

“Reputations in Interaction”

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Most studies analyze an actor’s reputation individually, based on what the actor says and does. Few studies have examined an actor’s reputation interactively, based on how the target reacts. Yet much of international relations is interactive: One state acts; the other state reacts. How does the other’s reaction affect one’s reputation—and the other’s own reputation? Under what conditions would the other succeed in using its reputation to attack one’s reputation? We break down these questions and investigate them experimentally. Using the setting of a diplomatic dispute, we randomize the reputations for honesty for each side to identify the diplomatic premium (or discount) of a good (or bad) reputation. We show that one’s reputation is both an offensive tool that can undercut the other’s credibility, as well as a defensive device that can protect one’s credibility from challenge. Separately, we also randomize regime type to identify the existence of a “dyadic-democratic premium” for credibility. Taken together, our results show that reputation is not simply a static asset. Rather, it is a dynamic asset that changes interactively, but in systematic ways.

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PIPC Online Speaker Series

March 29, 6pm (PST)

March 30, 12pm (Australia, Canberra)

March 30, 10am (Japan)

March 30, 9am (Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan)