mores

I have said earlier that I consider mores to be one of the great general causes responsible for the maintenance of a democratic republic in the United States…It is not my aim to describe American mores, just now I am only looking for the elements in them which help to support political institutions. (Tocqueville [1969])

Theories and results in various subfields of politics point to the importance of norms in political behavior. Attention to norms and the impact of norms on political behavior emerges in institutional analysis work in the Workshop tradition, in advocacy coalition theories of policy choice, in evidence for commitment theory in interest groups, in regime theory in international relations, in work on social capital, and in formal analysis of behavior in collective choice situations, to name just a few. This attention to norms raises important questions about how analysis of political choice can incorporate norms more systematically and about the political roles of religious institutions and leaders, who, one might say, are in the business of norms.

This paper applies the grammar of institutions to analysis of a few ways in which norms and religion currently influence political institutions. The paper outlines a logic of norms based on earlier work (Crawford and Ostrom 1995) and discusses a broad logic of norms in choice. The discussion then turns to analysis of contemporary influences of norms and religious institutions on policy and social change.

Norms and Politics

In his analysis of democracy in America in the 1800's Tocqueville argued that three key sets of variables lead to the successes of the democratic experiment in America, (1) physical conditions (distance from enemies and wealth of natural resources), (2) rules (elements of the constitutional design), and (3) mores (beliefs, practices, and values). Tocqueville's analyses lead him to argue that of these three sets of variables, mores stood out as the most important (Tocqueville [1969]). In more current assessments of democracy and civil society in the United States observers still stress the significance of mores, albeit with different labels (Bellah 1996; Putnam 2000; Putnam 2002; Reichley 2001; Smidt 2003). This emphasis occurs in many fields through studies of social capital (Baum 1999; Baum 2000; Feiock 2003; Lomas 1998; Lynch et al. 2000; Muntaner, Lynch, and Smith 2001; Ostrom and Ahn 2002; Putnam 2002; Smidt 2003; Wood 1997; Wuthnow 2003). Scholars too numerous to cite have published statistical analyses that note the impact of social capital (variously defined) on citizen participation, volunteering, community development, inter-governmental agreements, and even health outcomes. Although debate rages over how to define and measure social capital, clearly there is some social concept, or more accurately, a set of social concepts, beyond immediate physical resources and legal structures that play significant roles in explaining variation in civic engagement and community capacity. Mores still matter.

If we turn to current major theories of policy, we again see attention to the importance of elements that do not fit the categories of physical resources or rule

structure. The Institutional Analysis and Development framework identifies "attributes of the community," which includes norms, beliefs and values, as an important element of well-specified policy models (Ostrom 1999; Ostrom, Feeny, and Picht 1993). The punctuated equilibrium theory (Jones 2001) stresses the importance of beliefs in policy stability and the ways in which policy change comes from changes in beliefs. Advocacy coalition theory stresses the importance of normative elements by noting the important ways in which shared values of members of an advocacy coalition reinforce policy views, facilitate activity within a coalition, and limit cross-coalition learning. Advocacy coalitions bring together government officials, interest group professionals, and academics who share similar views on appropriate responses to public problems.

Two empirical tests of advocacy coalition theory provide more specific examples of the significance of values in policy processes. Sabatier, Loomis, and McCarthy (1995) test three competing theories of bureaucratic behavior in an analysis of the planning choices of U.S. Forestry Service bureaucrats. They find more compelling evidence of the influence of professional norms and shared norms between the forestry officials and conservation activists (advocacy coalition theory) than evidence of budget maximization (classic rational choice) or of hierarchical controls (principal-agent theory). In an earlier study, Sabatier and McLaughlin test three theories of the congruence of interest group leaders and members and find stronger evidence for commitment theory, which stresses the normative commitment of interest group leaders and a resulting large gap between elites and members, than evidence for exchange theory, which stresses self-interest and congruence, or for the moderating elites theory, which assumes moderate differences (Sabatier and McLaughlin 1990).

Studies of politics out of the collective action tradition have long had to grapple with the question of why we observe more cooperation in political arenas than would be expected based on classic models of collective action. Studies of domestic and international politics in this tradition have built models that incorporate attention to information, trust, and other institutions (2004; Boyd et al. 2003; Hasenclever, Meyer, and Rittberger 1997; Ostrom 1990; Ostrom 1998; Ostrom, Gardner, and Walker 1997; Ostrom and Walker 2003; Sabatier and McLaughlin 1990; Wendt and Duvall 1989), while critics of the approach argue that normative elements of politics cannot be captured by choice models.[i] Theories of social movements out of this tradition tend to stress the importance of the framing of issues as a mechanism that helps to kick in normative commitment and consequently allow mobilization of individuals despite the challenges of collective action (Cavendish 2001; Wald 2003).

Clearly, the study of politics requires attention to those elements that Tocqueville summarizes as "mores." The grammar of institutions provides a means to sort and label specific institutional components of cultural influences that are often discussed as "mores," "values," or "beliefs." Since the grammar also sorts and labels components of rules, the grammar facilitates analysis of the interaction of mores and policy. As such, it provides a means for contemporary analysis of the "elements in [mores] which help to support political institutions" as well as a means to examine "elements of mores" that

reduce the effectiveness of political institutions and “elements of mores” that facilitate change in political institutions.

