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Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Hello, and welcome to the Fall 2024 edition of the Michigan Journal of Political Science. During a year of persistent themes—with elections around the world polarizing political climates and devastating global violence—the role of free discourse, informed by critical inquiry, and analysis is more important than ever. MJPS was founded in 1981 to foster these discussions of contemporary political issues by publishing original academic, non-partisan undergraduate research, and we are proud to continue this legacy by featuring work from ten authors here.

From "Hemispheres of Geoengineering: An Analysis of Motivations for the Pursuit of Geoengineering in the Global North and South," which highlights worldwide risks from these scientific advancements, to "'Britain's Most Diverse Parliament Ever': An Investigation into the Acceptable Difference of the Backgrounds of Ethnic Minority Conservatives in 2024," which questions how progressive the 2024 general election results truly were from diversity and representation lenses, this edition of the journal encompasses a broad spectrum of topics.

Pieces like "The Effect of Political Polarization on the Reinterpretation or Recreation of National Flags, and Their Influence on Determining a Country's Current Form of Nationalism," "Growing with Age: How Getting Older Shapes Circuit Court Judges' Decisions on Healthcare Cases," and "Americans for Tax Reform, Club for Growth, and Heritage Action for America: Comparative Group Analysis" curate an American Politics section that tackles the most prevalent debates in an ever-polarizing country.

Meanwhile, "Complexities of Power Projection: Exploring Its Relationship with Terrorism," "Reciprocal Altruism: Rebuilding America's Reputation in the Middle East," and "Why Do Alliances Wage War Upon One Another? A Qualitative Case Studies Comparison of the Vietnam-China War (1979), Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998-2000), and the Fashoda Crisis (1898)" provide perspectives on historical and contemporary warfare through quantitative and theoretical means.

Political participation barriers and their importance are dissected via case studies from around the world in "Women in the Revolutionary Tide: A Comparative Study of Women's Participation in Southern African and Latin American Left-Wing Insurgencies" and "How Social Capital Enhances Political Participation: An Empirical Analysis in the Context of Military Mobilization in Ukraine."

We hope you enjoy reading these ten pieces as much as we have enjoyed preparing them. Our deepest gratitude goes out to the entire Editorial Board, particularly senior editors Rob, Beckett, Shihan, and Luke. Their attention to detail, commitment to academic rigor, and dedication to quality of writing have been instrumental during the publication process. After Alexa's graduation this past December, we would like to congratulate Beckett on his new role as co-editor-in-chief with Nimai for the next edition! Thank you to the Department of Political Science—namely Alice Austin, Brian Min, Joseph Johnson, and Dustin Hahn—for their continued support, without which our journal would not be possible. Finally, to our readers, thank you. Your readership helps ensure a transparent, accessible future for research.

Sincerely,
Alexa George and Nimai Talur
Editors-In-Chief

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Section 1:

American Politics

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Featuring:

"The Effect of Political Polarization on the Reinterpretation or Recreation of National Flags, and Their Influence on Determining a Country's Current Form of Nationalism"

Written by Madelyn Larson
Brigham Young University, Political Science Major, Class of 2025

"Growing with Age:
How Getting Older Shapes Circuit Court Judges' Decisions on Healthcare Cases"

Written by Mankang Qian
Washington University in St. Louis, Political Science and Economics Major, Class of 2025

"Americans for Tax Reform, Club for Growth, and Heritage Action for America: Comparative Group Analysis"

Written by Eric Xie
University of Florida, Political Science and Economics Major, Class of 2025

American Politics

The Effect of Political Polarization on the Reinterpretation or Recreation of National Flags, and Their Influence on Determining a Country's Current Form of Nationalism

Madelyn Larson

—

Nationalism has varying definitions and subsects, including civic and ethnic nationalism. Additionally, a country's flag symbolizes its beliefs.[1] America has faced multiple seasons of unification and intense polarization, which I argue is reflected in the country's national flag, affecting the type of nationalism the country espouses at that time. The article is based on a historical and contemporary analysis of the pivotal moments in the history of the United States. This claim strongly refutes Hans Kohn's claims of geographic boundaries pertaining to individual ideologies toward either civic or ethnic nationalism.

Introduction

Black, blue, and white—the colors of a contemporary addition to the alternative American flag phenomenon, this symbolic edition representing racism or "a solemn tribute to fallen police officers," depending on who you ask.[2] The violent variation between the interpretations of "The Thin Blue Line" American flag highly supports a polarized America. This example of disparity between opinions and symbolic representation is just one of many. Today, flags are presented and displayed in public society as a symbol designed, by intention or default, to create a new public divide, separating the supporters from the non-supporters. Historical flags serve the same purpose.

National symbols, such as national flags, embody a country's beliefs, ideals, and core values.[3] Under that motivational ideal, flags are flown, wars are fought, protests are assembled, and patriotism is built.[4] However, national symbols can be "perceived differently in today's increasingly polarized societies."[5] Understanding a nationally united front is near-impossible if the vision of the public is considered dissimilar. With that despairing definition, how is it that we used to see multiple iterations of the American flag in our earlier history, yet little variance in its public connotation? How was it that, with similarly intense international and internal issues to resolve, who you voted for in the United States did not provide its own seclusionary or exclusionary flag for supporters, unlike what is seen today? These queries catalyzed my dominant research question: How does the degree of political polarization within a country affect its interpretation or alteration of its national flag, and how does the manipulation of the flag reflect the form of nationalism the country espouses? I argue that historical and modern events present themselves as developmental turning points in public opinion and policy. Still, only critical junctures of extreme moments of polarization present the circumstances capable of changing or reinterpreting national flags, thus reforming the country's adopted type of

[1] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[2] Maurice Chammah and Cary Aspinwall, "The Short, Fraught History of the 'Thin Blue Line' American Flag," POLITICO, June 9, 2020, 3 https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/06/09/the-short-fraught-history-of-the-thin-blue-line-american-flag-309767.
[3] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[4] Julia C. Becker et al., "What Do National Flags Stand for? An Exploration of Associations Across 11 Countries," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 48, no. 3 (January 12, 2017): 335–52, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022116687851.
[5] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): abstract, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.

nationalism.[6] Furthermore, I claim that a more politically polarized era of a country's history will espouse more ethnic nationalism, while a more politically cohesive period in a country's history will espouse more civic nationalism in its nation-building processes.[7] Finally, I claim the form of nationalism is a malleable appendage within a country, not a determined condition, contrary to Hans Kohn's claims.[8]

I will pursue my theory through a historical and contemporary case study of the United States. As a democratic country, America is designed to give citizens a voice in the government and its ruling. They elect representatives who consider the people's needs and core values when voting on federal legislation and government directives.[9] These legal actions and processes are designed to sustain a growing, malleable, multiethnic, and representative constituency within the United States, resulting in a flexible pool of public policy and opinion.[10] Given the United States' organization, I will discuss four eras of varying political polarization in the country and the corresponding perceptions, modifications, and alternative creations of the American flag at those times and in connection with the espoused form of civic or ethnic nationalism.

I. Literature Review

Pre-existing literature suggests a wealth of modern research and purely contextual historical information in regard to my research question. There are specificities in research about different types of division or lack of cohesion in the world, such as economic, political, and ethnic divisions within a country.[11, 12, 13] Modern political polling and experiments have proven informational in the development and conclusions of public opinion. The degree of national unification can be tested through public opinion polling and the outcome of the political attitudes—a practice that has proven beneficial in modern eras but cannot be retroactively applied to America's early years. Great amounts of research have been conducted on the iconographic power of the flag as a national symbol. This research is growing more scientific, providing psychological and Attachment theories pertaining to the national flag's function and capabilities between interpersonal and intergroup applications.[14, 15, 16] Much research has been done on the nature of civic and ethnic nationalism and their relationships with other variables, although definitions of the presented types of nationalism vary between authors. Ultimately, the deficiency of research comes from the lack of historical data concerning public sentiment toward the country's current flag, particularly from early American history to World War II. Fortunately, what can be ascertained from these eras is the plentiful historical context of events and their effects on the current flag.

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[6] Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (April 1, 2007): 341–69, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0043887100020852.
[7] Geoff Eley and Ernest Gellner, "Nations and Nationalism.," *Contemporary Sociology a Journal of Reviews* 13, no. 6 (November 1, 1984): 767, https://doi.org/10.2307/2070853.
[8] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.
[9] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[10] Robert T. Schatz and Howard Lavine, "Waving the Flag: National Symbolism, Social Identity, and Political Engagement*," *Political Psychology* 28, no. 3 (May 15, 2007): 329–55, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2007.00571.x.
[11] Bart Bonikowski and Paul DiMaggio, "Varieties of American Popular Nationalism," *American Sociological Review* 81, no. 5 (September 9, 2016): 949–80, https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416663683.
[12] Zachary Elkins and John Sides, "Can Institutions Build Unity in Multiethnic States?," *American Political Science Review*101, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 693–708, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003055407070505.
[13] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[14] David A. Butz, "National Symbols as Agents of Psychological and Social Change," *Political Psychology* 30, no. 5 (July 24, 2009): 779–804, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2009.00725.x.
[15] Zachary Elkins and John Sides, "Can Institutions Build Unity in Multiethnic States?," *American Political Science Review*101, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 693–708, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003055407070505.
[16] Dennis Dunleavy, "Flags as Vehicles of Symbolism: Interpreting the role flags played in the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021," *Benedictine*, October 19, 2021, https://www.academia.edu/59073387/Flags_as_Vehicles_of_Symbolism_Interpreting_the_role_flags_played_in_the_storming_of_the_U_S_Capitol_on_January_6_2021.

Identity and Attachment

Identity is defined as either "(a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or, of course, both (a) and (b) at once)."[17] Secondly, "'identity' is [a] modern formulation of dignity, pride, or honor that implicitly links these to social categories."[18] Identities are "socially constructed," and not geographically defined as Kohn's claims.[19, 20]

Attachment, defined as a pride and psychological identification towards the state, holds a significant role in understanding degrees of division.[21] Generally speaking, across multi-ethnic states, such as the United States, "ethnic minorities manifest less attachment to the states in which they reside than do majorities."[22] Attachment can be increased based on the actions of others in relation to national symbols.[23] Between people, the consequences of national symbols "include enhanced national identification and the promotion of group unity at an unconscious level."[24] Between groups of people, national symbols are related to "heightened national identification and [have the] potential to automatically activate concepts associated with nationhood."[25] This supports the claim of nationalism being interpreted from the modifications and presentations of traditional and alternative flags.

Ethnic Nationalism and Civic Nationalism

Ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism are subcategories of nationalism.[26] However, ethnic and civic nationalism can only be a subcategory under the premise of having "primordial feelings and those motivated by rational and universal principles" in a situation's context.[27] Ethnic and civic nationalism are often blurred together, but Lecours claims they are the dichotomy between modern and traditional societies.[28, 29] Kohn argues civic nationalism is a liberal and reasonable way of thinking based on respect for personal freedoms and human rights, seeking personal liberties, and often seen in Western States as a "liberal and universal," nationalism.[30] Kohn also resolves ethnic nationalism to be a brotherhood of identity.[31] This mystical, brotherhood-like connection is fueled by "folk culture, language, and ethnicity, and therefore primitive, emotional, and motivated by

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[17] James D. Fearon, "WHAT IS IDENTITY (AS WE NOW USE THE WORD)?," November 3, 1999, 36, https://web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf.
[18] Ibid, abstract.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.
[21] Zachary Elkins and John Sides, "Can Institutions Build Unity in Multiethnic States?," *American Political Science Review*101, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 693–708, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003055407070505.
[22] Ibid, abstract.
[23] Ibid.
[24] David A. Butz, "National Symbols as Agents of Psychological and Social Change," *Political Psychology* 30, no. 5 (July 24, 2009): 779–804, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2009.00725.x.
[25] David A. Butz, "National Symbols as Agents of Psychological and Social Change," *Political Psychology* 30, no. 5 (July 24, 2009): 779–804, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2009.00725.x.
[26] There is a variation in definition and understanding of what "nationalism", "civic nationalism", or "ethnic nationalism" mean. Some definitions of nationalism are: an "inherently limited and sovereign" "imagined political community," how "the political and the national unit should be congruent," and the "uncritical acceptance of national, state, and political authorities and out-group antipathy," (Anderson 1983; Gellner 2006; Skitka 2005). For this research, Anderson's definition of "an imagined political community," will serve as our nationalism definition, though the other definitions will be touched on in support of our theory. (Anderson 2006).
[27] Yael Tamir, "Not So Civic: Is There a Difference Between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, no. 1 (February 23, 2019): abstract, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-022018-024059.
[28] André Lecours, "Ethnic and Civic Nationalism: Towards a New Dimension," *Space and Polity* 4, no. 2 (November 1, 2000): 153–66, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562570020013672.
[29] Yael Tamir, "Not So Civic: Is There a Difference Between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, no. 1 (February 23, 2019): 419–34, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-022018-024059.
[30] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, 167, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.
[31] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.

blood and belonging."[32] Ultimately, Kohn claims that whether a country is continually civic or ethnic nationalism-oriented is primarily based on their geographic region, whether they are an Eastern or Western State.[33] This is a shallow interpretation of a country and its regime.

The Symbolism of the Flag

Across various authors, flags are national symbols driven by pathos. The American flag is introduced as a symbol of the United States, one with either negative or positive connotations. Depending on the circumstance, the flag reflects positive achievements, nationalism, unification, patriotism, or conquest in battle.[34, 35, 36, 37, 38] As a symbol, national flags "embody their nations' core values and beliefs."[39] According to Gellner, ideology has a role in inducing change.[40] Gellner claims nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, where it is the belief that political and national units should be congruent.[41]

Scientific Effects of Symbols

As research has been done, understanding of the flag has turned from pathos-driven connotations to those additionally backed by logical science. Thongchai Winichakul argues that "nationhood was literally 'formed' by the demarcation of its body, the territoriality of a nation."[42] This phenomenon introduces the term geo-body, which refers to not only the physical outline of a nation, but "the geo-body mak[ing] claims to areas, peoples, and cultures that are in fact historically unverifiable because these people did not associate sovereignty with territorial boundedness."[43] It is "not merely space or territory … [but] the life of a nation … a source of pride, loyalty, love, passion, bias, hatred, reason, unreason."[44, 45] Geo-bodies, in connection with the historical growth of countries, show an unbridled understanding of a nation's size and influence.

Additional research needs to be done on the psychological and social effects of exposure to national symbols, such as the flag of a country.[46] According to the minimal research available, national symbols are not "passive fixtures of people's environment." Instead, they can possibly have great psychological and social effects, enhancing their national identification and "the promotion of group unity at an unconscious level."[47] The creation of ethnically nationalist symbols reflects an entity's intentionality of separation from former groups, whose intentionality of polarization is continually supported by their actions that contribute to the symbolism of the flag. National symbols affect intergroup

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[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Carolyn Marvin, "Theorizing the flagbody: Symbolic dimensions of the flag desecration debate, or, why the bill of rights does not fly in the ballpark," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 8, no. 2 (June 1, 1991): 119–38, https://doi.org/10.1080/15295039109366786.
[35] Gerald R. Webster, "American Nationalism, The Flag, And The Invasion Of Iraq*," *Geographical Review* 101, no. 1 (December 28, 2010): 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1931-0846.2011.00069.x.
[36] Roy Srirupa. "'A Symbol of Freedom': The Indian Flag and the Transformations of Nationalism, 1906-2002 on JSTOR." *www.jstor.org*, n.d. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25076079.
[37] Nicole Satherley, Danny Osborne, and Chris G. Sibley, "Who Is for (or Against) the National Flag? Ideological and Identity-Based Motivators of Attitudes," *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 19, no. 1 (October 18, 2018): 407–28, https://doi.org/10.1111/asap.12169.
[38] Robert E. Bonner, "Flag Culture and the Consolidation of Confederate Nationalism," *The Journal of Southern History* 68, no. 2 (May 1, 2002): 293, https://doi.org/10.2307/3069934.
[39] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): abstract, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[40] Geoff Eley and Ernest Gellner, "Nations and Nationalism.," *Contemporary Sociology a Journal of Reviews* 13, no. 6 (November 1, 1984): 767, https://doi.org/10.2307/2070853.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Thongchai Winichakul. "Maps and the Formation of the Geo-Body of Siam." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*. Routledge. 1996.
[43] Prasenjit Duara and Thongchai Winichakul, "Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation.," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1, 1995): 478, https://doi.org/10.2307/2169009.
[44] Steven Seegal. "Remapping the Geo-Body: Transnational Dimensions of Stepan Rudnyts′kyi and His Contemporaries on JSTOR." *Www.Jstor.Org*, n.d. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44364493.
[45] Thongchai Winichakul. "Maps and the Formation of the Geo-Body of Siam." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*. Routledge. 1996.
[46] David A. Butz, "National Symbols as Agents of Psychological and Social Change," *Political Psychology* 30, no. 5 (July 24, 2009): 779–804, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2009.00725.x.
[47] Ibid, abstract.

relations as they strengthen national identification and "potential to automatically activate concepts associated with nationhood."[48] A country's flag reminds constituencies of their nationalism and identity. Hassin and Fergusson found through their study of subtle exposure to the country flag that it influenced people's "political attitudes, intentions, and decisions, both in laboratory settings and in "real-life" behavior."[49] The subliminal exposure further resulted in tapering the gap between those with low and high levels of national identification.[50] This development by Hassin et al. shows the capability of national flags to taper and expand ideologies in their nation's people.

A Historical Background on the American Flag

Official standardizations for the flag began in 1818 by President Monroe with the approval of the "third and last Flag Resolution, requiring that henceforth the number of stripes should remain thirteen, the number of stars should always match the number of states, and any new star should be added on the July 4 following a state's admission."[51] It also declared the standardization of the original thirteen red and white stripes on the American Flag, and that the stars are "white on a blue field."'[52, 53] This standardization was the first of several.[54] In a non-official capacity, other military leaders created their own flags, representing their identity for combatant functionality, therefore creating another image for the United States.[55] During the Civil War, flags broke up various parties by affiliation: cavalry guidons for those on horseback, Stars and Bars for the Confederates, and the 1861 and 1863 versions of the American flag for the Union.[56, 57] When the seven southern states had seceded from the Union, President Abraham Lincoln refused to remove the stars representing their states from the American flag, and posted a 34-star flag at Independence Hall in 1861, claiming it was illegal to secede from the U.S.[58, 59, 60] Following the Battle of Iwo Jima during the Second World War, a period of intense cohesion among the population, the 48-star American flag was raised, creating a new cultural symbol of the unified superpower, although the flag had been commissioned and ratified many years before in 1912.[61]

II. Theory

I theorize that, historically and contemporarily, events present themselves as developmental turning points in public opinion and policy, but only critical junctures of extreme moments of polarization present the dire straits and public desires capable of changing or reinterpreting national flags, thus reforming the country's adopted type of

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[48] Ibid, abstract.
[49] Ran R. Hassin et al., "Subliminal exposure to national flags affects political thought and behavior," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 104, no. 50 (December 5, 2007): abstract, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0704679104.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Whitney Smith and Marc Leepson, "Flag of the United States of America | History, Meaning, Facts, & Design," Encyclopedia Britannica, December 4, 2024, 3,https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-the-United-States-of-America.
[52] Ibid, 2.
[53] U.S. Government Bookstore. "Our Flag," July 27, 2006. https://bookstore.gpo.gov/products/our-flag.
[54] Whitney Smith and Marc Leepson, "Flag of the United States of America | History, Meaning, Facts, & Design," Encyclopedia Britannica, December 4, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-the-United-States-of-America.
[55]U.S. Government Bookstore. "Our Flag," July 27, 2006. https://bookstore.gpo.gov/products/our-flag.
[56] Whitney Smith and Marc Leepson, "Flag of the United States of America | History, Meaning, Facts, & Design," Encyclopedia Britannica, December 4, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-the-United-States-of-America.
[57] U.S. Government Bookstore. "Our Flag," July 27, 2006. https://bookstore.gpo.gov/products/our-flag.
[58] Federal Bureau of Investigation "Flags and Banners at FBI Headquarters." Page. n.d. Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/fbi-headquarters/flags-and-banners-at-fbi-headquarters.
[59] National Harbor, "The Journey of the American Flag | National Harbor," n.d., https://www.nationalharbor.com/blog/the-journey-of-the-american-flag/.
[60] Smithsonian Institution, "Facts about the United States Flag | Smithsonian Institution," Smithsonian Institution, n.d., https://www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/flag-facts.
[61] Federal Bureau of Investigation "Flags and Banners at FBI Headquarters." Page. n.d. Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/fbi-headquarters/flags-and-banners-at-fbi-headquarters.

nationalism.[62, 63] As political polarization includes pride in social associations or qualifications, it influences political actions as well as an attachment to a country or state.[64, 65]

A constituency cannot be completely controlled by its government, even in the most authoritarian of circumstances. At its root, it is not possible to change someone's heart and mind, nor how they interact with each other. Actions and words reflect personal desires, and one individual's violation of another's ideals is a depiction of polarization.[66] This violation results in a necessity to declare separation and independence from their ideals, an example of nationalist sentiment.[67, 68]

Under universal threat, a country can reunify and break apart, as seen in modern times. Moments of international war often seem to foster national unity. However, when in internal war, polarization is astronomical. It is a cycle of personal interest, group interest, and national attachment, waxing and waning through international and internal conflicts, with low to moderate cohesion resulting in little to no variations or reinterpretations of the national flag.[69] What we see as worthy of our attachment varies based on our desires, which are not universally shared across a country.[70, 71] That factor of attachment and polarization is what drives the depiction of the desires in the medium of national symbols, reflecting the nationalism of the time.

III. Methods

To explore the relationship between political polarization and shifts in flag interpretation or design, I will perform a case-by-case study of extreme high and low points of political polarization in the United States. Through this comparison and analysis of polarized or nonpolarized American eras, I will show that one country, although classified as a Western state, does not need to adhere to the form of nationalism Hans Kohn assigned to them in his work. I will prove that countries choose what form of nationalism they adopt, whether ethnic or civic, at any given time and that their flags reflect their stance on nationalism during that era.

I will take three chronologically ordered historical cases and one developing case of high polarization within the United States, beginning in 1818 amid Westward Expansion and the first developments of the American Flag. Next, I will relate the polarizing historical events and controversies of the American Civil War and the unification of the public in WWII and conclude with one modern case of polarization seen in the 2020 and 2024 presidential election campaigns. The polling data will be sourced from the Pew Research Center's public data on the 2020 and recent 2024 presidential election data between Donald Trump and Joseph Biden. In support of Pew Research

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[62] Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (April 1, 2007): 341–69, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0043887100020852.
[63] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[64] Zachary Elkins and John Sides, "Can Institutions Build Unity in Multiethnic States?," *American Political Science Review*101, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 693–708, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003055407070505.
[65] James D. Fearon and Department of Political Science, Stanford University, "WHAT IS IDENTITY (AS WE NOW USE THE WORD)?," November 3, 1999, https://web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf.
[66] Geoff Eley and Ernest Gellner, "Nations and Nationalism.," *Contemporary Sociology a Journal of Reviews* 13, no. 6 (November 1, 1984): 767, https://doi.org/10.2307/2070853.
[67] Geoff Eley and Ernest Gellner, "Nations and Nationalism.," *Contemporary Sociology a Journal of Reviews* 13, no. 6 (November 1, 1984): 767, https://doi.org/10.2307/2070853.
[68] André Lecours, "Ethnic and Civic Nationalism: Towards a New Dimension," *Space and Polity* 4, no. 2 (November 1, 2000): 153–66, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562570020013672.
[69] Zachary Elkins and John Sides, "Can Institutions Build Unity in Multiethnic States?," *American Political Science Review*101, no. 4 (November 1, 2007): 693–708, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003055407070505.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.

Center polling data, I will pull from a discussion of top policies and issues by both parties in the recent 2024 election.[72, 73]

This modern Pew Research Center polling data will be valuable to this evaluation as it offers current evidence of America's extreme polarization. Political polarization is infused into what party, candidate, and issues American constituents are most worried about at the time, thus translating the desires and concerns of America into the national symbol and its interpretation. As a result of this, I will utilize the graphs, data, and figures presented in the article to show the political polarization between Republican, Democratic, and unaffiliated candidates and voters, each representing the ideals and concerns of competing American constituencies.[74] This comparison will illustrate the polarity of constituencies and their associated values.[75]

The primary concerns of the American constituency are highlighted in presidential elections. Despite the political relevance of the above-mentioned public polling data by Pew Research Center, additional data is required to itemize the premier topics of concern and campaigning for each of the candidates' political parties. *The Wall Street Journal*, a centrist news source, offered a candidate campaign reference guide for the 2024 elections, presenting the modern concerns of the American people. These concerns are often tied to alternative flags or variations, reflecting communally polarized beliefs and arguments for ethnic nationalism.

One limitation of this modern data is its proximity to the current presidential campaigns, not necessarily the public directly. Presidential campaigns are designed to lobby and pull the people, with the people often voting for a party, not for a candidate, or for a candidate, rather than party issues, which results in a varying purpose of the vote and public issue. Despite its flaws, I selected it because modern data captures the top issues Americans are concerned with today, reflecting the polarized nature of the republic. Additionally, the data presented correlated with many of the social and alternative flags presented today on behalf of the United States and the political ideologies of its constituents. Ultimately, these datasets reflect the perspectives of those who shape the meaning of American and alternative flags—the candidates and the voters. The choices of these individuals have lasting effects, influencing a potential shift towards either ethnic or civic nationalism.[76]

IV. Historical Evidence for American Eras of History

1818: An Age of Exploration and Growth

1818 brought about the best problem for a country to have: What to do with all this new property? A new realm of challenges for the U.S. arose from personal growth. Like their British predecessors, the American empire eventually grew to encapsulate the bordering lands and beyond, eventually covering the current western and central United States, Hawaii, Alaska, and U.S. Territories.

The West was being settled, mapped, charted, and developed, bringing new life to the American continent. The American Dream had begun. Driven by the ideals of Westward Expansion, the U.S. embarked on a period of exploration and growth that began in 1803 with the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France.[77] This period promoted individual opportunity. It was an era enough to inspire, dare, and unify a country to pursue a national identity rooted in exploration, growth, and personal prosperity. Unified by the promise of prosperity, people sought to make their fortunes.

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[72] Shanay Gracia and Hannah Hartig. "About 1 in 4 Americans have unfavorable views of both Biden and Trump." *Pew Research Center*, April 14, 2024. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/03/19/about-1-in-4-americans-have-unfavorable-views-of-both-biden-and-trump/.
[73] Alyssa Lukpat, "Biden, Trump and the 2024 Election: What to Know," The Wall Street Journal, April 8, 2024, https://www.wsj.com/politics/presidential-election-2024-guide-a264d4fe.
[74] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (April 1, 2007): 341–69, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0043887100020852.
[77] Smithsonian Institution, "Facts about the United States Flag | Smithsonian Institution," Smithsonian Institution, n.d., https://www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/flag-facts.

They pursued personal liberties and freedoms to expand the original colonies under the rationalized context of conquest.[78] This era was emblazoned with the idea of attainment, which in this case, extended to the whole world.

The War of 1812 erupted over key trade regions in North America, creating disputes between a young America and Great Britain, then the world's leading superpower. It was not until the Convention of 1818, which settled the 49th Parallel between the U.S. and British land, and the Rush-Bagot Act of 1817, which removed both British and American ships from the Great Lakes, that "diplomatic tensions that had led to the War of 1812 and marked the beginning of Anglo-American cooperation" had eased.[79] These political developments established the border between Missouri and present-day Canada but left the rest of the continent open for expansion. With westward being a plausible route, the United States' geo-body mentality, ideals, and physical growth were no longer constrained to the Atlantic Coast: Wherever Americans traveled and claimed was then called America. This act of unification against the British superpower promoted a new world of national confidence and unification for obtaining personal good.[80, 81] Growing and acting under their primordial desires of personal gain as a fledgling country, the unified political actions of the United States significantly shaped its development.

This mentality of continual westward and worldwide expansion through their geo-body of influence and occupation changed the standing of the United States.[82, 83] They had power now, and who should stop them? By 1818, the country had expanded from 13 colonies to 20 states—a 154% increase since 1776.[84] This marked each state's need to be represented and recorded, even if they were made of unverifiable peoples, land, and cultures that "did not associate sovereignty with territorial boundedness."[85, 86] They were part of the U.S., and that's what mattered. Whoever was living in the land of the West was under the United States' geo-body.

The U.S. anticipated continued growth and set standards for symbolic growth to match that precedent, as seen in the Congressional Flag Act, which reinstated the 13 stripes for the 13 colonies and added a star for each new state.[87] This idea was strengthened by their unified and powerful response against the British. The rational growth, further fueled by conquest as a result of defeating the British, reflects an era of civic nationalism.

Civil War

Up until this point in the study, civic nationalism had dominated the growing nation. It continued to reign until a new concoction of concerns created one of the largest polarizations of ideals in American history: "Slavery was absolutely central to the American experience … It was what defined the Old South and drew southern society

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[78] Yael Tamir, "Not So Civic: Is There a Difference Between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, no. 1 (February 23, 2019): 419–34, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-022018-024059.
[79] Office of the Historian "Milestones: 1801–1829" n.d.-a. Accessed February 28, 2024. https://history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/rush-bagot.

[80] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.
[81] Yael Tamir, "Not So Civic: Is There a Difference Between Ethnic and Civic Nationalism?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, no. 1 (February 23, 2019): 419–34, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-022018-024059.
[82] Prasenjit Duara and Thongchai Winichakul, "Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation.," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1, 1995). https://doi.org/10.2307/2169009.
[83] Thongchai Winichakul. "Maps and the Formation of the Geo-Body of Siam." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*. Routledge. 1996.
[84] Chamber of Commerce "USFlag.Org: A Website Dedicated to the Flag of the United States of America - The 1818 Flag, the 20 Star Flag." n.d. Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.chamberofcommerce.org/usflag/history/the20starflag.html.

[85] Prasenjit Duara and Thongchai Winichakul, "Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation.," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1, 1995): 478, https://doi.org/10.2307/2169009.
[86] Thongchai Winichakul. "Maps and the Formation of the Geo-Body of Siam." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*. Routledge. 1996.
[87] Federal Bureau of Investigation "Flags and Banners at FBI Headquarters." Page. n.d. Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/fbi-headquarters/flags-and-banners-at-fbi-headquarters.

along a path of development which set it increasingly apart from the rest of the nation."[88] The South had its own distinct identity through its industrial and social development. Their economy was strong, their identity fierce, and their social standing even more so. As a result of the South's prosperity and development, "the profits of the cotton trade paid for the economic development of antebellum America."[89] This industrial element of economy and progression gave the South considerable and sufficient standing on their own to claim prowess. Following this traditionalized path of slavery at this point, abolitionists became a part of the issue. Foner states that "on the one hand, the abolitionists, previously castigated as fanatics and agitators, suddenly emerged as the conscience of a sinning nation."[90] This divide in the social, political, and economic position of slaves and slave owners brought about a momentous conflict of opinion, as well as social, legal, and economic policy, ultimately resulting in secession.

The Southern identity influenced the form of nationalism espoused by the United States. Now, the South and the North were polarized, holding contrasting interpretations of the civic nationalism that brought them their growth. The issue of slavery, when viewed through the lens of nationalism, is based on the brotherhood, ethnocentrism, and mystical groupings aspect of Kohn's definition of ethnic nationalism.[91] Under the existing tradition of slavery, there was a social class distinction: White vs. Black people. This identification of two groups resulted in political conflict, threats, and actions taken to secede from the United States. Lecours argues that those seeking to secede need to emphasize their cultural markers over autonomist goals in their definition of a nation.[92] This resulted in a modification of the American flag. The Stars and Stripes for the Union and the Stars and Bars were created for the Confederacy. The flag stood as a symbol of a political and ideological[93] split within the United States. Playing off of the traditional U.S. flag, this flag was a modification of the original, showing a new country and brotherhood, with people who shared the same values and traditional ways of life, despite the despondency of slavery's effects on other people. This reflected one side of the polarized divide during the American Civil War.



Photo Credit: National Museum of American History, Smithsonian 2024

On the other side of the divide was an intense desire to keep the South in the Union. Abraham Lincoln was a major leader in this effort. He strongly believed that the Union was concrete, only growing, with no one leaving. In fact, it was illegal to secede.[94] Lincoln strongly advocated for this idea and discouraged the disunion of southern

[88] Eric Foner, "The Causes of the American Civil War: Recent Interpretations and New Directions," *Civil War History* 20, no. 3 (September 1, 1974): 197, https://doi.org/10.1353/cwh.1974.0073.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid, 198.
[91] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.
[92] André Lecours, "Ethnic and Civic Nationalism: Towards a New Dimension," *Space and Polity* 4, no. 2 (November 1, 2000): 153–66, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562570020013672.
[93] The Stars and Bars began as the secessionists' first flag, eventually leading to the adoption of the Confederate flag as the representative flag for the Confederacy (Smith and Leepson 2024).
[94] Smithsonian Institution, "Facts about the United States Flag | Smithsonian Institution," Smithsonian Institution, n.d., https://www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/flag-facts.

secessionists through a strong political action impossible to be misread.[95] On February 22, 1861, en route to Washington to resume his residency, he stopped in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania during the Southern states' ongoing threat of secession. Seven states had already seceded. He raised a large 34-star American flag over Independence Hall and insisted "that stars [representing the South] would not be removed from the Flag."[96, 97] This political action influenced the way America was seen. The stars were not removed, nor were the states that represented the stars given up on. They were kept and fought for in the North, just as their liberation was fought for in the South. The Union's civically nationalist claim maintaining the American tradition, the national growth, and the rational growth–not depletion of states–contrasted starkly with the polarized mentality of ethnically nationalist Southern states, fighting for their independence and their own claim on the ethnocentric brotherhood of slave industry. The creation or redefinition of national flags, such as the Stars and Bars and the 34-star Union flag, are a direct result of polarized distinction of ideals, identity, and forms of nationalism.

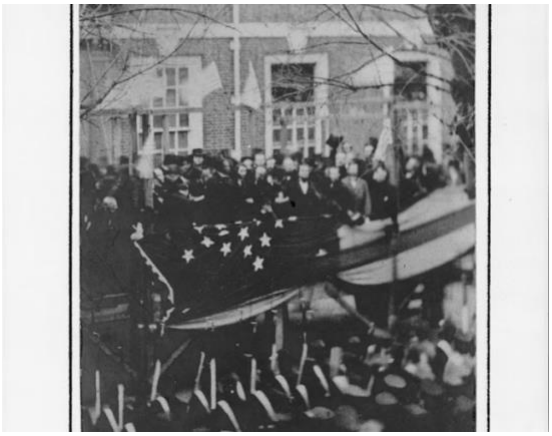


Photo Credit: National Harbor 2024

World War II

As a result of the highly polarized Civil War, U.S. history has seen the public's capability to alter the national flag, as well as the desertion of it in the adoption of a new flag, representing the acceptance of ethnic nationalism. This is a form of nationalism contrary to their former civic roots, which further rejects Kohn's idea of a locked form of nationalism for a country.[98] A country can leave its original form, and a country can return. World War II presents the ability for a country to revert back to its original form of nationalism under the context of unity.[99]

WWII had been raging long before America got involved. The Allied and Axis Powers between Europe and Asia had been fighting each other for years in full-force conflict and bloodshed. It was not until the bombing of Pearl Harbor, a military base in U.S.-occupied Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, that the U.S. plunged deeply and willingly into a world war for the second time in 50 years.[100] The day following the attack at Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt met with a session of the U.S. Congress. "A date which will live in infamy," the president said, coined the description of the horror of Pearl Harbor, resulting in a same-day declaration of war against the Japanese and other Axis powers.[101]

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[95] National Harbor, "The Journey of the American Flag | National Harbor," n.d., https://www.nationalharbor.com/blog/the-journey-of-the-american-flag/.
[96] Ibid.
[97] "Facts - The Civil War (U.S. National Park Service)," n.d., https://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilwar/facts.htm.
[98] Hans Kohn, "The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background.," *The American Historical Review*, October 1, 1944, https://doi.org/10.1086/ahr/50.1.93.
[99] Ibid
[100] Franklin D. Roosevelt Library "World War II Facts," n.d. https://www.fdrlibrary.org/wwii-facts.
[101] Ibid, 2.

The United States joined the side of the Allied Powers as they had done in WWI, however, this time, under direct threat.[102] Under the exigence of personal assault, the unification of the country was immediate. The world was in their sights and the desire to seek vengeance and retribution for their violator's deeds was a universal desire across the country.[103] For the second time in this study, America had begun her pursuit of protecting personal rights, freedoms, property, ideologies, and ultimately her way of living.



Photo Credit: National Harbor 2024

The Allied Powers won the war through a pivotal win at Iwo Jima, Japan, developing their national standing and national psyche. After "fearful fighting in World War II's Pacific campaign," on February 19, 1945, an American flag with 48 stars, as commissioned in 1912, was lifted up by four U.S. Marines on Mount Suribachi.[104] Up until that point, the flag had little significance beyond the additional stars of Arizona and New Mexico, the newest geographical and imaginary geo-body additions to the United States.[105][106] The established American flag at Mount Suribachi brought about a new, yet familiar, version of conquerors. As the American country had conquered the West through their geo-body mentality, they had conquered Japan, and in essence, all of the Axis powers and beliefs. The American continent had become the world superpower following the war, and everyone knew it. America was the saving grace of the Allies and the winner of the world.

Despite the varied appearances of America's youth, the presence of the stars on the American flag in Japan, following a difficult victory, symbolized that America was not done yet in her imaginative and geographic conquest from the early 1800s.[107] They were only continuing their prospects. Alaska and Hawaii were added to the Union in 1959, resulting in a 50-star flag.[108] After the addition, President Dwight Eisenhower "provided for the arrangement of the stars in nine rows of stars staggered horizontally and eleven rows of stars staggered vertically."[109] The 50-star flag, a symbol that has now lasted the United States almost 70 years, was created. Under the drive of personal growth, universal threat, and a cohesive mentality for national justice, this period of public unification resulted in one lasting flag variation, symbolizing a positive change of growth, personal liberties, and hallmarks of civic nationalism.

