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Leadership for the North

The Influence and Impact of Arctic
Council Chairs

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Leadership for the North

The Influence and Impact
of Arctic Council Chairs

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Douglas C. Nord
Department of Political Science
Umeå University
Umeå, Sweden

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*To Geoff, Gunnel, and Kjell—all leaders
from the North*

Preface

This edited volume focuses on the various leadership roles played by chairs within an international body. Specifically, it looks at the influence and impact of the Chair of the Arctic Council over the past two decades. It seeks to highlight the various ways in which the rotating head of this organization has facilitated the growth and development of the institution over this period and contributed to its emergence as the primary forum for the discussion of Arctic concerns.

The examination of “leadership from the chair” is not a subject that has received substantial attention within the existing literature on international organization. The assumption has been made that chairs of international bodies do not exert a significant amount of influence over the institutions they head or have a major impact on their decision-making. Yet increasingly the evidence of the real impact of the chair within contemporary international negotiations and diplomacy suggests that such an assumption may no longer be valid. Using both formal and informal methods and tools at their disposal, the leaders of such diverse bodies as the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the recently concluded Paris Climate Negotiations can all be seen to have left a major imprint on the bodies they have supervised.

This volume makes a similar argument with respect to the Arctic Council, a far less prominent actor within the international community. Nonetheless, as this international body has endeavored to become the leading venue for the discussion and investigation of Arctic problems and aspirations, the influence and impact of its successive chairs can be clearly seen in its evolution. The Chair of the Arctic Council over the past two decades has helped to provide focus and direction for the organization. It is most likely that in the future, the occupants of this post will continue to perform a significant leadership function within the body. Exactly how this has been done—and will be done in the future—is the common thematic concern of this volume.

This book has its origins in a series of discussions emanating from the Ninth International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA) meetings that were held in Umeå, Sweden, in June of 2016. At that time, two successive scholarly panels were convened to examine the efforts and consequences of the last four Chairs of

the Arctic Council (Sweden, Canada, the United States, and Finland). A number of the contributing authors to this volume took part in these discussions. All came away from this experience feeling that there was a need to capture the insights gained there and to engage in further comparative analysis of the influential roles played by the Chair of the Arctic Council both within the institution and in the realm of circumpolar diplomacy.

As the convener of the two IASSA panels, I volunteered to see if it would be possible to provide a volume that might address such matters. I engaged several of the original panel participants to provide their insights on the leadership roles played by the most recent Arctic Council Chairs. I prevailed upon other colleagues knowledgeable about the affairs of the Arctic Council to add their findings and observations regarding the impact and influence of its head. An effort was made to not only describe and account for the different paths taken by these successive leaders of the body but also to see how such leadership efforts were regarded by the different actors within the organization—the Member States, the Permanent Participants, and the Observers. The resulting volume is that which now appears before you. I am most grateful to all who took part in this collective effort and to their helpful contributions in furthering our understanding of leadership within the context of the Arctic Council.

Umeå, Sweden

Douglas C. Nord

Acknowledgments

I have come to believe over a number of years that the study of cooperation in politics is far more complex and rewarding than the investigation of conflict. It requires little effort to determine why individuals, communities, or nations come to blows with one another, while the reasons for why they seek to work with one another in a harmonious fashion often seem to be more subtle and nuanced. Such is the case of the Arctic today. There are many potential sources of tension within the region, and yet the area and its people continue to operate in a generally harmonious fashion. Often to the wonderment of outside Observers, the contemporary circumpolar community has functioned as a relatively conflict-free zone within a global community that has seen much disorder over the past two decades. This is the “good news” that comes from the Far North, and, sadly, it often goes noticed and unreported. I believe that the Arctic Council has made important contributions to building and solidifying this spirit of cooperation, and it is one of the reasons I have chosen to study its contributions and operation over several years.

The present volume is also an example of this spirit of cooperation, and there are several contributions to its fulfillment that I wish to acknowledge here. The first of these is the effort of the several chapter authors. Despite already having busy lives and heavy research commitments, each of the contributors was able to carve out some time and attention for this collective inquiry into the operation of leadership within the Arctic Council. They all willingly answered my call to participate and composed essays that provide us with new insights and a better understanding of this complicated relationship. They responded in good humor with my repeated calls to stay focused and on schedule and did not grumble too much when I presented them with suggested revisions and edits. To all of you (Amy, Doug, Gosia, Niklas, the two Heathers, Timo, Andy, and Diddy), I owe a debt of gratitude. You have reinforced my interest in the study of cooperation.