A Grammar of Institutions

The grammar of institutions provides a tool for synthesizing work in multiple methodological traditions that examine the shared social constructs that influence behavior (institutions) and for generating new questions for institutional analysis (Crawford and Ostrom 1995). This tool focuses on the linguistic content of statements that summarize shared social constructs. What do the sentences look like for the statements that summarize a shared rule, a shared norm, or a shared strategy? It does not assume that these linguistic statements are written down somewhere (although many of them are). It recognizes that there may well be slippages in common understandings (that everyone would not necessarily summarize the statements in exactly the same way), and it recognizes that there may be disagreements over the application of the statements to specific situations. However, attention to these linguistic statements provides a useful tool for analysis of the influences of institutions on behavior and the resulting policy outcomes. The grammar focuses on three specific types of institutional statements: shared strategies, norms, and rules. It works most effectively on those institutions that attempt to influence choices by encouraging or discouraging particular actions or outcomes. Most types of institutions can be interpreted in this manner. One class of institutions that does not fit as well, constitutive institutions (those that develop an identity or position without a direct attempt to regulate behavior), become relevant to grammar analysis through the regulatory institutions assigned to those identities and positions. The regulatory institutions define what actions or outcomes are appropriate for actors in those positions or with that particular identity and may define the actions or outcomes that are necessary before someone can be considered a legitimate holder of the position or identity. So, the grammar allows analysis of the ways in which constitutive institutions get connected to political situations through regulatory institutions that define appropriate and legal behaviors.

The syntax of the grammar of institutions contains five components that serve as the building blocks for all regulatory institutions. Regardless of how actors in a situation might describe an institution, a linguistic summary of that institution can be parsed as follows using the ADICO syntax.

A *A*TTRIBUTES is a holder for any value of a participant-level variable that distinguishes to whom the institutional statement applies. Examples include 18 years of age, female, college educated, 1 year experience, or a specific position, such as employee or chairperson.

D *D*EONTIC is a holder for the three modal verbs analyzed by von Wright. These are "may" (permitted), "must" (obliged), and "must not" (forbidden).

I A***I***M is a holder that describes particular actions or outcomes in the action situation to which the deontic is assigned. The description may include a

formula specifying an amount of action or outcome or a description of a process for an action.

C *C*ONDITIONS is a holder for those variables that define when and where an ACT or OUTCOME is permitted, obligatory or forbidden.

O *O*R ELSE is a holder for the institutionally assigned consequence for not following a rule.

This parsing provides a systematic way for scholars to compare institutional statements. By parsing the statements in a similar way, scholars can find similarities and differences in institutional statements in various situations. The denotic verbs are interdefinable, so institutional statements with similar AIMS can be rewritten with the same denotic to clarify comparisons of institutional statements.[ii]

The grammar also provides mechanisms for separating out different kinds of institutional statements, namely for distinguishing between shared strategies, norms, and rules. The grammar classifies institutional statements with all five components as rules. Rules are ADICO statements. It classifies institutional statements with only four of the components, ADIC statements, as norms. Institutional statements that are shared, but that do not have a denontic, AIC statements, are shared strategies.

Compliance with shared strategies relies on habit or on an expectation that the shared strategy is in the actor's best interest. Compliance with norms may occur in part because of habit or strategic assumptions (AIC components), but norms also bring moral and social pressure to bear because of the shared understanding of the denotic (D). Rule compliance, similarly, draws upon those elements that influence strategy and norm compliance (ADIC) with the added push of collectively assigned consequences for noncompliance (O).

The denotic component of rules and norms exerts the normative "umph" of the institution. Summaries of institutional statements with a deontic include words like "should," "ought," "must," "forbidden" or "required." Since both norms and rules include this component, analysis of normative influences matters for both. To that end, the grammar of institutions provides a language for talking about four ways in which this normative component influences choices. Since the grammar comes out of a tradition with an emphasis on payoffs, the grammar uses the term "delta," ? , to discuss the ways in which payoffs are changed by normative influences on choices. Although any particular analysis might focus on one particular aspect of this normative influence (d's), the grammar identifies four types of normative pressure. For any institutional statement, one can discuss the expected benefit or cost to individual actors of following the institutional regulation and the expected benefit or cost of disobeying the regulation. Generally, we focus on the benefit of following the regulation (increased trust, satisfaction of complying with duty, and reputation) and the cost of not following the regulation (guilt, weakened reputation). The rule of law relies heavily on most citizens having non-zero values for these deltas (Crawford and Ostrom 1995; Levi 1990). It is far too costly and oppressive

to rely on the OR ELSE component of laws alone. However, one might expect negative deltas for following an institution (e.g., moral cost for following a law that one does not consider just) or positive deltas for disobeying a norm or rule (e.g., moral benefit of a principled stand or civil disobedience). So, positive and negative deltas can exist both for obeying and disobeying the institution. It is also theoretically possible to distinguish between the internalized impact of the institution (the cost or benefit that exists even if no one else observes the behavior) and the external normative impact (the cost or benefit that comes from others in the community observing institutional compliance or noncompliance). Internal deltas take forms such as guilt or feelings of satisfaction while external deltas manifest in forms such as reputation or trust effects (Crawford and Ostrom 1995).

It is important to note that external deltas and OR ELSE components only apply if someone observes compliant (or noncompliant) behavior. Thus, discussions of the impact of those components must include attention to both the weight of those components (how big is the punishment or reward) and the probability of detection.

The delta parameters can thus be defined as:

$? = d^o + d^b$, where
d^o = the change in expected payoffs from obeying a prescription
d^b = the change in expected payoffs from breaking a prescription

One can further divide these rewards and costs into those that arise from external versus strictly internal sources of valuation. Thus:

$d^o = d^{o\,e} + d^{o\,i}$ and $d^b = d^{b\,e} + d^{bi}$, where
e = changes in expected payoffs originating from external sources
i = changes in expected payoffs originating from internal sources.
(Crawford and Ostrom, 1995, p. 588).