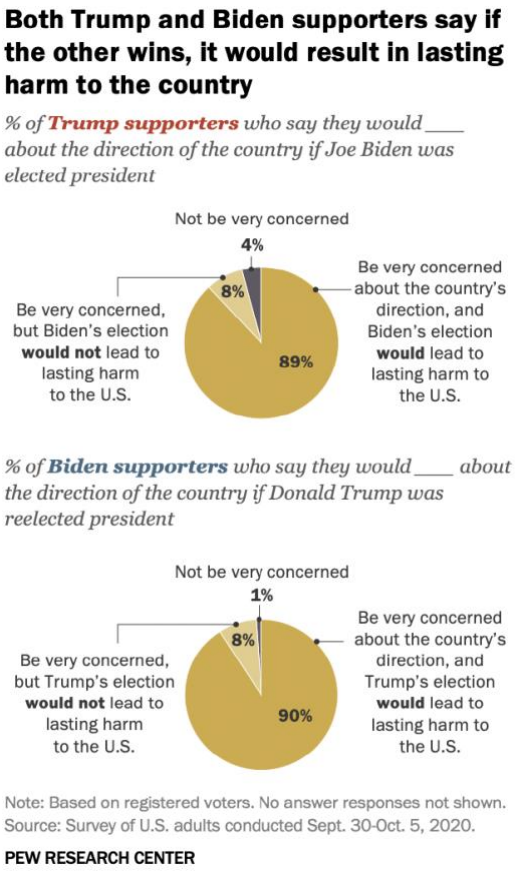
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[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Federal Bureau of Investigation "Flags and Banners at FBI Headquarters." Page. Federal Bureau of Investigation. n.d. 11, Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/fbi-headquarters/flags-and-banners-at-fbi-headquarters.
[105] Prasenjit Duara and Thongchai Winichakul, "Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation.," *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1, 1995): 477, https://doi.org/10.2307/2169009.
[106] Thongchai Winichakul. "Maps and the Formation of the Geo-Body of Siam." In *Asian Forms of the Nation*. Routledge. 1996.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Chamber of Commerce "USFlag.Org: A Website Dedicated to the Flag of the United States of America - The 1818 Flag, the 20 Star Flag." n.d. Accessed March 30, 2024. https://www.chamberofcommerce.org/usflag/history/the20starflag.html.

[109] Smithsonian Institution "Facts about the United States Flag | Smithsonian Institution." n.d. 7, https://www.si.edu/spotlight/flag-day/flag-facts.

Present Day

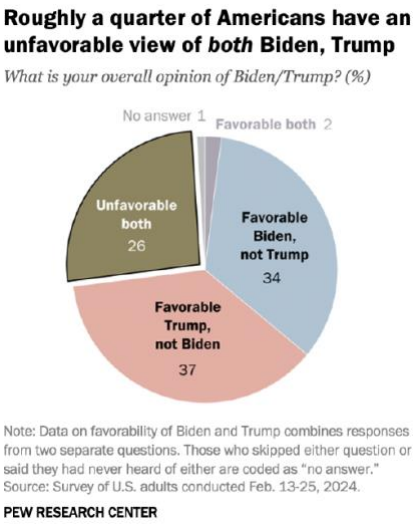
The public unification from WWII lasted a few decades as a result of America's national flag symbolically reminding them of their hard-earned and communally fought triumph over their Axis oppressors. However, the unification was lost when polarizing political issues and social programs took center stage on public policy, and thus public saliency, as a result of the living generation having neither a recollection of the war nor the original nationalist effects of the Iwo Jima and the 50-star American flags. The flag had now become a commonplace symbol, incapable of reflecting their political ideals and their core values in the way they once saw fit.[110]



As of 2024, political parties are deeply estranged and polarized on issues such as abortion, the economy, democracy, immigration, and foreign policy—topics that have since become intense points of public and social policy.[111] Pew Research Center did a public survey on approvals of candidates in the 2024 United States Presidential Election between Donald Trump and Joseph Biden, while President Biden was still in the presidential race. Four years prior when Biden and Trump were first running against each other in 2020, polls stated that 89% of people thought Biden's election and direction for the country "would lead to 'lasting harm' to the United States," and 90% of people felt the same about Trump.[112]

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[110] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[111] Alyssa Lukpat, "Biden, Trump and the 2024 Election: What to Know," The Wall Street Journal, April 8, 2024, 17-19, https://www.wsj.com/politics/presidential-election-2024-guide-a264d4fe.
[112] Michael Dimock and Richard Like, "America is exceptional in the nature of its political divide," *Pew Research Center*, November 13, 2020, accessed April 13, 2024, 3, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/11/13/america-is-exceptional-in-the-nature-of-its-political-divide/.



2024 brought about a starker contrast between election polling data and a more confused and desperate political divide. It seems that "a subset of primarily younger and well-educated Americans lacks any strong form of patriotic sentiment," contrary to the apparent strong patriotic sense of the older and less educated generation.[113] According to Gracia and Hartig, "Roughly a quarter of Americans (26%) hold unfavorable views of both Trump and Biden."[114] That demonstrates polarization based on political confusion or public feeling that they have no good options. As a result of this division, partisanship is becoming more independent by identification, especially by younger generations, rather than a simpler two-way divide seen in 2020.[115] In 2024, the polarization between parties shows that only 2% of Americans agree with both Donald Trump and Joseph Biden, and there is a 60% unfavorability vote for Trump and a 62% unfavorability vote for Biden.[116] It seems that neither is supported nor unanimously favored, resulting in a polarized and collapsing social and political identity within the U.S. Even after Kamala Harris was introduced as the Democrat's nomination, in August 2024, Pew Research Center stated, "Voters under 50 are more likely to say they will vote for or lean toward Harris (54%) than Trump (44%), while voters ages 50 and older back Trump over Harris by a similar margin (53% vs. 46%)."[117] Today, the United States' flag is an adaptable symbol to connote what the presenter relates it to be, or it is done away with entirely to present specific ethnic groupings.[118] If the national flag does not align with what the public wants, public approval towards it will decline.[119] Flags carry the identity of the culture with them and they "symbolically connect people to social movements that define them."[120]

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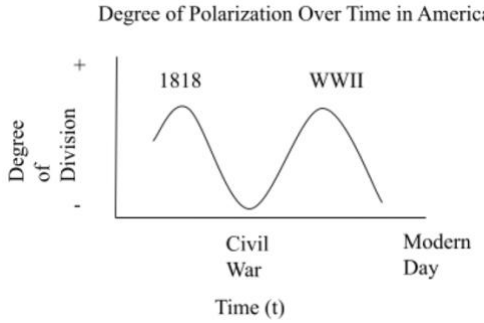
[113] Bart Bonikowski and Paul DiMaggio, "Varieties of American Popular Nationalism," *American Sociological Review* 81, no. 5 (September 9, 2016): 949–80, https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416663683.
[114] Shanay Gracia and Hannah Hartig. "About 1 in 4 Americans have unfavorable views of both Biden and Trump." *Pew Research Center*, April 14, 2024, 2, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/03/19/about-1-in-4-americans-have-unfavorable-views-of-both-biden-and-trump/.
[115] Michael Dimock and Richard Wike, "America is exceptional in the nature of its political divide," *Pew Research Center*, November 13, 2020, accessed April 13, 2024, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/11/13/america-is-exceptional-in-the-nature-of-its-political-divide/.
[116] Shanay Gracia and Hannah Hartig. "About 1 in 4 Americans have unfavorable views of both Biden and Trump." *Pew Research Center*, April 14, 2024, 2, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/03/19/about-1-in-4-americans-have-unfavorable-views-of-both-biden-and-trump/.
[117] Reem Nadeem. "1. Harris, Trump and the state of the 2024 presidential race," Pew Research Center, September 9, 2024, 9, https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/09/09/harris-trump-and-the-state-of-the-2024-presidential-race/.
[118] Carolyn Marvin, "Theorizing the flagbody: Symbolic dimensions of the flag desecration debate, or, why the bill of rights does not fly in the ballpark," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 8, no. 2 (June 1, 1991): 119–38, https://doi.org/10.1080/15295039109366786.
[119] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.
[120] Dennis Dunleavy, "Flags as Vehicles of Symbolism: Interpreting the role flags played in the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021," *Benedictine*, October 19, 2021, https://www.academia.edu/59073387/Flags_as_Vehicles_of_Symbolism_Interpreting_the_role_flags_played_in_the_storming_of_the_U_S_Capitol_on_January_6_2021.

Although the 50-star American flag still retains its positive connotation today, social flags have taken precedence in making statements about what individuals believe and what they ascribe to, rather than the most recent interpretation of the American flag doing it for them. This results in a naturally polarized segmentation of ideology. Social and political groups emerge with their own symbols, belonging, and values—a prime characteristic of ethnic nationalism—and further viewing of those flags or symbols results in a tapering of WWII flag connotation, and an increase of nationhood under polarized definitions.[121][122] Examples of flags with this ethnic description and varying definitions of nationhood include the Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ community, transgender, Gadsden, Thin Blue Line, and National Rifle Association flags, some of which are direct alterations of the American flag and others entire substitutions.[123] This tribalism of social groups through symbolic flags is a conduit of ethnic nationalism seen most prominently in the last decade of the United States' history.

V. Conclusion

The 1980s and 1990s were years of turbulence, but they were mild in comparison to the international and internal constraints of today, given the 1980s were close enough to ride the tail end of the fury of civic nationalism following the Second World War. The civic nationalist sentiment, nationalist actions, and international prowess that had been encouraged and prolonged by the war's symbols had not died yet. However, by 2020, the nostalgia and civic nationalism of World War II had worn off, leaving the similarly intense media, social activists, and international affairs to direct the critical juncture of understanding what the United States represented.[124] This resulted in polarization in the extreme and a slew of modifications, iterations, and recreations of the American flag, each posing a new definition of who the United States was and what it supported.

The high polarization of a country influences the cares, beliefs, and desires of the people, resulting in a reinterpretation or recreation of the national flag to fit those ideals.[125] If the degree of polarization and national symbol varies, through the course of either natural or man-made circumstances, how can a country remain stagnant in its form of nationalism, and therefore how can Kohn's theory of Western and Eastern state-set nationalism stand? It simply cannot be, as people change and national and international influences change, most conditions of which are outside any governmental control. If a country experiences periods of polarization or reunification, the nationalist direction is bound to change.



[121] David A. Butz, "National Symbols as Agents of Psychological and Social Change," *Political Psychology* 30, no. 5 (July 24, 2009): 779–804, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2009.00725.x.
[122] Ran R. Hassin et al., "Subliminal exposure to national flags affects political thought and behavior," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 104, no. 50 (December 5, 2007): 19757–61, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0704679104.
[123] Linley Sanders, "How Americans view the American flag, and other symbolic flags, in 2022," YouGov, June 29, 2022, https://today.yougov.com/politics/articles/42993-how-americans-view-flags-and-symbols-poll.
[124] Giovanni Capoccia and R. Daniel Kelemen, "The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (April 1, 2007): 341–69, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0043887100020852.
[125] Vlada Trofimchuk and Jin X. Goh, "Partisanship and divided perceptions of the American and British flags," *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 27, no. 6 (October 19, 2023): 1357–75, https://doi.org/10.1177/13684302231200138.

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The geographical positioning of a country should not, and would not, determine the form of nationalism in the country; rather, the degree of political polarization over time would affect the beliefs and national symbols in the country, which would then influence the country's expression of nationalism. The variances of national flag interpretations and alterations are a direct result of polarization within the public, as people can describe, contempt, correct, and manipulate the image of the country through symbolic representations of their ideals.[126]

[126] Ibid.

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Growing with Age: How Getting Older Shapes Circuit Court Judges' Decisions on Healthcare Cases

Mankang Qian

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Abstract

In this paper, I explore whether the aging of circuit court judges correlates to greater support for expanding access to public healthcare. Conducting binomial regressions, my analysis first includes all healthcare cases and then focuses on Medicare and Medicaid-related cases separately. My results indicate that the positive relationship between a judge's age and their pro-expansion votes is significant only among Medicaid-related decisions, not across all healthcare cases. More specifically, *ceteris paribus*, as a judge becomes one year older, their likelihood of supporting Medicaid expansion increases by 1.6%. Given Medicaid's reach to low-income communities, my findings offer additional empirical support for Glynn and Sen's theory that knowledge-based empathy, shaped by individual background and characteristics, can meaningfully impact judicial behavior. By highlighting age as a significant factor alongside race and gender, this paper contributes to the broader literature regarding how personal attributes can shape federal jurisprudence on salient legal issues.

Introduction

According to polls conducted by the Pew Research Center, "reducing healthcare costs" consistently stands out among the top seven policy priorities recognized by the US population from 2014 to 2023.[1] The high level of attention makes public healthcare one of the most salient topics in the US political debate. As liberal Democrats call for the expansion of government healthcare programs, conservative Republicans aim to limit those programs' coverage. While President Biden has widened access to Medicaid services via executive orders, GOP congressional members planned to force the cut on Medicare in 2023.[2]

The large partisan divide on the issue prompts states, organizations, and individual citizens to bring lawsuits regarding healthcare-related policies and administrative decisions to federal courts. In important cases like *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius* (2012), the federal judiciary regularly decides whether different levels of government, from Congress to state Medicaid authorities, have the constitutional and statutory power to broaden or limit access to public healthcare.[3]

Similar to the political debate in the executive and legislative branches, the public often perceives federal jurisprudence on healthcare-related cases to be divided along ideological lines. After Chief Justice Roberts delivered the majority decision of *King v. Burwell* (2015), which upheld tax-credit provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), conservative activist Carrie Severino issued a stark criticism, claiming that the Chief Justice, supposedly the "national 'umpire,'" has "join[ed] the court's liberals…[and] is now playing for one of the teams."[4] Prior to the publication of the opinion of *Health and*

[1] Pew Research Center, "Economy Remains the Public's Top Policy Priority; COVID-19 Concerns Decline Again.," Pew Research Center, last modified February 6, 2023, accessed May 5, 2023, http://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2023/02/06/economy-remains-the-publics-top-policy-priority-covid-19-concerns-decline-again/.
[2] Exec. Order No. 14009, 86 Fed. Reg. 7793 (Feb. 2, 2021). Accessed May 5, 2023. https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/02/2021-02252/strengthening-medicaid-and-the-affordable-care-act; Jack Fitzpatrick, "Entitlement, Spending Cap Plans Linked by GOP to Debt-Limit Deal.," Bloomberg Government, last modified October 11, 2022, accessed September 20, 2024, http://about.bgov.com/news/entitlement-spending-cap-plans-linked-by-gop-to-debt-limit-deal/.
[3] National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius, 567 U.S. 519, (June 28, 2012).
[4] King v. Burwell, 576 U.S. 473, (June 25, 2015); Josh Gerstein, "Conservatives Steamed at Chief Justice Roberts' Betrayal," *POLITICO*, June 25, 2015, https://www.politico.com/story/2015/06/gop-conservatives-angry-supreme-court-chief-john-roberts-obamacare-119431.

Hospital Corporation of Marion County v. Talevski (2023), a case regarding individuals' right of action in the Medicaid program, *The American Independent*, a liberal news site, predicted that "the radical conservatives" would deny such rights and significantly damage the existing system.[5]

While the public perception of ideological influence on judges' decisions for healthcare-related lawsuits is supported by the well-established attitudinal model in theory, it overly distinguishes between liberalism and conservatism and ignores individual differences among judges that may obscure the boundary.[6] Recent studies have found that personal characteristics like race and gender can have significant behavioral influence on specific cases associated with those characteristics.[7] Following in the footsteps of those studies, this paper, inspired by the relationship (hereafter explained) between aging and medical demand, relates the age of appellate court judges to their rulings on public healthcare.

Because older people are more likely to undergo health conditions, they tend to have greater needs for medical treatments and, therefore, pay more visits to their doctors.[8] As they gain experience in the US healthcare system, the senior population is more likely to encounter associated financial burden and become aware of the system's high cost and imperfections.[9, 10] Thus, age serves as an effective proxy for a person's involvement in the healthcare system especially when their medical history is classified. Older judges' concerns over personal costs or increased knowledge of systematic imperfections can encourage them to be more supportive of widening access to affordable treatments and relevant government programs.[11] Hence, this paper hypothesizes that a judge's age positively correlates with the likelihood of their support for the expansion of public healthcare programs in related cases.

This paper analyzes the relationship in two parts. Because of the limited number of justices and cases at the Supreme Court and the lack of data at district levels, this article focuses on U.S. Courts of Appeals to gather enough rulings and information from individual judges. I included all 69 circuit judges who were appointed before 2014, have decided healthcare-related cases while on the bench, and were not in senior status by 2024. This selection yielded 602 votes from 1986 to 2024. Part One of the paper evaluates the general relationship between a judge's age and their votes on all healthcare-related cases, including those on Medicare (public health insurance for seniors), Medicaid (public health insurance for limited-income individuals), and ACA (a statute focused on reforming the private insurance market). Due to the binary nature of a judge's vote, which is our outcome variable, this paper employs a binomial logit model, analyzing the age-vote relationship under 8 control variables and the congressional term fixed effect. Part One concludes that when all three categories of healthcare cases are included in the

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[5] Health and Hospital Corp. of Marion County v. Talevski, 599 U.S. (June 8, 2023); TAI Contributor, "Opinion: We Must Unrig the Supreme Court to Protect the Rights of All Americans.," The American Independent, last modified February 13, 2023, accessed May 5, 2023, http://americanindependent.com/opinion-supreme-court-indiana-v-talevski-medicaid-nursing-homes/.

[6] Jeffrey Allan Segal and Harold J. Spaeth, *The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[7] Adam Cox and Thomas Miles, "Judging the Voting Rights Act," *Columbia Law Review* 108, no. 1 (2008); Christina L. Boyd, Lee Epstein, and Andrew D. Martin, "Untangling the Causal Effects of Sex on Judging," *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 2 (2010): [Page #], https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00437.x.

[8] Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, *Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce* (n.p.: National Academies Press, 2008), Ch. 2; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Characteristics of Office-based Physician Visits by Age, 2019*, by Jill J. Ashman, Ph.D., Loredana Santo, M.D., and Titilayo Okeyode, M.Sc., report no. 184, National Health Statistics Reports (2023), 2, https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhsr/nhsr184.pdf.

[9] According to U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (2023), although individuals over 65 years old are Medicare enrollees, they must still pay "20% of the cost for each Medicare-covered service of item."

[10] Wei Yu et al., "The Relationships among Age, Chronic Conditions, and Healthcare Costs," *American Journal of Managed Care* 10, no. 12 (2004): 909; The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, "Support for Greater Government Role in Health Care for Older Adults," NORC, last modified 2022, accessed May 5, 2023, http://apnorc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/APNORC_TSF_Sept2022_report.pdf.

[11] While circuit judges' annual income of $236,900 by 2022 places them into the upper-middle-class section of the American society, studies have shown that a majority of middle-class seniors will be unable to pay for their medical needs by 2029 (Biden, 2021; Fry, 2024; Pearson et al., 2019).

analysis, there is no significant correlation between a judge's age and their support for the expansion of public healthcare.

Part Two of the paper considers the two main categories of healthcare cases (Medicare and Medicaid) as additional fixed effects. The section concludes that the positive relationship between a judge's age and the probability of their casting pro-expansion votes is significant under α=0.05 only when judges decide on Medicaid-related questions. More specifically, *ceteris paribus*, judges' odds of supporting the expansion of Medicaid coverage are predicted to increase by 1.6% with each additional year of their age. Part Two concludes that, because the age-vote relationship is significant under Medicaid cases and not under Medicare cases, knowledge-based empathy for others is more likely the incentive behind the relationship instead of concerns for personal interests.

Without refuting the attitudinal influence, this paper considers age as an additional factor and thus improves our understanding of what impacts the jurisprudence on healthcare reforms. This research also enriches the existing literature on the influence of personal attributes on judicial behavior by demonstrating that, in addition to race and gender, a judge's age can also be a notable force shaping our legal landscape.

I. Theory and Literature Review

The rise of legal realism has cast doubts on the notion that a judge is an impartial arbitrator of justice who engages in "an unbiased search for the correct legal answer" according to laws and laws only.[12] While some researchers continue to argue that judges are restricted by statutory languages in specific cases, there is a growing consensus that a variety of non-legal factors, including personal ideology, political environment, and intra-court relations, can shape judges' decisions.[13] More recently, political scientists added personal traits to the examination of jurisprudence. Factors seemingly unrelated to laws and politics (e.g., whether a judge has a daughter or not) can turn out to have a significant impact on correlating types of cases (e.g., gender issues).[14]

The existing literature on the judicial impact of personal characteristics focuses primarily on the race and gender of a judge. Many studies have found that female judges are more likely to cast a liberal vote than their male colleagues on cases involving employment discrimination and sexual harassment.[15] Similarly, African American judges are found to vote more liberally than their white colleagues on racial harassment and affirmative action programs.[16]

However, age as another important demographic factor has received limited academic attention in the field of judicial politics, primarily because people do not consider age to be an effective indicator of political tendencies. In Sen's research, when judges' partisan affiliation is concealed, their race and gender serve as significant signaling factors.[17] Under such circumstances, Democrats produce greater support for African American and female judges under the impression that they are more likely to be liberal.[18] Meanwhile, the age group to which a judge belongs produces negligible impact

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[12] Brian Z. Tamanaha, *Beyond the Formalist-realist Divide: the Role of Politics in Judging* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 189.
[13] Segal and Spaeth, *The Supreme*; Forrest Maltzman, James F. Spriggs, and Paul J. Wahlbeck, *Crafting Law on the Supreme Court: the Collegial Game*, repr., transferred to digital print ed. (Cambridge, Mass.[u.a.]: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009); Michael A. Bailey and Forrest Maltzman, *The Constrained Court: Law, Politics, and the Decisions Justices Make* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).
[14] Adam N. Glynn and Maya Sen, "Identifying Judicial Empathy: Does Having Daughters Cause Judges to Rule for Women's Issues?," *American Journal of Political Science* 59, no. 1 (2014), https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12118.
[15] Donald R. Songer, Sue Davis, and Susan Haire, "A Reappraisal of Diversification in the Federal Courts: Gender Effects in the Courts of Appeals," *The Journal of Politics* 56, no. 2 (1994), https://doi.org/10.2307/2132146; Jennifer L. Peresie, "Note Female Judges Matter: Gender and Collegial Decisionmaking in the Federal Appellate Court.," *The Yale Law Journal* 114, no. 7 (2005).
[16] Pat Chew and Robert Kelly, "Unwrapping Racial Harassment Law," *Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labor Law* 27, no. 1 (2006); Jonathan P. Kastellec, "Racial Diversity and Judicial Influence on Appellate Courts," *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 1 (2012), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2012.00618.x.
[17] Maya Sen, "How Political Signals Affect Public Support for Judicial Nominations," *Political Research Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2017), https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917695229.
[18] Sen, "How Political," 386.

on respondents' support.[19] Having a similar perception that age has a limited correlation with political stances, scholars generally turn to individual attributes that have more pronounced ideological connotations.

Nonetheless, as Kastellec observes, no empirical study has shown that a group of judges with one specific racial or gender identity vote liberally or conservatively across all types of cases.[20] Rather, such tendencies are evident only in cases centering on race or gender. Therefore, not only can we not accept the popular conception that classifies an entire demographic group of judges under one ideological camp for all legal questions, we also cannot let the lack of such expectation for age discourage us from considering its impact on theoretically related cases. In the study of Manning et al., the youngest judges have the lowest probability of voting for age discrimination claimants while the oldest have the highest.[21] Like rulings on age discrimination, healthcare-related decisions are age-relevant because older judges are more vulnerable to illnesses, thereby gaining greater exposure to the healthcare system. While surveys have found that people aged 50 and older are more supportive of expanding government-administered healthcare than younger adults, no scholarship has yet explored this potential relationship among judges despite it having important legal and political implications on the current debate surrounding healthcare reforms.[22] This paper hereby explores this uncharted field to supplement our understanding of judicial behavior.

According to Yu et al., patients 80 years or older encounter more chronic conditions and consequently spend $1295 more per annum on medical treatments than those between 65 and 80.[23] The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the average visit rate among adults aged 65 and over is 3.7 times higher than that among adults aged 18 to 44.[24] Because older judges typically devote more of their financial resources and time to the healthcare system, they may have stronger incentives to reduce treatment costs and have greater awareness of existing inadequacies. As a result, older judges may become more supportive of expanding coverage of public healthcare programs. Hence, this article proposes the following set of hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1
H_0: There is zero or negative correlation between the age of a judge and the likelihood of their supporting expansion of public healthcare services in related cases.
H_a: *Ceteris paribus*, a positive correlation exists between the age of a judge and the likelihood of their supporting expansion of public healthcare services in related cases.

Besides presenting the overall phenomenon, previous studies on judicial politics aimed to study the underlying rationale. To explain their finding on the positive influence of having a daughter on judges' likelihood of voting for female litigants, Glynn and Sen provide four theories: "learning, protectionism, lobbying, and preference realignment."[25]

This article considers two potential rationales similar to preference realignment and learning as theoretical explanations for the possible impact of aging on judges' stances on public healthcare. In the same way that judges in Glynn and Sen's study may support female plaintiffs to improve their own daughters' social and economic environment (realigned preference for family members), older judges in our sample may rule for wider healthcare coverage to reduce medical costs for their personal interests (realigned preference for the older self).[26] Meanwhile, corresponding to male judges' learning of existing gender inequality from their daughters, elderly judges' growing experiences in the healthcare system enable them to understand the deficient and

[19] Sen, "How Political," 387.
[20] Kastellec, "Racial Diversity," 169.
[21] Kenneth L. Manning, Bruce A. Carroll, and Robert A. Carp, "Does Age Matter? Judicial Decision Making in Age Discrimination Cases," *Social Science Quarterly* 85, no. 1 (2004), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0038-4941.2004.08501001.x.
[22] The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, "Support for Greater," NORC.
[23] Yu et al., "The Relationships," 909.
[24] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Characteristics of Office-based*, 2.
[25] Glynn and Sen, "Identifying Judicial," 40.
[26] Glynn and Sen, "Identifying Judicial," 42.

unequal distribution of quality treatments better than their younger counterparts.[27] By acquiring such first-hand knowledge as their age progresses, judges may become increasingly likely to empathize with appellants without critical medical access and support motions for healthcare expansion.

In Glynn and Sen's study, to statistically adjudicate between the two most compelling theories—learning and protectionism—that underly their central empirical finding, the authors subdivide the broader class of gender-related cases into civil allegations (e.g., gender discrimination) and criminal prosecutions (e.g., sexual harassment) and evaluate the respective daughter-vote relationship for each category.[28] Because male judges with daughters, compared to those without, only tend to vote more liberally for sex discrimination lawsuits, but not more conservatively for sexual assault cases to increase punishments, the study concludes that what judges have learned from their daughters, rather than the wish to protect their daughters from both civil discrimination and criminal violence, is the most empirically supported mechanism that can rationalize the exhibited correlation.[29] Under the mechanism, due to their experiences of having daughters, this specific group of male judges has listened to young women's perspectives on the societal barriers they still face and thus express greater empathy for female litigants in gender-related civil lawsuits.

Part Two of this paper follows the practice of Glynn and Sen and categorizes observations into two groups—votes on Medicare and votes on Medicaid (cases that only consider the ACA are excluded from Part Two)—to examine the empirical plausibility of the two aforementioned rationales underlying our age-vote hypothesis. By introducing case-related fixed effects, this section divides the remaining sample into two groups, each undergoing its own binomial logit regression analysis. The age variable's two coefficients, for Medicare and Medicaid case groups respectively, can help us determine whether the age-vote correlation described by Hypothesis 1 is statistically significant within any of the two category-specific subsamples, even if Hypothesis 1 itself fails to hold. Additionally, comparing the two subsamples' respective age coefficients (and their corresponding *t*-statistics) may indicate the primary mechanism, if any, that explains the hypothesized influence of age on healthcare rulings.

Different from the 65-year-old age requirement imposed by the Medicare program on most of its enrollees, many of whom do not suffer from limited financial resources, the Medicaid program employs economic indicators as its chief prerequisites and covers qualified limited-income individuals of all ages, including seniors.[30] Based on such policy provisions, if personal interest is the dominating incentive, there should be a positive correlation between a judge's age and the likelihood of their taking pro-expansion stances for Medicare cases but not Medicaid cases. Judges under this theory primarily care about lowering medical costs for themselves, the elderly group, but not for low-income communities. As previously discussed, knowledge-based empathy as a behavioral response arises from individuals personally witnessing and understanding the prevailing imperfections in our healthcare system. According to academic studies and numerous surveys, such imperfections have disproportionately affected low-income households through high debts, low life expectancies, and delayed medical treatments.[31] Therefore, we can reasonably expect that individuals, including appellate court judges, who practice knowledge-based empathy for disadvantaged patients, will recognize low-income communities as the most suitable receivers of their emotional support and

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[27] Glynn and Sen, "Identifying Judicial," 51.
[28] Glynn and Sen, "Identifying Judicial," 51.
[29] Glynn and Sen, "Identifying Judicial," 51.
[30] Digital Communications Division, "What's the Difference between Medicare and Medicaid?," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, last modified December 8, 2022, accessed August 19, 2024, https://www.hhs.gov/answers/medicare-and-medicaid/what-is-the-difference-between-medicare-medicaid/index.html.
[31] Shameek Rakshit et al., "The Burden of Medical Debt in the United States," Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker, last modified February 12, 2024, accessed August 19, 2024, https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp.html; Katherine Grace Carman, Jodi Liu, and Chapin White, "Accounting for the Burden and Redistribution of Health Care Costs: Who Uses Care and Who Pays for It," *Health Services Research* 55, no. 2 (2020), https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1475-6773.13258; Anton L.V. Avanceña et al., "Income and Income Inequality Are a Matter of Life and Death. What Can Policymakers Do About It?," *American Journal of Public Health* 111, no. 8 (2021).

potential political and economic backing. Given Medicaid's status as the principal public health insurance program assisting this demographic group, and Medicare's irrelevance to socioeconomic status, we can expect that empathetic judges concerned about public healthcare will more likely consider Medicaid as the means to improve the current state of the healthcare system. Therefore, if knowledge-based empathy is the prominent mechanism behind our age-vote hypothesis, aging should positively impact the likelihood of judges' support for Medicaid expansion, but not necessarily Medicare reforms. This paper thus proposes the following two sets of hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2
H_0: There is zero or negative correlation between the age of a judge and the likelihood of their supporting the expansion of the Medicare program in related cases.
H_a: *Ceteris paribus*, a positive correlation exists between the age of a judge and the likelihood of their supporting the expansion of the Medicare program in related cases.

Hypothesis 3
H_0: There is zero or negative correlation between the age of a judge and the likelihood of their supporting the expansion of the Medicaid program in related cases.
H_a: *Ceteris paribus*, a positive correlation exists between the age of a judge and the likelihood of their supporting the expansion of the Medicaid program in related cases.

II. Methodology

This paper first collects the names of all judges currently serving in US Courts of Appeals, excluding those at the Federal Circuit. To ensure a large aging impact on and sufficient data (i.e., votes) from each individual judge included in the study, all of them have served more than 10 years before 2024 on the circuit level and have not taken senior status by July 2024. This yields a collection of 69 judges from all circuits and both major parties, producing 602 votes on healthcare-related cases from 1986 to 2024. The median age at which judges cast their sample votes is 53.5 while the median year of age among the 69 judges in 2024 is 66. The respective numbers of judges appointed by a Democratic or a Republican president are 37 and 32.

On Westlaw, keywords including "Medicare," "Medicaid," and "Affordable Care Act" are searched.[32] The judge's name is typed in the filter to generate a collection of healthcare cases participated by each judge. Two types of healthcare cases are excluded: one on fraudulent claims for Medicare or Medicaid benefits and another on religious exemptions from the ACA. They are excluded because those cases respectively focus on criminal proceedings and religious freedom rather than on healthcare coverage.

This paper considers judges' case-specific votes as the outcome variable and their age when casting each vote as the principal explanatory variable. Our analysis turns the values of the outcome variable into binary dummies, with 1 representing a vote supporting claims to public healthcare coverage and 0 representing a vote against the coverage. In addition to age, Part One of our analysis includes 8 other control variables and the congressional term fixed effect. Due to the binary nature of our outcome variable, employing a traditional linear model would present problems of unbounded predictions and inaccurate R^2.[33] To mitigate the issue, this paper employs the binomial logit model, in which $VOTE_i = \frac{1}{1+e^{-(\beta_0+\beta_1 X_i+\epsilon_i)}}$, where $(\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \epsilon_i)$ is the regression equation under the linear model.[34] Part One of this paper thus formulates the following empirical model:

$$L: Pr(VOTE_i = 1) = ln(\frac{VOTE_i}{1 - VOTE_i})$$
$$= \beta_0 + \beta_1\, AGE_i + \beta_2\, PARTY_i + \beta_3\, DIS_i + \beta_4\, AUT_i + \beta_5\, AID_i$$
$$+ \beta_6\, ACA_i + \beta_7\, GOPUS_i + \beta_8\, DEMUS_i + \beta_9\, RACE_i + \tau_{it} + \epsilon_i$$

[32] West Publishing, ed., "Healthcare Cases," *WestlawNext*, https://1.next.westlaw.com/Search/Home.html?transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default)&bhcp=1.
[33] A. H. Studenmund, *Using Econometrics: a Practical Guide*, 6th ed. (n.p.: Pearson, 2014), 419.
[34] Studenmund, *Using Econometrics*, 424.

In the regression equation, i is an individual vote cast by a judge on a healthcare-related case. Dependent variable $VOTE_i$ records whether the judge's vote i supports the claim to public healthcare coverage (1=Yes; 0=No). Main explanatory variable AGE_i is the age of the judge when they cast vote i. $PARTY_i$ accounts for the vote-casting judge's ideological leaning (1=Democrat; 0=GOP). Other control variables are hereafter specified. τ_{it} is the congressional term fixed effect, with t ranging from 99 to 117.

Given that past surveys indicate higher support for public healthcare among Democrats, this analysis controls for judges' partisan affiliation (PARTY) based on the president who appointed them.[35] We hypothesize that *ceteris paribus*, Democratic judges are more likely to support healthcare expansion ($\beta_2 > 0$) than their Republican colleagues.

According to Kastellec, "the high level of unanimity on the Courts of Appeals" is due to the considerable cost of writing a dissenting opinion in cases that receive little public attention.[36] Hence, rather than sincerely objecting to the majority's decision, a disagreeing judge may simply "go along" with it.[37] To control for the degree of sincerity, this paper distinguishes between votes where the judge wrote a majority (AUT=1), concurring (AUT=1), or dissenting (DIS=1) opinion, and votes where the judge belonged to the majority but did not author an opinion (AUT=0 and DIS=0). As authorship only sufficiently (but not necessarily) signals genuine votes rather than indicating the votes' ideological direction, we cannot hypothesize the signs of β_3 or β_4.

Part One of our analysis also controls for the categories of cases by introducing AID and ACA. For Medicare-related cases, AID=0 and ACA=0. There is no pre-existing theoretical or empirical basis upon which Part One can hypothesize the respective coefficient signs of AID and ACA. Those two variables will be replaced by the category-specific fixed effect in Part Two.

Additionally, because presidents can potentially sanction the Supreme Court, and because the judiciary relies on administrative agencies to implement its rulings, multiple studies have found that justices are more likely to support the position of olicitors General representing the federal government.[38] To control for influences from the executive branch, we distinguish between votes on cases where the federal government is a party (GOPUS=1 or DEMUS=1), and votes on cases where the federal government is not involved (GOPUS=0 and DEMUS=0). Because of Republicans' opposition to the administrative state and Democrats' support for affordable healthcare in their respective party platforms, we hypothesize that *ceteris paribus*, Republican administrations' involvement negatively impacts judges' votes ($\beta_7 < 0$) and Democratic administrations' involvement positively impacts judges' votes ($\beta_8 > 0$).[39]

Furthermore, because people of color receive medical services of lower quality even when socioeconomic factors are accounted for, non-White judges may have a greater demand for healthcare reforms.[40] This analysis thus employs RACE as a binary variable controlling for racial backgrounds and hypothesizes that *ceteris paribus*, a non-White judge, compared with their White colleagues, is more likely to support the expansion of

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[35] Amina Dunn, "Democrats Differ over Best Way to Provide Health Coverage for All Americans," Pew Research Center, last modified July 26, 2019, accessed August 19, 2024, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/07/26/democrats-differ-over-best-way-to-provide-health-coverage-for-all-americans/; Lunna Lopes et al., "KFF Health Tracking Poll – January 2020: Medicare-for-all, Public Option, Health Care Legislation and Court Actions," KFF, last modified January 30, 2020, accessed August 19, 2024, https://www.kff.org/affordable-care-act/poll-finding/kff-health-tracking-poll-january-2020/.
[36] Kastellec, "Racial Diversity," 171.
[37] Kastellec, "Racial Diversity," 171.

[38] Ryan C. Black and Ryan J. Owens, *The Solicitor General and the United States Supreme Court: Executive Branch Influence and Judicial Decisions* (n.p.: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Timothy R. Johnson, "The Supreme Court, the Solicitor General, and the Separation of Powers," *American Politics Research* 31, no. 4 (2003); Jeffrey A. Segal, "Supreme Court Support for the Solicitor General: The Effect of Presidential Appointments," *The Western Political Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1990).
[39] Republican National Committee, *Republican Platform 2016* (n.p., 2016), 36; Democratic National Committee, *2020 Democratic Party Platform* (n.p., 2020), 26.
[40] Brian D. Smedley, Adrienne Y. Stith, and Alan R. Nelson, *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care* (n.p.: National Academy Press, 2003).

public healthcare ($\beta_9 > 0$). Finally, this paper controls for the congressional term during which the case was decided to account for the broader political environment.