A second acknowledgment of assistance goes to those scholars and practitioners of international organization and diplomacy who have helped shape and refine my thinking about the Arctic Council and the leadership within it. A number of individuals such as Oran Young, Jonas Tallberg, John English, Gustaf Lind, and Björn Lyrvall have helped me wrestle with this central research question. Several other

colleagues have provided useful insights along the way including Heather Exner-Pirot, Timo Koivurova, Joel Plouffe, Heather Nicol, Sverker Sörlin, and Jennifer Spence. To all a hearty thanks!

This volume would not have been completed without the timely assistance from several folks along the way. I wish to thank Marianne Røgeberg and Kyösti Lempa of NordForsk in Oslo who connected me with other international and Nordic scholars interested in the contemporary Arctic. For the same reason, I wish to thank Peter Sköld and Gabriella Nordin of Umeå's Arctic Research Centre (ARCUM). They are adept in focusing our attention on the needs and aspirations of the North. Deep appreciation is also directed to Marie Olsson, Christine Boström, and Magnus Blomgren who saw to my needs within the Political Science Department throughout the course of this inquiry.

Finally, a word of sincere thanks goes to my all my friends and colleagues at Umeå University with whom I shared morning coffee and afternoon *fika*—and an occasional extended conversation down the corridor—during the length of my investigation including Anders Lidström, Patrik Johansson, Chris Hudson, Camilla Sandström, Thorbjörn Bergman, and Olof Johansson. Your insights as well as your patience and good humor were much appreciated. And to my stalwart supporters, Gunnel Gustafsson, Kjell and Gertrud Lundmark, Kerstin Kolam, and Martin Strand, I cannot adequately express all that I owe to each of you! I look forward to many future gatherings.

Umeå, Sweden

Douglas C. Nord

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List of Contributors

Andrew Chater Brescia University College, London, ON, Canada

Douglas Cost School of Education, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, USA

Niklas Eklund Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden

Heather Exner-Pirot University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

Diddy R. M. Hitchins University of Alaska Anchorage, Anchorage, Alaska, USA

Timo Koivurova Arctic Centre (University of Lapland), Rovaniemi, Finland

Amy Lauren Lovecraft Center for Arctic Policy Studies, International Arctic Research Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks, USA

Heather Nicol Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

Douglas C. Nord Department of Political Science, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden

Malgorzata (Gosia) Smieszek Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland

About the Editor

Douglas C. Nord is an established scholar in the fields of international relations and comparative politics. His areas of specialty include the foreign and northern development policies of Canada, the Nordic states and Russia as well as the United States. He has written extensively on the relations between the countries of the circumpolar north and on the emergence of the Arctic as a central concern of contemporary international politics. Professor Nord has taught and undertaken research inquiries at various educational institutions across the region. He presently conducts his studies at the University of Umeå in Sweden where he is an associated research professor at the Arctic Research Centre (ARCUM). He presently serves as the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board for NordForsk's Nordic Centres of Excellence in Arctic Research. Professor Nord has studied the Arctic Council for over twenty years and has published two earlier volumes on the organization: *The Changing Arctic: Creating a Framework for Consensus Building within the Arctic Council* (2016) and *The Arctic Council: Governance within the Far North* (2016).

Authors' Biography

Andrew Chater serves as a fellow at Polar Research and Policy Initiative with an interest in Arctic governance. He is presently an assistant professor of political science at Brescia University College in London, Ontario. He completed his doctorate at the University of Western Ontario and was previously a graduate resident at the Rotman Institute of Philosophy. He holds a master's degree from the University of Waterloo. His research interests include Arctic governance, geopolitics and security, as well as Canadian foreign policy. In 2013, he was part of the Arctic Athabaskan Council's delegation at the Arctic Council meetings in Whitehorse, Yukon.

Douglas Cost is an assistant professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) in the School of Education (SOE). He completed his PhD in Cross-Cultural Education and Future Studies as a National Science Foundation and IGERT fellow in Resilience and Adaptation at the UAF. While doing so he was awarded a TUNDRA fellowship and studied at the Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø. He has an MFA in Poetry and an MA in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Dr. Cost's research focuses on the role of compulsory education in the resilience of Arctic Alaska communities. He is also a scenarios and future-thinking researcher using these concepts and methods to approach questions of youth leadership, teacher education, and educational reform. Currently he instructs Teaching Methods, Multiculturalism, and Developing Literacy in the Content Area courses to student teacher candidates in the SOE.