The grammar of institutions contributes to the study of normative elements of politics, then, by providing a systematic method of parsing norms and rules and by providing a systematic way of discussing four distinct normative impacts of rules and norms on choices. The grammar also provides a mechanism for analysis that distinguishes between beliefs that have normative content (beliefs about appropriate behavior), which the grammar classifies as norms, from beliefs that do not (strategic beliefs), which the grammar classifies as shared strategies. The grammar would push analyses of values and ideologies to consider the linguistic statements that summarize key shared provisions. For example, one might summarize a strong liberal value of religious liberty as: [Government] [must not] [fund religious institutions] [under any condition], while one might summarize values of those pushing a strong free exercise value of religious liberty as: [Government] [must] [fund religious institutions] [if religious institutions meet proposal requirements]. In numerous policy debates proponents of each of these norms push for government rules that more closely match their understanding of appropriate government actions.

A Model of Choice with Norms

The institutional grammar provides tools for analyzing the set of institutional statements in any given situation. To get to analysis of the impact of norms and rules on political outcomes, we need a model of choice that incorporates these institutional elements. Institutions shape political outcomes through their expected impact on the choices of actors. The model of choice developed here lays out basic building blocks for formal models or for empirical analysis. In formal analysis the building blocks serve as parameters.

In order to work through the basic logic of the model, some simplifying assumptions are in order. First, assume that choices involve selecting an action from a set of possible actions. Assume that each possible action can be assigned parameters for *outcome consequences*, and parameters for *institutional consequences*.[iii] The outcome consequences include possible physical or natural consequences such as running out of a natural resource or getting physically injured as well as consequences that result from interactions with other actors (such as the result of electoral or economic competition).[iv] Assume that the institutional consequences for a specific actor include only the delta's and ORELSE's. Thus, institutional consequences include only the direct influences of institutions linked to the specific actions from which the actor is choosing in a particular choice situation. One would generally assume that an actor would consider the expected influence of institutions on other actors when assessing the probable outcome consequences of his or her actions. So, the broader institutional influence on a situation through the institutional influences on *other* actors through this broad outcomes component, and through the modeling of the choices for those other actors. This model pushes all of that complexity into the outcomes consequences box.

Start with a simple situation in which an actor chooses between two possible actions, action1 and action2. Assume, for now, that the actor can know with certainty the outcome consequences of each action. She knows that choosing action1 yields outcome1 and that choosing action2 yields outcome2. Assume that the following norm exists for this situation: [all] [must] [choose action2]. The relevant choices, then, are between the expected consequences of action1 and action2. We would assume that the actor would choose action2 if:

$$[\text{outcomes2} + (d^{oi} + p(d^{oe}))] > [\text{outcomes1} + (d^{bi} + p(d^{be}))],$$

where d^{oi} represents the internal delta for obeying the norm, d^{oe} represents the external delta for obeying the norm, d^{bi} represents the internal delta for breaking the norm, d^{be} represents the external delta for breaking the norm, and p represents the probability that others will observe the choice and react. If we assume that this norm is the only relevant institution for the choice, and if we assume that this actor and the relevant community values norm following, then we would assume that the d^{o} parameters increase the value of choosing action2 and that the d^{b} parameters decrease the value of choosing action1. In this simple case, we can rearrange the equation to determine how large the external deltas need to be in order to expect norm compliance from this actor.

$p((d^{oe} - d^{be})) > [(outcomes1 – outcomes2) + (d^{bi} – d^{oi})]$.

The level of external normative weight (the external delta) required to induce norm following here depends on the extent to which the outcomes from choosing action1 are deemed to exceed those of choosing outcome2, the outcome temptation. But, that outcome temptation value gets reduced by the delta values associated with the norm. Since this actor values following norms, we assume that all of the b deltas are negative and all of the o deltas are positive. Consequently, d^{bi} is negative so subtracting d^{oi} from it yields an even larger negative value and d^{be} is negative, which when subtracted from d^{oe} becomes a positive value that adds to the pressure to comply with the norm. If we assume that this actor has internalized this norm and that this actor highly values norm following, we can assume that ($d^{bi} – d^{oi}$) yields a large negative value that would substantially reduce the outcome temptation value (outcomes1 - outcomes2). If we assume that the actor does not personally value norm following or does not consider this particular norm legitimate, then ($d^{bi} – d^{oi}$) goes to zero and the only moderating effect on the outcomes temptation would be the possible external normative costs and benefits to the actor ($d^{oe} - d^{be}$), which depend heavily on whether anyone sees the choice ($p(d^{oe} - d^{be}$)). In this case, if the chance of detection is slight, the value of the external deltas go to near zero, regardless of how much effort might be put into a shame (d^{be}) or praise (d^{oe}) upon detection and the outcome temptation and internal deltas become the only relevant component of the actor's choice. Similarly, if the choice is visible, but the probability of anyone reacting gets very small, the outcome temptation and internal deltas dominate the decision. If we assume that this actor does not consider the norm legitimate and does not care about how others react, then all the deltas go to zero and the norm has no real impact on his or her decision. Given this model, one sees that normative influences depend heavily on internalization, on the visibility of choice, on the willingness of others in the community to react (positively and/or negatively), and/or on the extent to which actors care about community reactions.