Resting upon the two rationales aforementioned—personal interest and knowledge-based empathy—this paper hypothesizes that the age of a judge positively influences their probability of voting for healthcare expansion ($\beta_1 > 0$). More specifically, the value of $\widehat{\beta_1}$ corresponds to the change in the log of the odds of an average judge's voting for healthcare expansion as they become one year older. After dividing $\widehat{\beta_1}$ by four, we can approximate the change in the percentage probability of an average judge's voting for healthcare expansion with a one-year increase in age.[41] The paper draws its conclusion on the statistical significance of the age variable's impact from the *t*-statistic of the estimated age coefficient ($\widehat{\beta_1}$), and on the fit of our overall model in explaining healthcare-related jurisprudence from the mean percentage of correct predictions, $\overline{R_p^2}$.[42]

While inheriting the basic structure of the previously established empirical model, Part Two of our analysis divides our sample into Medicare-related votes and Medicaid-related votes, thus introducing categories of cases as fixed effects to replace AID and ACA. We exclude cases on the ACA that are not also related to Medicaid due to their lack of theoretical relevance to our two proposed rationales—personal interests and knowledge-based empathy. Based on the following empirical model, this paper conducts two sets of regression analyses, one for the Medicare subsample and another for the Medicaid subsample:

$$L: Pr(VOTE_i = 1) = ln\left(\frac{VOTE_i}{1 - VOTE_i}\right)$$
$$= \beta'_0 + \beta'_1 AGE_i + \beta'_2 PARTY_i + \beta'_3 DIS_i + \beta'_4 AUT_i + \beta'_5 GOPUS_i$$
$$+ \beta'_6 DEMUS_i + \beta'_7 RACE_i + \tau_{it} + \epsilon'_i$$

From comparing respective levels of statistical significance (*t*-statistic) of $\widehat{\beta'_1}$ between the relationship among Medicare votes and that among Medicaid votes, we can infer the predominant incentive, if any, that drives our hypothesized age-vote correlation. The two relationships' respective $\overline{R_p^2}$ also indicate the category of cases among which our empirical model's prediction is more accurate. Because $\widehat{\beta'_1}$ is significant under $\alpha = 0.05$ among Medicaid cases but not among Medicare cases, we conclude that knowledge-based empathy, not personal interest, is the main mechanism behind the positive relationship between a judge's age and their likelihood of casting pro-expansion votes.

The most significant limitation of this article lies in its consideration of extraneous variables. By classifying cases per their general category (Medicare, Medicaid, or ACA) but ignoring case-specific questions considered by judges, this paper fails to account for potential legal rationales underlying a ruling. For instance, appellants arguing for Medicare's coverage of dental services[43] are subject to greater judicial scrutiny than those arguing for the coverage of critical prescription drugs at equal rates.[44] The decision to not control for a ruling's legal reasoning stems from the difficulty of providing and defining categories of control. Our analysis, with its nine control variables (including congressional terms), thus satisfies the theories of the attitudinal model (PARTY), the strategic model (GOPUS and DEMUS), and of scholars studying personal characteristics (RACE), but is subject to criticism from the legalistic school. Additionally, age in our analysis serves only as an imperfect proxy for a judge's health conditions. We can reasonably imagine an 80-year-old judge who, with great health and little involvement with the healthcare system, does not experience the theoretical basis for their age's impact on their decisions. Individual judges' health conditions have a more direct conceptual relationship with their healthcare-related votes and could have produced

[41] Studenmund, *Using Econometrics*, 428.
[42] Studenmund, *Using Econometrics*, 429.

[43] Fournier v. Sebelius, 718 F.3d 1110, (9th Cir. May 31, 2013).
[44] American Hospital Association v. Becerra, 596 U.S. (June 15, 2022).

coefficients of greater statistical significance. However, such information is classified and difficult to categorize even if obtainable. Therefore, this paper considers its empirical model to have captured a satisfactory range of potential correlating factors given practical limitations.

III. Results

Part One of our analysis includes the age-vote correlation and nine categories of additional control variables (including congressional terms as one category). We initially have 602 observations, but that number is reduced to 597 when all control variables are included due to small sample sizes during the 99th, 101st, and 102nd Congress. Among the 597 observations, 213 have the effect of supporting public healthcare expansion (VOTE=1) while 389 do not (VOTE=0). The years of age when judges cast their votes vary from 39 to 84. After computing binomial logit regression analyses, we obtain the following results:

	Dependent variable:		
	Log of the Odds of an Average Judge's Voting for Healthcare Expansion (VOTE):		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
AGE	0.00217	0.00437	0.0213
	(0.21)	(0.42)	(1.63)
PARTY		0.577***	0.708**
		(3.34)	(3.18)
DIS			0.908
			(1.76)
AUT			0.206
			(1.04)
AID			0.480*
			(1.99)
ACA			1.415***
			(3.67)
GOPUS			0.287
			(0.94)
DEMUS			-0.524
			(-1.78)
RACE			0.186
			(0.79)
Constant	-0.729	-1.118	-3.298**
	(-1.21)	(-1.78)	(-3.03)
Observations	602	602	597
Term fixed effect	No	No	Yes
Adjusted R^2_p	0.0001	0.0144	0.0089
LR chi-square statistic	0.05	11.25	68.95
Number of iterations	2	3	4

Table 1: Logistic Regressions between AGE and VOTE

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

We performed three regression analyses, one between AGE and VOTE without any control variables, one with PARTY as the single control, and one including all control variables and the congressional term fixed effect. The third analysis relies on the empirical model described in the methodology section. According to Table 1, the *t*-statistics of AGE ($t_{\widehat{\beta_1}}$) consistently fail to reach the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ ($p < 0.05$) under all three analyses. As a result, we fail to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 1, and our current empirical model cannot support a positive correlation between AGE and VOTE when all three categories of healthcare-related cases (Medicare, Medicaid, and ACA) are included. Additionally, the values of $\overline{R_p^2}$ are relatively low for all three regression equations. Even when all control variables are included, our model can only, on average, correctly predict 8.9% of all observations, indicating a relatively poor fit for the general landscape of healthcare jurisprudence.

On the other hand, our second and third analyses indicate the significant influence of a judge's partisan identity on their votes under $\alpha = 0.01$. According to our third analysis, *ceteris paribus*, an average Democratic judge (PARTY=1) is 17.7% (0.708 divided by four) more likely than their Republican colleagues to vote for expanding public healthcare. The other three control variables of which coefficient signs are hypothesized (GOPUS, DEMUS, and RACE) fail to generate $t_{\widehat{\beta}}$ of statistical significance. Based upon such results, we can conclude that, when all types of healthcare-related cases are considered, partisanship under the attitudinal model is the most dominant factor predicting a judge's vote while personal characteristics like a judge's age exert negligible impact.

Our evaluation, however, does not end upon the rejection of Hypothesis 1. The lack of correlation between AGE and VOTE on a general level does not preclude the possibility of such correlation among specific subcategories of healthcare-related cases. According to our third analysis of Part One, the coefficient of AID is significant under $\alpha = 0.05$. *Ceteris paribus*, a judge is 12% (0.48 divided by four) more likely to cast pro-expansion votes on Medicaid cases than on Medicare cases. Hence, there is sufficient ground to examine whether older judges' pro-expansion tendency (i.e., the greater statistical significance of the age-vote correlation) regarding Medicaid-related cases is the reason behind larger coefficients of AID. This paper thus moves to include the category-specific fixed effect to examine Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3.

American Politics

After excluding votes on lawsuits that are only related to ACA, Part Two of our analysis, with six control variables (without AID and ACA) and the congressional term fixed effect, includes 591 observations, 389 among Medicare cases, and 202 among Medicaid cases. After computing respective logistic regressions for Medicare and Medicaid votes, we obtain the following results:

	Dependent variable:		
	Log of the Odds of an Average Judge's Voting for Medicare Expansion (VOTE when AID=0):		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
AGE	-0.0103	-0.00834	-0.00621
	(-0.77)	(-0.61)	(-0.38)
PARTY		0.548*	0.534
		(2.49)	(1.85)
DIS			1.566*
			(2.09)
AUT			0.297
			(1.19)
GOPUS			0.0143
			(0.03)
DEMUS			-0.740
			(-1.75)
RACE			0.174
			(0.60)
Constant	-0.176	-0.550	-1.170
	(-0.23)	(-0.68)	(-0.90)
Observations	392	392	389
Term Fixed Effect	No	No	Yes
Adjusted R^2_p	0.0012	0.0140	0.0505
LR chi-square statistic	0.603	6.873	24.604
Number of iterations	3	3	4

Table 2: Logistic Regressions between VOTE and AGE among Medicare-related cases (MEDICAID=0)

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

	Dependent variable:		
	Log of the Odds of an Average Judge's Voting for Medicaid Expansion (VOTE when AID=1):		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
AGE	0.0151	0.0165	0.0642**
	(0.92)	(0.98)	(2.78)
PARTY		0.723*	0.934*
		(2.50)	(2.46)
DIS			0.218
			(0.28)
AUT			0.301
			(0.89)
GOPUS			0.433
			(0.81)
DEMUS			-0.450
			(-0.79)
RACE			0.498
			(1.14)
Constant	-1.210	-1.580	-6.709**
	(-1.22)	(-1.54)	(-3.24)
Observations	210	210	202
Term fixed effect	No	No	Yes
Adjusted R^2_p	0.0030	0.025	0.14
LR chi-square statistic	0.840	7.143	38.74
Number of iterations	3	3	4

Table 3: Logistic Regressions between VOTE and AGE among Medicaid-related cases (MEDICAID=1)

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 2 shows that, among Medicare-related cases, judges exhibit no patterns of age-vote correlation under all three regression analyses.[45] According to the absolute values of respective *t*-statistics, the coefficient of AGE among Medicare cases, when all controls are included, is even less significant than the coefficient of AGE in the third analysis of Table 1.[46] We thus suspect that the AGE coefficient $\widehat{\beta_1}$ when all categories of healthcare cases are included, which is only significant around $\alpha = 0.10$ (p=0.102), is a

[45] Due to the AGE coefficient's lack of statistical significance here, it is not necessary to discuss its unexpected negative sign when AID=0.

[46] In the third analysis of Table 1, $t_{\widehat{\beta_1}}$=1.63. In the third analysis of Table 2, $t_{\widehat{\beta_1}}$=-0.38.

result of the insignificant $\widehat{\beta'_1}$ when AID=0 weighing down a statistically significant $\widehat{\beta'_1}$ when AID=1.

Table 3 demonstrates that such suspicion is not unfounded. When all control variables are included, judges are more likely to support Medicaid expansion as they become older, and such positive age-vote correlation is significant under $\alpha = 0.01$ ($t_{\widehat{\beta'_1}} = 2.78$). With $\widehat{\beta'_1} = 0.0642$, the log of odds of a judge's casting pro-expansion votes on Medicaid-related cases increases by 0.0642 as the judge becomes one year older. More specifically, our empirical model (third analysis of Table 3) predicts that *ceteris paribus*, a judge becomes 1.61% more likely to support Medicaid expansion with a one-year increase in their age (0.0642 divided by four). Our $\overline{R_p^2}$ =0.14 for the third analysis of Table 3, compared with $\overline{R_p^2}$ =0.05 under Table 2, also indicates a moderate fit of a model with a binary outcome variable.

PARTY is the only other explanatory variable that is statistically significant under $\alpha = 0.05$ in the third analysis of Table 3. According to our results, *ceteris paribus*, a Democratic judge is 23.4% more likely than their Republican colleague to vote for Medicaid expansion (0.934 divided by four). Interestingly, $t_{\widehat{\beta'_1}}$ (2.78) is higher than $t_{\widehat{\beta'_2}}$(2.46), indicating that the age-vote correlation is stronger than the party-vote correlation among Medicaid cases. Additionally, our model predicts that the 23.4% partisan gap regarding Medicaid jurisprudence can be outweighed on average by a 25-year age difference.[47] Therefore, under our empirical model, the positive influence of a judge's age on their support for Medicaid expansion is at least comparable to, if not stronger than, the influence of their partisan identity.

Given the lack of statistical significance of $\widehat{\beta'_1}$ under Table 2, we fail to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 2, and there is no evidence to support a positive age-vote correlation among Medicare-related cases. Given the statistical significance of $\widehat{\beta'_1}$ under Table 3, we are confident under $\alpha = 0.01$ to reject the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 3 and claim that a positive age-vote correlation exists among Medicaid-related lawsuits. This paper thus infers that, as judges age, they are primarily motivated by knowledge-based empathy, not personal interests, to exhibit a positive age-vote relationship when deciding certain types of healthcare-related cases. Based on such empathy, older judges are more likely to support Medicaid expansion to improve the lives of low-income communities.

IV. Conclusion

Compelled by the national debate over healthcare reforms, the importance of the judiciary in such reforms, and the lack of academic studies on the impact of a judge's age on their healthcare jurisprudence, this paper examines the relationship between a circuit court judge's age and their votes on healthcare-related appeals. After constructing multiple logistic regressions, this paper concludes that even though a statistically significant age-vote correlation does not exist for the field of public healthcare at large (i.e. when Medicare, Medicaid, and ACA-related cases are all included), there is a positive relationship under $\alpha = 0.01$ between a judge's age and their tendency to support the expansion of coverage among Medicaid cases. More precisely, *ceteris paribus*, a judge's likelihood of supporting Medicaid expansion increases by 1.61% on average as they become one year older. Given Medicaid's focus on low-income communities, this paper considers knowledge-based empathy, rather than personal interests, as the main mechanism behind the age-vote correlation. This paper thus supports Glynn and Sen's claim that "empathy may indeed be a component of how judges decide cases."[48]

Future research can start from this essay's limitations and control for cases' specific legal facts, which requires scholars to devote extensive efforts to distinguish

[47] For a judge originally with VOTE=0.5, *ceteris paribus*, their likelihood of voting for Medicaid expansion is predicted to become 74.5% after 25 years of 1.61% year-on-year increases.
[48] Glynn and Sen, "Identifying Judicial," 37.

between details of legal questions and design workable categories to assign values for the control variable. Additionally, studies can follow the example of Kastellec and study the counter-judge effect of an older judge on their younger colleagues.[49] Just as an African American judge can make the panel more likely to vote in favor of affirmative action programs, an older judge can make the panel more likely to vote in favor of Medicaid expansion.[50] This paper thus adds the relationship between age and the medical world to the complex legal landscape of America.

[49] Kastellec, "Racial Diversity."
[50] Kastellec, "Racial Diversity."

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American Politics

Americans for Tax Reform, Club for Growth, and Heritage Action for America: Comparative Group Analysis

Eric Xie

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Abstract

Pluralists and group theorists often outline the political landscape in terms of a network of organized interests vying for influence in government policy making by operating within multiple mediums. However, not all groups share the same motivations. Further inquiry into the motivations of groups requires an examination of a group's behavior, rhetoric, membership, and structure. Some of these elements are represented in quantifiable terms, such as lobbying expenditures and electioneering expenditures. However, many aspects of a group's nature are more nebulous, such as the motives of leaders and members, and require qualitative analysis. This paper performs both facets of this inquiry by identifying instantiations of the observations made in group theory among three conservative advocacy groups: Americans for Tax Reform, Club for Growth, and Heritage Action. How these groups incentivize and maintain their memberships reveals common trends in how groups seek survival and gain prominence. How they form and prioritize policy positions reveals behavioral trends in group responses to external stimuli. How they broadcast their advocacy and spend money reveals how groups reflect upon their own policy priorities.

Introduction

Americans for Tax Reform (ATR), Club for Growth (CFG), and Heritage Action for America (HA) represent a microcosm of the multifaceted world of American interest groups. Although all three organizations can be labeled as conservative, the nuances of their actions reveal diverse motivations. Some motivations may be shared among each group, while others may indicate a specific group's idiomatic response to their shared environment. Moreover, an exploration of each group's distinctive psychology uncovers how certain aspects of group theory manifest in the political realm. Ultimately, despite the generalizations that encompass ATR, CFG, and HA, the complexities of their ideologies, organizational structures, and political activity ultimately define the unique character of each group. Ideology influences a group's policy goals, organizational structure influences a group's responsiveness to external and internal pressures, and political activity reflects a group's preferred strategy. These three factors influence each other as well.

Some definitions are needed to clarify terminology used in this paper. First, the members of the three groups fit into Barakso et al.'s description of "'chequebook' members,"[1] or people whose participation in a group is largely limited to financial contributions. This fact is evident, for the primary function of all three groups' websites is to solicit donations. Although they can be deemed "memberless organizations," their donors still represent a base of people wielding a degree of influence over the internal decisions of each organization. Therefore, the terms "donor" and "member" will be used synonymously in this paper depending on the effect being drawn, with the former emphasizing the monetary relationship between the group and its base and the latter emphasizing the reciprocal relationship. Additional terms repeated throughout the argument are defined below:

[1]Maryann Barakso, Jessica C. Gerrity, and Brian F. Schaffner, "Assessing the Importance of Financial and Human Capital for Interest Group Sector Strength Across American Communities," *British Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 3 (July 2011): 557.

Group: the organization as a whole as opposed to the collection of its individual members.
Policy area: an individual topic of policy; it can vary in scope.
Policy position: a group's bias with respect to a policy area.
Issue domain: the primary policy area(s) that a group advocates within.

I. Group Ideology, Structure, and Public Perception

Advocacy Description

To begin, the content of each group's advocacy must be explained. First, HA's mission is to "fight for conservative policies" at the federal and state levels.[2] The policies and positions in their purview include reducing federal spending, strengthening border security, resisting anti-climate change policy, rejecting critical race theory, and resisting pro-abortion policies.[3] Next, CFG's issue domain centers on "basic economic conservative principles" which they define as "free-market, limited government" economic solutions that can be implemented "regardless of party."[4] They espouse several policy goals that accord with this philosophy which include "cutting government spending," "deregulat[ing]," establishing a "fair/flat tax," and passing a "Balanced Budget Amendment."[5] CFG explicitly restrains their issue domain to the economic realm by noting that they do "not take positions on social issues" or the "immigration/borders debate."[6] In short, CFG operates broadly on all aspects of federal economic policy but constrains itself solely to economic policy. Finally, ATR's issue domain is primarily dedicated to taxation, aiming to minimize the government's "power to control one's life" by reforming the tax system to be "simpler, flatter, more visible, and lower" than the status quo.[7] Their main mechanism to achieve this goal is to convince elected officials to sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge that "commits them to oppose any effort to increase income taxes." In summary, ATR defines its issue domain as tax policy.

Group Substance and Incentives

The substance and incentive structure of all three groups can be inferred from the basic descriptions of their advocacy. The ends pursued by all three groups are representative of nonmarket groups. Olson explains that nonmarket groups pursue an "inclusive collective good" that "is not fixed in supply" such that multiple people can consume a benefit "without necessarily reducing the benefits for others."[8] For all three groups, their ultimate end (i.e. the collective good they are pursuing) can be reduced to the enactment of conservative policy. The passage of one piece of legislation aligned with this goal does not preclude the future passage of similar legislation, nor does it degrade the quality of future conservative policies. Moreover, all members of all three groups can equally experience the effects of the conservative policies their group advocates for. For example, CFG's hypothetical achievement of a Balanced Budget Amendment cannot be denied to any particular member of the group.

Moreover, Olson notes that groups want to increase their membership as much as possible because it "may lead to lower costs" for each existing member without "any increase in competition."[9] The term "costs" in this context is defined as the effort and contributions that each member provides rather than the total sum of expenses needed to maintain group operations. It seems that Olson's analysis, however, does not entirely apply to the three groups. It is not incorrect to presume that these groups' costs can be dispersed among their membership, but the particular natures of the three groups undermine this traditional conception of cost sharing. As previously established, all three groups are "memberless organizations" whose donors are indicative of "chequebook"

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[2] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-a), "About," accessed 2023, https://heritageaction.com/about.
[3] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-b), "Issues," accessed 2023, https://heritageaction.com/issues.
[4] The Club for Growth, (n.d.-b), "What We Do," accessed 2023, https://www.clubforgrowth.org/about/what-we-do/.
[5] The Club for Growth, (n.d.-b).
[6] The Club for Growth, (n.d.-b).
[7] Americans for Tax Reform, (n.d.-a), "About Americans for Tax Reform," accessed 2023, https://www.atr.org/about/.
[8] Mancur Olson, "A Theory of Groups and Organizations," in *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), 37-38.
[9] Olson, 37.

members. Consequently, although the relative contributions (i.e. shared costs) of each member will decrease as the group expands, it is unlikely that the absolute contributions per member will decrease, as Olson suggests. Primarily, it is in each group's interest to increase their membership as much as possible while simultaneously maintaining or increasing average contributions. If a group only needs to spend a certain amount of money to acquire a benefit, any additional contributions can be retained by the group as a surplus. Although this surplus could be used to seek additional benefits for the groups' members, one can argue that a minimum threshold of benefit allocation exists such that the groups' memberships are sustained or steadily expanded. As long as this minimum threshold is satisfied, the groups can indefinitely pursue surplus extraction. Furthermore, financial donations do not have the same fatiguing effect that traditional group activity has. This observation is coupled with the fact that members are generally unaware of the degree of participation (i.e., donations) of their peers; in effect, the members are isolated from one another. Consequently, the contribution of each member is not affected by the contributions of their peers, depriving members of any perception of inequity. The groups can leverage this lack of transparency and implement a universal strategy for donation acquisition without any individual member feeling as if she has been cheated.

Regardless of the nature of the group, all three groups need to incentivize membership to ensure the group's efficacy and longevity. The ends of each group suggest that they all primarily provide purposive incentives. Clark and Wilson explain that purposive incentives are intangible inducements that are "inseparable from the ends being sought" by the group, i.e., the incentives are the ends being sought by the group.[10] Members seek out and donate to the three groups because they agree with the groups' policy goals. All actors within a group share a common vision to alter the status quo such that their political views are represented in government legislation. One can argue that groups that depend upon purposive incentives are more delicate than their non-purposive peers. The policy positions of individuals are easily susceptible to various outside pressures, such as the mass media. If a group's purposive incentives are misaligned with their members due to these pressures, their members could lose interest or begin opposing the group. Thus, each group must monitor the sentiments of its membership such that they can adjust their policy areas to accommodate the changing tides of their members. The willingness of a group to alter their purposive incentives is directly related to the steadfastness of their leaders' ideologies and, by extension, the group's fundamental ideology. Groups with narrower issue domains may find it more difficult to adjust their purposive incentives because a concentrated focus is less flexible; a broader issue domain enables a group to conduct lateral movements between the various policy areas within.

The presence of purposive incentives does not preclude the existence of other supplementary incentives. Solidary incentives are of secondary prominence behind purposive incentives; Clark and Wilson associate them with the "status," "fun," and "sense of … identification" that are derived from associating with other members.[11] Although the members of these three groups are isolated from one another, some groups provide opportunities for socialization. For example, ATR has an ancillary goal of spreading invitation-only "coalition meetings" across the country that enable interaction between members and further interaction with important "Capitol Hill staffers and foreign dignitaries."[12] This benefit is undoubtedly reserved for the most prestigious donors to ATR, thus motivating people to donate large sums of money so they can bolster their sense of prestige. Additionally, material incentives are occasionally provided, which Clark and Wilson define as "rewards that have a monetary value."[13] HA has a merchandise shop with a variety of clothing, stickers, and other paraphernalia.[14]

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[10] Peter B. Clark and James Q. Wilson, "Incentive Systems: A Theory of Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (September 1961): 136.
[11] Clark and Wilson, 134.
[12] Americans for Tax Reform, (n.d.-b), "About Coalition Meetings," accessed 2023. https://www.atr.org/about/coalition-meetings/.
[13] Clark and Wilson, 134.
[14] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-d), [Merchandise Storefront], accessed 2023, https://donate.heritageaction.com/storefront/.

Although the primary purpose of these items is to solicit funds from the general public, buyers who were originally drawn to the website for these items may later return to the site to become sincere donors. It is also likely that larger donors are sent these items for free as a sign of gratitude for their regular donations.

Group Maintenance

ATR, CFG, and HA have all established distinct issue domains, thereby differentiating their identity and legitimizing their existence. A group's issue domain size and bias can influence how one interprets and applies issue niche theory onto them. Heaney encapsulates this point by explaining that groups can differentiate themselves via "narrowing [their] focus until" they eliminate any issue overlap or possessing a recognizable "predetermined position" such that multiple groups can "work on the same issue."[15] A mixture of narrowing and positioning is visible in the niche strategies of all three groups. Regarding narrowness, it is evident that the groups' issue domains fall on a spectrum: HA has the broadest domain, CFG has an intermediate domain, and ATR has the slimmest domain. The groups' website biographies justify their locations on this policy domain spectrum.

A group's location on the spectrum entails different implications for group maintenance. Mainly, HA may face greater instability than ATR and CFG. The greater the number of policy areas that are assumed by HA, the greater the number of constituencies that it will claim to represent. Although the entire collection of these constituencies can be generally labeled as "American conservatives," this classification risks alienating certain member subgroups that are bundled under this label. For instance, climate-conscious conservatives may take issue with HA's advocacy against green policies. The volume of issues absorbed by HA therefore increases the points of clash between members. If HA adopts a new issue, invests more into one issue than another, or alters its position on an issue, it could deter new members from joining and compel current members to leave. A delicate balance must be achieved to maintain the group's longevity.

By contrast, ATR avoids this clutter, for it only needs to appeal to individuals who want a lowered tax burden. Concentrating its issue domain clarifies the group's purposive incentive. ATR's members need only to heed one purpose to justify their participation, and the group's unwavering support of one policy and position is the only necessary action to preserve this incentive. Thus, group maintenance becomes much simpler. Furthermore, it can also be argued that the group's concentration on taxation comports with their policy position on simplifying taxation. Allowing the virtue of simplicity to define both the group's construction and political position reinforces the credibility of their mission. A simple group pursuing a simple goal can claim to its members that all of its resources are devoted to satisfying the very purpose that attracted its membership. This superficial efficacy can be easily realized since the group only requires employees who are experts in taxation and content to solely work in tax policy. CFG embraces this same strategy to a lesser degree. The group is undoubtedly cognizant of the risks of a cluttered issue domain since it blatantly renounces any involvement in immigration or social politics. Although there are still numerous policies within its economic issue domain, it can nonetheless congregate all of its members under the singular ideology of free-market economics. CFG can thereby afford to increase the size of its issue domain by ensuring all of the positions and policy goals that it assumes cohere with a unifying ideology. Although there may be a complementary ideology that accompanies ATR's position on taxation, it is not the ideology per se that attracts members; rather, it is ATR's specific positions and goals on taxation that have the most attractive force.

HA can adapt its issue domain to mitigate member alienation, and several of these adaptations are already present in its advocacy. First, HA has carefully curated the issues within its issue domain to minimize points of conflict. The selected policies themselves are inoffensive among a conservative audience. For example, it can be inferred that many conservatives deem public spending, border security, and abortion as

[15] Michael T. Heaney, "Identity Crisis: How Interest Groups Struggle to Define Themselves in Washington," in *Interest Group Politics*, 7th ed., edited by Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2007), 281-282.

important policy topics, and it can be further inferred that they hold a similar position on each topic. Thus, HA's decision to define its conservative advocacy around the most popular conservative topics helps stabilize the group. Moreover, HA deliberately frames an issue's description and its corresponding position to reduce dissension. A simplified description of a policy problem would reference easily decriable threats. Such a generic description would be nothing more than a staunch rejection of the given problem. For example, HA frames the problem of border security by referencing the "open southern border" as a "freeway for fentanyl" and describing present regulation as rife with "asylum fraud" and corrupted with "catch and release" policies.[16] This lack of nuance within each policy area further reduces the opportunities for members to find points of disagreement in HA's advocacy. Although the transparency of HA's actions may suffer, members are unlikely to examine the minutiae of HA's positions further. As long as general trust in the alignment between HA and its membership is maintained, members will not protest against the group.

Second, HA can justify its broad issue domain by acting as a reliable conservative authority. Heaney explains that close relations with "one… interest [group] that provide[s] useful information on many issues" would be preferable to contacting multiple "boutique" groups that have a "narrow issue niche."[17] Although Heaney explains this relationship in terms of policymakers and interest groups, it applies similarly to the relationship between interest groups and their members. If HA can fortify its reputation and credibility, members will find it more convenient and inexpensive to support a single group that encompasses a large portion of their political views than supporting multiple groups that collectively embody their political views. This convenience would be especially advantageous for conservatives who do not fiercely identify with a certain policy area or policy position but nonetheless want to contribute to the conservative political cause. Establishing itself as the voice for conservatism as a whole is a formidable task, but HA can entrench itself as an authority. Mainly, the affiliation between HA and the Heritage Foundation performs most of the effort in validating the soundness of HA's advocacy. The Foundation already enjoys considerable intellectual admiration among conservatives, for it is the preeminent conservative think tank in the United States. Naturally, this same respect is extended and applied to HA as well, therefore bolstering the group's credibility. One can argue that the relationship between HA and the Foundation diminishes the autonomy and personality of HA. However, this hierarchy was likely intentional. By linking the two organizations together, it can be insinuated that the policymaking process is simplified into two steps: policy formation and policy implementation. These abstract components are then reified by the Foundation and HA, respectively. This dynamic justifies the need for both groups to exist, and it also implies that HA's existence presupposes that of the Foundation's. The Foundation provides the "intellectual fuel" that propels HA. Thus, HA's standalone existence would not make much sense.

LaPira and Thomas reference the research of Hertel-Fernandez when noting how right-wing organizations sometimes assume the role of "'ideological coordinators'" who "identify problems" and "develop… solutions" such that other groups can act under their leadership.[18] HA working in conjunction with the Foundation may satisfy this role. By embodying conservative advocacy, HA commands an extensive amount of influence on the policy goals of other conservative groups. By possessing both intellectual and financial prowess, HA can demonstrate why the positions they take have greater merit and popularity. Thus, it would be in the best interest of other groups to supplement the advocacy of HA lest they dare to challenge its hegemony. The influence wielded by HA can be framed by McFarland's reference to Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's concept of advocacy coalitions, described as "stable political coalitions" that assume a certain

[16] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-c), "Issue Toolkit: The Secure the Border Act," accessed 2023, https://heritageaction.com/toolkit/border-security-debate-how-to-improve-border-security.
[17] Heaney, "Identity Crisis: How Interest Groups Struggle to Define Themselves in Washington," 282.
[18] Timothy M. LaPira and Herschel F. Thomas, "How Big a Political Footprint? Interest Groups as Influence Enterprise," in *Interest Group Politics*, 10th ed., edited by Allan J. Cigler, Burdett A. Loomis, and Anthony J. Nownes (London: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2020), 268-269.

perspective on a policy (i.e., policy position) within a larger "policy network."[19] HA's influence can ensure homogeneity within an advocacy coalition, thereby creating a robust front that can challenge the power of other advocacy coalitions. The auxiliary groups within HA's advocacy coalition possess narrower issue domains such that the coalition has the requisite technical knowledge to advance their positions. As a result, HA's advocacy coalition can triumph and dominate a policy network, leading to the acquisition of member benefits, entrenchment of HA's leadership, and justification of HA's identity.

Internal Consensus

Although all three groups superficially possess ordered priorities and defined missions, there may be events occurring outside of the public's eye that are disrupting this internal stability. Drutman argues that a common collective action challenge is "getting to consensus" among members about the direction of the group's advocacy.[20] Although Drutman is writing about firms seeking influence in a trade association, this same dynamic can be applied to individual members of a group.

CFG may be encountering this friction. Wilson reports that since 2020, financier Thomas Klingenstein has retracted from his previously "modest and intermittent" electoral contribution profile by donating a total of $7 million to CFG's super PAC, Club for Growth Action (CFGA).[21] Klingenstein's ties with the "radical, pro-Trump" Claremont Institute has generated rumors that he may be "attempt[ing] to bring the Club for Growth into the Maga universe."[22] If Wilson's conclusions are trustworthy, Klingenstein's actions resemble Halpin and Fraussen's description of "entryism," where individuals "seek to 'capture' the policy agendas" of a group and orient it towards their subgroup interest.[23]

CFG's ideological focus is likely more susceptible to member influence due to the monetary nature of their electioneering. The money in its PACs is the literal instrument for its advocacy, so whoever controls this money has leverage over how this instrument is used. In an unofficial capacity, large donors likely possess some control over how their donations are "earmarked" and how the organization distributes its total sum of money. With respect to CFG, certain factors can enhance the leverage of an individual or subgroup that intends to do this. First, if CFG is steadfast in its agenda, a new entrant can simply overwhelm CFG with enough money to send the unambiguous message that it wants to co-opt its agenda. Such a sum of money must be large enough to compensate for the potential exit of large donors who may be offended by the drastic shift and to convince CFG leaders that an overhaul would be worthwhile and affordable. This shift would also damage CFG's free-market public image and its group integrity. Therefore, the sum of money must be so substantial as to overcome both the practical inconveniences of transitioning and the ethical concerns of reneging its agenda. Second, if CFG is amenable to agenda adjustments, a new entrant can simply donate enough money to solicit the attention of the group's leaders. Once among the group's donor elite, they can simply ask the leaders to carve out a portion of the agenda or supplement the agenda so their specific policy positions are represented. This more respectful approach may compel CFG leaders to heed the entrant's desires and not disturb the tacit understanding of donor entitlement to their requests. Moreover, the overall image of the group would remain stable since the entrant's concerns would not dominate the group's activity. The growth of CFG's coffers would elevate the group's prominence, and the adjustment in its advocacy may likely go unnoticed.

The nature of Klingenstein's entry suggests that he is attempting the second method of exercising influence. However, there are still several challenges that will inhibit his efforts. The individual contributions to CFGA during the 2022 midterm cycle can be

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[19] Andrew S. McFarland, "Neopluralism," in *Neopluralism: The Evolution of Political Process Theory* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 53.
[20] Lee Drutman, "Trade Associations: A Collective Action Dilemma or a Problem of Cohesion?" (2009), [Manuscript submitted for publication], 1.
[21] Jason Wilson, "The far-right financier giving millions to the Republican party to fight 'woke communists'," *The Guardian*, August 4, 2023, para. 13.
[22] Wilson, paras. 11, 19.
[23] Darren Halpin and Bert Fraussen, "Interest Group Policy Positions and Priorities," in *Interest Group Politics*, 10th ed., edited by Allan J. Cigler, Burdett A. Loomis, and Anthony J. Nownes (London: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2020), 315.

studied to analyze Klingenstein's entry. Klingenstein accounted for $1.45 million of the roughly $82.2 million that CFGA received during that cycle, or about 1.76% of the total.[24] Of the 476 donors to CFGA, Klingenstein would be the eighth largest donor.[25] Ordinally, Klingenstein was able to distinguish himself from the rest of CFGA's donors, so his contributions to CFG's agenda may have been acknowledged. However, Klingenstein's donation would not be enough to overhaul CFG's agenda or effectuate real change. CFGA's top two donors, Richard Uihlein and Jeff Yass, contributed 63.4% of CFGA's total donations in 2022, and the top seven donors ahead of Klingenstein contributed 80.4% of CFGA's total donations.[26] If those seven individuals already have a consensus on how CFG ought to operate, then Klingenstein's influence, regardless of his contribution, would be quite limited. Klingenstein's hypothetical exit, despite the volume of his donation, would not be a great hindrance to CFG's advocacy. Due to the sheer amount of Uihlein and Yass's donations relative to CFGA's overall volume, CFG leaders likely dedicate most of their attention toward accommodating their policy positions. A delicate strategy likely is pursued to appease Uihlein and Yass, limiting the amount of energy that can be expended upon the remaining 474 donors. Klingenstein's material incapability to influence CFG's agenda is also complicated by the ideological rigidity of the group's advocacy. Evidence of CFG's ideological integrity will be established in the later discussion on electioneering, but there is enough evidence to currently presume that Klingenstein does not have the leverage to convince CFG leadership to alter their convictions and the group's public image.

Secondary Group Goals

All three groups have a primary issue domain, but some have secondary policy areas that accord with the theme of their primary policy areas. The reason for this might pertain to Walker's analysis of mobilization methods. Walker's third mode of mobilization pertains to groups "tap[ping] the enthusiasm and energy of social movements" to aggregate a mass of people who are united by a cause.[27] Walker discusses this mode with reference to group origins whereby an organization is created to formalize the advocacy of an existing base of motivated individuals. However, this strategy could be adjusted and minimized such that it enables already existing groups to supplement their membership. A group can incorporate secondary policy areas that already have an active base of participants to entice them into joining the group. The financial resources that are extracted from those new members would be distributed such that the group's primary issue domain is subsidized while enough funds remain to meet a minimum threshold of advocacy for the new policy area. This ensures that the group is not distracted by its new policy area while also maintaining the membership of its new base. This specialization of Walker's analysis is akin to franchising in the business realm, where nodes outside of the main corporation are established such that financial resources can be redirected back to the main corporation.

ATR's primary focus on tax reform is supplemented by additional advocacies in healthcare, technology, and intellectual property rights among other foci.[28] In addition, it advocates for vaping as a safer alternative to tobacco use.[29] CFG's focus on creating a freer market is supplemented by advocacies in term limits, tort reform, and charter schools among other foci.[30] In addition, it specifically calls for the financial deregulation of Bitcoin usage and the election of politicians who are Bitcoin-friendly.[31] In both ATR and CFG, there seem to be two types of secondary policy areas. First, there are secondary

[24] Federal Election Commission, *Club for Growth Action 2021-2022 Itemized Individual Contributions* [Unpublished raw data], 2022b, retrieved October 6, 2023, from https://www.fec.gov/data/receipts/?committee_id=C00487470&two_year_transaction_period=2022&cycle=2022&line_number=F3X-11AI&data_type=processed.
[25] Federal Election Commission, 2022b.
[26] Federal Election Commission, 2022b.
[27] Jack L. Walker, Jr, "The Three Modes of Political Mobilization," in *Mobilizing Interest Groups in America: Patrons, Professions, and Social Movements* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 187.
[28] Americans for Tax Reform, (n.d.-c), "Policy Areas," accessed 2023, https://www.atr.org/policy-areas/.
[29] Americans for Tax Reform, "Vape Facts," August 18, 2022, https://www.atr.org/vapefacts/.
[30] The Club for Growth, (n.d.-a), "All Issues," accessed 2023, https://www.clubforgrowth.org/issues/.
[31] Bitcoin Freedom PAC, (n.d.), "Bitcoin Freedom PAC is dedicated to a single mission:," accessed 2023, https://www.bitcoinfreedompac.org/.

policy areas that are natural extensions of the group's underlying ideology. Incorporating these areas enables both groups to add greater vibrancy to their public image and prove to their members that they are ideologically consistent. For example, ATR's support for greater intellectual property protections accords with their overall ethos of rejecting theft. The group's denouncement of taxation as the consummate model for robbing the common citizen contains a theme of exploitation that is easily transferable into their narrative surrounding intellectual property. Although it may not be the government that is threatening the intellectual property of citizens, the general sense of indignity around the issue remains and can be incorporated into the group. The same dynamic is present between CFG's laissez-faire economic philosophy and their treatment of the school choice debate; in both policy areas, the group can extract the anti-interventionist sentiment of its membership. Second, there are secondary policy areas that are incorporated for economic reasons. Others, like the pro-vaping and pro-Bitcoin advocacies of ATR and CFG, respectively, do reflect a libertarian spirit. However, one cannot forget that both areas are connected to wealthy industries. It is possible that these advocacies were selected to construct a pandering strategy to extract financial resources from individuals and entities connected to these industries. On a more forgiving note, incorporating these policy areas could intrigue people who are otherwise politically apathetic into becoming members.