Niklas Eklund is a senior lecturer and associate professor in political science at the Department of Political Science, Umeå University. His current research focuses on different aspects of public administration, security, and crisis management, and he regularly teaches a master-level course in leadership. As a researcher, Eklund is affiliated with the Arctic Research Centre at Umeå University (Arcum). He is the permanent university representative on the board for Pax Nordica, a yearly symposium about Nordic and Arctic security. Among his recent publications is "Refracting

(Geo)political Choices in the Arctic” (2017) with Lize-Marié van der Watt in *The Polar Journal*, and he is currently working on the chapter about Sweden in the *Routledge Handbook of Arctic Security* which will soon be published.

Heather Exner-Pirot is the managing editor of the *Arctic Yearbook*. She is a regular contributor to Radio-Canada’s Eye on the Arctic website, a board member for both The Arctic Institute (TAI) and the Saskatchewan First Nations Economic Development Network, an editorial board member for the *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, and the chair of the Canadian Northern Studies Trust. She is currently a strategist for outreach and indigenous engagement at the University of Saskatchewan and has held previous positions at the International Centre for Northern Governance and Development and the University of the Arctic. She completed her doctoral degree in Political Science at the University of Calgary in 2011, focusing on Arctic regionalization and human security. Her additional research interests include indigenous and northern governance, economic development, health care, and postsecondary education.

Diddy R. M. Hitchins is an emeritus professor of political science and international studies at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). She earned her BSc (Social Sciences) at the University of Southampton and MA (Political Behavior) and PhD (Government) at the University of Essex. Her first academic appointment, while completing PhD research, was at the University of Ghana. Subsequently, Hitchins served as chair of Political Science and director of International Studies at the UAA. She was also the founding director of the UAA’s Canadian and North Pacific Studies Programs. Her teaching areas are in Comparative Politics and International Relations. She has conducted extensive research in Canada, the Russian Far East, and the Arctic, as well as China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. She was president of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS). Since 1985, Hitchins has been British honorary consul for Alaska and has served on UK Observer delegations to the Arctic Council. Queen Elizabeth II honored her with a Member of British Empire (MBE) award in 2005.

Timo Koivurova is a research professor at the University of Lapland. He serves currently as the director of the Arctic Research Centre, which is a national and international hub of information and center of excellence that conducts multidisciplinary research in changes in the Arctic region. As a researcher, he has specialized in various aspects of governance in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Koivurova has led many international and national research projects and has been involved as an expert in international processes generally and in the Arctic region. Koivurova is a member of the board of directors of the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS), an executive committee member of the European Polar Board, and an editor-in-chief of *The Yearbook of Polar Law*.

Amy Lauren Lovecraft is a professor of political science at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) and the director of the Center for Arctic Policy Studies at the International Arctic Research Center. In her research, Dr. Lovecraft explores power dynamics in social-environmental systems. In particular, how are problems defined and policies designed in the light of climate change and development uncertainties in the Arctic? Her research explores the question from transdisciplinary standpoints seeking to bridge the domains of science, policy, and civic life. Dr. Lovecraft has been a Dickey Scholar at Dartmouth College and a Fulbright research scholar in Norway at the Center for International Climate Change and Environmental Research (CICERO). She has served two terms as a member of the US National Academies Polar Research Board and currently serves NordForsk in evaluating the Nordic Centres of Excellence (2017–2021). In 2017 she was elected to the Norwegian Scientific Academy for Polar Research.

Heather Nicol is a professor of political geography at Trent University, where she teaches in the School of the Environment. Nicol's research interests are in global relations and regional structures, borders, and policies. Her work explores the contemporary and historical border between Canada and the United States, regional structure of Caribbean political and economic cooperation, Canada-US relations, and most recently circumpolar regional governance and geopolitics. In 2015–2016 Nicol was the University of Washington's Fulbright visiting chair in Arctic Studies during which she studied the US chairmanship of the Arctic Council. She is the author of numerous books and articles exploring the political geography of the circumpolar region, including *One Arctic: The Arctic Council and Circumpolar Governance* with Whitney Lackenbauer and Wilfrid Greaves, *The Networked North* with Whitney Lackenbauer, and *Climate Change from a Northern Point of View* with Lassi Heininen.