In cases in which the value of outcome2 exceeds that of outcome1, there no real temptation exists to break the norm. Norm following could occur even by actors with weak deltas. Not surprisingly, normative discourse often includes discussions of the improved consequences of following the norm in an effort to influence actors' assessments of the action-outcome link. For example, abstinence only programs emphasize more than just the norm of choosing not to have sex. Church-based programs emphasize the delta components by emphasizing bible justifications for the norm (internal) and by developing social peer pressure for abstinence (external). Above and beyond these efforts though, many of these programs also stress the medical and psychological consequences of pre-marital sex. An abstinence-only program with all three of these components seeks to influence the outcomes calculation, the internal delta weights, and the external delta weights of youth. The redundancy makes sense when we recognize the vulnerability of norms and, in this case, the secrecy of the choice. Notice that the more you can convince actors that the outcomes difference favors the norm, the less you need to rely on normative weight to influence choices.

Persuasion, including religious persuasion, matters as long as the link between actions and outcomes involves uncertainty. Notice that persuasion also matters because the link between an action and the external delta consequences is probabilistic. An actor must be convinced that there is a reasonable chance that others will pay attention to his or her choice and react accordingly.

Normative persuasion also comes into the picture as soon as we assume that the value of the norms to actors (the deltas) are subjective and changeable. Ritual and persuasion can bolster commitment to norms (Cavendish 2001) and commitments to norms can erode as others fail to follow norms or fail to punish norm offenders (Axelrod 1984; Levi 1990; Ostrom 1990; Ostrom 1998; Ostrom, Gardner, and Walker 1997). In most houses of worship much effort goes into teaching norms consistent with the religious traditions of the congregations and to boosting the delta values that actors assign to those norms. This includes efforts to encourage actors to internalize norms, efforts to develop relationships so that external norms matter to actors, and efforts to convince actors that the probabilities of external deltas are non-zero. The U.S. congregational model, which includes a heavy emphasis on small group meetings and activities alongside worship rituals, provides a setting conducive to such persuasion and network development. Study groups, activities, and presentations exist in local religious entities in the U.S. even in religious traditions in which this mode of religious organization is rare elsewhere. In a recent survey in the Detroit area, more Muslims list activities as the primary purpose of the mosque (39 percent) than list prayer as the primary purpose (32 percent)) (2004). Even huge mega-churches, which some might consider too large for such interaction, work to place church members into small study or activity groups where a member can expect others to know and care about his or her behavior. Thus, religious organizations provide a useful laboratory for studying the ways that human organizations develop, teach, reinforce, and apply norms to their own work and to politics.

Norms and Policy Change

The applications of the model of choice thus far have focused on the influence of institutions on norm or policy compliance. If we assume that norms matter for policy development as well as for policy compliance, then the model also applies to analysis of policy change. Advocacy coalition theory and punctuated equilibrium theory both point to the importance of beliefs held by key actors in maintaining policy stability and both likewise to the necessity of changes in beliefs in order to for policy change to occur. The core beliefs themselves might be captured by statements linking actions (or policies) to outcomes. For example, a belief might link free trade policies to a higher probability of economic growth. If this belief dominates, then according to punctuated equilibrium theory, one expects only small marginal changes unless or until something happens that shakes the core belief, at which point large changes become possible. This fits the punctuated equilibrium model of little change most of the time with occasional bursts of large changes. A shared belief in the economic benefits of free trade could be considered a strategy in the ADICO if it instructs all policymakers [ATTRIBUTE] to enact free-trade policies [AIM] whenever possible [CONDITION]. Once the strategy is institutionalized, it becomes easy for policymakers to ignore information or research that challenges the link between free trade policies and economic benefits. The institution (the shared

strategy pushing free trade policies) also causes lawmakers to assume that others who share the strategy will follow the instruction and thus reinforces the sense of agreement concerning free trade policies and creates a confidence that no further information is necessary. Consequently, it can become difficult for those pushing alternative policies to bring about any policy change, even in the absence of norms (deontics and delta values) that prescribe free-trade policies.

The advocacy coalition theory recognizes that the institutions shared by those with strong policy beliefs who work in a policy area also have normative weight. In ADICO terms a free-trade advocacy coalition would share an institution like: all policymakers *must* enact free-trade policies whenever possible. In one study, Sabitier et al note the prior existence of an "old timber religion" among forestry bureaucrats that has now been replaced by strong conservation norms (Sabatier, Loomis, and McCarthy 1995). The advocacy coalition model also notes the tendency for policy activists who share a set of beliefs to demonize the opposing coalition of activists with different beliefs, which also stresses the normative element of those policy beliefs. Those with different policy beliefs are not just mistaken, they are *wrong*. From a norms perspective, those with the opposing policy belief need to be converted or need to have their *real* hidden agendas exposed. Those in the opposing coalition do not follow the norms as understood by those in the first camp and thus the first camp sees them as "immoral." The advocacy coalition theory further stresses the importance of norms by arguing that a prominent forum in which professional norms dominate (professional norms that span the coalitions and are shared by all) offers one space where learning across belief systems becomes possible (Sabatier 2003).

If we recognize many of the shared beliefs discussed in advocacy coalition literature as norms, then analysis of norms becomes an important component of understanding stability of policy views, the power of particular advocacy coalitions, and the possibility of policy change. Although the advocacy coalition theory focuses on policy elites in specific policy subfields, the same normative polarization dynamic holds elsewhere. Among religious activists in a broad array of policy areas, one finds a social justice camp and a moral reform camp, each with shared norms about appropriate government roles and with norms that deem the other camps views inappropriate (Dionne and Chen 2001; Guth 1997; Hunter 1991). Analyses of social justice and moral reform cleavages among Protestant clergy reveal clusters of religious and political beliefs that combine to reinforce this cleavage (Guth 1997; Olson et al. 2004). So, although we could summarize a basic "social justice" norm and a basic "moral reform" norm and discuss the impact of these norms on political behavior, digging deeper to assess why those deltas are so strong reveals a rich web of reinforcing norms. In other words, the deltas that drive social justice and moral reform political behavior come from multiple norms.