How ATR and CFG formally advocate for their secondary policy areas ought to be evaluated as well. Mainly, the bureaucratic activity of both groups aligns with their secondary advocacies. For example, ATR commented on a rule proposal released by the Financial Stability Oversight Council to express their concerns that a new designation for "nonbank financial companies" would elevate "levels of regulation."[32] The Club for Growth Foundation (CFGF), the public education and research arm of CFG, commented their opposition to a rule proposal released by the Department of Education that would alter grant requirements for charter schools such that "student access to high-quality charter schools" would be hindered.[33] In contrast, the groups' legislative hearing activity aligns with their primary advocacies. For example, ATR president Grover Norquist testified before a House subcommittee in favor of legislation that would ensure states could not "tax across state lines" when targeting online transactions.[34] Former CFG president Stephen Moore testified before a House subcommittee to emphasize how President Bush's tax plan might "[reduce] the budget deficit" by stimulating economic growth.[35] This differentiation is motivated by the difference in forum. Rule commenting enables groups to publish long, technical analyses that are only targeted toward regulators and experts. Since the wider public is not the intended audience, a group can still satisfy their obligation to advocate for their secondary policy area without risking a marked image deviation from their primary issue domain. Moreover, the impersonal nature of commenting detracts from its efficacy by inhibiting the commenter from properly stressing the importance of a policy area. Thus, this would not be the best forum for a group to advocate their primary issue domain. Not only do congressional hearings compel a representative of the group to physically appear before a body of legislators, but hearings are often made available to the wider public. Since legislators and general audience members usually are not technical experts, and spoken oratory disincentivizes mouthiness, these representatives are more likely to speak plainly during their testimony. Thus, this environment allows groups to promulgate their primary agenda concerns. Not only is the audience wider, but the presence of a group leader indicates to the audience that the topic is of crucial importance to the group. The degree of importance can be

[32] Americans for Tax Reform, [ATR Comment on Nonbank Financial Company Designation], July 25, 2023, retrieved from https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FSOC-2023-0002-0027, 1.
[33] Club for Growth Foundation, [CFGF Comment on CSP Proposed Priorities, Requirements, and Assurances], April 18, 2022, retrieved from https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2022-OESE-0006-26090.
[34] U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law of the Committee on the Judiciary, *Nexus issues: Legislative hearing on H.R. 2315, the "Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act of 2015;" H.R. 1643, the "Digital Goods and Services Tax Fairness Act of 2015;" and H.R. 2584, the "Business Activity Tax Simplification Act of 2015"*, 114th Cong., 1st sess., June 2, 2015, 8.
[35] U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Financial Services, *Paying Dividends: How the President's Tax Plan Will Benefit Individual Investors and Strengthen the Capital Markets*, 108th Cong., 1st sess., March 18, 2003, 41.

further stressed, for oratory grants the speaker greater flexibility in communicating her authenticity via her inflection and tone.

In contrast, HA does not possess any secondary policy areas. Its issue domain is so broad as to embody general conservatism, so it would be difficult to find an additional policy area to incorporate that is disparate enough to be distinguished as "secondary". Its constituency would theoretically be wide enough to generate a membership that is sufficient for the group's operations. More importantly, if HA is to be treated as an authority in conservative advocacy, a secondary policy area might prove to be a distraction. The potential members that it would attract would not outweigh the lost energy that would have been distributed to its primary issue domain; in other words, the opportunity cost of incorporating a new area would be too high. This is not to mention the fact that HA's reputation as a serious intellectual authority could be compromised if it were to incorporate policy areas such as vaping that may be viewed as frivolity.

II. Group Lobbying Strategy

ATR and HA both engage in lobbying activity, and they faced a marked decrease in lobbying expenditures from 2019 to 2020 which was likely caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, HA was able to rebound its activity in the following years while ATR experienced a steady decline. Figure 1 summarizes the lobbying expenditures of ATR and HA between 2019 and 2022.[36]

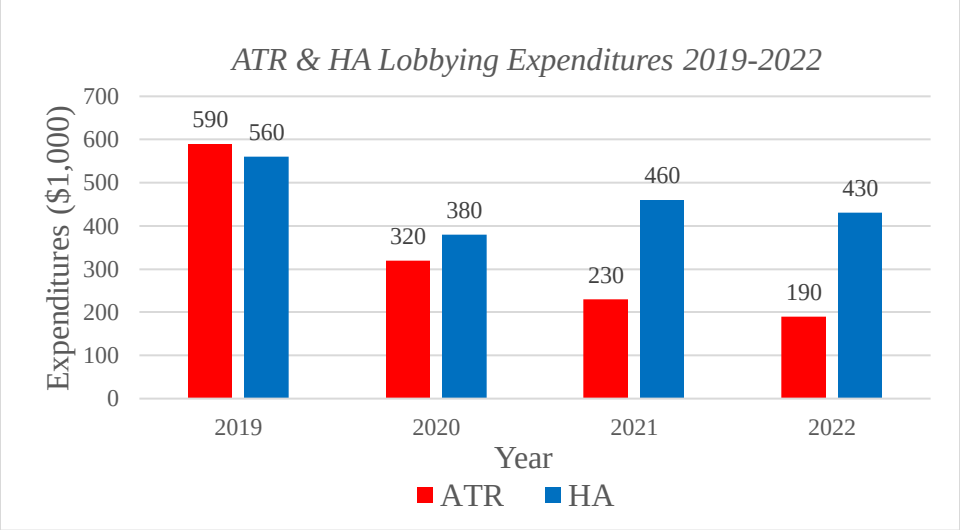


Figure 1. ATR and HA Lobbying Expenditures 2019-2022

First, the decline in lobbying activity observed in ATR could be explained by a policy accomplishment that reduced further need for lobbying. If one were to extend Figure 1 to include 2017 and 2018, one would find that ATR spent $650 thousand and $470 thousand in lobbying during those respective years.[37] Therefore, higher amounts of

[36] Eric Xie and Jordan McCants, *Club for Growth and Americans for Tax Reform Project C Spreadsheet* [Unpublished raw data], 2023b, https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/487976/assignments/5769717; Fiorella Recchioni and Pristine Thai, *American Civil Liberties Union and Heritage Action for America Project D Spreadsheet* [Unpublished raw data], 2023b, https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/487976/discussion_topics/4074468.

[37] United States Senate Lobbying Disclosure, (n.d.-a), "Registrations & Quarterly Activity," accessed 2023, https://lda.senate.gov/filings/public/filing/search/?registrant=Americans+for+Tax+Reform&registrant_country=&registrant_ppb_country=&client=&client_state=&client_country=&client_ppb_country=&lobbyist=&lobbyist_covered_position=&lobbyist_conviction_disclosure=&lobbyist_conviction_date_range_from=&lobbyist_conviction_date_range_to=&report_period=&report_year=2017&report_dt_posted_from=&report_dt_posted_to=&report_amount_reported_min=&report_amount_reported_max=&report_filing_uuid=&report_house_doc_id=&report_issue_area_description=&affiliated_organization=&affiliated_organization_country=&fore

spending are correlated with the Trump administration (with a 2017-2020 average of $507.5 thousand) and smaller amounts are correlated with the Biden administration (with a 2021-2022 average of $210 thousand). McKay's explanation of negative lobbying could explain this split. McKay argues that opponent groups advocating against a proposal have a "built-in and disproportionate" advantage over proponent groups because opponents can prompt legislators to question the "wisdom" and "severe consequences" of new legislation.[38] In other words, positive groups must satisfy a heavy burden of proof that requires them to establish the safety and benefits (both electorally and practically) of passing a novel piece of legislation. In contrast, negative groups can simply sow doubt on the potential inefficacy and electoral ramifications of legislation, exploiting a person's innate sense of risk aversion. This dynamic can be used to evaluate ATR's lobbying activity. Between 2017 and 2020, ATR was likely involved in the Trump administration's efforts to pass tax cuts and other conservative policies that accord with ATR's mission. Republican control during the 115th Congress would have contributed to a greater quantity of new legislation that ATR would have supported. Prominently, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 can be viewed as the administration's magnum opus and a bill that would warrant extensive ATR involvement. McKay would suggest that this new wave of conservative legislation would require extensive amounts of lobbying to assure legislators of the merits and attractiveness of Trump-era legislation. Thus, ATR's lobbying activity would reflect this wave of intensity. Once the Biden administration came into power, ATR would have altered its lobbying strategy. Not only would the group attempt to preserve the Trumpian status quo, but it would also resist President Biden's legislative agenda. Notably, the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 would have encountered considerable conservative resistance. Thus, ATR's shift towards negative lobbying would have been reflected by a reduction in lobbying expenditures.

Second, the relative consistency in HA's lobbying could be explained by their cyclical issue advocacy process. HA distinguishes between their "current fights" and "past fights," suggesting that although their issue domain is broad, they likely segment their advocacy to make their operations more manageable.[39] HA likely rotates through several policy areas, transitioning to a new area when their previous advocacy has been exhausted or when a new issue has broader appeal to their membership. The latter reason could be the justification for incorporating immigration into HA's "current fights."[40] Illegal immigration has been a major source of contention between conservative Americans and the Biden administration; the proposed impeachment of Alejandro Mayorkas has been a rallying cry among congressional Republicans. HA even sells a bumper sticker that reads "Impeach Mayorkas."[41] Thus, HA has accommodated its lobbying priorities to fit the shifting priorities of its conservative membership. This adjustment is emblematic of the indirect influence that members can have on their group's leadership, and it confirms to HA's membership that the group is responsive and vigilant.

Of course, there are certainly several other possibilities that could explain the movements in ATR and HA's lobbying expenditures. First, four data points are not enough to generate any firm conclusions on the overall strategy being employed by both groups. Second, and more importantly, several internal factors influence expenditure.

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United States Senate Lobbying Disclosure, (n.d.-b), "Registrations & Quarterly Activity," accessed 2023, https://lda.senate.gov/filings/public/filing/search/?registrant=Americans+for+Tax+Reform&registrant_country=&registrant_ppb_country=&client=&client_state=&client_country=&client_ppb_country=&lobbyist=&lobbyist_covered_position=&lobbyist_conviction_disclosure=&lobbyist_conviction_date_range_from=&lobbyist_conviction_date_range_to=&report_period=&report_year=2018&report_dt_posted_from=&report_dt_posted_to=&report_amount_reported_min=&report_amount_reported_max=&report_filing_uuid=&report_house_doc_id=&report_issue_area_description=&affiliated_organization=&affiliated_organization_country=&foreign_entity=&foreign_entity_country=&foreign_entity_ppb_country=&foreign_entity_ownership_percentage_min=&foreign_entity_ownership_percentage_max=&search=search#js_searchFormTitle.

[38] Amy M. McKay, "The Power of Negative Lobbying," in *Interest Group Politics*, 9th ed., edited by Allan J. Cigler, Burdett A. Loomis, and Anthony J. Nownes (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2016), 327-328.

[39] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-b), "Issues," accessed 2023, https://heritageaction.com/issues.

[40] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-b).

[41] Heritage Action for America, (n.d.-d), [Merchandise Storefront], accessed 2023, https://donate.heritageaction.com/storefront/.

Notably, neither ATR nor HA have returned to their 2019 expenditures value. Along with the pandemic creating many barriers to in-person lobbying, donations might have decreased because of the coinciding economic hardship. If financial constraints were not responsible, group leaders might have deemed it strategic to shift their advocacy efforts elsewhere, such as toward public education or events, in light of the pandemic.

CFG did not report any recent lobbying expenditures; records only indicate lobbying in 2003 and from 2006 to 2007 that cumulatively totals roughly $110 thousand.[42] The dearth of lobbying activity comports with the nature of CFG's advocacy. CFG wants federal policy to reflect their interpretation of free-market economics. Although the group has specific policy goals, all those goals adhere to an underlying ideology. This emphasis on consistency and homogeneity naturally attracts the group towards electioneering rather than lobbying. Whereas lobbying can be used as a precise instrument towards specific policies, electioneering strives to manipulate the ideological makeup of the legislative machinery such that all churned-out policies are indirectly manipulated as well. Targeting the machinery reduces the likelihood that CFG will individually pursue its policy goals. In other words, lobbying does not provide CFG with the breadth of political effect that it desires.

One may argue that HA's broad issue domain may compel it towards electioneering, and HA indeed performs some electioneering. However, the fundamental difference between HA and CFG is that HA's underlying "conservative" ideology lacks an easily definable message. "Conservatism" is distinctive enough to attract members to contribute to the organization, but the ideology's nebulousness disables members from agreeing upon an all-encompassing intellectual basis for their policy goals. In contrast, this intellectual basis is firmly defined in CFG's advocacy. Consequently, it is much easier for HA to parse its issue domain so its members can agree on simpler intellectual bases for individual policies. Thus, the specificity afforded by lobbying enables HA to maintain this compartmentalization and its members.

The scant information that is available on CFG's lobbying activity suggests that it strategically lobbied to safeguard its survival. Its lobbying reports from 2006 reference its opposition to legislation that would "regulate 527 groups." Although Club for Growth does not presently operate any 527 organizations, it did so in 2006.[43] The "legislation" noted in CFG's lobbying reports likely does not refer to any enacted pieces of legislation. However, following the controversy surrounding the 527 organization Swift Boat Veterans for Truth during the 2004 presidential election, several legislators did attempt to close the "527 loophole" by "amend[ing] FECA's definition of 'political committees' to include" 527's.[44] This effort, if successful, would have severely undermined CFG's ability to influence elections. However, the lack of lobbying expenditures and the short duration of CFG's lobbying in response to this threat indicates that the group probably did not consider the post-Swift Boat discourse to be a dire threat. Group leaders may have prognosticated that these proposed regulations run afoul of the First Amendment, a sentiment later affirmed by *Emily's List v. FEC* when the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that the US Constitution "protects unlimited contributions to and spending by a 527."[45] CFG used outside lobbyists to conduct their advocacy, so it is plausible that they sought the advice of outside legal counsel as well.[46].

III. Group Electioneering Strategy

CFG and HA both have considerable electioneering activity, with CFG's activity being more substantial and prevailing.[47] In contrast, ATR's electioneering activity is so

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[42] Xie and McCants, 2023b.
[43] OpenSecrets, (n.d.), "527 Organizations Affiliated with Club for Growth," accessed 2023, https://www.opensecrets.org/527s/527cmtes2.php?ein=&cycle=2004&tname=Club+for+Growth.
[44] Lauren Daniel, "527s in a Post-Swift Boat Era: The Current and Future Role of Issue Advocacy Groups in Presidential Elections," *Northwestern Journal of Law & Social Policy* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 164, 169.
[45] Daniel, 151.
[46] Xie and McCants, 2023b.
[47] Eric Xie and Jordan McCants, *Club for Growth and Americans for Tax Reform Project C Spreadsheet* [Unpublished raw data], 2023a, https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/487976/assignments/5769714; Fiorella Recchioni and Pristine Thai, *American Civil Liberties Union and Heritage Action for America Project C*

minimal as to be comparatively negligible.[48] Holyoke may have an explanation for why CFG and HA are more engaged in electioneering as opposed to ATR. Holyoke explains that groups looking to influence elections "tend to represent small but highly motivated and intensely partisan" sections of the population with the ultimate goal of "see[ing] policy reflect their values."[49] This explanation adds a new layer of nuance to the analysis of CFG in the prior section. As previously mentioned, CFG and HA (to a lesser degree) have an underlying ideology that coheres to their various policy goals. Instead of individually targeting legislators and legislation to advocate against, it would be more convenient for these groups to alter the makeup of the legislature such that all subsequent policies passed by the legislature align with their ideology. If a group were to be more partisan than the general populace, preexisting barriers would make it difficult to persuade legislators with more moderate views. In particular, CFG's brand of free-market capitalism might be unpopular among an audience of legislators (even Republicans) who support some degree of regulation and public spending. Although HA's general conservatism has a wider range and appeal, they still have an incentive to expand the application of their ideology. If CFG or HA intends to gain leverage over the policy-making process, it would be imperative for them to steer the composition of Congress to be more favorable. Holyoke's comment about motivation applies to this imperative. Since these groups have unpopular policy positions and are scant in number, the collection of their interests cannot compete with the remainder of the policy network. It would take a group that is "highly motivated" to resist these barriers and aggregate enough resources to obtain a fighting chance.

This is not to say that there is no underlying ideology that binds ATR's advocacy. One can characterize its ideology as a strain of conservative libertarianism that is similar to CFG's ideology. However, ATR's primary focus is on their singular policy position on taxation. Thus, the cohesion that is afforded by an ideology is not required to justify an issue in isolation. It is more effective to lobby a legislator on a single issue than it is to lobby a legislator in the hope that all her policy positions will transform into the group's policy positions. The former approach directly reaches the group's policy goals while the latter approach is indirect. Thus, if ATR remains dedicated to taxation, it is better served by using a direct approach. There are some public image concerns relating to electioneering as well. Loomis notes that the leaders of the American Civil Liberties Union were reluctant to engage in elections due to fears that the group would "suffer if it [was] seen as too political."[50] ATR's leaders are probably cognizant of this risk as well. The essence of ATR's advocacy can be found in the tacit message of "taxation is theft" that hearkens back to the United States's revolutionary era and embeds in the civic memory of many Americans. ATR's logo contains the torch of the Statue of Liberty, and its media displays images reminiscent of the American Revolution for the express purpose of reviving a sense of libertarian nostalgia. ATR recognizes that disdain for heavy taxation is a ubiquitous sentiment, so they are unwilling to undermine this ubiquity by framing reduced taxation as a partisan issue.

Independent Expenditures

CFG has two primary contribution devices: Club for Growth PAC and Club for Growth Action (CFGA; a super PAC). HA has one primary contribution device outside of its independent electoral activity: Sentinel Action Fund (SAF; a super PAC). SAF only had significant activity during the 2022 election cycle. Therefore, most of the comparisons made in this section will be between CFGA and SAF during the 2022 election cycle to

Spreadsheet [Unpublished raw data], 2023a, https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/487976/discussion_topics/4074468.

[48] Xie and McCants, 2023a.

[49] Thomas T. Holyoke, *Interest Groups and Lobbying: Pursuing Political Interests in America*, 1st ed. (New York: Westview Press, 2014), 300.

[50] Burdett A. Loomis, "The Trump Effect: The American Civil Liberties Union Maximizes a Windfall," in *Interest Group Politics*, 10th ed., edited by Allan J. Cigler, Burdett A. Loomis, and Anthony J. Nownes (London: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2020), 77.

preserve the comparison's symmetry. Figure 2 summarizes the 2022 cycle independent expenditures of CFGA and SAF.[51]

	Democratic	Republican	Group Name
Total Contribution Amount	$10,197,031.34	$3,082,631.61	Sentinel Action Fund
Number of Candidates	5	10	
Average Contribution per Candidate	$2,039,406.27	$308,263.16	
Money Spent in Opposition	$10,197,031.34	$0.00	
Money Spent in Support	$0.00	$3,082,631.61	
Total Contribution Amount	$27,913,959.20	$41,950,395.26	Club for Growth Action
Number of Candidates	9*	45	
Average Contribution per Candidate	$3,101,551.02	$932,231.01	
Money Spent in Opposition	$27,913,959.20	$21,792,085.00	
Money Spent in Support	$0.00	$20,158,310.26	

Figure 2. 2022 CFGA and SAF Independent Expenditures
**Note: Includes CFGA's independent expenditures pertaining to Evan McMullin*

The distribution of CFGA and SAF's independent expenditures reveals various characteristics of their behavior. First, both groups dedicated their expenditures on Democratic candidates solely towards oppositional advocacy, and the average contribution per Democratic candidate is much higher than the average contribution per Republican candidate. This preference for negative advertisements implies their greater perceived efficacy. The underlying risk-averse human psychology that McKay analyzed regarding negative lobbying likely applies to elections as well. The "dangers" of an unfavorable candidate and the accompanying instinct to protect oneself outweigh the merits of a favorable candidate and the accompanying satisfaction when voting for her.

The specific targets of HA's electoral advocacy make this strategy optimal for them. Further evaluation of the 15 candidates targeted by SAF reveals that HA had a keen interest in competitive, high-profile congressional races, such as the Senate races in New Hampshire, Arizona, Nevada, and North Carolina.[52] Almost two-thirds of the $13.3 million that SAF spent during the entire cycle were in opposition to incumbent Senators Mark Kelly and Maggie Hassan ($6.68 million and $1.54 million, respectively).[53] Notably, the Republican frontrunners in both of those races were political outsiders. Therefore, SFA's negative advertisements likely relied upon the previous actions and voting records of those two incumbents for ammunition against their credibility because their preferred candidates did not have any concrete evidence for their campaign promises. In other words, the only means to uplift the credibility of their favored, but unreliable, candidate is to disparage the observable legislative record of her opponent. Ambivalent voters, who are cautious and deferential to the incumbent (i.e. the status quo), might be swayed if they are shown evidence that they are currently being harmed.

Moreover, negative advertising is a great strategy when attempting to obfuscate the true policy positions of a preferred candidate. This rationale is key to CFGA's

[51] Federal Election Commission, *Club for Growth Action 2021-2022 Independent Expenditures* [Unpublished raw data], 2022a, retrieved October 7, 2023, from https://www.fec.gov/data/independent-expenditures/?q_spender=C00487470&two_year_transaction_period=2022&cycle=2022&is_notice=false&data_type=processed;
Federal Election Commission, *Sentinel Action Fund 2021-2022 Independent Expenditures* [Unpublished raw data]. 2022c, retrieved December 5, 2023, from https://www.fec.gov/data/independent-expenditures/?q_spender=C00811166&two_year_transaction_period=2022&cycle=2022&is_notice=false&data_type=processed.
[52] Federal Election Commission, 2022c.
[53] Federal Election Commission, 2022c.

oppositional advertisements against Republican candidates. In short, CFG is obliged to resist certain Republican candidates because opposition to its brand of libertarianism pervades the entire political spectrum. Supporting a conservative with an inadequate economic record would be hypocrisy. However, presenting its ideology as an appealing alternative to conventional conservatism and differentiating between its preferred candidates and inadequate candidates prove to be two prominent challenges. Instead of a balanced response to these challenges, negative advertising enables CFG to kill two birds with one stone. Instead of making libertarianism more appealing by expounding upon its virtues, CFG can simply convince Republican voters that conventional conservatism is awful in the hope that they drift towards the more libertarian candidate. Instead of differentiating between the technical economic positions of two Republican candidates, attacks against an opponent's more lurid defects enable voters to contrast more easily between a flawed candidate and a desirable or neutral candidate. In other words, CFG relegates the stale economic components of the candidates to the backburner such that more sensational flaws can be weaponized. The same desired result is achieved even though CFG's complicated and contentious economic motives are not revealed, all while playing on emotional reactions.

IV. Conclusion

To conclude, all three groups – ATR, CFG, and HA – are memberless organizations that primarily use purposive incentives to attract donors. HA can establish its reputation as an intellectual authority on conservative advocacy, enabling it to maintain a broader issue domain than ATR and CFG. ATR and CFG's issue domains are more defined, making it simpler for members to align their personal views with the groups' policy positions. Some may argue that CFG is facing an internal threat that may undermine consensus on the group's policy positions, but the magnitude of the threat is not large enough to cause any major destabilization. ATR and CFG incorporate secondary policy areas within their issue domain to demonstrate their ideological consistency and attract already existing advocacy bases into their bases. HA does not possess any secondary policy areas because the opportunity cost of incorporating them would be too high. The diminishment of ATR's lobbying expenditures could be explained by the advantages of negative lobbying, and the levelness of HA's expenditures could reflect their strategy of cycling between various issues. CFG's minimal lobbying activity coincides with attempts by the federal government to threaten the group's survival. Negative electoral advertisements enable CFG and HA to indirectly uplift the credibility of their preferred candidates without bringing attention to the divisiveness of their ideologies.

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Section 2:

International Politics

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International Politics

"Britain's Most Diverse Parliament Ever": An Investigation into the Acceptable Difference of the Backgrounds of Ethnic Minority Conservatives in 2024

Tess Bailie

—

Introduction

The 2010 General Election marked the end of the Labour Party's monopoly on equal representation (Saggar, 2000) and reflected a new era of Conservative favor among minority voters (Sobolewska, 2013). This landmark election saw the near doubling of ethnic minority representation in the House of Commons as the result of a large electoral swing (Kavanagh, 2011) and a shift in Conservative strategy which aimed to 'de-toxify' the party's image (Green, 2010). In anticipation of the 2024 General Election, which is set to see another electoral swing and large swathes of MPs standing down, this dissertation will investigate the impact of this strategy change on diversity in the Conservative party.

In January of this year, findings were released which forecasted that ethnic minority representation in the House of Commons will rise from 10 to 12% (British Future, 2024: 2). The media was quick to praise this statistic, arguing that it implied a "narrowing of the gap" between the diversity of parliament and society (The Guardian, 2024). However, while these figures are encouraging, evidence suggests that rising descriptive representation of ethnic minorities in the Commons is not translating to the substantive representation of racially marginalized voices in Britain. A recent survey by YouGov, a prominent public research organization, found approximately half of all ethnic minority Britons feel disengaged with politics. Within this group, 30% accounted such disengagement to not feeling related to anyone in politics and 23% claimed their most important issues were being ignored by their MPs (YouGov, 2022). Moreover, despite claims to "positively value the diversity of people's backgrounds," (Conservatives, 2021: 4), the striking homogeneity and socioeconomic prestige of minority Conservatives is often cited in lieu of this. In particular, it is not uncommon to encounter remarks on the billionaire status of the Winchester, Oxford, and Stanford alum, Rishi Sunak PM. Additionally, the disparity between active efforts to improve representation in the Commons, and a lack thereof at the local level, has shed further doubt on the scale of commitments to genuinely foster diversity within the party (Sobolewska and Begum, 2020).

Therefore, in anticipation of the 2024 election, it is important to remain critical of claims that parliament will be "Britain's most diverse ever" (British Future, 2024: 1) because these analyses only measure diversity by way of counting numbers of non-white and non-male representatives, or what Page referred to as Identity Diversity (2019). In doing so, such statements do not adequately acknowledge the ongoing persistence of barriers to equal access and representation in British politics.

In seeking to explore the complexities and incongruities of the Conservative diversity agenda, this dissertation will draw primarily from Durose's theory of Acceptable Difference and the Archetypal Candidate (2013). The core tenet of this thesis is that EMPs have had to, "work twice as hard and be twice as good," as their white counterparts, and that they have done so by cultivating distinct biographies of archetypal traits to become acceptably different (*ibid*, 2013: 255). One decade on, this dissertation aims to extend the historical continuity of Durose's theories in support of their sustained relevance within the current political climate. As such, her theoretical conceptualization of acceptable difference, as the unspoken criteria for minority inclusion within parliament, provides the foundational basis for this research.

Through comparison of the backgrounds of white and ethnic minority Conservatives, this research found substantial evidence to support that minority candidates can, for the most part, be considered to be acceptably different. In particular, all Conservative EMPs were found to have attended university and worked in the upper echelons of the private sector in London. Additionally, the majority of EMPs were from the south of England with a comfortable middle/upper class origin and were much more likely to have attended fee-paying independent school than their white colleagues. On the other hand, the backgrounds of white representatives were broadly dissimilar from one another, which highlights that this group is not required to adhere to the same rigorous and elite standards upon standing for Conservative office.

Ultimately, this dissertation poses itself as a preliminary, exploratory, and qualitative enquiry into the recruitment of EMPs into the Conservative party. By differentiating between outwardly observable indicators of diversity and the diversity of how people perceive, think, and operate (Page, 2019) this research will begin to delve deeper into understanding why "political dinosaurs" may not be extinct, despite improvements in the diversity of political representation (Lovenduski, 2012: 698). In seeking to address the important nuances of political representation, this dissertation will investigate the ways in which the experiential biographies of EMPs intersect with their non-white status. Here, Page's definitions of Identity and Cognitive diversity (2019) will be applied as a novel approach in the field of political science. Given the recent incorporation of ethnic diversity into British politics, there is a distinct lack of longitudinal data on EMPs and, consequently, this study provides only a 'snapshot' analysis of the Commons, in the interests of serving as a catalyst for future research.

Moving forward, Chapter 2 will provide a brief review of the existing literature on cognitive diversity and political representation before discussing previous research into Conservative diversity. Following this, Chapter 3 will layout Durose's thesis (2013) and use Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital (1999) to construct a theoretical framework for research. Chapter 4 will then articulate the methodological approach to the research, justifying how the use of qualitative life-course analysis is most appropriate in addressing the central research question: **To what extent can the current cohort of Conservative EMPs be considered acceptably different?** Chapter 4 will continue by outlining the three research hypotheses prior to establishing criteria with which to assess the generalizability of the findings. Chapter 5 will then begin by providing an overview of the findings before an in-depth analysis of the hypotheses is conducted. In demonstrating that EMPs are indeed acceptably different, Chapter 6 will move on to a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of the evidence before Chapter 7 concludes with a summary of the research and final recommendation for future enquiries into political diversity.

I. Chapter 2: Literature Review

There are two relevant academic fields which discuss ethnic diversity in depth. The first is an interdisciplinary approach spanning the fields of business management and sociology, asserting that *diversity is more than skin deep* (*see,* Page, 2019; Kamalnath, 2022b). While previously, such studies have scarcely referred to political phenomena, their theoretical distinction between identity and cognitive diversity lay the groundwork for this research. The second sits within political science and is built upon the argument that descriptive representation is the bedrock of modern liberal democracy because it facilitates the substantive representation of marginalized voices (see Plotke, 1997; Gay, 2002; Childs and Cowley, 2011; Arnesen and Peters, 2018). Accordingly, this chapter will outline the central theses from each field in order to situate this dissertation within an arena of pre-existing literature and facilitate the application of cognitive diversity theories to this study of political representation.

Ethnic Diversity versus Cognitive Diversity

The inter-disciplinary approach to the diversity agenda specifies the need to diminish the Group Think crises (see Janis, 1972) resulting from elite homogeneity, where unanimity and concurrence are prioritized in group decision making (Heemskerk and Fennema, 2014; Adams et al., 2015). The concept that diversity is more than skin

deep is best outlined by Page, who points to the "Diversity Bonus" available to businesses seeking to enhance team functioning (2019). Scholars following Page emphasize the importance of separately defining Identity Diversity from Cognitive Diversity. Identity diversity refers to differences in outwardly observable traits, such as race and gender (Page, 2019). Cognitive diversity, on the other hand, relates to differences in how individuals think and operate, and has far greater capacity to protect the group against the pitfalls of homogeneity (ibid., 2019). There is broad consensus within this field that previous attempts to diversify the elite, in the pursuit of improved governance, have "failed" due to the over-emphasis of identity diversity and it's presumed capacity to produce a cognitively diverse set of individuals (Dalton, 2006: 89; Page, 2019: 134). One would assume, then, that political parties are similarly susceptible to such shortcomings.

Furthermore, it has been found that ethnic minority elites often have background characteristics which are markedly similar to those of the incumbent white male (Young et al., 2021: 365), resulting in instances where an identity diverse group is strikingly cognitively homogenous (Singh, 2008). The most common shared characteristic of these groups is their elite, upper-class backgrounds (Schmid and Roedder, 2022). These findings support that diversity quotas, aimed at increasing the descriptive representation of minority groups, often lead to instances where minority individuals become valued for their role as a token (see Kanter, 1977) over their contribution to the cognitive diversity of the group (Kamalnath, 2022b; Schmid and Roedder, 2022). This indicates that elite diversity agendas are particularly susceptible to the "visibility phenomenon" associated with tokenism (Kanter, 1977: 965). The visibility phenomenon dictates that, given the disproportionate share of awareness afforded to identity-diverse candidates by virtue of their difference, tokens encounter significant "performance pressures" which result in their outsize accumulation of elite-level capital (1977: 967). This has been upheld by evidence to suggest that women in the upper echelons of the corporate sphere are inclined to be better qualified than their white-male counterparts (Singh et al, 2008). In these instances, it can be assumed that tokenistic diversity agendas become stunted in their capacity to promote full cognitive diversity of groups by ensuring that new hires are similar to the incumbent white male across all non-visible indicators.

Within this field, references to the elite build on the conceptualization of the so-called "Power Elite" as leaders of the political, corporate and military sectors of society (Mills, 1956). Elites are then depicted as "small-N" social units who are distinguishable from the majority of the population by virtue of the unique and inaccessible composition of their backgrounds (Bukodi and Goldthorpe, 2021: 673). By applying Mills' three-pronged depiction, conclusions which have been specifically drawn on *corporate* elites within this field can, by extension, be applied to a study of *political* elites.

Ethnic Diversity and Political Representation

At the fundamental level, ethnic diversity in political institutions can be used as a "key indicator" of political engagement of the most marginalized groups in society (Bird, Saalfeld and Wüst, 2010: 2). This idea falls within a much broader academic discussion on the interplay between descriptive and substantive representation and the consequent implications for modern representative democracy (see Lijphart, 1971; McAdam, 1994; Plotke, 1997). Today's diversity and inclusion agenda echoes the theoretical arguments first put forward by Mansbridge (1999). She argued that descriptive representation motivates political engagement with the substantive representation of the interests of minorities because minority candidates are influenced by a notion of, "*shared experience*" (Mansbridge, 1999: 629). Essentially, "mirror" representation[1] promotes the proper functioning of deliberative democracy (on a contingent basis) because a heterogenous government is best suited to reflect the inherent heterogeneity of public opinion (ibid., 1999: 636).

Mansbridge has faced various academic oppositions which tend to follow Pitkin's theory of the diminishing political accountability of descriptively representative governments (1967). These critiques have had minimal traction in the modern political

[1] Mirror representation speaks to instances where an elected body of representatives proportionally reflects the demographic constituency of the electorate.

sphere, as evidenced by the growing use of various quota measures to achieve gender balance in political institutions (Dahlerup, 2013). A common pitfall of the literature in this field is an over-emphasis on descriptive representation of minority groups which can breed essentialist conclusions (see Mahalingam, 2003; Mansbridge, 2005). This signals that there is insufficient understanding that identity groups are not homogenous, whilst simultaneously maintaining the importance of ethnic diversity. In particular, 'head-counting' the representation of ethnic minorities as a unitary non-white grouping does not acknowledge significant variations in the socioeconomic status of each minority group (Parekh, 1998), and the prevalence of racial hierarchies (Simpson and Yinger, 2013) within the UK. As such, this dissertation finds that incongruities arise when discussing minority representation within political science because there is a lack of a wider sociological perspective of the differences between identity and cognitive diversity.

Furthermore, recent research has found empirical support that descriptive representation promotes the substantive representation of minority interests in the House of Commons (Sobolewska et al, 2018), thus supporting Mansbridge's shared experience thesis (1999). Interestingly, however, the substantive representation of marginalized voices was overwhelmingly correlated to Labour party membership (Saalfeld and Bischof, 2013). These findings indicate that, despite similar levels of ethnic minority representation across parties, there is a difference in the way that the Conservatives incorporate and apply diversity. Importantly, the nature of this disparity is not well defined within the literature – an issue which this dissertation seeks to remedy.

Ethnic Diversity in the Conservative Party

Historically, most EMP's have stood for the Labour party, with Labour continuing to be the party of choice for ethnic minority voters (Rich, 1998; Saggar, 1998). Since the 2010 election, however, there has been an upsurge in research documenting the swelling of Conservative ethnic minority support and representation. While there is some evidence that the growth of middle class minorities is responsible for this changing picture of politics (Heath and Cheung, 2007), others highlight the development of party strategies to attract minority voters (Sobolewska, 2013a). There is general agreement that the party was motivated to "soften their image" (Quinn, 2008: 179) and appear more "inclusive" (Green, 2010: 673) following findings released in a report commissioned by Lord Ashcroft in 2005. This identified that the low representation of women and minority groups was one of the key drivers of the party's image as "old fashioned and elitist" (Ashcroft, 2005: 26). Importantly, this research highlights that Conservative diversity strategy is unusual because it's primary goal is *optics* improvements and the *reputational advantages* associated with ethnic diversity (Sobolewska, 2013). Labour and the Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, are typically understood to prioritize the substantive representation of minority interests (Saalfeld and Bischof, 2013). In exaggerating the electoral favor associated with appearing diverse, these reports highlight that the Conservatives somewhat value minority individuals as tokens for diversity in such a way that fails to acknowledge the benefits of cognitive diversity and improved political representation.

II. Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

In developing a theoretical framework for analysis, this dissertation draws primarily from Durose's theories of "Acceptable Difference" and the "Archetypal Candidate" (2013). Additionally, Bourdieu's theories of Cultural Capital and Habitus (1997, 2002) will be theoretically mobilized to facilitate the application of Page's diversity definitions (2019) to Durose's acceptable difference thesis (2013) and the operationalization of research variables in the following section.

Acceptable Difference and The Archetypal Candidate

Conducted prior to 2010, Durose's research used interviews with ethnic minority politicians to identify their various pathways into politics and individual sentiments around minority representation in the House of Commons (2013). Conclusive evidence was found that, while minority representation was improving at face value (identity diversity), the routes into British politics were more exclusionary than ever before (ibid.,

2013). Where aspiring minority candidates had been successful, they felt this was on account of their "acceptable difference" (ibid, 2013: 246). Candidates are understood to be "acceptably different," when they share most of the key characteristics of the "archetypal candidate". The archetypal candidate is a "white, middle-aged, middle-class, able-bodied, heterosexual male with an elite educational and professional background and prior experience in local government" (ibid., 2013: 250). Non-white candidates are consequently understood to mitigate against the electoral disadvantages of being a minority (discussed in the previous chapter) by constructing extensive biographies of characteristics which are closely aligned with those of the incumbent elite archetype.