Malgorzata (Gosia) Smieszek is a political scientist and researcher at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland, in Rovaniemi, Finland. In her research Gosia studies international environmental regimes, Arctic governance, and questions of science-policy interface. She has taken part in numerous projects including most recently "Finland's Arctic Council Chairmanship in Times of Increasing Uncertainty" for Finland's Prime Minister's Office (2016–2018). Gosia has been a fellow of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) since 2014, representing the IASC at the Arctic Council, and was co-chair of the IASC Action Group on Communicating Arctic Science to Policymakers (CASP). She was also the co-organizer of the fourth China-Nordic Cooperation Symposium and a participant in the science diplomacy course of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the Vega Fellowship program on science communication and leadership. The latest project that she has been developing is the "Women in the Arctic."

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Part I
Introduction

Chapter 1

Providing Leadership for the North



Douglas C. Nord

Abstract This chapter provides a brief overview of the need for leadership in the contemporary Arctic. It considers how the process of Arctic governance has evolved over the past quarter century and how the Arctic Council has become a central actor in this endeavor. It looks at how recent Arctic Council Chairmanships have played significant roles in developing a response to pressing Arctic concerns. It notes, however, that the precise means by which successive chairs of the organization have advanced its work has rarely been examined or compared. This is the overall focus of this volume. Its individual chapter inquiries are noted and briefly summarized.

Keywords Leadership · Arctic Council · Governance · Diplomacy · Chairmanships

Over the past few decades, the Arctic has become a region of growing importance within the international arena. Important environmental, economic, security and development concerns can all be seen in evidence within its borders. Similarly, change in the Arctic has been shown to have direct consequences for those residing beyond its borders. No longer a distant and remote region of the world, today's Arctic has become a significant influencer of international trade, meteorological conditions and resource development. Climate change, international shipping, defense preparedness and energy security have also been linked to ongoing change within the circumpolar North. Consequently, there appears to be a growing need to become more familiar with these and other significant challenges and opportunities that affect both the Arctic and the broader global community.

Clearly, there is also a need for effective leadership to address and respond to the changing conditions of the North. How concerted effort is organized to deal with major concerns of various communities has become a growing concern of the social sciences over the past quarter century. The study of leadership, and particularly is

D. C. Nord (✉)
Department of Political Science, Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden
e-mail: douglas.nord@umu.se

capacity to mobilize response to pressing issues and needs, has been broadly considered.¹ Yet the study of leadership within international organizations has been less well examined (Nye 2008). There remains a significant gap in our present knowledge of how leaders within such international bodies emerge, perform their functions and deliver necessary results. A proposed examination of leadership in the North within such a context would contribute important new understanding to the field.

Over the past 20 years or so, the primary institutional vehicle for doing so has been the Arctic Council. This “high level forum” was founded in 1996 and brings together under its auspices national governments, representatives of indigenous peoples and a variety of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations interested in the future of the Arctic and its global impact. (See Table 1.1 below.) The Arctic Council has provided the mechanism for establishing a focused circumpolar effort at research of Arctic issues and relevant policy recommendation along with the first steps toward establishing a governance framework for the relatively new international organization has contributed both good science and innovative ideas for collectively responding to the needs and challenges of Arctic environments and peoples.

Table 1.1 Composition of the Arctic Council

Ministerial Meeting (Biennial)
Member States 8
Permanent Participants 6
Senior Arctic Officials Group Meeting (normally biannually)
Working Groups 6 (meet on a scheduled basis)
Task Forces (vary in number and frequency of meetings over time)
Observers
Non-Arctic States 13
Intergovernmental and Inter-Parliamentary Organizations 13
Non-Governmental Organizations 13

Source: Arctic Council Secretariat

¹The scholarly literature on leadership is extensive. Some of the more useful studies that have contributed to the perspectives contained within this volume include R.H. Axelrod (2010) *Terms of Engagement: New Ways of Leading and Changing Organizations (second Edition)*. San Francisco, CA: Berret-Koehler Publishers; J. M. Burns (2003) *Transforming Leadership*. New York: Grove Press; G. Buseberg (2001) “Learning in Organizations and Public Policy” in *Journal of Public Policy* 21(2) 173–189; S. De Rue (2011) “Adaptive Leadership Theory: Leading and Following as a Complex Adaptive Process” in *Organizational Behavior* 31,125–150; Heifetz et al. (2009) *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership. Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. Boston: Harvard Business School; O. Young, “Political Leadership and Regime Formation: On the Development of Institutions in International Society” in. *International Organization* 45 (3) 281–308.