Norms, Religious Subgroups, and Social Change

Multiple institutions may often bear on a single choice. Often multiple institutions become relevant because an actor simultaneously belongs to multiple communities. This requires moving beyond the simple assumption of a one-to-one match

between choices and institutions. Of particular interest, for analysis of policy and social change are the cross-pressures or reinforcing pressures that result from the interactions of sub-group institutions with larger societal or governmental institutions. Religious inspired civil disobedience or suicide bombing could be examined through this lens as examples in which socialization within a particular religious subgroup builds norms with deontics opposite of those associated with government law. The institutional consequence associated with the OR ELSE and the normative weight of the law for these actors gets outweighed by the delta values associated with the subgroup norms. This kind of analysis need not focus only on religious groups. The advocacy coalition work that examines the matches and mismatches of norms and beliefs of various secular policy subgroups related to forestry (Sabatier, Loomis, and McCarthy 1995), also brings attention to the interaction of various subgroup norms and broad policy. However, the remaining discussion of subgroup norms and policy does mostly focus on religious subgroups and their interaction with larger social and political communities. The remaining discussions also mostly use a thin view of the institutions with religious subgroups oriented around a single norm at one level and broad legal or social norms at the other level.

Strictness

Sociologists of religion discuss clashes between religious norms and broader societal norms as strictness or tension. Sociological analyses of strictness focus on personal morality norms that exact tighter restrictions on choices than those found in broader social norms (Finke and Stark 1992; Iannaccone 1988; Iannaccone 1992; Iannaccone 1994; Iannaccone, Olson, and Stark 1995; Kelley (1972) 1986; Stark and Finke 2000). Social lifestyles and behaviors permitted elsewhere are not permitted in strict churches and strict churches require lifestyle behaviors not required elsewhere. The distinctness of the subgroup norms is sometimes referred to as tension with strict subgroups being understood as groups at high tension with broader societal norms. In terms of the grammar of institutions, tension exists when a religious subgroup assigns a different deontic to a particular action or outcome than that assigned by the larger community (through societal norms or law). In terms of the grammar logic, tension can be understood as a function of the deltas associated with these distinct norms. The higher the delta values associated with the deviant norm for members of the religious subgroup, the greater the tension or strictness. This interpretation is consistent with notions of stigma and sacrifice associated with tension (Iannaccone 1992), although the strict church scholarship does not use a delta definition of tension.

Finke and Stark (2000) (as well as the other strict church scholars) assume that strictness is found only in conservative religious subgroups and build theories of strictness and church growth based on this assumption. However, consider my liberal Christian colleague who rides a bike to work, digs out weeds instead of spraying his lawn, purchases fair trade products, and stood with war protestors on a busy intersection during the days leading up to the Iraqi conflict. These actions reflect adherence to norms distinct from broader social norms. It would be possible to map out norms that he shares with his religious left peers that help explain these choices, to analyze the difference between these norms and societal norms, to examine the peer interaction processes that

boost these "deviant" delta values, and to examine the ways in which commitment to these norms influences political mobilization. Socially conservative religious subgroups are not the only religious subgroups with norms that require more of adherents or even the opposite of adherents than that prescribed by social norms or governmental law. Conservation norms on the left clash with consumerism norms. Pacifist norms clash with patriotism norms as understood by many in American society. Prophetic social justice norms clash with norms prescribing support for government leaders and proscribing obstructionists. Preferential option for the poor norms clash with individualism norms.

The logic of the delta parameters provides a means to explore various dimensions of value that adherents to strict religious subgroups on the right or the left assign to political activity. How do socialization and interaction boost deltas associated with following or breaking the political norms of the subgroup? What assurance does a subgroup member have that his or her peers will engage in similar behaviors and reinforce his or her choices? This final question also gets into the outcomes consequence component of the model of choice. Finke and Stark (2000) summarize much strict church work that argues that members of strict churches can expect better value from their participation in strict churches in part because the high tension weeds out uncommitted free-riders (Iannaccone 1992; Iannaccone 1994; Iannaccone, Olson, and Stark 1995). The strong norms turn away those with weaker levels of commitment making it more certain that members can expect other members to follow norms that result in improved outcomes like vibrant worship and stronger attendance. A similar dynamic may exist for religious-political engagement. Strict venues for political participation make it more likely that others in the group will also be mobilized to act and that others in the group will share similar norms and a commitment to reward those who comply and sanction those who do not. These dynamics may enhance the value of political engagement by bolstering the deltas associated with political activities and by reducing uncertainty about at least some of the outcome consequences.