Bourdieu's Cultural Capital

Bourdieu's framework of cultural and social reproduction delineated three forms of human capital and used these to explain the persistence of intergenerational social inequality (1997). Cultural capital is specifically relevant to this analysis as it speaks to the type of traits held by Durose's archetypal candidate. Human capital can be embodied (intangible), objectified (held in cultural products), and institutionalized (officially accredited) (Edgerton and Roberts, 2014). Where Bourdieu's original definition is abstract, developed interpretations argue that cultural capital describes various social competencies which provide familiarity with relevant institutions and the development of necessary intellectual and social skills (Lamont, 1992; Erickson, 1996). Furthermore, "habitus" refers to learned practices and preferences which orient the individual's structures of agency, perception and thought process (Bourdieu, 2002: 27). Habitus is deeply rooted in an individual's upbringing and thus heavily influenced by their field of daily norms, which is constructed around specific combinations of cultural capital (Thompson, 2008).

A Framework for Research

Prior to operationalizing acceptable difference, it is important to have a deep understanding of the interrelation between cultural capital, diversity, representation, and acceptable difference. Cultural capital is here understood as the determinant of one's habitus (Bourdieu, 2002), in that the biography of an individual's experiences informs the way in which they govern themselves (Inglis and Thorpe, 2019). In this way, habitus affects group cognitive diversity. Where cognitive diversity speaks to the differences in how group members operate (Page, 2019), a parliament with distinctly heterogenous habitus (resulting from diverse cultural capital stocks) can be considered cognitively diverse and is thus far less vulnerable to the pitfalls of elite homogeneity (Heemskerk and Fennema, 2014). Returning to Durose, where the characteristics of elected minorities will tend towards the archetypal candidate, the cultural capital stocks of representatives begin to converge around a specific set of traits and experiences. Consequently, this narrows the range of the politician's habitus which results in declining cognitive diversity of the group, despite improvements in identity diversity. On the understanding that one's practices and actions are a direct consequence of their habitus and cultural capital profile (Edgerton and Roberts, 2014), this convergence towards archetypal characteristics calls into question the effective performance of the deliberative function of democracy (Mansbridge, 1999).

III. Chapter 4: Methodology

The primary aim of this research is to extend the historical continuity of Durose and Page's works by applying their theories to the current political context of increasing ethnic diversity. In doing so, this dissertation will pursue a qualitative enquiry of life-course analysis as the primary tool in shadowing Durose's methods. This research lies within narrative positivism (see Abbott, 1992) because of the significant consideration paid to evidencing theoretical concepts (Aliyu et al., 2014). Such an approach is best equipped to assess acceptable difference because it pays heavy attention to the individual development of life trajectories (Stanley, 1992).

Acceptable Difference in the Conservatives

The research focus of this dissertation is placed specifically on the 22 ethnic minority Conservatives because they are a most-likely-case for observing the acceptable difference of representatives in parliament. This is because, as discussed previously, evidence points to optics as the "primary motivating factor" behind the upsurge in the ethnic diversity of the party (Sobolewska, 2013: 616). This emphasis on the electoral benefits of appearing to be diverse extends from Cameron's "de-toxification" strategy which was characterized by attempts to soften the party's image and appear more inclusive following significant losses in the Blair era (see Ashcroft, 2005; Quinn, 2008; Green, 2010). Such an over-emphasis on identity diversity is more likely to promote tokenistic recruitment processes and cognitive homogeneity of groups (Page, 2019). Therefore, we may expect to observe the convergence of ethnic minority traits towards an acceptably different archetype because of the Conservative prioritization of looking, as opposed to being, diverse. Conversely, this research chose not to investigate acceptable differences in other parliamentary parties, namely the Labour party, because differing electoral strategy and political ideology will alter the ways in which they incorporate the substantive representation of marginalized interests into party discourse. In this way, by only investigating one party (as opposed to a cross-party study) the influence of electoral strategy, party ideology, and political preference on affecting party diversity can be somewhat controlled for, given that Conservative recruitment is united under the same national strategy.

Research Hypotheses

Three hypotheses will be tested to investigate the central research question of: *to what extent can the current cohort of Conservative EMPs be considered acceptably different?*

The research hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Ethnic minority Conservatives are more likely to share middle/upper class socioeconomic backgrounds than their white colleagues.

H2: Ethnic minority Conservatives are more likely to share elite educational backgrounds than their white colleagues.

H3: Ethnic minority Conservatives are more likely to share elite professional backgrounds than their white colleagues.

Method

In testing the hypotheses, qualitative life-course analysis was employed to assist the researcher in inspecting the backgrounds of EMPs (Hatch and Wisniewski, 2002). Life-course analyses are best accompanied by a conceptual understanding of the interrelationship between cultural capital and habitus in informing social processes, political networks, and shared assumptions, (King and Roberts, 2014) as outlined within the theoretical framework. Two analysis techniques were employed to best understand the findings.

Firstly, individual backgrounds were recorded as biographical strings of accumulated capital, which generates useful visualizations depicting the processes of life experience standardization (*for similar research frameworks*, see Liefbroer and Elzinga, 2006; Han et al, 2017). Biographical information was recorded across 'episodes' of the MP's life and the data was then coded twice using two different coding processes. Using a directed approach which builds from pre-existing theory (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005), the first coding phase assigned a maximum of three code categories to simplify the empirical analysis (detailed below) and ensure that decisive conclusions could be drawn (Charmaz and Bryant, 2010). While this was useful, the application of only three codes generated limitations in the findings because certain life experiences were difficult to uniformly categorize. The second phase recoded only for the presence/absence of archetypal characteristics, which aided a surface level descriptive analysis of the prevalence of acceptable difference. This technique aimed to highlight repeating patterns of archetypal background experiences in minority candidates prior to entering politics. To support the theoretical generalizability of results, the categorization of both phase one and two codes was informed by an extensive operationalization process (Ritchie et al., 2014) as outlined below.

Secondly, in the interests of empirically testing the hypotheses, two descriptive calculation techniques were used for ease of data interpretation. Firstly, Blau and Duncan's Index of Homogeneity (IH) was employed to distinguish between similar and heterogenous cohorts (1967: 32-35) . To do so, percentage distributions of subjects with specific characteristics were treated as sets of probabilities within a biographical indicator. Squares of these probabilities were then summed which gives the probability that any two subjects within the cohort share a given characteristic (Rhoades, 1993). As such, a maximum value of *one* indicates group homogeneity and the reciprocal of the number of observations (1/3) indicates heterogeneity. Duncan's Index of Dissimilarity was also used to measure the evenness with which two racially exclusive groups (in this case, segregated between minority and white British) were distributed across different characteristic traits (Jakubs, 1979). This figure is calculated by taking half of the sum of the absolute difference between the proportions of each group (Smith, 2015). When closer to *zero*, these measures indicate proportionate distribution across groups in each category, and a score closer to *one* is indicative of high dissimilarity where no subject shares a characteristic. Where ID suffers from key methodological weaknesses, these are of minimal concern because they stem from issues regarding the dichotomizing of subject groups which, in this case, is suitable for comparative analysis between the two racial cohorts.

Generalizability of Findings

Building from a positivist stance, this dissertation intuitively seeks to maximize the objectivity of the research findings. In doing so, a criterion of generalizability will be applied because it is the best means to assess the relevance and robustness of qualitative findings in social science research (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Generalizability requires both internal validity of the research framework and a further judgment on the applicability of findings within the extended population (otherwise understood as external validity) (Leung, 2015).

Biographical data was collected for over twenty variables using publicly available information from internet sources[2] and the collection process achieved full coverage. This ensured that the dataset had high levels of granularity which promoted the content validity of the research (Almanasreh et al, 2019). Moreover, the suggestion that leading British politicians tend to downplay their social origins and occupational backgrounds for electoral favor (Bleich and Morgan, 2019) raised concern over the potential for subjective measurement of background characteristics. However, recent evidence suggests that this is not the case for Conservative politicians in particular (Bukodi et al., 2023). Therefore, there are no significant concerns over the face-validity of the research. To ensure construct-validity, data was also collected on ethnicity[3], year elected to parliament, constituency safety upon first election, gender, and age to observe the influence of contextual factors on trait accumulation.

Additionally, probability sampling techniques were used to maximize the reliability of findings (Acharya et al., 2013). Given that there are six ethnic minority women in the Conservative party, this gender quota was applied to the random sample of white-British Conservatives. Proportionate gender representation across these samples enhances their comparability and ensures research reliability because it almost exactly matches the gender balance of the party (25% female). Additionally, using simple random sampling within these quotas enhances the validity of the research by hedging against the pitfalls of systematic and confirmation bias (Panzeri, Magri and Carraro, 2008)

As of March 2024, there were twenty-two ethnic minority Conservatives sitting in the Commons. Although this is a remarkably small cohort of subjects, it is an entirely representative sample of minority Conservatives because it comprises the whole population of interest. Issues with representational generalizability, as a measure of whether the sample findings are equally true for the parent population (Denzin et al, 2006), are therefore not of concern here. Despite this, concerns arise over the theoretical

[2] For an example, see About Sajid from the Conservative constituency website for Bromsgrove.
[3] Ethnicity was categorized in accordance with the recommended group distinctions from the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2021) and all ethnic minority politicians had publicly self-identified as such.

generalizability of findings due to a lack of longitudinal data (King and Roberts, 2014) on the traits of EMPs. However, within prevailing conditions of low minority representation, there were no means by which this could be effectively addressed.

Further limitations arise with respect to the twenty-two white Conservatives within the sampled cohort because they represent only 6% of the parent population. The best method to assess the generalizability of findings within a sample is to test them against well-supported research evidence on the characteristics of the parent population (Ritchie et al., 2014). Therefore, this dissertation will lean heavily on the findings from the recent House of Commons briefing on political diversity, which contains data on the demographic composition of parliament from the 1979-2019 elections (2023). Where findings regarding traits of the white sample align within 10% of the Conservative average, the research will be considered representatively generalizable for the whole party.

Operationalizing Acceptable Difference

Finally, a deductive operationalization method applied existing insights into the accumulation of social advantage to ensure that the research analysis was best equipped to test the hypotheses.

Firstly, position within the middle and upper classes of the UK provides an individual with distinctly higher levels of social mobility than those in the lower classes (Hey et al, 2017). Additionally, location of upbringing impacts one's social mobility due to the economic dominance of, and concentration of wealth in, the Southeast (Cunningham and Savage, 2015). These inequalities are further reinforced through geographically distinct cultural practices which contribute to the development of elite class formations in the South (Savage et al., 2018). Cultural capital is also closely linked to the socioeconomic status of the individual's parents (Kraaykamp and van Eijck, 2010). Specifically, social advantage pools around profession types, benefitting white collar and service sector workers whilst limiting the prospects of blue-collar workers (Hey et al, 2017). As such, data was collected on individual's region of upbringing and parent occupation as proxy indicators of class origin (Bukodi et al., 2023).

As "engines of social privilege," access to private schooling provides attendees with significant social mobility in the UK (Kynaston and Green, 2019: 4). Additionally, the British political elite has long been dominated by those with university educations (Bovens and Wille, 2017). Educational institutions are central mechanisms for cultivating one's habitus and embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Therefore, attendance at the same or similar schools and universities can distinctly reduce the cognitive diversity of groups (Bourdieu, 2006; Kamalnath, 2022a). As such, attendance to fee-paying school (both primary and secondary), and elite (Russel Group) university attendance were recorded to measure elite educational background.

It has been proffered that minority candidates are more likely to have experience in 'politics-facilitating professions' because there are far fewer barriers to entry in the private sector than within local party politics (Cairney, 2007). These politics facilitating professions are predominantly high-paid, private sector jobs in the City of London. In the British context, the conventional 'City professional' has a distinctly elite profile which is ensured through the selective recruitment of applicants with highly institutionalized cultural capital portfolios (Cook et al, 2012). There is a further distinction between technical (e.g. bankers), sociocultural (e.g. journalists), and petty bourgeoisie (e.g. small shop owners) professions because these have been proven to influence policy preference, political orientation and value profiles (see Beramendi et al., 2015; Oesch and Rennwald, 2018). Accordingly, data was collected on whether candidates had vocational training experience in the private sector (as accountants, solicitors, investment bankers, etc.), whether they were a technical or socio-cultural professional, the private or political nature of their three main career episodes, and whether they had any prior experience in the City of London.

Acknowledgement of Positionality

Despite ensuring that the above methodological choices maximize the potential for the generalizability of findings, this dissertation consciously recognizes the constraints

imposed by the researcher's positionality. On the understanding that true human objectivity does not exist (Qin, 2016), it is important to address the researcher's own privilege in an attempt to dislocate this position from the findings. Specifically, there are relevant potential challenges that arise as a white researcher seeking to engage with ways in which racial minorities have circumvented discriminatory barriers to the political elite (f*or a comprehensive review of the limitations associated with white enquiries into experiences of people of color,* see Bourke, 2014; Secules et al., 2021). As such, given this research has been conducted by a white woman of privileged class origin who has been educated within Britain's elite institutions, it is important that the following findings are reflected upon with a critical eye.

IV. Chapter 5: Findings

Overview

Of all 66 ethnic minority politicians in parliament today, 62% stand for the Labour party and 33% are Conservative, with over half of this population also being female. According to the 2021 Census, approximately 82% of the UK population is white, whereas this population is over-represented in the Tory party at 94% (Office for National Statistics, 2021). It is also important to note that women are significantly under-represented in the Conservatives across all ethnic groups, consisting of only 25% of party members.

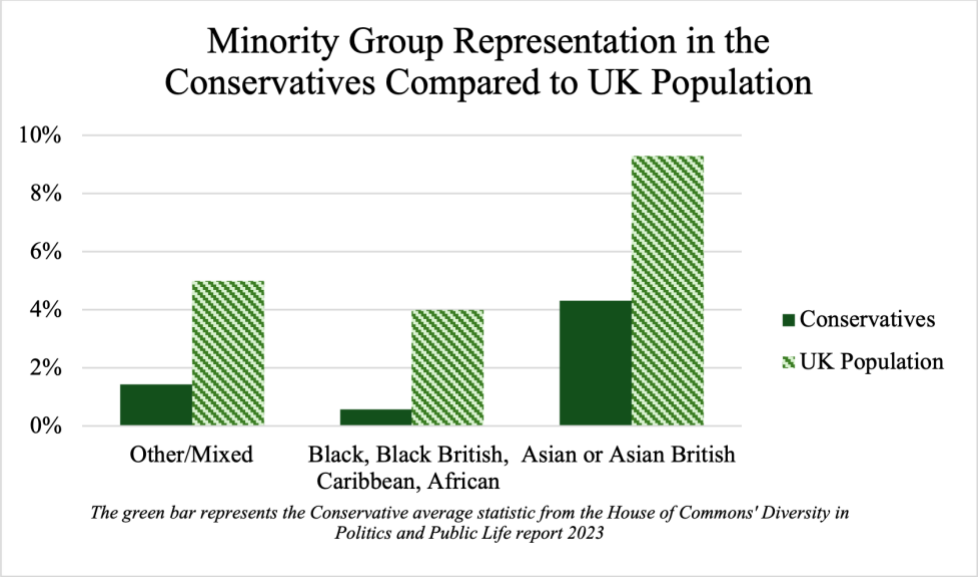


Figure 1. Minority Representation in Parliament

As seen in Figure 1, the representation of different ethnic groups in the Conservative party somewhat follows the population-wide distribution[4]. Of all 22 minority MPs, nearly 70% are of Asian origin, just over 20% are of mixed (or other) heritage and only 9% are black, compared to a 50%, 23% and 22% composition of the UK minority population comparatively. The dominance of Asian representation is unsurprising given that they have been conceptualized as the most 'socially acceptable' minority group in the West (*for a theoretical discussion of the model minority*; see Wong and Halgin, 2006; Wu, 2013; Chou and Feagin, 2015). Here, the under-representation of black minorities in the Conservatives indicates initial support for the acceptable difference thesis because, given the prevalence of socioeconomic deprivation among black British communities (Department for Work and Pensions, 2023), they are far less likely

[4] Ethnic groups were categorized into four over-arching distinctions; White, Asian, Black, and Mixed/Other in accordance with the 2021 Census categorizations.

to attain the elite cultural capital profiles required to circumvent typical discriminations upon entering politics.

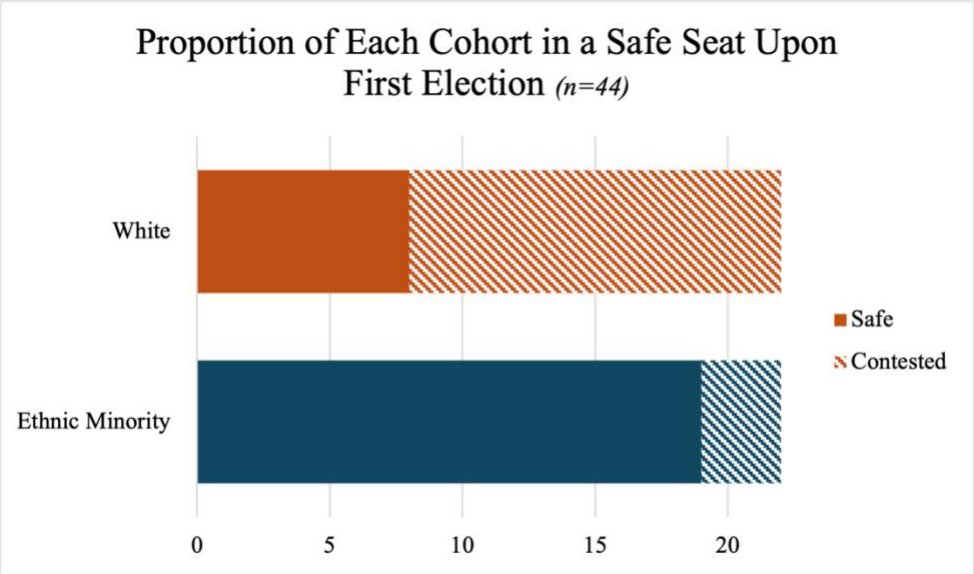


Figure 2. Constituency Safety by Cohort

Despite constituting only 6% of the parliamentary group, EMPs hold 12% of the party's safest seats, with additional research suggesting that over 75% of minority Conservatives would survive a landslide defeat akin to 1997 (British Future, 2024: 9). Figure 2 highlights that only three politicians in the minority sample were elected to unsafe seats and two of these were prior to the 2010 strategy change. On the other hand, over half of the white cohort were elected to unsafe seats. Additionally, there is a broadly similar distribution of time spent in office across both cohorts which promotes the construct validity of findings.

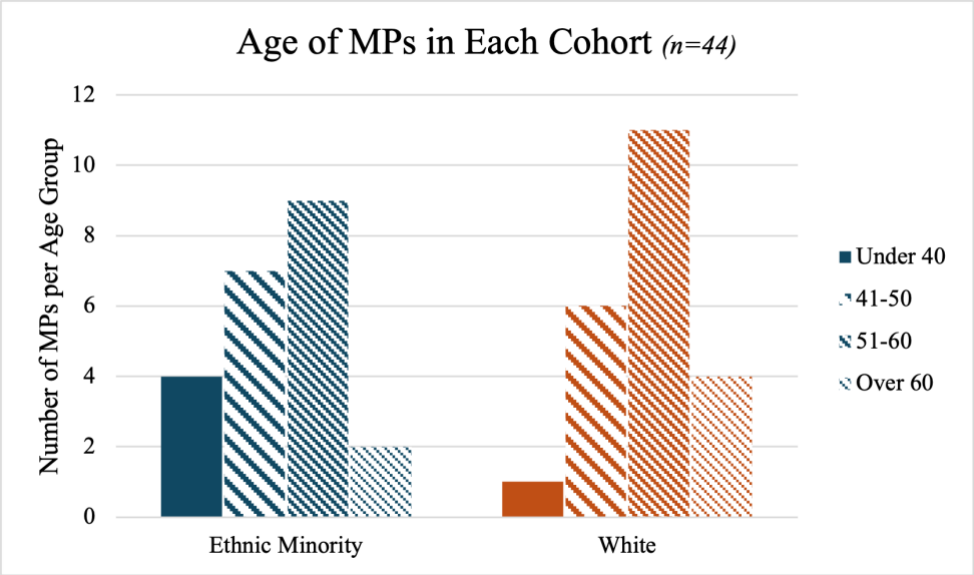


Figure 3. Age of Sampled MPs

Where the white sample are predominantly older, the minority Conservatives are evenly distributed around the age of fifty (Figure 3). Approximately 52% of all

Conservatives are under fifty (House of Commons, 2023), which indicates that there are no significant selection patterns of minority candidates based on candidate age. On the assumption that archetypal characteristics are accumulated as capital stocks over the course of one's lifetime, older individuals should be more inclined to have reached elite status and thus, one might expect EMPs to be older than their white colleagues. Despite such assumptions, there is no evidence to support this, possibly indicating that distinct elite minority backgrounds are being cultivated in the earlier stages of candidate trajectories. Also, the misrepresentation of white-sample age compared to the party average is indicative of potential internal validity issues resulting from a small sample size. Moving forward, it is important to maintain an awareness of the potential influence candidate age may have on the backgrounds of the white sample.

Acceptable Difference Across Life Courses

Each subject's background was recorded as a categorical sequence of occurrences which enabled the examination of the order of their 'pre-politics' trajectories and patterns of capital accumulation (Cornwell, 2015).

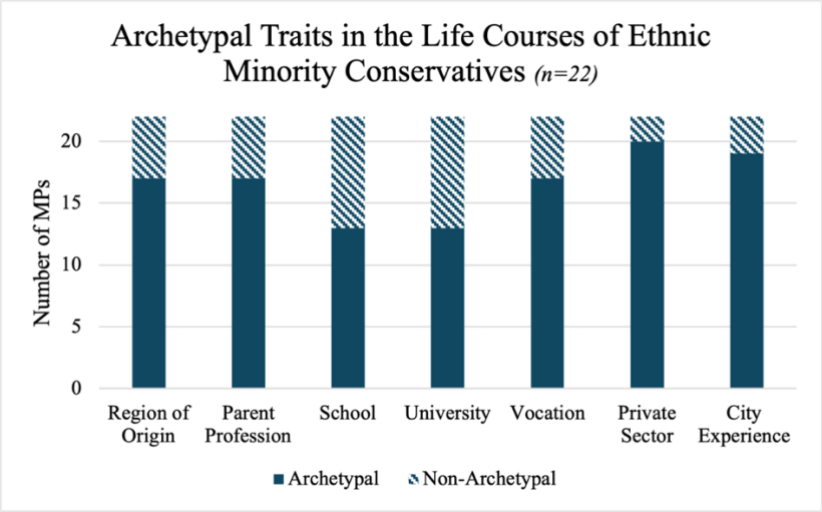


Figure 4. Archetypal Traits in the Minority Cohort

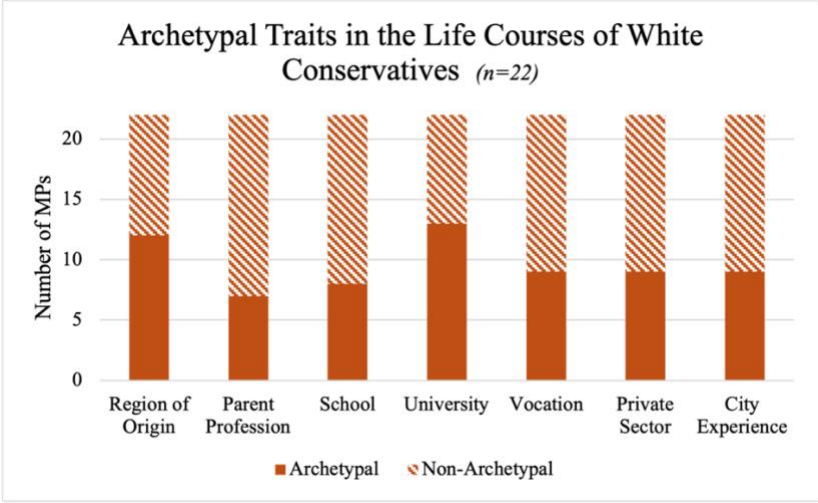


Figure 5. Archetypal Traits in the White Cohort

Figures 4 and 5 represent the presence of archetypal characteristics in the minority and white samples comparatively. Over half of white experiences are not considered to be archetypal, whereas most minority experiences are, thus presenting

broad support for acceptable difference. This variation is noticeably less significant across educational indicators and most prevalent across professional experience. The ID across all traits is 16%, indicating somewhat of a difference in white and minority experiences. The lack of a remarkable pattern in the backgrounds of the white cohort implies support for acceptable difference because white politicians are less inclined to be restricted to having similar portfolios than their minority counterparts (Durose et al., 2013).

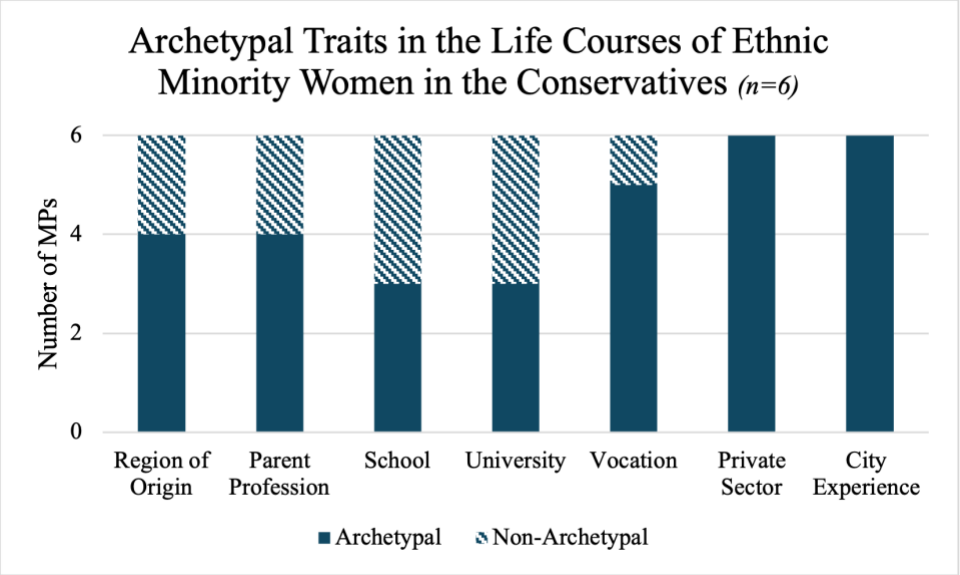


Figure 6. Archetypal Traits in the Minority Cohort of Women

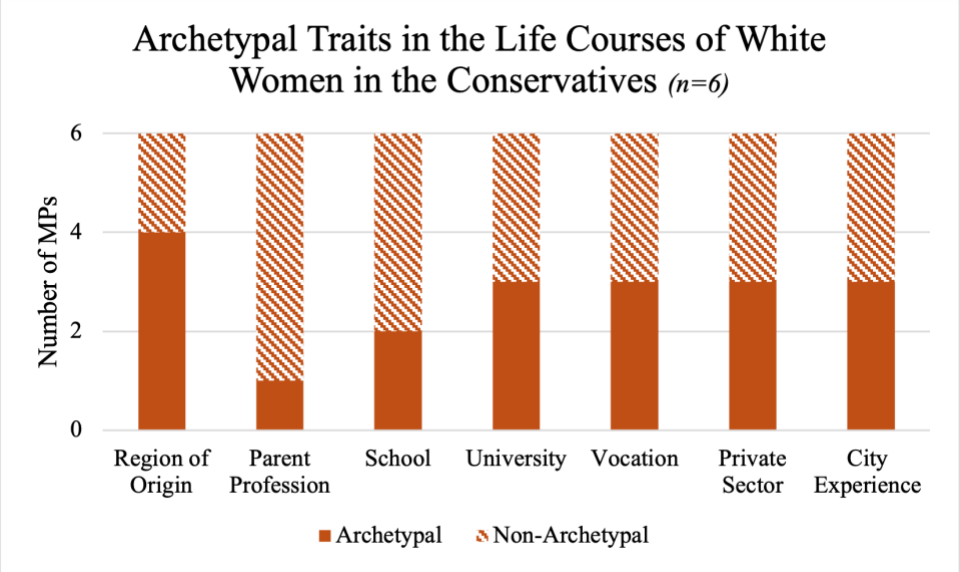


Figure 7. Archetypal Traits in the White Cohort of Women

Given the historically subordinated role of women in politics (see Pateman, 1992; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Sultana, 2010), we might expect to observe the prevalence of archetypal traits in white women alongside ethnic minorities. However, despite a reduced frequency of high-income backgrounds, Figures 6 and 7 present no evidence to suggest there is a selective practice of recruitment of women in the Conservatives. The ID between female subjects is 14%, in comparison to 16% race-based variation, thus indicating that gender-based background variation accounts for only 2% of the variation between racial cohorts. Minority women, on the other hand, are much more commonly

found to have acceptably different backgrounds. Notably, all six minority women were employed as technical professionals in well-established private corporations such as RBS, KPMG, Merrill Lynch, and Diageo. This demonstrates that only the most conventionally successful minority women in the upper echelons of the workforce are recruited to Conservative office. Furthermore, it is often alleged that ethnic minority women suffer a double "bind" or penalty in party politics by nature of being both a minority and a woman (see, Jamieson, 1995). While these findings somewhat support this, further research is required.

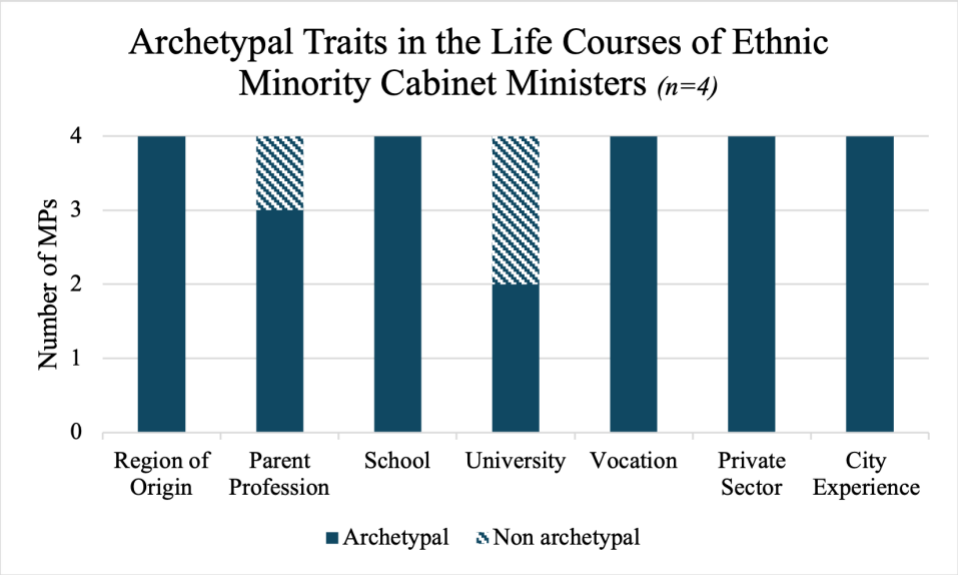


Figure 8. Archetypal Traits in Minority Cabinet Ministers

Cabinet ministers are the most visible and influential members of the party (Atkins et al, 2013) and therefore should be a most-likely case for witnessing acceptable difference. Figure 8 shows that the backgrounds of the ethnic minority cabinet ministers are almost entirely archetypal. While, given the small sample size, the significance of these findings should not be overstated, they perhaps provide support for the existence of tokenistic recruitment practices at the national level because they are the most visible minority candidates. Only Kemi Badenoch was of non-elite class origin, but nevertheless, she was raised internationally which resulted in a unique upbringing far unlike the national standard. Once again, there is no observable pattern in elite university attendance.

Arguably the most visible politician in parliament, Rishi Sunak PM, has one of the most elite biographical portfolios of all MPs, consisting of upper-class origin, high-income parents, and private education at Winchester College. Sunak then studied PPE at Oxford and went on to receive an MBA from Stanford University before beginning his career as an investment banker at Goldman Sachs. In material terms, it is hard to see how these life experiences diverge from the elite standard in the UK.

Testing The Hypotheses

The following section will delve into a deep exploration of the data in response to the proposed hypotheses of this dissertation. Through application of indices of homogeneity and dissimilarity (IH and ID respectively) and descriptive examination of individual trajectories, this research found supportive evidence that ethnic minority Conservatives are acceptably different. As seen in Table 1, there was moderate support for the first hypothesis, almost no support for the second, and strong evidence found in support of the third.

Table 1: Indices of Homogeneity and Dissimilarity

International Politics

	Index of Homogeneity *0.333 < IH < 1*		**Index of Dissimilarity Between Cohorts (%)**
	Ethnic Minority	White	
H1: Class Origin			
Region of Origin	.62	.41	23
Parent Profession	.41	.43	20
H2: Educational Background			
Private School Attendance	.47	.47	15
University Attendance	.34	.37	9
Degree Subject	.34	.36	14
H3: Professional Background			
Private/Political Career Trajectory	.53	.37	39 *(Private)* 50 *(Political)*
Profession Type	.57	.34	32

H1: Class Origin

The findings provide a moderate level of support for the H1 because the minority cohort were significantly more homogenous than their white counterparts with regards to region of upbringing, but both cohorts were considerably heterogenous according to parent profession.

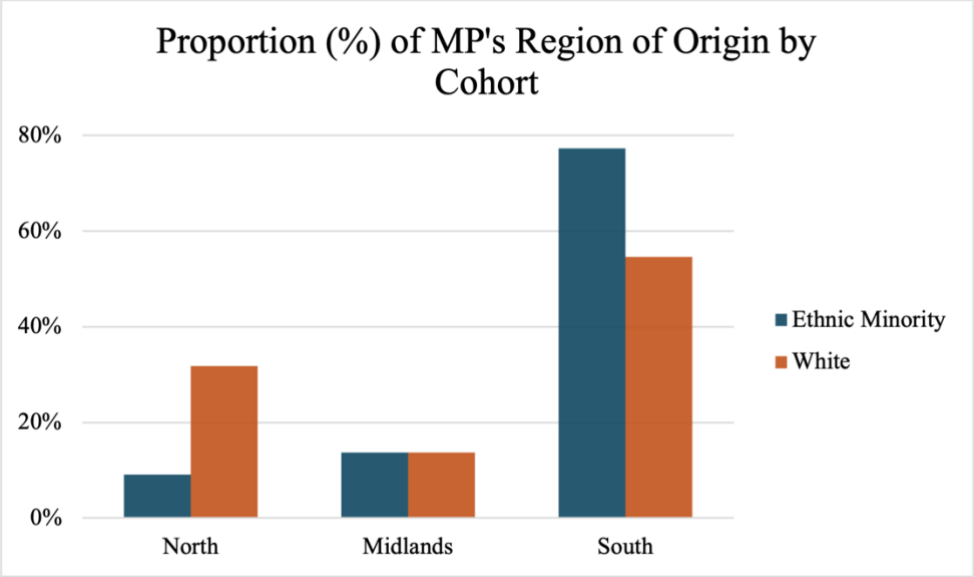


Figure 9. Region of Origin by Cohort

Across both cohorts, the South was the dominant region of origin (see Figure 9). Noticeably, only two ethnic minority subjects were from deprived regions in the North of the country: Helen Grant, and Darren Henry. The early upbringings of both candidates were distinctly non-archetypal, with Grant being raised by a single mother on a council estate, and Henry on the salaries of factory workers. Regardless of the non-elite nature of their beginnings, both candidates took highly traditional professional routes to Conservative candidacy, as an established solicitor and military official respectively.

Despite these cases, nearly 80% of minority Conservatives were raised in the South, with most of these individuals being raised around Greater London. The IH for region of origin was 0.62 for ethnic minorities, reflecting significant cohort homogeneity as evidenced in Figure 8, whereas the white cohort tended towards heterogeneity with an IH of 0.41. An ID of 23% similarly indicates that the white sample tended less towards southern origin. Notably, the lack of party-wide data on class origin of candidates limits the generalizability of these findings.

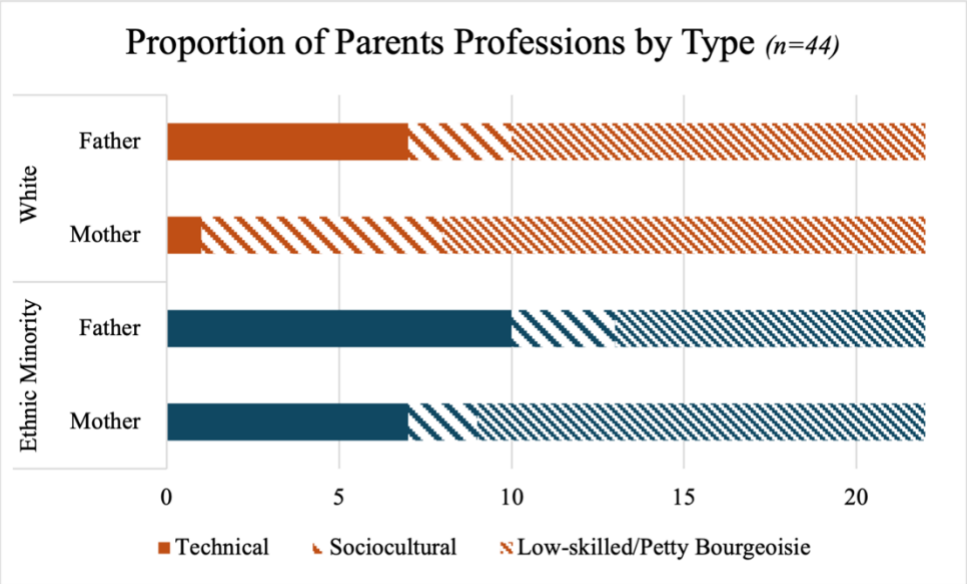


Figure 10. Parent Profession by Cohort

There were few significant differences in the professional experiences of subject's parents between cohorts, with similar IH's of 0.41 and 0.43 (Figure 10). In both cohorts, over half of the parents were categorized as low-skilled or petty bourgeoisie workers. However, a central limitation of this enquiry is that non-working parents, such as stay-at-home mothers, were included in the low-skill category. This significantly skewed the data and produced unclear results given that eight stay-at-home minority mothers in high income households were effectively classified as working class.

