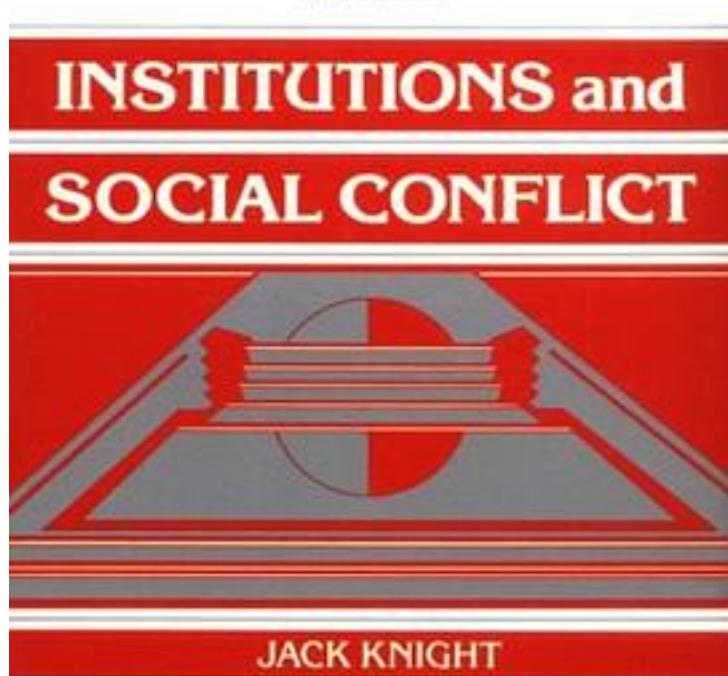


Institutions and Social Conflict



Political Economy
of Institutions and Decisions

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Many of the fundamental questions in social science entail an examination of the role played by social institutions. Why do we have so many social institutions? Why do they take one form in one society and quite different ones in others? In what ways do these institutions develop? When and why do they change? Institutions and Social Conflict addresses these questions in two ways. First it offers a thorough critique of a wide range of theories of institutional change, from the classical accounts of Smith, Hume, Marx and Weber to the contemporary approaches of evolutionary theory, the theory of social conventions and the new institutionalism. Secondly, it develops a new theory of institutional change that emphasises the distributional consequences of social institutions. The emergence of institutions is explained as a by-product of distributional conflict in which asymmetries of power in a society generate institutional solutions to conflicts.

作者介绍:

A renowned political scientist and legal theorist, Professor Knight's scholarly work focuses on modern social and political theory, law and legal theory, and political economy. He holds a joint appointment with Duke Law School and Duke's Trinity College of Arts and Sciences, where he teaches in the Politics, Philosophy and Economics Program. At the Law School, he teaches courses on social scientific approaches to law and courts, as well as courses on the political economy of social institutions.

Professor Knight's research focuses on the rules and norms that organize human activities in nations. In addition to study of the motivations and decisions of judges, he has examined the effects of the norm of extensive prior judicial experience as a prerequisite for service on the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as several other aspects of how courts make decisions and how judges choose their positions in opinions.

Professor Knight is the author of several books: *Institutions and Social Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), *Explaining Social Institutions* (with Itai Sened) (The University of Michigan Press, 1995), and *The Choices Justices Make* (with Lee Epstein) (Congressional Quarterly Press, 1997), which won the American Political Science Association's C. Herman Prichett Award for the best book published on law and courts. He co-edited *Courts, Judges and Politics* (McGraw-Hill, 6th Edition, 2005) and has published numerous articles in journals and edited volumes on such topics as democratic theory, the rule of law, judicial decision-making, and theories of institutional emergence and change.

Professor Knight holds a bachelor's degree and JD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MA and a PhD in political science from the University of Chicago.

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评论

传承制度学派，补充了冲突、分配和权力的视角

总结现有制度理论并发展一种新的制度研究和思考路径。制度确实有利于固化集体的未来期望、塑造固定的互动和集体行动模式、提供信息促进策略性合作，但其主要功能并非提供收益、安全或减少不确定性，而是平息权力和资源/利益分配上的冲突，促成并巩固一种相对均衡的资源分配模式。制度将群体间的愿望结晶化成相对可持续和有合法性的规则、范式、规矩、法律等。权力和分配冲突再起的时候，制度变革随之发生；权力和分配相对稳定且各方收益均衡的时候制度则比较有延续和稳定性。为了超越制度的功能性解释之哲学（有用故存在、存在即合理）而将制度视为了权力和分配的副产物。

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书评

我们在日常生活中，听到或者遇到一位“好”人遭遇不测或者困难，常说的一句就是“好人没好报”。我们判断一个人的好坏，是这个乐于助人，为他人着想、急他人所急，不求回报或者付出大于所得，依据的是在现实生活中这个人对所处环境的具有“正能量”、馈赠的德行。我们评价这类...

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