A shift from the thin institutional view of one religious norm and one societal norm to a richer picture with overlapping norms within religious subgroups on the left and right allows initial propositions concerning expected differences between strictness dynamics on the left and right in politics. Jelen notes the challenge of religious mobilization on the right because larger subgroup norms (my term, not his) stress distinctness, which works as a successful market strategy for conservative Christian congregations and fits inerrancy beliefs in a single, correct, authoritative, interpretation of Scripture. The regular practice of the distinctness norms in the day to day work of religious leaders in this subgroup make developing broad coalitions for political work more difficult (Jelen 2001; Jelen 2002). Using the language of the grammar of institutions, the day to day practice of emphasizing distinctness boosts the delta values on these norms, making it more difficult to work on inclusiveness and compromise in political ventures. Once we recognize that liberal religious subgroups can be strict, then we can consider a liberal dynamic that mirrors the conservative challenge that Jelen identifies. The day to day norms of liberal congregational practice stress norms of inclusiveness. In fact, liberal traditions are strict about inclusiveness and stress that one must be inclusive above and beyond the tolerance that might be demanded by broader

social norms or government laws. Jesus is often discussed as a model of radical inclusiveness for Christians on the left; a leader who mingled with tax collectors, Samaritan women, lepers and others deemed "unclean" by the social norms at the time. Whereas congregational norms on the right may limit the inclusiveness necessary for political engagement, the congregational norms on the left may limit the exclusiveness necessary for maintaining assurance of mutual commitment in liberal political groups. Groups on the left may find it difficult to make and enforce the boundary rules necessary to maintain collective commitment to the entity (Ostrom 1990; Ostrom, Gardner, and Walker 1997).

On the other hand, the emphasis on inclusiveness provides a strength for highly strict minority groups who may be prone to liberal political mobilization (e.g., Gay and Lesbian Affirming Disciples in the Disciples of Christ tradition). Such groups can enforce strict norms and attract stricter members and yet remain within denominational organizational structures where they continue to benefit from the large institutional infrastructure rather than forming separate sects that would not have such benefits. Multi-layered and multi-faceted denominational structures surround the subgroup and provide many of the advantages of complex polycentric structures. This also gives liberal strict groups practice in aligning with entities that do not share their strict views on a particular issue but who share many other important values; thus their experiences in religious institutions provide practice in balancing strictness, accountability, and compromise. It also provides practice and reinforcement of the civic norm of religious liberty, which is consistent with the religious norm of inclusiveness. The normative emphasis on "priesthood of the believer" and norms against creeds and hierarchy in many conservative Christian traditions provide a similar reinforcement of civic religious liberty norms, but those norms appear to be weakening as religious organizational enforcement stresses biblical authority norms that stress a single correct doctrine instead (e.g., firing missionaries and seminary professors, banning congregations from ordaining women, removing congregations from fellowship).

Inclusiveness norms on the left make it more difficult for liberal Christian to build political arguments around the moral authority of Jesus, the central religious figure of Christian adherents. The higher the inclusiveness norm deltas, the more difficult references to Jesus become in political discussion aimed outside of the small group. Diversity of listeners is assumed as a condition and the norm of respect for other traditions forbids language that might exclude. This not only limits access of these activists to their core moral resource (Jesus), but it opens them to the criticism that they have been cooped by liberal allies to abandon their Christian heritage (Eisenach 2003; Hauerwas and Willimon 1989; Stark and Finke 2000).

The tension between religious norms and existing policy may provide value to political activism to change that policy. The discussion of strictness thus far, though, does not really establish a clear relationship between tension and the likelihood of political mobilization. One situation that appears most likely to convert tension into political mobilization is when the political laws jeopardize the legitimacy of the alternative institutions of the subgroup by making enforcement of the subgroup norm

illegal. This explanation fits with the mobilization of the otherwise apolitical Amish and Jehovah Witness groups in American history and has been used as an explanation for recent American Muslim mobilization. Many differences between subgroup norms and government rules can be tolerated by religious subgroups. Distinct norms and rules bolster religious subgroup identity, particularly the notion that the group is "holy and set apart." However, if government enforcement pushes out the ability of the subgroup to enforce its own norms (school official enforcement of standing for the pledge pushing out subgroup enforcement of refusing to stand for the pledge; school official teaching of evolution pushing out subgroup enforcement of the norm of belief in a seven day creation story) then a positive relationship between strictness and mobilization based on demand makes sense. This specific kind of tension would be most likely to politically mobilize strict religious subgroups because threatening enforcement so threatens the legitimacy of their institutions.

Shifts in mobilization of religious groups may be the result of increases in strictness threats due to political changes (such as school prayer rulings) that increase threats to enforcement of religious subgroup norms (in this case religious conservatives). Yet, the political mobilization in all of these stories depends on the existence of legal standing for religious freedom in the American political system. Absent this standing, these same stories could instead be stories of religion going underground, not an uncommon religious subgroup story in political histories. The larger institutional configuration (the legal context) matters. One would expect the strongest relationship between strictness and political mobilization in these conditions (threat to enforcement in a configuration with free exercise standing). One would expect the swiftest mobilization of elites in this instance too. Elites in the subgroup have a vested interest in maintaining subgroup norm enforcement and thus have a vested interest in fighting government rules that threaten that. Of all the possible political goals created by gaps between religious values and existing political conditions, government rules that threaten subgroup norm enforcement would seem to take priority. Jelen (2001) notes that conservative Christian groups have recently made very effective use of attention to threats to free expression for mobilizing their own and for gaining legitimacy for their political arguments.

Finke and Stark (2000) develop a logic of the competitive advantages of strict churches in the religious marketplace and then show empirical evidence to support their claims concerning strict growth. Is it possible that there is a similar competitive advantage to strict interest groups in the political marketplace? Is it the case that among religious interest groups those that would be deemed most strict, those with norms most different from current norms or policy, have the greatest growth? Do they have any power advantages or do elite power and electoral dynamics make such groups easily dismissed? Although the discussion of strictness in most of this paper focuses on religious organizations, strictness need not be limited to religious interest groups. Professional group and issue groups could be strict too. One could use the notion of strictness developed here to test a broader hypothesis that strict interest groups experience more growth or to test whether strictness emerges as an influence on interest group power above and beyond the usual suspects of money, reputation, and membership.

Although tension may be important in understanding mobilization of efforts to push for social change (or fight against social change), it bears mention that subgroup norms need not be strict ones to be relevant for political analysis. At the other end of the spectrum, civil religion involves religious norms that emphasize reverence for existing government order. Nearer the middle, religious norms can complement governmental order. Many of Tocqueville's observations about ways in which religion complemented democracy could fit here as would discussions of the need for governmental liberty to exist alongside strong moral codes (Reichley 2001).

Institutional Supply

Religious communities not only influence policy change through political mobilization, but also influence such change through their ability to create institutions. They are a source of institutional supply. By institutional supply, I mean supply of strategies, norms, and rules, not the supply of organizational entities (congregations, seminaries, denominational headquarters), although these organizational entities play important roles in the supply of shared strategies, norms, and rules.

Religious organizational activities supply norms that can have political implications. Seminaries and clergy development programs supply norms and teach religious leaders how to reinforce norms through congregational practices. These religious practices not only build and reinforce norms, but they also build knowledge of stories and images that create a portfolio of possible frames for political mobilization that have strong normative value for believers. Just as economic groups have collective action advantages in that they need not form an organization solely for the purposes of political action, but can use their organizational structures and resources designed for business for political action, so religious movements have a collective action advantage in that they need not build normative commitments solely for the purposes of political action, but can use normative commitments supplied by religious norms developed through regular worship and religious study for political action.

Several components of religious organizations make them useful institutional incubators in American politics. Religious organizations invest in developing many specific institutions as they work to maintain organizational structures and establish understandings of their roles in broader society. To give a recent example, a liberal congregation seeking to develop a marriage policy consistent with their inclusiveness norms developed a rule that the congregation would no longer celebrate marriages and instead would only conduct blessing ceremonies of couples. This allowed the congregation to include heterosexual and homosexual couples equally in the rituals of the church. Congregation discussion of their rules concerning marriage were necessary because marriages are part of congregational "business," but these discussions would also clarify or reinforce arguments concerning the mismatch between their religious beliefs and current governmental rules concerning marriage for some members. This congregational policy shift also creates a social experiment that others can observe. In this way, religious organizations serve as institutional laboratories in much the same way as states operate as laboratories in the U.S. federal system. Assuming that religious organizations care about integrity and credibility, these efforts in institutional design also

create practice in developing institutions that match broad norms stressed by the religious tradition, which provides insight into the match or mismatch between broad religious norms and societal or governmental institutions that exist outside of the church. Religious organizations' need for policies combined with their expected concern with integrity also creates practice in accountability as religious policies get compared with religious principles and text and debates ensue over appropriate policies (e.g., current debates in Protestant denominations over homosexuality policies).

Several realities enhance the civil society capabilities of religious organizations to be institutional incubators. Religious traditions often emphasize that faithfulness may require adherence to norms or rules different than those required by society or government. This tradition reinforces the notion that the civic space in religious organizations may need to be innovative. It also reinforces the notion that religious institutions that do copy those found in society may be challenged on the grounds that they are inconsistent with religious principle. It is okay, perhaps even desired, to have norms and rules different than those found elsewhere. Eisenach (2003) notes that this allows religious organizations to develop and build legitimacy for social ideas such as gender equality before they become widely accepted. He argues that the practice of such institutions in the religious organization constitutes them or makes them real institutional options with legitimacy. They become, then, part of a possible policy option set for broader policy discussions. To the extent that religious organizational practice reinforces norms and rules distinct from government or broader societal institutions, normative commitment to these alternative institutions builds, which supplies normative commitment for efforts to make changes in broader or governmental institutions. It also builds legitimacy for those institutions so that if they become government policy, their legitimacy is reinforced in at least some religious subgroups. On the other hand, this religious legitimacy can backfire and reduce legitimacy though, if others view the policy as an illegitimate result of government officials pandering to a particular religious subgroup.

Institutional innovation in religious organizations has even broader social implications because underlying norms of mission and evangelization push religious organizations to develop institutions that reach beyond the walls of religious congregations, hospitals, and schools. These norms push religious organizations to develop strategies, norms, and rules designed to improve lives or to improve the broader community (this is not to say that they always *do* improve lives or communities). It pushes religious organizations to invest in the research and resources necessary for broader community institutional development. Again, this institutional development fits well into the day to day preaching, teaching, and program needs of religious organizations. It also fits well with the layered organizational design of many religious traditions. National or regional bodies can invest in this kind of institutional design, information about innovations at the local level can be shared with others, and new institutional ideas can be debated and taught. There are a plethora of regional, state, and national meetings and conventions where this kind of information gets shared. Congregations need to engage members in witness and service, religious colleges need service-learning partners, religious hospitals need health programs that tackle larger

community health needs. The religious missions and service norms of these organizations and the competitive pressure from secular alternatives push religious organizations to take these outreach efforts seriously.

The impact of these outreach efforts gets even further broadened by the strong norm in many religious organizations that religious groups should work in collaboration with other institutions with similar goals. High percentages of congregations and clergy in a broad array of religious traditions report working in at least one community coalition (Ammerman 2002; Wuthnow and Evans 2002). Thus, religious organizations also work at this inter-organizational layer to supply institutions.

The innovation potential of religious organizations is also enhanced by their independence. Religious freedom laws limit government regulation of religious organizations allowing them more freedom in developing institutions. Funding streams from tuition, tithes, contributions, and hospital revenues provide a financial base that allows many religious organizations freedom from the most severe grant-to-grant existence that dominates in many other service organizations. Larger religious organizations, particularly denominational organizations and interdenominational organizations, have funds to offer their own grants, and hence to set their own agenda.