Interestingly, there remained a 20% ID for parent profession, despite nearly identical IH scores, which reflects the imbalance in profession types held by cohort parents. Specifically, there was a threefold increase in the number of technical professional minority parents to white parents. Additionally, half of ethnic minority parents held influential roles at the tops of organizational hierarchies, where this was the case for only a few white parents. In four cases, EMP parents were affluent politicians in some regard, such as Rehman Chishti's father's role as federal advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

H2: Educational Background

The findings suggest few significant differences in the educational backgrounds of minority and white ministers comparatively, thus providing minimal support for the second hypothesis. Figure 11 also reflects a high degree of representative generalizability from these findings given that the statistics on the white sample are highly resemblant of those of the whole party.

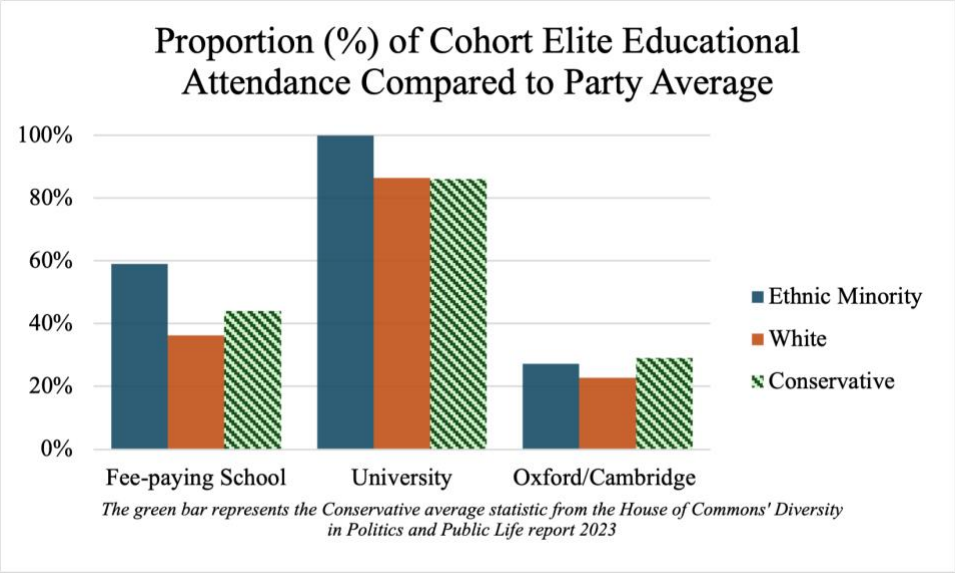


Figure 11. Elite Educational Attendance

As discussed previously, the archetypal nature of educational episodes was almost identical across cohorts. Despite the presence of archetypal characteristics not being as dominant as one would initially expect, Figure 11 reflects important variations in the educational experiences of minority and white Conservatives which offer some support for acceptable difference. Chiefly, minority Conservatives were 15% more likely to attend fee-paying school than the party average and all EMPs attended university.

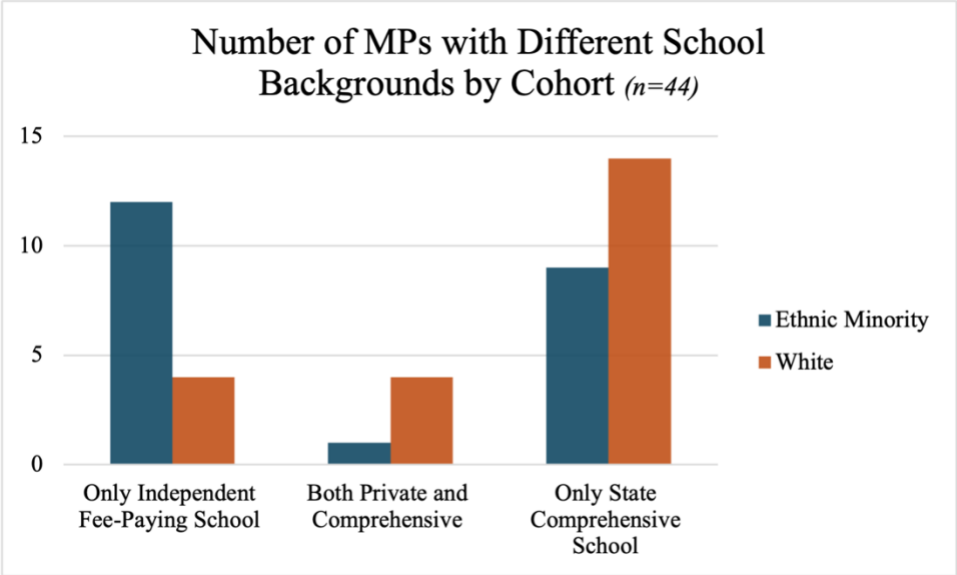


Figure 12. School Backgrounds by Cohort

Given the IH for private school attendance is 0.47 for both cohorts, it might be initially assumed that ethnic minority Conservatives are no more acceptably different, in educational terms, than their white colleagues. However, an ID of 15% warrants further analysis and upon reflection of Figure 12, it is evident that exclusive minority attendance to independent private schools is three times that of the white cohort. Conversely, white MPs were much more likely to solely attend state comprehensive schools. Given that independent schools are understood to be engines of privilege (Kynaston and Green,

2019) it is likely that this disparity has somewhat of a homogenizing influence on the development of elite habitus in EMP Conservatives. It is also important to note that, despite a Conservative average of 44%, and a country-wide average of 7%, private school attendance was significantly over-represented within the minority cohort at nearly 60%.

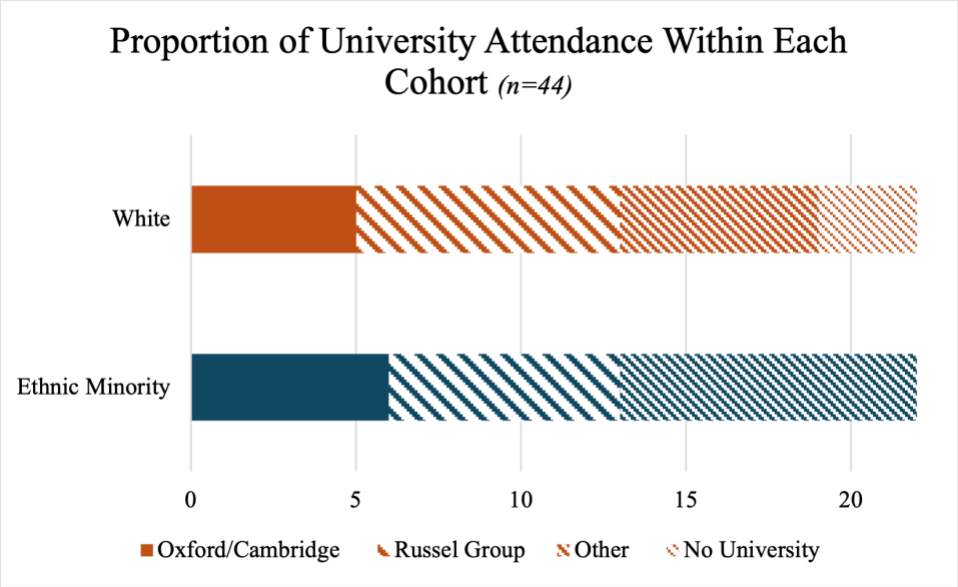


Figure 13. University Attendance by Cohort

University attendance gave the lowest ID of 9% between cohorts and very low IH scores of 0.34 and 0.37 (almost total heterogeneity) for minority and white cohorts respectively. As Figure 12 exemplifies, there is no evidence to support H2 in that EMPs are more likely to have elite university experience. Compared to the Conservative average, minorities are slightly less likely to attend Oxford and Cambridge. However, despite this, it is important that all minority Conservatives attended university, whereas 16% of the party elected in 2019 had no university degree whatsoever. This supports the claim that EMPs must attain certain levels of capital to circumvent discriminatory barriers, because there were no instances where minorities have reached candidacy without the institutionalized cultural capital of an undergraduate degree. The low IH and ID scores are also skewed by the homogeneity of Russel Group attendance rates and therefore do not best reflect the significance of these findings.

H3: Professional Experience

Acceptable difference is most observable in the professional experiences of minority Conservatives. There is particularly strong evidence to support H3 that EMPs have predominantly private-sector career trajectories and minimal prior involvement in local politics. This marks a significant break from the traditional route into politics of longstanding involvement with parties, extensive local network building and prior experience as a local councilor (Durose et al., 2013). Overall, the white sample findings aligned with the Conservative average, so these findings can be considered representatively generalizable.



Figure 14. Archetypal Professional Experience by Cohort

As seen in Figure 14, EMP Conservatives outperform their white counterparts on archetypal professional experience at a ratio of 2:1 in all cases. Over 75% of minority candidates received private vocational training in the early stages of their careers, with law and accountancy being the most prevalent specialties. Additionally, all minority candidates had private sector experience in the City of London. In contrast, under half of the white cohort had archetypal professional experience and, with reference to Conservative averages, this appears to be an over-representation within the sample. This indicates that minority Conservatives have almost always been recruited with significant institutional cultural capital stocks. Notably, the three minority candidates without city experience did not stray far from the "well-trodden" routes into the party (see, Durose, 2013: 250-255). Where Gagan Mohindra worked in financial services elsewhere, Darren Henry took the military route and Paul Scully worked within influential political think-tanks.

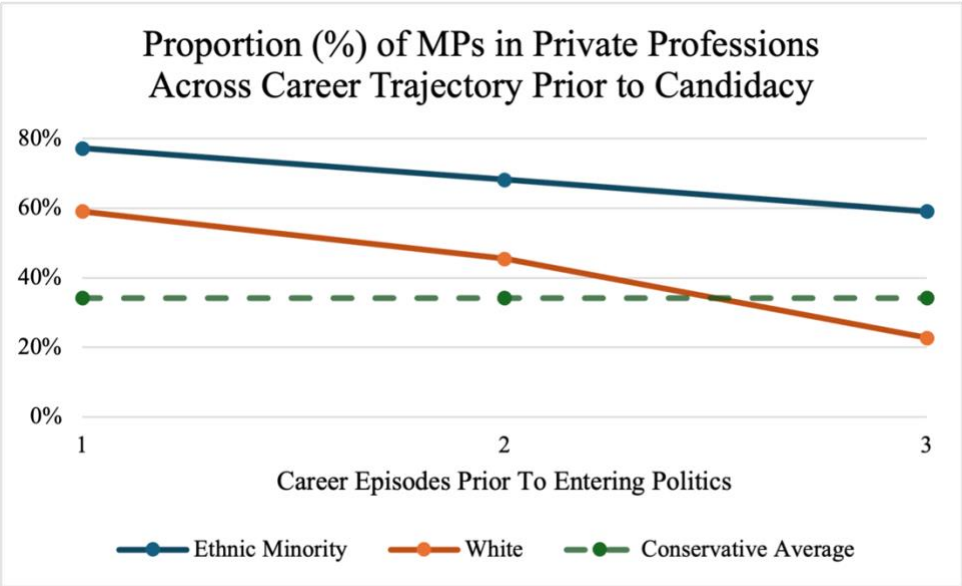


Figure 15. Private Career Trajectories

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Furthermore, career trajectories were broken down into three main episodes of experience depending on time spent in each role relative to individual career length. There are significant variations evident in minority and white professional experiences, with IH scores of 0.53 and 0.37 respectively. The ID score for private trajectories is 39% indicating a high level of dissimilarity between the groups. As seen in Figure 15, minority candidates predominantly resided over private career trajectories before standing as an MP, whereas this was not reflected in the trajectories of their white counterparts. The Conservative average of 34% private sector professional experience indicates the high degree to which minority candidates are skewed towards resembling the archetypal candidate, with 91% of party EMPs having private sector experience. The absence of a clear trend in white private sector experience further suggests that the professional backgrounds of white politicians are not constrained to any particular trajectory of elite capital accumulation.

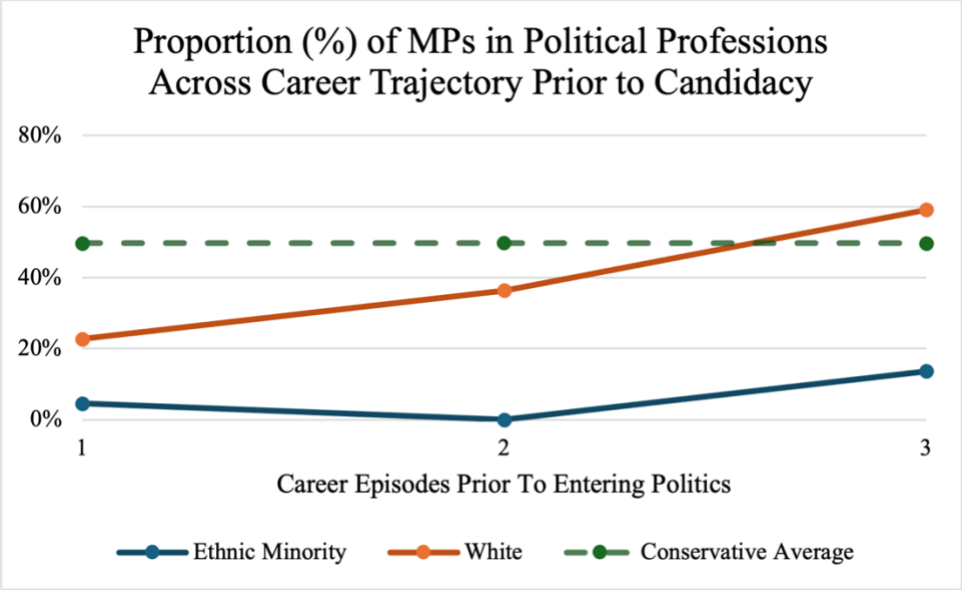


Figure 16. Political Career Trajectories

On the other hand, political career trajectories are strikingly prominent among white Conservatives, as seen in Figure 16. The ID was highest in the case of political career trajectories with a score of 50%, thus indicating that half of all subject episodes are entirely different from one another. Given the white sample was somewhat over-representative of private backgrounds, the degree of dissimilarity between white and minority backgrounds can be conceivably assumed as higher across the whole party. While four EMPs did have professional political experience, three quarters of these episodes occurred at the end of their careers as they transitioned into candidacy. Importantly, where half of the Conservative party held local office prior to election in 2019, only Priti Patel shared this background in the minority cohort. Given that her father had been a UKIP candidate, it is perhaps unsurprising that she followed this path. As such, these findings show strong support for the theoretical assumption that, while white politicians enter the party through local politics, minority candidates, possibly due to the prevalence of selector discrimination (Fisher et al., 2014), do not take this route.

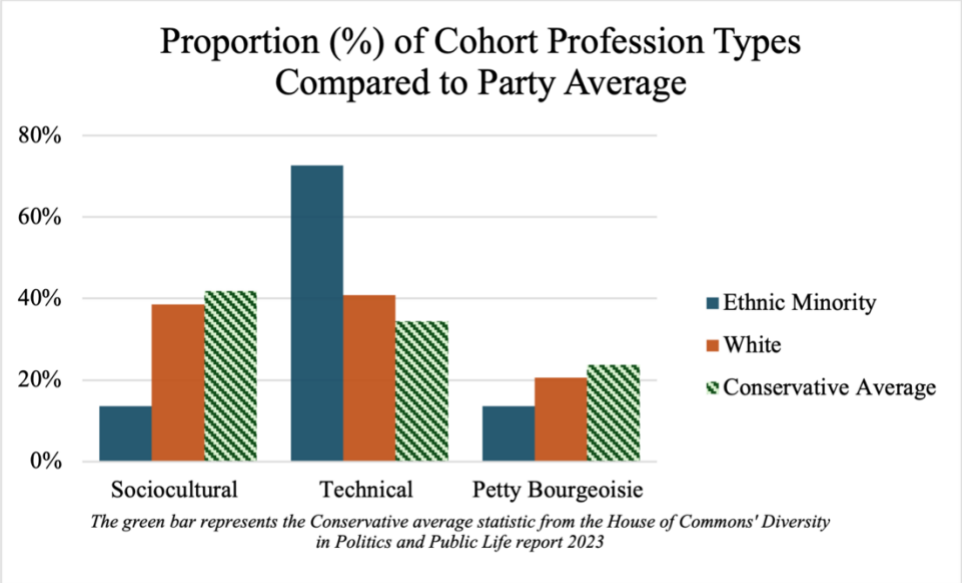


Figure 17. Profession Types by Cohort

As seen in Figure 17, there was much higher incidence of technical professional trajectories in the EMP cohort, compared to both the white cohort and party average, which is supported by a high ID score of 32%. This provided further evidence to sustain H3, with a considerably high minority IH score of 0.57, indicating homogeneity. Minority MPs held technical occupations in over 75% of cases, which serves as an indicator of high-level, high-income, elite experience. There were also very few instances where minority candidates held socio-cultural or petty-bourgeoisie occupational positions. By contrast, there were no significant trends in the professions of both the white cohort and Conservative average, confirmed by an IH score which tended towards total heterogeneity at 0.34. Overall, EMPs resided over technical professions at a rate double that of the party average. This further supports that, where minority candidates are predisposed to having elite-level professional backgrounds, their white colleagues are not constrained to having such elite cultural capital portfolios in the same way.

V. Chapter 6: Discussion

As outlined in the previous chapter, the research findings provide a firm level of support for the acceptable difference thesis, indicating that there are distinct asymmetries in the recruitment requirements for white and ethnic minority Conservatives. While there are constraints on the explanatory power of the findings, due to methodological limitations, it is important to reflect on the observed prevalence of acceptable difference and the consequent theoretical and practical implications of this. In particular, it was affirmed that ethnic minorities are almost-universally acceptably different by virtue of their elite, technical, private-sector, professional experience in the City of London. Alongside this, ethnic minority Conservatives are much more inclined to having comfortable, middle-class backgrounds and attend fee-paying independent school. As discussed in the introduction, recent research has forecasted that the next elected House of Commons will be "Britain's most diverse ever," regardless of various political scenarios (British Future, 2024: 1). Considering the above findings, the following section will serve as a critical reflection as to whether the five-fold increase in ethnic minority representation since 2010 reflects a genuine "narrowing of the gap" between the diversity of parliament and the British population (ibid, 2024: 9)

Substantive Representation of Minority Interests

As discussed in the introduction, research indicates that the increase in descriptive representation of EMPs has not wholly translated to the substantive representation of marginalized interests in national politics. Recent survey data indicates

that 59% of ethnic minority Britons feel that MPs are not representative of the wider population (YouGov, 2022). Additionally, over three quarters (77%) claimed to have low levels of satisfaction with politics, which suggests that the political voices of these communities are not being adequately represented in Westminster. In light of these proxy measurements for substantive representation, it may be plausible to suggest that the prevalence of acceptable difference in ethnic minority candidates has diluted the impact with which racially marginalized voices can be represented by EMPs. By virtue of Mansbridge's notion of shared experience (1999), descriptive proportions of minorities in office should promote the discussion of marginalized, minority, interests in parliament because the deliberative function of democracy affords advantages to representatives who are existentially close to the issues being discussed (ibid, 1999).

It could therefore be posed that the recruitment of EMPs with primarily archetypal backgrounds increasingly detaches non-white representatives from exposure to the typical shared experiences of minority groups in Britain. For instance, ethnic minority groups in the UK are consistently found to be of lower socioeconomic status, on average, than their white counterparts (Pesta et al., 2023) with recent evidence found of striking structural socioeconomic exclusion of ethnic communities across the country (United Nations, 2018). This is typically understood to be the result of the "unequal chances" faced by ethnic minorities in labor markets (Heath and Cheung, 2007: 12) and long-term, systemic racial prejudice and discrimination (Simpson and Yinger, 2013). In contrast, the findings suggested that the experiences of EMPs in the Conservatives are substantially different, in material terms, than those of socioeconomically deprived minority communities in Britain. In this way, acceptably different ethnic minority politicians, in ascribing to archetypal characteristics, become exceedingly dislocated from the communities which they visibly appear to represent.

It is important to acknowledge that there are, of course, a plethora of shared experiences of racial discrimination faced by EMPs, by virtue of being non-white, which have not been explored here. Also, the symbolic power of descriptive political representation of minority groups is unquestionable. Despite this, it is important to maintain a persistent awareness of the many discriminatory barriers faced by minority candidates aspiring to political office. These barriers are not only predetermined on lines of racial prejudice, but also on the basis of systemic classism, sexism, and elitism.

Moreover, the high levels of social mobility held by all acceptably different candidates indicates that pathways to national office may be restricted for many British racial minorities who lack such privileged backgrounds. In a similar vein, the remarkable heterogeneity of white sample characteristics indicates that white candidates need not fulfill the same stringent requirements upon standing for Conservative national office. Ultimately, the absence of EMPs with non-elite backgrounds suggests that, in the Conservative party, exclusionary recruitment standards extend beyond candidate ethnicity. Accordingly, there remains a social group, which cannot be identified by skin color, who are not represented within the Conservative party. This, in turn, fosters a structural imbalance within party discourse due to the over-representation of affluent individuals, whilst undermining the principles of inclusive and representative democracy.

Cognitive Diversity and Tokensim

Furthermore, the inclusion of acceptably different minorities, in the pursuit of visually expressing the party's commitments to (identity) diversity has laid the potential for stunted cognitive diversity of the parliamentary group and tokenistic practices of minority inclusion. The Conservative-led Ashcroft report (2005), among other party documents (see, Green, 2010), explicitly confirms that the upsurge in ethnic minority representation formed part of a wider strategy in pursuit of the benefits associated with "appearing" to include all major ethnic groups (Ashcroft, 2005: 103). In these reports, however, no mention was made of the benefits of *being* diverse.

Without adequate perspective on the differences between identity and cognitive diversity, it seems there has been insufficient acknowledgement of the significant homogeneities in EMP backgrounds and the ways in which this impacts the party's decision-making. Limited cognitive diversity, via acceptable difference, inhibits the proper performance of the deliberative function of democracy because there is an over-

representation of certain (often elite) points of view. This promotes a high degree of concurrence and unanimity within decision-making and thus increases party susceptibility to crises of 'Group Think' (see, Janis, 1972). The near-universal elite professional career trajectories of the ethnic minority cohort, for instance, is likely to limit the scope with which each member can contribute diverse perspectives to policy making. This is exacerbated by the highly similar nature of the private organizations within which they worked and the homogenizing influence that such institutions have in shaping one's habitus and institutionalized cultural capital stocks (Schmid and Roedder, 2022).

The case for tokenistic practice of minority inclusion in the Conservative party is best supported by a demographic analysis of ethnic diversity in local government, as briefly touched on in the first chapter. In many ways, the influence of local governments in the UK is hard to over-estimate because council decisions have a significant and direct impact on communities in a way that national policies do not (Wilson and Game, 2011). Additionally, while the descriptive representation of minorities at the national level is of high symbolic importance, grassroots diversity in local councils is, in some ways, better equipped to cater for the needs of marginalized communities. Currently, Conservative representation of minority ethnic groups in local office stands at a mere 5% (House of Commons, 2023) and there is also no evidence to signal that the Conservatives have locally pursued their national strategy of placing ethnic minority candidates in safe seats (Sobolewska and Begum, 2020) While local-level discrimination and preference for councilors to be residents can be relevant here, this disparity indicates that the party does not value national and local diversity equitably. Evidence that ethnic minority Conservatives are acceptably different, in conjunction with poor local government diversity, indicates that minority candidates may have been over-valued as tokens of the party's commitment to diversity, which warrants further investigation. In this way, acceptable difference echoes initial conceptualizations of tokenism and the visibility phenomenon discussed by Kanter (1977) because it attributes the distinctly elite biographies of EMPs to the outsize share of public attention afforded to their backgrounds upon standing for national office.

VI. Conclusion

Toward a New Research Agenda

Ultimately, the primary goal of this paper has been to advocate for deeper understanding of how we can improve equal access to, and opportunities within, representatively democratic political systems. As such, this dissertation emphasizes the increasing need for a renewed research agenda into the nuanced intersection between political representation and ethnic diversity.

Where Durose's acceptable difference (2013) and Page's identities (2019), as theoretical frameworks for research, provide ample opportunity for further rigorous investigation into the backgrounds of EMPs, there are a multitude of other lines of enquiry which require similarly thorough analysis. Research using acceptable difference may wish to incorporate face-to-face interviews, akin to Durose's methods, in the interest of extending the generalizability of conclusions drawn on the experiences of EMPs. Alternatively, a comprehensive analysis of the voting records of EMPs inside the Commons on matters pertaining to the concerns of racially marginalized communities would generate important insight into the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. In future, increasing cohort sizes will facilitate longitudinal data analyses, specifically using sequence analysis techniques, as a way to quantitatively develop theories on the prevalence of certain pathways into politics. Additionally, a discourse analysis of the framing techniques mobilized by the Conservatives would allow forthcoming researchers to enquire into tokenism within the party by testing the preliminary assumption that racial differences are exaggerated when the backgrounds of EMPs are discussed. Finally, a comparative analysis of the backgrounds, behaviors, and experiences of EMPs in other parties and across international (namely European) parliaments will facilitate wider exploration into the phenomena observed in this paper in order to assist the development of improved diversity agendas.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, this research found provisional evidence that the current cohort of ethnic minority Conservatives are acceptably different to their white counterparts by virtue of having distinctly elite backgrounds. In converging towards the archetypal candidate, acceptably different EMP Conservatives are increasingly dislocated from the predominantly non-elite experiences of the racially marginalized populations which they visibly represent. In this way, acceptable difference stunts the capacity with which politically-relegated minority voices can be substantively included in deliberative decision-making processes, which is evidenced by high political disengagement among minority communities (YouGov, 2022). Additionally, the Conservative diversity agenda has over-emphasized the benefits of appearing to be diverse (identity diversity), without sufficiently acknowledging the ways in which cognitive diversity can improve party governance, which is somewhat tokenistic. Furthermore, evidence of acceptable difference suggests that the pool from which minority candidates are recruited from is an exclusionary one. Ultimately, where racial discrimination appears to be a diminishing prejudicial practice in party recruitment, the persistence of elite representation indicates that there is a group, which cannot be identified by skin color, who remain excluded from Conservative representation.

While the scope of this exploratory study inherently limits its capacity to undoubtedly prove that Conservative EMPs are recruited on the basis of acceptable difference, it has brought a novel and beneficial insight into the field in the interests of inspiring a new direction for research. Given the significance of aforementioned methodological limitations, and upon recognition of the influence of the researcher's positionality and unconscious bias within the investigative process, the above findings must be reviewed critically. Notably, the restrictive sample size of twenty-two EMPs posed significant challenges throughout the enquiry. However, assuming that ethnic diversity in politics is on an upwards trajectory, EMP sample sizes will continue to grow and thus facilitate more comprehensive research frameworks into the evolving state of identity diversity within politics and its consequent impact on the cognitive diversity and representational capacity of parliaments.

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International Politics

Why Do Alliances Wage War Upon One Another? A Qualitative Case Studies Comparison of the Vietnam-China War (1979), Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998–2000), and the Fashoda Crisis (1898)

Ha (Joey) Do

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Introduction

Question

Why do countries in alliances, particularly ideological alliances, engage in war with each other? Conventional theories in international relations suggest that alliances reduce the overall likelihood of conflict and war because they act as a deterrent. Leeds (2003) argues that stronger alliance commitments decrease the probability of a militarized dispute arising, while alliances based on non-intervention increase the likelihood of such disputes. Additionally, Fang et al. (2015) argues that military alliances exert significant influence over the behavior of both challengers and targets during crises, often leading to peaceful resolutions. When a target nation highly values its alliance, a recommendation for settlement from an ally can encourage the target to make concessions, thus avoiding escalation. Similar theories uphold that strong alliance commitments are likely to deter war and violence. Yet, we have frequently observed wars between allied countries, indicating that these explanations within the literature require further investigation.

In 1979, China invaded Vietnam's northern borders. Both countries adhered to Marxist-Leninist socialism and were therefore considered strong ideological allies. Leaders from both states even described their relationship as being "as close as lips to teeth" (Thayer, 1994). Similarly, in 1998, war broke out between the newly independent Eritrea and Ethiopia. The two years of bloody conflict pitted Eritrea against its former ally and mother country, Ethiopia (Triulzi, 2002). In the 1970s, both the central Ethiopian government and the Eritrean government saw Marxist-Leninist principles as core tenants of their nation building projects and were even referred to as brothers. This raises the questions: what unique attributes of these countries or alliances make them more prone to war? Under what scope of conditions or dynamics would states within such alliances be inclined to wage war against each other?

Theory

After examining various case studies, I have formulated a theory regarding the occurrence of war between alliances. I propose that war occurs under the following conditions: (1) alliances characterized by a clear hierarchy, and (2) ideological alliances that lack tangible commitments such as economic or military promises.

Research suggests that alliances based solely on shared ideology tend to be the weakest, often superficial and devoid of significant commitments (Walt, 1985). Alliances that are characterized by weak ideological ties and a lack of substantial elements like economic or military agreements have a lower threshold for engaging in war because there are few tangible costs of withdrawing from the alliance. Moreover, a clear power structure between two states creates fertile ground for the escalation of grievances to conflicts, particularly if they have previously engaged in hostilities with one another.

Methods

In this study, I will utilize a qualitative approach to compare three distinct case studies: Vietnam-China (1979), Eritrea-Ethiopia (1998), and Britain-France (1898, Fashoda conflict). The Fashoda conflict serves as the control case, as no war occurred between these alliances, while Vietnam-China and Eritrea-Ethiopia serve as experimental cases where war did occur. At the core, all case studies share the same scope condition: they are all ideological alliances. Vietnam and China were both communist states; Eritrea

and Ethiopia adhere to Marxist-Leninist ideologies; and Britain and France are democracies.

However, variables such as the density of relationships and hierarchy differ between the control and experimental cases, which explains why my theory accurately predicts war under the two conditions. Between the experimental cases, Vietnam-China and Eritrea-Ethiopia, many underlying similarities exist that explain the shared outcome of war. Vietnam and Eritrea share parallel historical trajectories characterized by wariness of and domination by more powerful, dominant states. Both countries have experienced colonization and pursued ideologies as a means of self-determination and independence. Additionally, due to a lack of development resulting from disastrous social policies or conflict, both Vietnam-China and Eritrea-Ethiopia lacked robust relationships, during their respective disputes.

I. Alternative Explanations: Literature Review

Various theories attempt to explain why allied states might be inclined to wage war against each other under certain conditions. One prominent school of thought is Walt's theory on alliances: particularly the section that focuses on ideological alliances. According to Walt (1985), alliances formed on the basis of ideological similarities are secondary choices in alliance formation. He suggests that such alliances often result in fragile and short-lived relationships among countries. Walt posits that countries are more likely to prioritize ideological alliances during periods of relative security but prefer security alliances when faced with imminent danger (Walt, 1985, pg. 24). This theory implies that ideological alliances may lead to conflict because they are inherently weak and superficial. However, Walt's theory fails to address the specific conditions under which ideological alliances might escalate to war such as securities commitments, economic ties, or historical grievances between states.

Another theory, proposed by Jackson and Nei (2015), emphasizes the role of trade in fostering peaceful and stable alliances. They argue that trade increases alliance density, reduces vulnerability to attacks, and diminishes incentives for attacking allies. Data from the 1950s onwards, demonstrates a correlation between intensified trade relationships and both reduced conflict and denser alliances. Between states without trade ties, the geopolitical benefit of attacks outweighs the costs on the economy or international trade of breaking trade ties, they are thereby more likely to choose war. Wars may occur between allied states if the negative effects on trade are not significant enough to deter them from engaging in war. However, this perspective negates factors such as ideological alliances or historical grievances, which could influence the decision to go to war.

Levy (1987), Lebow (1984), and Van Evera (2019) introduce preventive war logic, suggesting that war arises when political leaders perceive their state's military power to be declining compared to a rising adversary. According to this logic, leaders may believe that engaging in war sooner rather than later will incur lower costs, as opposed to waiting until their rival has bolstered its military capabilities. Preventative war logic exemplified in conflicts like the Vietnam-China War (1979) and the Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998-2000), where long-standing historical enmity played a significant role. Vietnam and Eritrea were subordinate to China and Ethiopia, respectively, for an extended period. However, during wartime, both Vietnam and Eritrea were engaging in power-building, which may have triggered a reaction from their aloof neighbors. While the preventive war logic helps explain when relative rivals might resort to war, it fails to address other dynamics such as ideological alliances or dense relationships.

In summation, while these theories offer valuable insights into the factors influencing alliance behavior and the outbreak of war, none provide a comprehensive explanation that clearly delineates conditions of wars between ideological alliances. Understanding the complexities of alliance dynamics and the causes of war requires the consideration of a range of factors including ideological alignments, perception of trade relationships, and historical grievances.

II. Theory and Scope Conditions

Through careful case study analysis and literature review, I have formulated a theory regarding the conditions of war between alliances. I propose that wars between allied countries happen when they are limited to ideological alliances (scope condition) and two conditions are met: (1) the alliance presents a clear hierarchy of powers, and (2) there is a lack of density in their relationship, like economic or military promises.

This theory builds upon several important points raised in previous literature. Walt (1985) suggests that alliances formed solely on shared ideology are often superficial because they lack significant commitments, such as economic or military agreements. When ideological alliances lack this component, the likelihood of entering into war increases because withdrawing from the alliance does not impose a high cost on either state. This idea is exemplified in Jackson and Nei's theory in the previous section. Furthermore, a clear power hierarchy between two states creates a fertile environment for grievances to escalate into conflicts, particularly when there's a history of hostility between them. This notion is further developed in the literature on the logic of preventative war in the preceding section (Lebow, 1984; Levy, 1987).

Table 1 below outlines the conditions that explain why wars arise among allied states in some cases, but not others. It features two horizontal columns: "hierarchy" and "equal," depicting the country dynamics within these alliances. There are also two vertical rows: "dense relationship" and "ideological ties (only)," illustrating the nature of relationships among alliance members. The most noteworthy cell is highlighted in color, denoting instances of war, with the Vietnam-China War and the Eritrea-Ethiopia War serving as experimental case studies.

Table 1: Theory and Scope Conditions

	Hierarchy	**Equal**
Dense relationship	NATO (No War)	Fashoda Crisis (No War)
Ideological ties (only)	Vietnam-China 1979 (War) Eritrea-Ethiopia 1998-2000 (War)	Bandung Conference 1955 (No War)

Starting from the top left cell, we observe an alliance characterized by a clear hierarchy and a dense relationship, exemplified by NATO. Established in 1949, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) comprises 32 countries from Europe and North America, with the primary objective of safeguarding the people and territory of its members (Nato, n.d.). NATO boasts a robust and dense relationship, functioning as a security alliance wherein each member commits to contributing two percent of its national GDP towards collective defense efforts. Structurally, NATO adheres to a clear hierarchy, with the United States serving as the predominant hegemon. Despite this hierarchical setup, NATO's strong cohesion and military obligations have fostered relatively stable inter-state relationships. Consequently, there have been no conflicts among member states to date, and the likelihood of future wars under the current status quo remains minimal.

In the top right cell, we examine an alliance characterized by an equal dynamic and a dense relationship, as illustrated by the Fashoda Crisis between France and the United Kingdom in 1898. This incident occurred against the backdrop of the Scramble for Africa between French and English troops (Mangold, 2018). While the crisis involved several minor skirmishes between the troops, full-scale conventional warfare was averted (Mangold, 2018). In this alliance between France and the UK, we observe a relatively balanced relationship between the two nations. Despite their historical animus relationship, these two countries stand on relatively equal footing, with neither dominating the other. Moreover, they share a strong, dense relationship characterized by

robust economic ties and extensive international trade. I posit that despite disagreements over colonial disputes, war did not erupt in this instance due to the strength of their dense relationship and the equitable dynamic between them. The prospect of waging war against a significant trading partner, as well as against a comparably powerful nation, carries substantial costs, thus serving as a deterrent. Consequently, war was averted.

The bottom right cell examines an alliance characterized by an equal ideological dynamic, exemplified by the Bandung Conference in 1955. This conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia gathered representatives from 29 governments of Asian and African nations to deliberate on peace, the role of the Third World in the Cold War, economic development, and decolonization (Wilson Center, n.d.). The Bandung conference was co-sponsored by the governments of Burma (Myanmar), India, Indonesia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. However, the Bandung Conference participants were very diverse: consisting of an additional 24 nations from Asia, Africa and the Middle East (Wilson Center, n.d.). These nations shared ideological beliefs in decolonization, nationalist, self-determination, and lacked substantive, dense relationships between members. Despite this, no wars have broken out between any of the allied states, largely due to the absence of a hierarchical power structure.

Lastly, we examine alliances characterized by a hierarchical dynamic with ideological ties only, as exemplified by the Vietnam-China 1979 War and Eritrea-Ethiopia (1998-2000) War. In the twentieth century, Vietnam and China were both devout followers of communism during the time of war. Similarly, Eritrea and Ethiopia were both Marxist-Leninist governments. Dense relationships were not present in both alliances. However, both of these cases have a hierarchical relationship. Vietnam was dominated by the North for a thousand years before breaking free from China to become fully independent (Nguyen, 2013). Similarly, Eritrea was a province of Ethiopia before finally gaining independence in 1991 (CSIS, 2019). I theorize that it is under this lack of a dense relationship, coupled with a historical enmity that led these allied states to wage war against one another. The ideological alliances between these countries were situational and opportunistic rather than substantive. Thus, when grievances within both alliances were voiced, they escalated to war because there was no significant cost of dissolving the relationship. These two instances of war serve as a clear example of my proposed theory.

In summation, my theory introduces a novel explanation as to why crises such as war occur between allies, by establishing a clear correlation between the superficial nature of ideological alliances and their likelihood to commence war. By delineating the variables and conditions necessary to sufficiently explain the occurrence of war within alliances, my theory provides a comprehensive framework for accurately understanding the phenomenon of interest.

III. Empirical Analysis

In this paper, I utilize the qualitative case studies comparison method to specifically analyze the historical backdrop and circumstances of countries within specific alliances. I use three case studies to accomplish this goal: the Vietnam-China Border Conflict (1979), the Eritrea-Ethiopia War (1998-2000), and the Britain-France Conflict (1898, known as the Fashoda Crisis).

