



A contingency approach to the Sino–U.S. conflict resolution

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Abstract

Taking the dispute between the United States and China over the collision of a U.S. Navy plane with a Chinese jet in April 2001, the research confirmed at certain the Contingency Theory variables that affect the U.S. government's stance in resolving the conflict. It supported the postulates of the theory: Symmetry through a dialogue may not be inherently ethical; in a morally intractable conflict, accommodation may be impossible.

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1. Introduction

With the rapid growth of international news media and globalization, disputes and conflicts between countries are more than ever subject to the shaping influence of increasingly diverse publics. Taking the dispute between the United States and China over a midair collision in April 2001, this research aims to identify the factors that affect the dispute resolution of the U.S. government. The dispute was sparked by the incidental collision of a U.S. Navy reconnaissance plane with a Chinese fighter jet sent to intercept it over the South China Sea. The U.S. spy plane made an emergency landing on the Chinese island of Hainan after the collision, while the Chinese fighter jet crashed into the sea, with its pilot missing.

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