Finally, the sheer size and scope of religious organizations in the United States makes their institutional supply important in policy. The religious sector is a civic space that still has plenty of people joining in association with one another. Although membership in many other civic organizations has declined (Putnam 2000), church attendance in the United States remains strong. It is also a civic space that reaches lower income and lower education groups in ways that other civic organizations do not. Beyond the membership-based organizations, religious organizations dominate in the nonprofit sector in many fields, with education and healthcare being notable examples.

The fact that religious organizations have strong capacities when it comes to institutional development should not be taken to mean that they necessarily always choose desirable institutions or that society would be well advised to pick up and apply their institutions whenever possible. Bad ideas and perverse incentives exist here too. Past norms and rules concerning appropriate responses to sexual abuse allegations against clergy stand out as one recent example. Religious associations are also not entirely free from the influence of broader institutions that are inconsistent with religious teachings and so problems with broader institutions can get echoed in their institutions. The multi-layered structure of many religious institutions and the authority of scriptural teaching in many traditions provide mechanisms for correction and accountability, but these too are imperfect. Whether religious groups are any more or less prone to good institutional ideas or whether they are more or less adaptive and self-correcting than other civic associations are interesting questions for further empirical analysis.

The emphasis on institutional supply here also should not be taken as an argument that institutional supply offers the only or even most important source of religious power in policy debates. Religious organizations also contribute to policy change, particularly

at the local level, through their supply of resources for community efforts. These contributions of staff time, space, volunteers, building investments, and money, supply resources that enable many collaborative efforts to happen (Wuthnow 2003). The supply of these resources and the supply of legitimacy resources can grant leaders of religious organizations political access and power (Demerath and Williams 1992; Stone 1989). Religious organization resources enable religious leaders to participate in discussions that get their institutional supply ideas on the table.

What makes an institutional idea created in a religious association a legitimate option in policy debates? One response that fits the emphasis here on norms and that is consistent with the advocacy coalition theory and the punctuated equilibrium theory is that legitimacy comes from shared beliefs between the elites in the religious association and bureaucratic or elected elites (shared strategies or norms in the grammar of institution terms). Sabatier et al. (1995) argue that the match between the professional norms of the forestry officials and the norms of the conservation interest groups explains the planning decisions of forestry officials better than competing explanations. Religious subgroups with norms that match the dominant norms of elites in an advocacy coalition, then, would have greater legitimacy and thus greater ability to yield power through institutional supply. The growing attention to faith-health collaborations in public health policy appears fueled, at least in part, by the strong consistency between public health profession norms that stress social justice and community building and similar norms stressed by religious professionals. Similarly, President Bush's attention to faith-based initiatives appears driven, at least in part, by his normative beliefs in the unique power of religion to allow individuals to overcome additions, a belief shared by many evangelical activists and opposed by many professional service providers.

Religious organizations are not the only entities supplying institutions and so the conceptual notion of institutional supply extends beyond the study of religion and politics. Many professions have multi-level organizations that supply institutions in similar ways, although none have the breadth of religious organizations. No other set of civic organizations has such an inroad to such a broad base of citizens and to human service and community development elites. This scope of religious organizations makes their institutional supply dynamics particularly relevant for many policy debates.

Conclusion

The model of choice offered here directly incorporates normative influences, but still includes attention to an outcomes consequences. Thus it still recognizes the potential for self-interest to drive choices when the outcomes component is clear or when this component is not drowned out by normative commitment or habit. The fact that the outcomes consequence in many complex political circumstances may not be clear makes the institutional consequence component all the more important. Empirical evidence that norms matter in many political and collective action circumstances also indicates the importance of incorporating clear normative components in models of political choice alongside components that represent tangible consequences of choices.

The grammar of institutions provides a mechanism for sorting shared understandings that are called many different things by different people into systematic categories. The grammar not only provides a language for distinguishing one kind of normative influence from another, but does so in a way that links the distinctions directly to differing influences on choices. Many components of "mores," "attributes of the community," "beliefs," or "values" can be identified as shared understandings that can be parsed with the grammar into categories of shared strategies, norms, and rules. Some of these understandings are also likely to be rules. Since the grammar can also be used to parse policy statements, it also facilitates comparative analysis of the interaction of subgroup mores and governmental policy. This paper only begins a discussion of the ways in which religious institution mores interact with larger civic institutions to shape policy. The analytic power of lining up nested institutions to examine reinforcing institutions and cross-pressures from institutions extends far beyond these applications. In complex situations with multiple layers of communities and governments one would expect to quite often find multiple prescriptions tied to particular actions. Since religious organizations work heavily on developing and reinforcing institutions and since they are so pervasive in nearly every American community, examining the interaction between religious institutions and policy institutions becomes particularly important for analyses of policy change and governance.

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Notes

[i] For a recent review of these debates in comparative politics see Blyth (2003).

[ii] See Crawford and Ostrom (1995) for a discussion of how to use the interdefinability of denotics to translate institutional statements with different initial denotics.Crawford, Sue E. S., and Elinor Ostrom. 1995. A Grammar of Institutions. *American Political Science Review* 89:582-600.

[iii] Ryan Adams first suggested the idea of identifying deltas and OR ELSE's both as institutional consequences in a discussion of the grammar in November 2003.

[iv] Analysts must find ways of simplifying what would be assumed to be most relevant for the actor and most relevant for the analysis at hand. This simplification need not wreck the validity of the model as actors have limited cognitive ability and limited time to make decisions and so must make heavy use of simplification themselves.