In this comparative analysis, the Fashoda conflict acts as the control case, because it did not escalate to war, while the Vietnam-China and Eritrea-Ethiopia wars are experimental cases that vary by the nature of the conflict and casualties. What binds these cases together is their association with ideological alliances- the scope condition. However, there are notable differences in factors such as the density of the relationship and the existence of a hierarchy between the control and experimental cases. These variations account for the explanatory power of my theory when applied to the outcomes of conflicts between states in alliance.

Employing a case study comparison results in a nuanced understanding of these conflicts, a perspective often overlooked in broader, quantitative analyses. Furthermore, these cases are lesser-known conflicts that take place in developing nations or former colonies, and as such provide a unique lens for identifying underlying causal mechanisms. Through this approach, I aim to uncover patterns such as historical animosities and

decolonization movements and explore how these factors interact to shape the outcomes of war.

A. Vietnam-China Border War of 1979

Fragile ideological alliances: rapidly shifting dynamics

The Vietnam-China Border Conflict of 1979 serves as an excellent experimental case due to the involvement of two prominent ideological allies who later resorted to war following a process of alliance realignment. In the 20th century, Vietnam and China entered an alliance based on their shared belief in Marxist-Leninist principles as the path to self-determination and economic development (Thayer, 1994). Their relationship was extremely close; Vietnam regarded China as a model of development and received Chinese assistance for social policies such as land redistribution, economic reforms, and public censorship (Thayer, 1994).

However, the gradual Sino-Soviet split, which began in the 1960s, unearthed weaknesses in the Vietnam-China ideological alliance. During this split, Vietnam chose to align with Russia over China, while China befriended the U.S. during rapprochement and pressured Vietnam to follow U.S. concessions during the American War (Gompert, 2014). These actions strained the Vietnam-China relationship over decades and served as the foundation for military confrontation in 1979. The conflict was seen as the culmination of a series of realignments between the two states, with the threat of war becoming increasingly credible as a result. Unsurprisingly, Nguyen Co Thach, Vietnam's then deputy foreign minister, famously stated: "China changes allies as often as people change underwear" (Browne, 1979).

According to Walt's theory on alliances, ideological alliances are secondary to national interests (Walt, 1985). In alliances based solely on ideological similarities, there are no real consequences for reneging, nor are there assurances that allies will follow through. This explains why wars between ideological allies occur: the absence of a substantial cost of dissolving the alliance ensures that engaging in war yields a higher utility for a state than that of maintaining the alliance.

Following this line of reasoning, China chose to initiate war against Vietnam. Deng Xiaoping realized that this limited war would neither yield significant victory nor profound loss for China (Tretiak, 2021). China aimed to compel Vietnam to reconsider its alignment with Russia during the Sino-Soviet split and to re-establish its dominant position over the newly independent nation. In doing so, China prioritized its own benefits and national goals over ideological ties with Vietnam (Tretiak, 2021).

Historical Hierarchy

Historically, the two communist nations have maintained a long-standing history of animosity and mistrust. Vietnamese leaders across generations have shared a common sentiment: a desire to distance themselves from Chinese influence. This sentiment traces back to the period known as the *One Thousand Years of Domination* until 938 A.D. when Vietnam was a tributary state under the Chinese Empire (Nguyen, 2013). Despite the establishment of the first Vietnamese state in 938 A.D., Vietnam remained vigilant against Chinese ambitions, as various Chinese dynasties attempted to reassert control over Vietnam as either a province or tributary state (Nguyen, 2013). Vietnam was largely able to resist these efforts.

Even during periods of peace, Vietnam's diplomacy remains cautious and calculated to avoid military conflicts with China. From ancient conflicts predating colonialism to contemporary disputes like the Vietnam-China War of 1979, the relationship between Vietnam and China is complex, characterized by periods of symbiosis and amiability during peacetime which unfurl to reveal deeper tensions during moments of significant change. This analysis sheds light on the historical foundations of the unequal power dynamic in Vietnam-China relations, a theme critical to my argument. The historical grievances between China and Vietnam have played a crucial role in their decision to engage in warfare. For China, the 1979 War was about asserting ancient dominance, while for Vietnam, it was about defending territorial integrity.

Dense Relationships

At the onset of the 1979 border war, both Vietnam and China were among the world's poorest nations, facing economic hardship and limited bilateral trade (Field, 1986). China, following the cultural revolution in 1966, experienced severe economic downturn and poverty due to disastrous policies. The catastrophic leadership under the "Gang of Four" further exacerbated issues, leading to a decline in human capital and economic output. Industrial production plummeted between 1974 and 1976, nearly collapsing the economy (Field, 1986). Similarly, in the aftermath of the American War and subsequent reconstruction, Vietnam grappled with economic challenges. Facing embargoes and isolation from the US, Vietnam relied heavily on support from Russia and Eastern Europe for economic growth (Van Song et al., 2020). Moreover, policies modeled after China from 1955 to 1975, such as agricultural collectivization and the suspension of private industries, added to Vietnam's struggles (Van Song et al., 2020).

However, this was not always the case. Prior to the Sino-Soviet Split, China was a significant supporter and economic provider for Vietnam. Chinese economic aid to Vietnam surpassed that of the USSR and other Eastern European allies from 1965 to 1964 (CIA, 1971). Yet, following rapprochement and ideological shifts in the early 1970s, China's aid to Vietnam dwindled to one-third of that provided by the USSR (CIA, 1971). Reduced aid to foreign nations also reflected China's own domestic economic challenges during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward. By the late 1970s, the once dense relationship between China and Vietnam had weakened significantly, lacking strong bilateral commitment. This lack of a dense relationship lowered the threshold for war, leading to China's decision to initiate hostilities.

Table 2: Estimated aid to North Vietnam, CIA report (1971)

Table 3

Estimated Communist Aid to North Vietnam

Million US $

	1954-64	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970 a/	Total
Economic aid	950	150	275	380	480	470	535	3,240
USSR	365	85	150	200	240	250	360	1,650
Communist China	455	50	75	80	100	90	95	945
Eastern Europe	130	15	50	100	140	130	80	645
Military aid b/	140	270	455	650	390	225	155	2,290
USSR	70	210	360	505	290	120	70	1,625
Communist China	70	60	95	145	100	105	85	660
Eastern Europe	Negl.	Negl.	Negl.	Negl.	Negl.	Negl.	Negl.	5 c/
Total aid	1,090	420	730	1,030	870	695	690	5,530
USSR	435	295	510	705	530	370	430	3,275
Communist China	525	110	170	225	200	195	180	1,605
Eastern Europe	130	15	50	100	140	130	80	650

a. Preliminary.
b. Valued at Soviet foreign trade prices. Data refer exclusively to combat material, excluding aid designed for war-support purposes.
c. The cumulative value of deliveries from Eastern Europe.

B. Ethiopia-Eritrea War (1998-2000)

Weak and short-lived ideological allies

This conflict serves as an excellent experimental case because it consists of two former ideological allies. In the mid-twentieth century, both Ethiopia and Eritrea pursued the Marxist-Leninist model in their state-building endeavors, forging a tight ideological bond. However, in 1998 Eritrea waged war against Ethiopia to challenge the demarcation of the international border, despite the relatively peaceful relations that had existed between the two nations since Eritrea's independence in 1993. In 1979, members of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) were inspired by Borochov's Marxist ideology amidst efforts for Eritrean self-determination (Cohen, 2023). The founders of the EPLF were Marxist students involved in Addis Ababa's university political demonstrations in the late 1960s, who were heavily influenced by their education in China and Cuba (Cohen, 2023). However, post-independence in the 1990s, Eritrea gradually distanced itself from pure socialism due to economic policy failures while still maintaining its nationalist and leftist stance (Clapham, 1992).

Similarly, Marxism-Leninism gained popularity in neighboring Ethiopia during the 1970s (Clapham, 1992). Embraced by both the ruling regime after the 1974 revolution and its adversaries, socialism permeated Ethiopia's military government,

which was characterized by stringent centralization and radical social transformation. Like Eritrea, both the central Ethiopian government and the Eritrean EPLF saw Marxist-Leninist principles as instrumental in fostering a multi-ethnic state (Clapham, 1992). Yet in Ethiopia, socialism proved economically ineffective and politically flawed. The Insurgents who assumed power in Ethiopia in 1991 ultimately abandoned socialism in favor of Western support (Clapham 1992). The abandonment of socialism in the 1990s illustrated its superficiality and lack of substance in Ethiopia.

In both Eritrea and Ethiopia, the socialist ideological alliance played a fundamental role in establishing the Eritrean nation-state and reshaping post-Mengistu Ethiopia (Guazzini, 2002). Despite their surface-level socialist alignment, significant differences pertaining to military strategy emerged between EPLF and Ethiopia (Guazzini, 2002). Post-Eritrean independence, maintaining this ideological alliance between the EPLF and Ethiopia proved challenging, given the shifting political and civic allegiances in Eritrea's politics (Guazzini, 2002). This underscores the transient nature of socialist sentiments in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Despite its initial genuine popularity, these socialist movements and subsequent ideological alliance between the two nations were short-lived, instead serving as temporary instruments for structural change.

Historical Hierarchy

Eritrea's historical ties with Ethiopia have been marked by periods of subjugation and collaboration. In the 16th century, Eritrea was integrated into the expansive Ethiopian Empire (Markakis & Last, 2024). As a result, Eritrea and Ethiopia share many aspects of language, culture, and heritage. In the 19th century, Eritrea became an Italian colony, while Ethiopia maintained its independent status as a regional empire (Markakis & Last, 2024). Following World War II, Eritrea transitioned into a United Nations Trust Territory under British administration. Yet, the trajectory between the two nations shifted significantly when Ethiopia unilaterally annexed Eritrea in 1962, disregarding the Eritrean peoples' aspirations for independence. This annexation deepened the longstanding tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia (Markakis & Last, 2024).

This historical enmity persisted even during the period of ideological alliances in the 1970s. The Eritrean War of Independence between 1961 and 1991 resulted in Eritrean (Eritrean Embassy, n.d.). liberation and ushered in a new era of collaboration. For the first time since 1991, Ethiopia emerged as the sole neighboring country with which Eritrea did not have active tensions. However, this interval of peace was disrupted when war broke out in 1998, triggered by border disputes.

The relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia was characterized by contention. Similar to Vietnam-China relations, Eritrea and Ethiopia share an undeniably deep relationship with strong commonalities in history, heritage, and ideology. However, Eritrea's pursuit of independence and sovereignty fostered the wariness of its powerful brother Ethiopia. The depth of historical grievances between Eritrea and Ethiopia has emerged as a critical determinant in the decision to engage in warfare. Despite sharing similar Marxist-Leninist beliefs, the substantial historical enmity between the two nations overpowered the ideological alliance during times of crisis, demonstrating their superficiality.

Dense Relationships

When war erupted between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998, many observers commented that it was a conflict between "two of Africa's poorest countries" (Araia, 2018). At that time, Eritrea had recently gained independence and ranked among the world's poorest nations with an annual GDP of just 0.47 billion USD (*Eritrea GDP 1960-2024*, n.d.). While Ethiopia's GDP stood substantially higher at 8.83 billion USD, it still lagged considerably behind other regional economies when adjusted for its larger population and relative economic standing (*World Bank Open Data*, n.d.).

Notably, the two nations lacked significant bilateral trade relations, illustrating the lack of a dense relationship. During the 1998-2000 period, Ethiopia's top export partners included Germany, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Italy, while its primary import sources were Yemen, Italy, and Japan (WITS, 2000). Eritrea, on the other hand, was grappling with its newfound independence and economic challenges.

Eritrea's post-independence conflicts with neighboring countries, such as Sudan and Yemen, resulted in its isolation and a focus on self-reliance in economic policies (Healy et al., 2007). The prolonged warfare and economic isolation prevented Eritrea from fostering close ties with its more powerful neighbor, Ethiopia. Due to economic challenges and post-independence conflicts with neighboring countries, the two nations reluctantly chose to isolate themselves, ultimately establishing a weak relationship with each other as a last resort. With limited economic costs associated with warfare, the likelihood of war between these two countries increased (Jackson and Nei, 2015).

C. Fashoda Crisis (1898)

Strong ideological alliance

The Fashoda Crisis of 1898 serves as an ideal control case for analysis. Hereto ideological allies, France and Britain, maintained a strong, dense relationship and equal dynamic, effectively averting war—an outcome markedly different from the outcomes of the experimental cases. This crisis unfolded against the backdrop of the late nineteenth-century Scramble for Africa, pitting a French expedition led by Captain Marchand against a British contingent commanded by General Kitchener (Mangold, 2018). Ultimately, war was averted, and the French retreated.

At the time of the crisis, both Britain and France were transitioning to democracies, sharing common practices rooted in progressive values such as representation in government and civil liberties. For Britain, the Reform Act of 1832 marked a pivotal moment in the evolution towards parliamentary democracy by extending suffrage to a broader segment of the middle class (The National Archives, 2022). Although full democratization would come later, various laws and reforms during this period laid the foundation for a democratic framework. Similarly, in France, the end of the French Revolution in 1789 saw the establishment of the First Republic, transferring power from the monarchy to the populace (Crook, 2013). While complete democracy was still in progress, subsequent domestic uprisings and reforms paved the way for significant democratic advancements over the following century (Crook, 2013). During the Fashoda Crisis, Britain and France stood as early pioneers of Western democracy, united by their shared goals to promote liberal democracy and capitalism globally.

Dense Relationships

By the 1860s, France and Britain had emerged as the world's largest and second-largest exporters of commercial goods (NBER, 2019). The onset of the industrial revolution in the late eighteenth century led both nations into active participation in global trade, fueling economic growth (Findlay, 1982). While their approaches to global trade initially diverged, with Britain embracing free trade and France embracing protectionism, (NBER, 2019) Their trade networks became deeply intertwined (NBER, 2019) by the century's end. This marked a mutual transition away from economic autarky.

As my theory states, the expansion of trade increases perceived costs of war. Unlike the absence of dense relationships in the experimental cases, there remained a strong, interdependent bond between France and Britain. Consequently, both nations found themselves increasingly reliant on each other, resulting in high costs of going to war. Rational actors in this scenario, each country calculated that it would incur immense costs by engaging in conflict with an equally formidable economy, thereby lowering the utility of war. Such a conflict would yield significant and mutual fatalities and loss of trade. The advent of the industrial revolution and international trade has fundamentally altered the landscape, influencing each country's perception of the costs associated with war. This observation aligns with my theory and other alternative explanations, such as the proposition that war declines sharply with expanded international trade (Jackson and Nei, 2015). Moreover, it reflects the current norms in international relations, wherein countries seek alternative ways to resolve conflicts, recognizing that conventional warfare exacts a toll too high to bear.

Historical Hierarchy

Throughout history, France and Britain have maintained a centuries-long rivalry, with each upending the other in different epochs. The two nations have engaged in a series of conflicts, from the Norman Conquest (1066) to the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) to the Seven Years War (1756-1763) (Jeffery, 2022). However, unlike the hierarchical relationships observed in cases like Vietnam-China and Eritrea-Ethiopia, the Franco-British rivalry was characterized by a more balanced dynamic of equality rather than subjugation. Since the Hundred Years' Wars, France and Britain have stood as equal adversaries, with no clear hegemon. This distinction in the relationship between France and Britain is crucial for understanding why war did not erupt during the Fashoda conflict.

Before the late nineteenth century, neither France nor Britain were democratic nations, and their involvement in international trade was not as extensive as the industrial revolution and globalization. Given this perception of equality in their relationship, it stands to reason that both countries, if acting rationally, would seek to avoid war as a last resort. The costs associated with engaging in conflict with an equally formidable nation are considerably large, with high risk of mass casualties and economic downturn. The perception of equality in the relationship thus played a significant role in the decision to avert war, resulting in the conflict being contained to minor skirmishes.

IV. Conclusion

My comparative case studies offer a novel perspective on conflict within alliance studies. Rather than simply drawing from established theories, my research expands on Walt's proposition regarding the fragility of ideological alliances by delineating the specific circumstances conducive to conflict. Central to my framework are the notions of dense relationships and historical hierarchy, characteristics that have not been comprehensively cooperated in prior considerations of ideological alliances. By theorizing about the conditions leading to war in ideological alliances, my work contributes to a deeper comprehension of this phenomenon and offers insights into conflict prevention strategies by highlighting the importance of international diplomacy or trade in fostering strong alliances that result in peace.

I acknowledge the potential for an endogeneity issue between one of my independent variables, dense relationships, and my dependent variable, war. Since the end of the last World War in 1945, most developed countries have enjoyed relative stability and prosperity. It is observable that countries less inclined towards war are more likely to form dense relationships, suggesting a correlation between the probability of going to war and the inability to foster strong, interconnected ties. However, this potential endogeneity doesn't invalidate my theory; rather, it allows for a more nuanced examination of the relationship between colonialism, economic instability, and conflicts.

The two experimental cases, Vietnam-China and Eritrea-Ethiopia, share the legacy of colonialism, characterized by poverty and involvement in other conflicts. This observation reinforces the conventional belief that former colonies often endure structural dismantlement and exploitation. This may lead to slower economic development and a lower threshold for war, due to the absence of dense relationships.

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Complexities of Power Projection: Exploring Its Relationship with Terrorism

Jett Moyer

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Abstract

Acts of terror continue to pose significant threats to global security, prompting nations to explore various strategies to prevent and mitigate such attacks. Nations often have the option to resort to increasing their levels of hard power and expressing it abroad, commonly referred to as power projection, which involves the ability to deploy military force swiftly and effectively anywhere in the world. While this approach aims to combat terrorist groups and preempt attacks, its effectiveness remains uncertain. This research paper investigates whether increased power projection by a state correlates with a rise in the frequency and intensity of terrorism targeting that state.

Drawing on existing literature, which highlights grievances and instability as key drivers of terrorism, this paper proposes a hypothesis that suggests a positive relationship between a nation's power projection and the incidence of terrorism within its borders. This research uses data on naval capabilities as a proxy for power projection, as well as data on terrorism frequency and intensity from the Global Terrorism Database to explore correlation through regression analysis. The findings reveal a significant positive correlation between a nation's naval tonnage and the frequency of terrorist attacks. In the case of terrorism intensity, no statistically significant correlation is found with naval tonnage. Further analysis suggests that while terrorism frequency may be influenced by a state's power projection, factors such as covert coordination and security measures may impact the intensity of attacks. These results challenge the initial hypothesis and highlight the complex relationship between power projection and terrorism. They suggest that while increased military presence may foil some attacks, it may also inadvertently fuel grievances and lead to more frequent acts of terrorism. This study's implications demonstrate a need for nuanced approaches to counterterrorism efforts that consider both short-term domestic security measures and long-term geopolitical consequences.

Future research may be inclined to expand the scope of analysis to include additional variables and a broader range of nations, providing deeper insights into the dynamics of power projection and its impact on global security. Such findings could inform policymakers and aid in the development of more effective strategies, which in turn could be used to maximize security and minimize indirect grievance fueled terrorism.

Introduction

Acts of terror plague the world by devastating the lives of civilians and instilling terror into nations. The ramifications of terrorism leave many to ponder how nations can take preventative actions against acts of terror and better protect their inhabitants. Some state leaders use "Power projection" to accomplish this goal. Within the literature, power projection is defined as the ability to project and sustain military power anywhere in the world with little or no notice (Corley, 2002). Many nations choose to increase military projection capabilities in order to attack terror groups abroad or thwart attacks before they can take place. However, the efficacy of these actions remains unclear. By increasing its hard power projection, does a state face an increase in the frequency and intensity of terrorism? Many papers address the factors that lead to acts of terror being committed, such as grievances and instability, but fail to directly address how power projection can influence terrorism. To fully answer this question, my leading hypothesis is that when a state increases its power projection, it will face an increase in both the frequency and intensity of terrorism. I believe this to be the most logical line of thought because as a nation meddles in the foreign affairs of other states, it is bound to pick a position that is contrary to the views another group may hold. In this event, the group may be motivated enough to retaliate through violent means, resulting in an increase in terror attacks, and

thus, terrorism intensity. I test this hypothesis by acquiring data about the average power projection capabilities of multiple nations over the course of decades. To measure power projection, I focus on states' naval capabilities and look at the correlation between states' naval capabilities and the frequency and intensity of terrorism within each respective state. I find that a positive correlation exists between the total tonnage of a nation's navy and the frequency of the terrorism it experiences. However, a correlation between naval capabilities and terrorism intensity does not exist. This speaks to the robustness of terrorism frequency, while also highlighting the sensitivity of terrorism intensity and its susceptibility to the controlling or outside variables. Real world applications are plentiful within the results of this study, as the possible consequences of power projection in the pursuit of defense may have enough weight to alter international defense strategy.

I. Previous Literature

Terrorism is responsible for one of the most horrific attacks on U.S. soil since the turn of the 21st century and continues to ravage individuals across the globe. Terrorism has had a significant negative impact on individuals and states, motivating state-led efforts to determine possible causes of terrorism. Without further research and analysis of this area of interest, countries may adopt policies that inadvertently exacerbate terrorist acts, increasing the threat of violence against their citizens.

Terrorism refers to "the threat or use of violence to achieve a political, economic, religious, or social goal through intimidation or coercion by a non-state actor" ('Global Terrorism Database', n.d.). This definition serves as an effective base understanding of what terrorism is and succinctly demonstrates the implications of the word terrorism within the literature and colloquially. Existing literature posits central ideas on terrorism such as, tracking global terrorism ('Global Terrorism Database', n.d.), U.S. geopolitical strategies related to responding to terrorism (Tucker, 1998), and terror strategies and causes (Meierrieks & Krieger, 2009). While contested, there is broad consensus within the literature that large swaths of terrorism are based on grievances held by various terrorist groups; the key characterizing elements are instability and grievance. Grievance based terrorism can fluctuate between one of two forms; these include individual grievances and group grievances (Atran, 2003). In some cases, it is noted that individual and group grievances can coincide and result in a multiplying effect, drastically increasing the radicalization within aggrieved populations (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2017). Instability has also been highlighted by numerous studies, and correlation between instability and international terrorism has been demonstrated (Li, 2019). Terrorism, within the general sphere of discourse is described as an action rooted in irrationality. However, the literature contends that terrorist attacks can be predicted logically. Specifically, suicide attacks are exacerbated by grievance-based motivations (Pape, 2006). Real world examples can be drawn to prove this grievance-based terrorism by analyzing the reasoning of infamous terrorist Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden explained the grievances he had with the U.S., the western values it exemplified, and the imposition of these values on the Middle Eastern sphere (Stern, 2010).

Adding to this discussion, I argue that greater levels of power projection led to greater grievances among the subject population. This, in turn, will lead to an increase in acts of terrorism against the imposing country. The literature has not directly addressed whether countries with high power projection cause more grievances. Indeed, the literature pertaining to the relationship between state power projection and terrorism perpetrated within that state is sparse, and the field needs to complete more in order to discern any correlation. Over the last decade, the possibility of correlation between state power projection and terrorism has been ignored by states. In fact, the ramifications of this potential correlation have been treated as insignificant, as macro level reviews across nations are nonexistent.

Most of the published work on power projection is focused on the influence of the United States abroad and the economic ramifications of that influence. The influence of power projection from other countries remains understudied, as well as the impact that all countries' power projection has on grievances, which the literature posits positive correlations with terrorism. To further the understanding of this issue, research with a diverse sample of countries must be conducted on this correlation. This research would

be most effective with an evaluation of their respective levels of power projection and the frequency and intensity of the terrorism they experience. Quantifiable variables for power projection should also be used, as the literature tends to hinge on qualitative statements made by prominent terrorist group leaders such as Osama bin Laden. These studies could prepare states to shift their geopolitical strategies, and better address terrorism within and outside their borders.

II. Theory

Terrorism has been pervasive in many countries throughout the past two decades, with extremist groups targeting civilians, government officials, and infrastructure in order to advance their interests. Interestingly, there are many countries which do not seem concerned about terrorism within their borders. As this threat is ever-present and available within the toolbox of extremist groups operating in an asymmetric manner, nations continue trying to find strategies to prevent acts of terror from being committed. I argue that power projection is one important factor that influences whether countries are likely to experience terrorist attacks.

The logic behind this assertion stems from the dynamics of power relations and the nature of geopolitical events. Power projection can significantly shape a nation's interactions with other states and non-state actors. When states engage in power projection, they may inadvertently exacerbate underlying grievances and fuel resentment among local populations. This is a fertile environment for extremist ideologies to take root and for terrorist organizations to recruit operatives. Moreover, the perception of foreign interference or aggression can invigorate extremist groups and inspire acts of violence against the intervening state.

The prescription of terrorism as a primary national security concern may drive states to prioritize militarized responses and power projection measures in their efforts to combat the perceived threat. However, such approaches can escalate tensions and contribute to a cycle of violence, which ultimately increases the risk of terrorist attacks within the intervening state's borders. This cycle of violence and the sowing of grievances through power projection leads to the conclusion that as the power projection of a state increases, the frequency and intensity of terrorist attacks in that state increase.

III. Research Design

The independent variable within each subject country is its power projection, measured using its total naval tonnage within a given year. The data will cover the 37 different countries and their power projection capacity represented by total naval tonnage, collected over a timeframe of 41 years. For the power projection data, the decision was made to prioritize naval tonnage as a representative for power projection capacity. This decision was mainly driven by the lack of availability of specific data which would give an even more comprehensive overview of a nation's power projection capacity. Utilizing naval tonnage data is a sufficient measure because ships are far more likely to be used in a power projection mission than land-based armies, ships are specifically poor at being utilized for the defense of sovereign lands, and historically, states have not projected power globally without first creating the ability to project power over water (Markowitz & Fariss, 2018). The data used within this paper and utilized within the model is derived from a public dataset put forth by Crisher and Souva (Crisher & Souva, 2014). The database from Crisher and Souva was chosen because it is currently the most comprehensive dataset available. Many papers that have needed naval tonnage information have utilized a dataset by Modelski and Thompson (Modelski & Thompson, 1988). I am opting to use the dataset by Crisher and Souva (Crisher & Souva, 2014) due to the more comprehensive timeframe which ends in 2011, as opposed to the Modelski and Thompson (Modelski & Thompson, 1988) dataset ending in 1993.

The dependent variables will be the frequency and intensity of terrorism committed within the state of interest. Terrorism frequency is defined as the number of attacks in a year, with terrorism intensity being the total number of casualties incurred from terror attacks in a given year. These variables will give insight into the two most important aspects of terrorism attacks and provide an in-depth view of how terrorism more broadly impacts a country. Utilizing these two aspects of terrorism provides more

variation and a deeper understanding of the problem as well. The data for terrorism is almost entirely from the Global Terrorism Database ('Global Terrorism Database', n.d.) provided by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). This data will include individual instances of errorism within each subject country and will also provide the intensity of each terrorist attack, providing full insight into frequency and intensity of acts of terror perpetrated within any given country. The GTD also provides a filter functionality, which was utilized in gathering the data for this paper. The selections were configured to only include instances of terrorism which matched all 3 criteria put forth by the GTD itself. The criteria were that (1) the act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious, or social goal, (2) there must be evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to a larger audience (or audiences) than the immediate victims, and (3) the action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities. The data coming from the GTD is unique because of its comprehensiveness. There is no other database available that has such comprehensive information on terrorism around the globe. The database tracks fatalities, extremist groups involved, and injuries from each instance of terrorism, providing a compendium of information that is unparalleled.

This paper utilizes a quantitative approach, using correlational techniques and regression in order to establish whether there is a correlation between a state's power projection and the frequency and intensity of terrorism that state experiences. The model consists of the comparison between a nation's total naval tonnage over the course of decades, serving to demonstrate a state's power projection across the globe. This variable will be allocated to all the subject countries and will be derived from the public dataset created by Crisher and Souva (Crisher & Souva, 2014). Following the analysis of this variable, each nation's rate and intensity of terrorism it experiences will be compared to the variable that comprises their total naval tonnage. The method by which the included countries were selected was a simple process of overlaying the naval tonnage dataset and the dataset from the Global Terrorism Database. As the GTD has data that spans from 1970 to 2020 any nation with complete naval tonnage data from 1970 to 2011 (the final year of the Crisher and Souva dataset) was included. This method notably led to the exclusion of Taiwan, as it did not have the data necessary to fully incorporate the control variables. This is because the World Bank does not include independent observations about GDP or population for Taiwan. Finally, the results of the previous step will be compared between all nations from the year 1970 to 2011, giving an insight into the possible correlation between a state's power projection and the frequency and intensity of terrorism it experiences. Overall, this model will not deviate from the literature, which posits that terrorism is spurred by instability and grievance. Instead, this model will seek to bridge the gap between the idea of power projection impacting either of the aforementioned causes of terrorism and thus impacting the rate of terrorism itself. This model will encourage further research, as the literature on the specific correlation between a state's power projection and the frequency and intensity of terrorism it experiences is sparse. While this research may provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between power projection and terrorism, it cannot provide a causal relationship.

While utilizing the model, I expect the results to demonstrate a positive correlation between a state's naval tonnage and the intensity and frequency of terrorism it experiences. A positive and significant coefficient on power projection given by the regression analysis will support the hypothesis that a nation conducting higher levels of power projection will result in more frequent and intense terrorism. Alternate results will lead me to reevaluate the relationship between power projection and terrorism.

IV. Results

Figures 1A and 1B show a visual breakdown of the two dependent variables across all the nations included within the study. Each figure plots the observed data points for each subject nation across the 41 years of data. Figure 1A showcases the level of terrorism frequency within a given country over time, while Figure 1B plots the observations relating to terrorism intensity.

Figure 1A

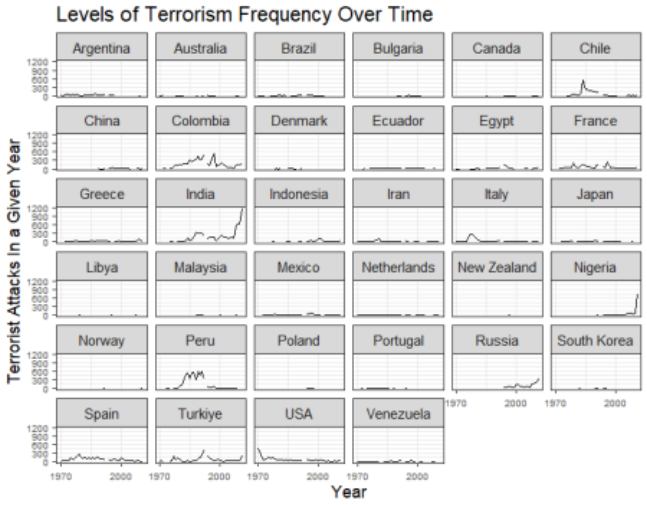
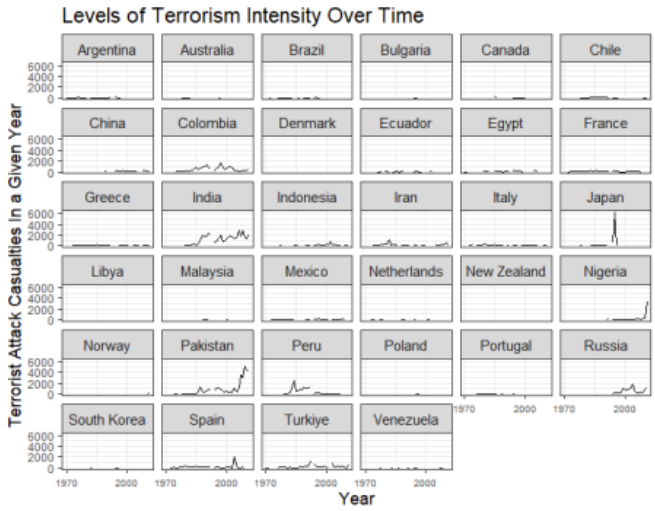


Figure 1B



As these figures demonstrate, the range of terrorist attacks in terms of frequency and intensity is quite high. The frequency of terrorist attacks in a given year ranges from a minimum of 1 to a maximum value of 2,368. The variance in terrorism frequency was extraordinarily high for the full set of countries, with a value of 20,346. After removing Pakistan as an outlier, the variance comes down to 12,114.

Terrorism intensity shows a similarly large range and variance. The range of terrorism intensity has a minimum value of 1 and a maximum of 24,908. Similarly, The variance in terrorism intensity also had an outlier, which was determined to be the United States. With the US removed, the variance of terrorism intensity was 327,299.

Figures 1A and 1B also show wide variation across countries. The mean across all states for terrorism frequency is 63.06 attacks per year, and the mean for terrorism in tensity is about 251 killed or wounded per year. Some countries suffer from very high levels of both terrorism frequency and intensity, such as India, Russia, and Peru. Although the average is likely inflated by a minority of states experiencing a higher level of terrorism frequency and intensity, which is indicated by the high variance observed across each dependent variable. No states included within Figures 1A or 1B were classified as outliers. The only outliers that were removed were the US from Figure 1B due to the massive amounts of casualties experienced during the September 11th attacks,

and Pakistan from Figure 1A due to an extraordinarily high rate of terrorism attacks being perpetrated starting around the year 2008. Figures 2A and 2B focus on these states.

Figure 2A

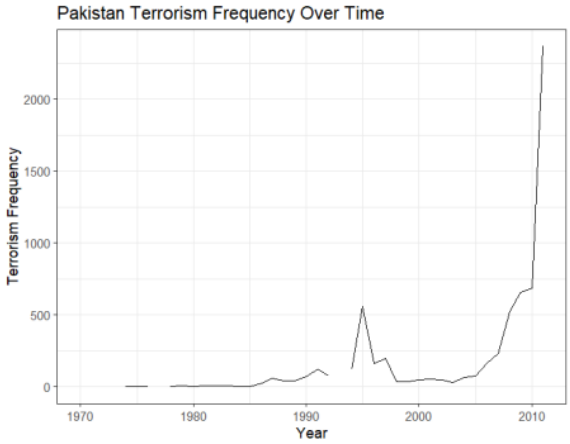
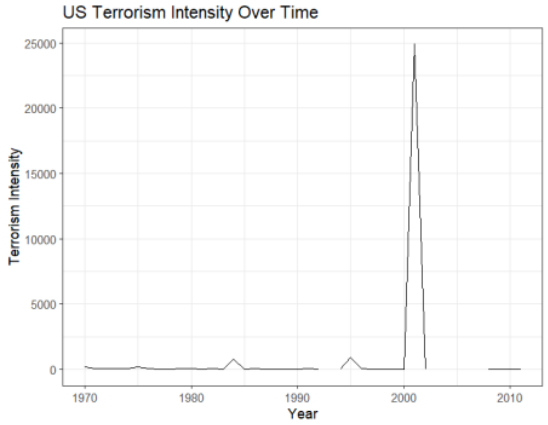


Figure 2B



To test my hypothesis, I utilized regression analyses to determine the correlation between a country's total naval tonnage and its levels of terrorism frequency and intensity.[1] Two models were analyzed, one for each dependent variable. In addition to the main independent variable, several control variables were also included to account for potentially confounding factors. These controls included a state's total GDP per year and its total population in a given year. Finally, dichotomous variables controlling for region were included in order to account for the geographical differences between the included countries. The data for GDP and population were derived from public data published by the World Bank, and the region distinctions were taken from those utilized in the Global Terrorism Database.

[1] For clarity with regard to quantitative results, a country's total naval tonnage was divided by 1000.

International Politics

Table 1

	Dependent variable:	
	TerrFreq	TerrInt
	(1)	(2)
TotalTonThousands	0.293***	−0.202
	(0.083)	(0.269)
Population	0.00000***	0.00000***
	(0.00000)	(0.00000)
GDP	−0.000***	−0.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)
factor(Region)East Asia	−31.374	−108.437
	(27.604)	(107.740)
factor(Region)Eastern Europe	−1.405	−63.914
	(22.944)	(100.457)
factor(Region)Middle East/North Africa	−17.219	−43.083
	(20.434)	(87.022)
factor(Region)North America	−0.982	−6.518
	(23.215)	(97.464)
factor(Region)South America	64.350***	154.738**
	(16.295)	(75.532)
factor(Region)Southeast Asia	−0.557	−34.021
	(26.413)	(103.692)
factor(Region)Western Europe	12.965	0.788
	(15.812)	(74.383)
Constant	−17.274	−23.877
	(14.968)	(72.269)
Observations	659	502
R^2	0.150	0.127
Adjusted R^2	0.137	0.109
Residual Std. Error	83.091 (df = 648)	254.910 (df = 491)
F Statistic	11.469*** (df = 10; 648)	7.136*** (df = 10; 491)
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In Model 1, using terrorism frequency as the dependent variable, the coefficient associated with a country's total naval tonnage is positive and statistically significant, with a p value of 0.012. This shows a strong positive correlation between a state's total naval tonnage and the frequency of terrorist attacks in that state. Substantively, Model 1 returns a coefficient of 0.09 meaning that an increase of a nation's total naval tonnage by 1000 tons would result in an increase of terrorism frequency within that state by 0.09. This can have large ramifications due to the massive scales on which some global navies operate, reaching values up to 2,862,437 tons for their total naval weight.

In Model 2, where terrorism intensity is the dependent variable, the correlation with a country's total naval tonnage is not statistically significant, with the model returning a p-value of 0.64. The p-value of 0.64 is indicative of a correlation so weak that terrorism intensity even falls out of the range of a suggestive correlation with total naval tonnage. The results for Models 1 and 2 are illustrated graphically in Figures 3A and 3B, respectively. Each figure plots the regression line along against the observed data points. Figure 3A shows the strong positive correlation between naval tonnage and terrorism frequency, while Figure 3B shows the insignificant relationship between naval tonnage and terrorism intensity.

Figure 3A

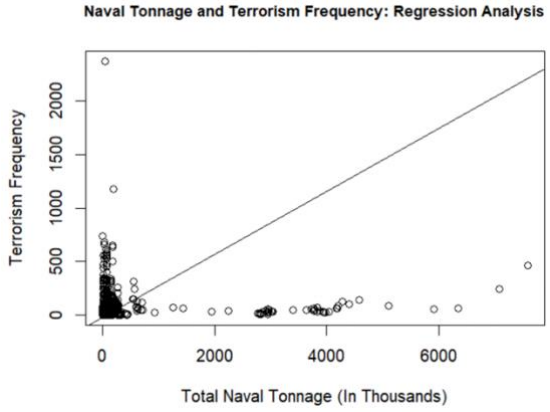
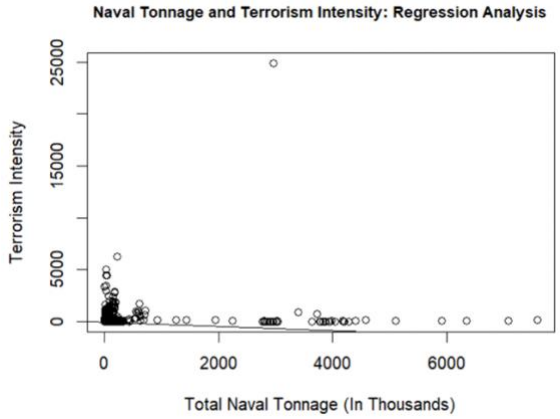


Figure 3B



V. Analysis

The results proved to be inconsistent with the initial hypothesis I proposed. I predicted that a country's total naval tonnage would be positively correlated with both terrorism frequency and intensity. However, it was only significantly positively correlated with terrorism frequency. This might be the case because terrorism frequency, as a variable, is far more robust. It remained significant throughout the implementation of the control variables and the robustness checks. This may be the case because there are fewer factors affecting terrorism frequency. In a real-world setting to follow through with a terrorist attack that is high in its intensity, individuals must be incredibly covert, coordinated, and thorough to carry it out. Most developed nations have some type of state-level apparatus which attempts to foil terrorist attacks at their inception. I would hypothesize that the higher capacity for intensity a single attack could have, the harder it is to maintain a strict level of coordination and inconspicuousness. Inversely, a terrorist cell, which seeks to advance with a plan that is less coordinated or covert and thus has a lower capacity for intensity, may not be flagged by security agencies, resulting in less casualties. Furthermore, the control variables that were implemented had a far greater effect on terrorism intensity than frequency as well. This highlights the robust nature of terrorism frequency and how it may not be affected by outside factors to the same degree that terrorism intensity is.

The real-world inferences that can be applied from the results relate the reaction states have to terrorism. It is apparent that individual states may react in a highly retaliatory manner to terrorism perpetrated within their borders. An example of this is the invocation of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) following the September 11th attacks in the United States and the massive projection of power abroad, led by the US, United Kingdom, and other NATO countries. A similar scenario to

this could, hypothetically, lead to short term domestic gains in the form of placating fearful constituents who were just attacked but could also have negative effects in the long term according to the results of this study. The projection of power correlating with an increase in terrorism frequency could lead to a type of self-defeating prophecy where, in an effort to better protect the citizens of a nation, governments indirectly foster environments which increase the risk of terrorism, achieving the opposite of the objective.

VI. Conclusion

Going forward, if there is data available for any number of nations' power projection over the course of decades, it could provide an even deeper understanding of the relationship between power projection and terrorism. Variables other than naval tonnage may serve as better indicators for a nation's overall power projection. Utilizing naval tonnage excludes other forms of projection, such as military installations or troop presence abroad. Further research would benefit from compiling this data and presenting decade-wise averages for each nation across all variables related to power projection. Because the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) has information on terrorism dating back to the 1970s, an average could readily be made for the frequency and intensity of terrorism within each country.

Furthermore, a filter may be applied to the Global Terrorism Database to remove specific instances of terrorism that are unclear or do not fit the parameters of the research. In regard to the correlation explored in this study, the filter section could be useful in removing instances that are not explicitly related to the operations of a nation abroad. The filter function of Global Terrorism Database, while extensive, is not a reasonable method for achieving a more specific data set, as it would require the manual selection of specific terror cells from a substantial list. This would not only be unreasonable, as the number of terror cells is disproportionate, but it would risk confounding the results in the event of an accidental exclusion or inclusion. Although the process would be intensive and risky, it would undoubtedly increase the quality of the research.

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Section 3:

Comparative Politics

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Featuring:

"Women in the Revolutionary Tide: A Comparative Study of Women's Participation in Southern African and Latin American Left-Wing Insurgencies"

Written by Adèle Bard
McGill University, International Relations Major, Class of 2024

"How Social Capital Enhances Political Participation: An Empirical Analysis of Ukraine"

Written by Yuxing (Nemo) Chen
University of Michigan, Political Science Major, Class of 2026

"Hemispheres of Geoengineering: An Analysis of Motivations for the Pursuit of Geoengineering in the Global North and South"

Written by Zoe Leff
Northeastern University, Environmental Science Major, Class of 2025

Comparative Politics

Women in the Revolutionary Tide: A Comparative Study of Women's Participation in Southern African and Latin American Left-Wing Insurgencies

Adèle Bard

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Abstract

This research explores the intricate dynamics of gender within left-wing rebel movements, comparing the Southern African insurgency groups ZANLA, ZIPRA, FRELIMO, and MK with the Latin American FARC and FMLN.

Through a cross-regional analysis, this study identifies both global trends and distinctive regional patterns in the ways women participate in left-wing insurgencies. Subsequently, the paper utilizes these comparisons and trends to comprehend the impact of women's engagement in advancing gender equality within movements.

To reach these findings, the paper examines both similarities and differences in women's engagement, delving into the complete timeline of their involvement. It begins by exploring women's motivations prior to enlistment. It subsequently investigates their assigned roles during the insurgency. The third focal point delves into their lived experiences within the movements, generally discussed following the end of the insurgency. Finally, the study explores the enduring post-insurgency implications they encountered.

Introduction

During the second half of the 20th century, left-wing rebel groups surged across the globe. This essay will examine the participation of women in leftist-rebel groups through a cross-regional analysis focusing on Latin America and Southern Africa. I will analyze women's motivations to join the movement, their assigned roles, their lived experiences, and the long-term implications they faced once the insurgency stopped. This analysis will draw insights from cases in the ZANLA (Zimbabwe), the ZIPRA (Zimbabwe), FRELIMO (Mozambique), the MK or "Umkhonto we Sizwe" (South Africa), the FARC (Colombia), and the FMLN (El Salvador).

This essay initially outlines global and regional trends regarding women's participation in left-wing rebel groups through a cross-regional comparison. I argue that women's involvement in leftist-rebel groups in Southern Africa and Latin America is remarkably similar, rooted in a shared foundation influenced by the group's leftist ideology and patriarchal dynamics. However, upon closer examination, distinct regional trends emerge, highlighting that each group aligns with the trends within its specific region. Subsequently, this essay leverages these comparisons and identified trends to deepen our understanding of how women's engagement in left-wing rebel groups has contributed to the advancement of gender equality in their respective countries. Here, I argue that groups exhibited superficial commitments to gender equality and women's emancipation, luring women into participating.

After providing background information on each rebel movement, I will review the available literature, beginning with global theories and then delving into regional and country-specific theories. The literature review will conclude by specifying the theories this essay will draw upon. This essay will first analyze the varied motives that influenced women to join movements in each region, laying the groundwork for the subsequent examination of regional trends in the roles assigned to women. Then, I will explore the similarities in women's lived experiences across both regions before delving into the dual nature of rebel movement reintegration processes.

I. Comparative Analysis of Left-Wing Rebel Movements Across Regions: Insights from Six Cases

I chose to compare a group of six rebel groups: four located in Southern Africa and two located in Latin America (Appendix A). Unlike other left-wing rebel groups under examination, the MK (Umkhonto we Sizwe) formed in 1961, stands out for its close association with the African National Congress. The ANC, initially founded in 1912, focused on political mobilization and nonviolent resistance against apartheid policies in South Africa. For many years, the ANC pursued its goals peacefully, advocating for equality and civil rights. The armed wing of the ANC, the MK, only emerged 49 years after the ANC in response to the limitations of nonviolent methods, increasing repression by the apartheid government, and the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960. The ANC's overarching objectives and dedication to combating apartheid prior to the creation of its armed wing significantly shaped women's experiences within the MK movement, mainly explaining the MK's distinctiveness in this research.

In Zimbabwe, I explored women's experiences in ZANLA and ZIPRA, armed wings respectively associated with ZANU and ZAPU. While operating in the Eastern Highlands (Appendix B), they addressed local issues such as land dispossession and redistribution while playing a crucial role in the liberation against minority rule in Rhodesia, seeking majority rule and Zimbabwe's independence.

Established in 1962, FRELIMO served as the armed wing of the Mozambique Liberation Front, responding to Portuguese colonialism and the oppression of black Mozambicans. FRELIMO aimed to end colonialism, attain independence, and establish a democratic Mozambique. This group exhibits a subtle deviation from regional trends, primarily for reasons similar to the MK. The armed wing of FRELIMO was established two years after its political foundation, explaining why FRELIMO prioritized women's education. This stands in contrast to other rebel groups in the region that concentrated solely on recruiting women for participation in insurgency efforts.

Established in 1966, the FARC served as the armed branch of the Colombian Communist Party. The movement was disarmed in 2016 following peace talks with the government, led by the UN in Cuba (Daren et al., 2019, p. 57). The FARC had a high proportion of female fighters, constituting 30 to 40% of its forces by the 21st century (Daren et al., 2019, p. 57). I deliberately selected only two cases in Latin America given that the FARC embodies how rebel movements interacted with women in the region.

The Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation or FMLN emerged from the association of five distinct Marxist groups: The FPL, the ERP, the FARN, the FAL, and the PRTC. In 1992, the FMLN demobilized due to a peace accord signed between the rebel movement and the government (Vazquez ,1997, p. 39). Women represented approximately 30% of the armed forces and 20% of the military leadership of the FMLN (Gonzalez, 2018, p. iv).

II. Literature Review

Literature on women's involvement in South African and Latin American left-wing rebel movements

Extensive research has been conducted on the involvement of women guerrilla fighters in rebel movements, resulting in numerous analyses. Wood's theory on the correlation between the level of female guerrilla fighters and the ideology of the rebel movement stands out as particularly compelling and applicable to both Southern Africa and Latin America. Wood establishes a robust link between the group's ideology, ranging from Marxism to Islamism, and the extent of female recruitment, emphasizing that variations in women's roles are correlated to the ideological orientation of the group (Wood, 2017, p. 31). Specifically, Wood contends that left-rebel groups are more likely to "exhibit a 'high' prevalence of female combatants," constituting approximately 24% of their total forces (Wood, 2017, p. 42). This high prevalence is attributed to the ideological affinity of leftist-rebel groups with Marx, who underscored the significance of the position of women in society as an indicator of societal progress (Wood, 2017, p. 34). Building upon Wood's findings, my research exclusively focuses on leftist guerrilla movements, anticipating a greater enrollment of women in these groups (Appendix C).

Scholars examining the involvement of women in leftist-rebel movements –in Southern Africa and Latin America equally– came to disagree on the impact of women's participation, debating whether it led to their subsequent emancipation or if their

integration into armed movements was merely a response to wartime needs. In this discourse, Mudeka contends that women's multifaceted contributions during the conflict, encompassing simultaneously traditionally feminine roles and military activities, triggered a "progressive reevaluation of gender norms" and societal perceptions of women (Mudeka, 2014, p. 102). In contrast, Nhongo-Simbanegavi posits a theory suggesting that the war further solidified male dominance, despite exceptional circumstances –where women's contribution could significantly advance national liberation–, patriarchal societal structures prevented their direct involvement in the conflict (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000). In this essay, I refute the conclusions of both Mudeka and Nhongo-Simbanegavi. Drawing from the perspectives of Mashingaidze on Southern Africa and Lopera-Arbeláez (2022) on Latin America, I argue that leftist-rebel movements exhibited a superficial commitment to gender equality while maintaining deeply rooted patriarchal tendencies that persisted during and after the struggle. Women's empowerment was essentially a perception during times of conflict; however, the post-conflict period reflects a continuation of patriarchy and structural gender inequalities.

Theories

Scholars and researchers have developed theories based on the dynamics of rebel conflicts within specific states or regions. In South Africa, Jacklyn Cock (1994) highlights the discrimination between white and black women involved in the armed forces. She posits that the roles of black women in the armed struggle were often residual positions left by white women, emphasizing the difference between the "protected roles" of white women and the "resistance roles" undertaken by black women. Turning to El Salvador, Vázquez contends that the FMLN lacked a "progressive theory about sexuality" and, more specifically, failed to address the oppression of women's sexual lives. This absence of understanding and theoretical framework around sexuality within rebel camps prevented the movement from "interpreting constructively the changes that took place in these domains" (Vázquez, 1997, p. 145). In the broader context of Latin America, Viterna (2013) and CANLA articles offer theoretical perspectives that challenge the binary views held by many scholars. The experiences of women within rebel camps, according to Viterna, defy simplistic categorizations. Women did not solely assume roles as cooks or commandants in chief, nor did they join purely due to ideology or kinship networks. Viterna urges us to recognize the heterogeneity of women's motivations for enlistment, roles and experiences within insurgent movements.

Origins of our research

This research essay emerged from a noticeable gap in the existing literature. First, while women's involvement in leftist-rebel movements has been extensively studied, there is a lack of cross-regional and cross-case analyses. The only exception I encountered was Caitlin Mary Troup's thesis, which explored the differences in women's experiences in South Africa and South Korea. However, I found no literature focusing on the comparison of female involvement across Southern Africa and Latin America, leading me to delve into this unexplored territory. Secondly, the literature on women's participation in insurgency movements often highlights the absence of true emancipation post-conflict without thoroughly exploring the underlying reasons for this limited progress, despite left-wing groups constructing entire campaigns around the promise of a better future for women. This essay aims to fill this gap in the literature by providing explanations for the insufficient realization of women's emancipation after conflicts.

Building on Wood's theory, my research exclusively focuses on leftist-rebel movements, intentionally excluding RENAMO from consideration. I align with Mashingaidze and Lopera-Arbeláez's perspective on the limited impact of women's involvement in long-term women's emancipation. Additionally, I draw from Viterna's heterogeneity theory, expanding its application beyond Latin America, to Southern African cases.

Limitations of the essay

Like any undergraduate research, this essay has its share of limitations. Firstly, the distribution of groups across regions is uneven, with Latin America solely represented by two insurgency groups. This limitation stems from the predominant focus of researchers on the FARC, thereby curbing valuable knowledge and information about other insurgency groups in the region. Secondly, given the extensive scope of my research covering the complete spectrum of women's involvement in insurgency groups from beginning to end, the availability of resources has not been optimal. I aimed to gather reliable information on women's participation at every stage, leading me to exclude under-studied Latin American insurgency groups. Thirdly, the majority of research I encountered lacks direct voices of women. Many of the studies were authored by researchers without incorporating direct quotations from the women who lived these experiences. Consequently, this tendency relegates women's voices to a secondary position, a deviation from the original intent I had for this research. Lastly, I want to underscore the importance of acknowledging the diversity of women's experiences within left-wing rebel movements. Recognizing the limitations of my essay, framing "women" as a homogeneous group and theorizing their experiences represent a constraint in understanding the full spectrum of their unique engagement within rebel groups.

III. Women in Left-Wing Rebel Movements: Exploring Structural Dynamics

Delving into the structure and organizational dynamics of left-wing rebel groups is a crucial element to gain insights into the roles and experiences of women who served within their ranks. Furthermore, acquiring insights into the structural dynamics of a movement will enhance our understanding of the dearth of emancipation for women in the post-struggle period. In the Southern African ZANLA and ZIPRA, the active participation of women at the leadership level was allowed (Chogugudza, 2023, p. 31-32), as "women comrades [were] represented at every level of [the] organization" (Mudeka, 2014, p. 83). However, drawing upon Lopera-Arbeláez's theory, the influence of women in leadership was limited: it simply facilitated a shift in how gender is perceived rather than influencing gender related behaviors within rebel movements in Southern Africa.

The situation within MK was notably different, distancing itself from regional dynamics. Women played a predominant role in the logistical aspects of the underground structures used by MK, engaging in tasks like passport preparation and arms smuggling logistics. The presence of women within the armed ranks was limited, with even fewer occupying positions in MK's decision-making leadership (Appendix D) (Makau, 2009, p. 60). The examination of Mandela's chapter, "Birth of a Freedom Fighter," underscores this observation: exclusively male names are referenced (1994, pp. 83–85). Similarly, left-wing movements in Latin America exhibit extremely patriarchal command structures, leaving no space for women in leadership (Kermanshahchi, 2020, p. 141). The FARC, for instance, has been characterized by scholars as a highly hierarchical military organization, intentionally keeping external information sources limited (Gutiérrez Sanín & Carranza Franco, 2017, p. 174). The FMLN was equally chauvinistic and hierarchical, and "great obstacles were put in [women's] way reaching the higher ranks of power in the hierarchy (Vázquez, 1997, p. 141). In Latin America, patriarchy and machismo shaped the structures and decisions of movements, affecting the roles and perceptions of women within their ranks. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the impact of these structural elements is limited in the face of the demands of the war: fighting for the cause "was in some way an equalizer," enabling women's participation despite their lack of representation in top leadership (Ryan, 2013, p. 24).

When considering structural dynamics, regional trends prevailed over global trends. We discover that in Latin America and with the MK, women lacked access to leadership roles. In Southern African groups like ZANLA and ZIPRA, while women's participation was permitted, there is no indication of a genuine organizational commitment to ensuring women were granted leadership positions. The MK diverged from the South African trend, and I propose that this distinction stems from the MK's strong affiliation with the ANC and the ANC's lack of women in its political elites. Consequently, the structure of each group, characterized by an absence of women in

leadership roles, stems from deeply ingrained patriarchal traditions and operational norms, and serves as a key factor explaining the lack of genuine empowerment for women through their involvement in left-wing insurgencies globally.

IV. Understanding Their Choices: Exploring Reasons for Women's Participation in Rebel Movements

Women's enlistment in left-wing rebel movements was driven by a variety of motivations. Across movements in Southern Africa and Latin America, women were influenced to join by a standard set of foundational factors, specifically (1) economic incentives, (2) safety concerns, (3) perceived empowerment opportunities and (4) religious motivations. However, an important distinction emerges between Southern African and Latin American movements regarding women's political awareness level. Women in Southern African left-wing rebel movements were primarily driven by their political consciousness. Contrastingly, women in Latin America joined the insurgency due to interpersonal factors. While the foundational reasons for women's enlistment were similar in both regions, the driving factor differed. Concluding this section, I will delve into the connection between women's motivations to join and the recruitment techniques utilized by rebel groups based on the primary motivations of their prospective recruits. Examining these recruitment techniques will provide a deeper understanding of the limited progress made in women's emancipation post-struggle.

Economic incentives

Many women joined left-wing rebel movements to alleviate the economic hardships imposed by harsh governmental policies on their households' daily lives. In the FARC, the FMLN, ZANLA, ZIPRA, FRELIMO and the MK alike, women were compelled to act in response to the devastations of poverty during wartime, highlighting the severe effects of the war within both regions. Becoming a member of rebel forces granted economic benefits and an escape door from "dreary lives circumscribed by poverty" (Manuel & Cáez, 2014, p. 17). Women joined ZIPRA and MK ranks in southern Africa to improve conditions for themselves and their families (Chogugudza, 2023, p. 37). Combatant roles within Latin American movements provided an economic melioration for women who wished to flee poverty, although they were not paid positions (Kazman, 2019, p. 12).

Security concerns

Despite the geographical distance between Latin America and Southern Africa, we observe women joining the ranks for similar security concerns. In South Africa, the imposition of a general state of emergency and state repression in response to the 1976 and mid-1980s uprisings "turned the townships into battle zones" (Makau, 2009, p. 8). The activism and engagement of students with the ANC drew the attention of the apartheid police, leading to targeted actions against schools and universities. This constant threat of police repression instilled fear among students, gradually pushing them to seek refuge within MK ranks (Makau, 2009, p. 8). Similarly, in Zimbabwe, ever-present police brutality served as a compelling factor that motivated women to join ZIPRA (Alexander & McGregor, 2004, p. 85). In a similar vein, Latin America witnessed women joining rebel movements due to the dual influence of state repression and domestic abuse. The escalation of domestic violence against women heightened existing feelings of insecurity –exacerbated by ongoing conflicts– which compelled women to leave abusive homes (Rubio, 2013, p. 34; Daren et al., 2019, p. 65). According to the World Health Organization, approximately 20% of women in Colombia experienced domestic abuse during the civil war (as cited in De Bruyn, 2003), and Rubio (2013) identifies male domestic abuse as the principal reason for girls' involvement –as early as six years old (Appendix E) (Viterna, 2013, p. 101). The sanctuaries where young children should feel secure –their homes– were transformed into abusive households by the ravages of war. I suspect that the men who stayed behind, not enlisting with either the rebel movement or the government army, felt emasculated: they channeled their anger and frustration onto their families, creating a rise in violence against women and girls, propelling them to seek refuge within rebel movements' ranks (Viterna, 2013, p. 101).

Perceived opportunities

Across movements in Southern Africa and Latin America, women's participation in rebel movements was often driven by the expectation of empowerment. Zimbabwean women joined ZIPRA or ZANLA to “assert their equality as human beings” (Chogugudza, 2023, p. 37). However, many women experienced disillusionment upon enrollment, finding that the roles, respect, and treatment they anticipated were not always fulfilled. The documentary "Guerilla Grannies" sheds light on the contrasting reality faced by former female guerrilla fighters of FRELIMO, illustrating a disparity between expectations and actual experiences (Bertels, 2013). Women joined Latin American rebel groups enticed by the promise of gender equality, empowerment opportunities, and upward mobility that these groups seemed to offer. Both the FMLN and the FARC were perceived as advocates for greater gender equality compared to civilian life (Stanski, 2006, p. 148). Women seeking to join the FARC were enticed by the power and status that would be earned by holding a gun (Herrera & Porch 2008, p. 616), while the appeal of the FMLN was its willingness to place women in control of the tasks they aspired to perform (Viterna, 2013, p. 135). However, women’s daily realities involved forced contraception in the FARC and unattainable command roles in the FMLN (Stanski, 2006, p. 148).

I align with Roggeveen's assertion that, in both regions, empowering women was not the actual goal of rebel groups (Roggeveen, 2003, p. 25). Rebel groups manipulated the idea of empowerment to attract women, who anticipated and perceived this empowerment to be confirmed before joining. The portrayal of the "guerilla mom" in propaganda posters lured women, suggesting that the movement would empower them by allowing a dual role: pursuing motherhood while contributing to the fight for freedom (Appendix F). However, as we will explore, the actual experiences of women within rebel movements greatly differed from the propagated narrative.

Religious motivations

Lastly, it is interesting to underscore the significance of religion, often an understudied aspect, as a compelling factor attracting women into rebel movements. In Zimbabwe, Nehanda, a female spirit medium, played a pivotal role in urging individuals – particularly women– to join the armed struggle (Lyons, 2004, p. 87). Likewise, in El Salvador, the widespread presence of Catholic schools across the nation, coupled with the teachings and influence of Liberation Theology from Catholic nuns, significantly impacted Salvadorian women and motivated their participation in the armed struggle (Ryan, 2013, p. 71).

Southern Africa’s political awareness

However, a distinct contrast emerges between Southern Africa and Latin America regarding political awareness. I suggest that years of oppressive colonialism equipped Southern African women with a profound understanding of their countries' political landscapes, sharpening their political consciousness and compelling them to join left-wing rebel movements for the political education they offered. In contrast, Colombia and El Salvador achieved independence from Spanish colonial rule in 1810 and 1821, respectively—nearly 150 years before the Southern African countries under consideration in our study. For example, in Rubio’s study (2013), it is revealed that ideology accounts for only 8 percent of the reasons why women joined the armed struggle in Latin America (see Appendix G). Differently, in Zimbabwe, women wanted to "remove the chains of British settler colonialism" (The Sunday Mail, 2016) and address land dispossession, as seen in their desire to redistribute the land after years of loss (Mudeka, 2014, p. 86). The life of Maria Sulila, known as "the educated one" in the short film "Guerrilla Grannies," reflects the sharp political consciousness of women enrolled in Mozambique’s rebel ranks, and their desire to educate themselves through the movement. In South Africa, women honed their political awareness through outlets such as the ANC’s radio “Radio Freedom”, the ANC’s journal “Sechaba,” or other ANC pamphlets, attracting them toward the MK (Makau, 2009, p. 15). In the course of my research, I noted that South African women enrolled in the MK, driven by aspirations for self-determination and national liberation, displayed the highest level of political consciousness within the Southern

African regional trend, once again highlighting the distinctiveness of the MK compared to other rebel groups (Magadla, 2021, p. 568). The divergence between South African and Latin American experiences stems from their struggles for independence andthe histories of their respective movements. As previously discussed, the ANC (linked to the MK) and FRELIMO initially functioned as political entities before resorting to arms, naturally emphasizing political ideologies more than their Latin American counterparts.

Latin America's interpersonal factors

Distinctively, in Latin America, women's motivation for joining rebel movements was not primarily driven by political awareness, with ideology accounting for only 8% of the factors explaining their enrollment (Appendix G). Instead, interpersonal reasons played a predominant role, as women often joined due to the influence of their networks, since existing connections accentuated positive and trustworthy sentiments around the group (Kazman, 2019, p. 11). In the case of the FARC, Rubio argues that 41% of female combatants contacted the group through family ties (2013, p. 35). Additionally, joining these movements offered women "moral and affective benefits" (Wood, 2003, as cited in Gonzalez, 2018, p. 17), providing a break from their previous lives and gaining stability, friends, arms to act and means to express their grief (Herrera & Porch, 2008, p. 616). Wood (2003) contends that obtaining these moral and affective benefits through FMLN enrolment was crucial for the emergence of "insurgent collective action." Finally, Herrera and Porch's essay, titled "Like Going to a Fiesta" (2008), underscores how women in Latin America perceived the guerrilla experience as a positive and enjoyable venture, and how this rose-colored perception of rebel groups contributes to their enlistment. In my view, the absence of a strong political consciousness among Latin American women further confined them to secondary roles, as explored in the following paragraph.

Recruitment processes

Through a cross-regional investigation of women's motivations to join insurgency movements, I found that a shared set of foundational factors influenced women across both regions. Nevertheless, the driving factor differed, leading Southern African movements to rely on women's political awareness, and Latin American groups to accentuate interpersonal recruitment channels. Understanding the motivations behind women's enlistment is a crucial step for comprehending how rebel movements have crafted their recruitment processes.

Historically, Latin American rebels had no intention of placing women at the forefront. However, in the initial phases of Colombian and Salvadoran insurgencies, women joined to offset the shortage of fighters—casualties were high, and men's recruitment fell short of rebels' needs (Viterna, 2013, pp. 63–135). When rebel groups came to recognize women's worth, they tailored recruitment techniques to increase women's participation. While the FARC adjusted its internal structure to facilitate greater female involvement, the FMLN modified its ideology to foster increased gender equality and boost women's recruitment (Kampwirth, 2002). Hence, notwithstanding the leftist campaign rhetoric emphasizing women's emancipation, the primary recruiting objective was the necessity for women in the war effort. This understanding of the motives behind women's enlistment elucidates the absence of women's emancipation post-struggle, as it was simply not a prioritized concern for left-wing insurgency groups.

V. Examining Women's Roles in Rebel Movements: Empowering or Undermining?

Women's roles in left-wing rebel movements were significantly diverse, ranging from support tasks such as cleaning and cooking to active participation as guerrilla fighters (Appendix H). In Southern African rebel movements, women predominantly occupied secondary roles, whereas in Latin American movements, their contributions to the armed forces were integral to the high levels of operation within the movements.

In Southern Africa, despite brief mentions of female guerrilla fighters in armed ranks, especially through the "guerilla mom" narrative, all sources depict women in secondary roles. Despite their political engagement, women faced limitations in accessing combat positions, often confined to rear bases and relegated to inferior positions

(Appendix I) (Mashingaidze, 2003, p. 141). Both in military and civilian spheres, women remained subordinate to men, assigned to traditional female roles (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000). The lack of extensive female involvement within the armed forces of the movement is the only point on which MK does not differ from the regional trend (Magadla, 2021, p. 27). The camp houses of the MK guerrillas were called the "Mzana" or "small homes," portraying their inferiority compared to male combatants (Magadla, 2021, p. 27). Whether in Mozambique or South Africa, women's involvement in FRELIMO and MK was predominantly indirect (Magadla, 2021, p. 570). As one participant in the Lawyers Without Borders report recounted: "[despite my training] For years I served as their cook" (Impact of Armed Conflicts on the Lives of Women and Girls in Mozambique, 2018, p. 44). Even in ZANLA and ZIPPA, where women appeared actively involved in the armed forces, their roles remained secondary. Despite taking on tasks typically associated with men, such as transporting munitions and "carry[ing] bullets grenades A.K. 47 guns and other war material," women rarely engaged in using them (Mudeka, 2014, p. 90).

Distinctively, women in Latin America were key components of the insurgent armed forces, forming between 30 to 35 percent of soldiers in the case of FARC (Comba, 2015, p. 163). Their involvement in the armed forces challenged traditional gender norms as they assumed various key responsibilities, encompassing "military, operational, tactical, judicial, and recruitment functions, to more basic social, supportive, and community roles" (Restrepo, 2022). According to Diana Acuña, the head of NGO Sinestesia, gender equality was more pronounced during the war within FARC than in the post-conflict reincorporation phase, emphasizing the egalitarian nature of women's roles in Latin America struggles (Rueda, 2018). I assert that FARC stands out as the group that embraced women most inclusively within its armed ranks, providing them with equal fighting opportunities during the conflict. The profound engagement of women in the FARC resulted in the creation of spaces where "gender inequalities were renegotiated, rethought, and redefined" (Sanín & Carranza, 2017, p. 179).

A surprising contrast emerges from our cross-regional analysis of women's roles in armed struggles. While Southern African women, despite their political awareness and top leadership inclusion, were relegated to secondary positions, Latin American women easily accessed combatant roles. I suggest that Southern African groups were influenced by a more pronounced patriarchal system, limiting women's participation in armed roles. In Latin American movements, though also patriarchal, women faced comparatively fewer restrictions than their counterparts in Southern Africa. Examining women's roles in each rebel movement was crucial to minimize its impact as a confounding variable. In this cross-regional comparative study, I explored the structural dynamics of each group. I investigated the specific roles women undertake to gain a nuanced understanding of their position within left-wing insurgency groups. This precision helps mitigate the potential influence of women's diverse roles on our next section: their lived experiences within the movement.

VI. Women's Experiences in Rebel Groups: A Systematic Deprivation of Femininity and Womanhood.

The individual experiences of women within movements showed minimal variation between Southern Africa and Latin America, predominantly centering around reproductive rights and sexuality. Across all movements, a consistent pattern emerged where propaganda strategically crafted the image of the "guerrilla mom," uniquely combining "motherhood with militant activism" (Appendix F) (Miller, p. 60). Despite this idealized image, women experienced instances of sexual abuse, rape, forced marriages, and compelled contraception.

In Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Colombia, and El Salvador, repression characterized every aspect of womanhood. Women's sexual pleasure was prohibited, as was engaging in affairs with male soldiers (Vázquez, 1997, p. 143). The consequences of sexual relations in leftist rebel movements, including pregnancies and diseases, were consistently attributed to women. They were frequently punished for perceived "misbehaviours" (Vázquez, 1997, p. 142) which could lead to accusations of disrupting the camps' productivity (Chogugudza, 2023, pp. 44–45).

In Southern Africa, women were dissuaded from engaging in their sexual lives through the unavailability of contraceptives, with the awareness that pregnancy would lead the movement to compel them to undergo abortions (Moloney, 2011). These measures were implemented to maintain the focus on warfare, deemed incompatible with family life (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000). Conversely, in Latin America, movements took a different approach, coercing women to use contraceptives and mandating abortions if these measures failed (Lopera-Arbeláez, 2022, pp. 226–234). However, male sexuality, irrespective of hierarchical levels, "was seen to have no limits nor to admit of delays in its satisfaction," which led to a surge in sexual assaults and rape against women (Vázquez, 1997, p. 143). Notably, the increase in rape incidents was exacerbated by the enlistment of young guerrilla fighters, as "older and more educated women were less vulnerable to exploitation than young girls" (Appendix E) (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000, p. 8).

In both Southern Africa and Latin America, the overarching challenge women faced when enlisted in left-rebel movements was the commodification of their bodies, viewed as "useful" tools for providing pleasure and services to men ("Impact of Armed Conflicts on the Lives of Women and Girls in Mozambique," 2018, p. 41). Male violence against women extended beyond young girls, and beyond their own camps; instead, women's bodies became battlegrounds where rape techniques were employed to demoralize opponents and instill fear. Regrettably, this violence against women and their bodies often goes unnoticed, dismissed as collateral damage (as noted in "Impact of Armed Conflicts on the Lives of Women and Girls in Mozambique," 2018, p. 35).

Throughout their engagement, women endured systematic deprivation of femininity and womanhood (Kermanshahchi, 2020, p. 138). This experience proved to be extremely challenging for women, who had to sacrifice prime years, relationships, and family life for the cause, disrupting motherhood, and denying the opportunity to lead a "regular life" (Vázquez, 1997, p. 143). Through this cross-regional comparison, the striking similarities in women's engagement with sexuality between Southern African and Latin American cases –despite their difference in leadership level and insurgency roles as explored earlier– support the idea that despite following leftist ideologies and incorporating women into their ranks, rebel groups were still deeply influenced by patriarchy.

Following the 52-year ban on pregnancies by FARC, the baby boom in 2016 reflects women's urge to reclaim their motherhood (Appendix J). However, as women sought to regain the womanhood that had been denied them during the insurgency, they inadvertently found themselves moving farther away from gender equality in the eyes of society. While having undertaken roles traditionally considered masculine throughout the conflict, women yearned to experience motherhood and establish families post-insurgency. However, their desire for womanhood reinforced their alignment with conventional gender roles in the post-insurgency society's perception. This aligns with Nhongo-Simbanegavi's theory, suggesting that the war further solidified male dominance (2000). In this context, the rebel movements they were part of offered no assistance in reshaping society's view of their women ex-combatants as being both mothers and emancipators from traditional gender roles.

Upon observing a notably limited number of sources addressing sexual abuses within the MK in South Africa, I have chosen to exclude the MK from our discussion. This decision once again underscores the distinctiveness of the MK compared to other rebel movements (Magadla, 2021, p. 570). I posit that the scarcity of sources on women's sexual abuses in the MK can be attributed to the movement's close ties with the ANC and the stringent command structure imposed by the ANC. This structure either (1) prevented various types of abuses within the MK or (2) utilized its influence to suppress reported cases of abuses.

VII. Implications of Women's Involvement Within Rebel Movements: Challenges and Hope

In the post-struggle era, many women encountered challenges and endured negative implications from their involvement in armed struggles. Recognition and reintegration of former guerrilla fighters and their representation in decision-making processes were difficult in both Southern African and Latin American movements. In the

absence of structured programs for supporting the reintegration of ex-female guerrilla fighters, each movement's management of the post-conflict period reveals mixed results and glimpses of hope.

Challenges

In both ZIPRA and ZANLA, women encountered challenges in gaining recognition for their contributions and were marginalized in post-struggle society. Despite being portrayed as "guerilla heroes" during the war, society was uneasy with their dual identity as both female and fighter (Chogugudza, 2023, p. 49). Moreover, post-struggle governments often grappled with the effective reintegration of rebel fighters: the most common solutions were (1) either abandoning them or (2) offering them jobs primarily within the confined realm of the armed forces (Reuters, 1981). Women's limited reintegration opportunities and their underrepresentation in decision-making bodies remained extremely constraining, contributing to a neglect of gender issues in post-struggle Zimbabwe (Mashingaidze, 2003, p. 141). In Mozambique, the government struggled to include women in its transitional justice considerations, leaving many abuses against women during the war unaddressed. The absence of structural mechanisms that recognized women's contributions within FRELIMO denied most women the opportunity to receive compensation and pensions for their efforts (Impact of Armed Conflicts on the Lives of Women and Girls in Mozambique, 2018, p. 63). Only a fortunate few, highlighted in the short film "Guerilla Grannies," managed to navigate bureaucratic procedures to be recognized and receive pensions and compensations (Bertels et al., 2013). Post-struggle, women were left poorer and further excluded (Magadla 2021, p. 570).

Similarly, in Latin America, ex-female guerrilla fighters faced societal stigma due to their experiences during the years of conflict. Their engagement in jungle warfare set them apart from the broader society, posing a myriad of challenges for societal reintegration (Restrep, 2022, p. 20). As observed in Southern African cases, former FARC guerrillas encountered employer bias and economic insecurity post-war: they struggled to secure employment due to a lack of diverse skills beyond those acquired in combat at a young age (Lopera-Arbeláez, 2022, pp. 403–419). Despite the Colombian government's efforts to implement effective reintegration programs, these initiatives consistently lacked the precise knowledge of the specific needs of former female fighters transitioning into new societies. For example, the absence of childcare services in Colombian Territorial Spaces of Training and Reintegration (ETCR) reflects the government's insensitivity, complicating women's efforts to balance "between motherhood and reintegration" (Rueda, 2018). Finally, the unexpected violence against ex-female fighters in El Salvador, involving physical abuse, intimidation, assassination, victimization, and targeting by death squads, was a surprising revelation in my research, deviating from the general responses observed in other states (Serrano, 2017).

Optimism in reintegration processes

However, it is essential to nuance our understanding of the transition from armed struggle to democracy in Southern Africa and Latin America. In its unique approach, each rebel movement worked to facilitate an efficient and smooth reintegration of its former guerrilla fighters, instilling hope within the transition process. Former female guerrilla fighters in South Africa gained recognition through images associated with the "guerrilla mom" myth. These photographs –taken to showcase women's active participation during propaganda campaigns–

significantly contributed to recognizing women's contributions and enhancing their political agency in society (Miller, 2009, p. 750). In Zimbabwe, the government initiated the "Education for All Policy" and "Adult Literacy Campaign", resulting in a significant drop in women's illiteracy rates to 11.75% (Mudeka, 2014, p. 101). Similarly, in Mozambique, the "Women's Detachment" committee of FRELIMO successfully positioned women's education as instrumental in the country's fight for independence, emphasizing that an educated woman could "make a far more constructive contribution to the revolution than an ignorant one" (Adam Matthew Digital, "Passive Women", 2018). FRELIMO posters (Appendix K) showcase the high value placed on women's education. Maria Sulila's successful career abroad exemplifies FRELIMO's deep commitment to

women's education and support for their political emancipation post-war, recognizing the mutual benefits brought to the movement (Bertels et al., p. 2013). I attribute FRELIMO's emphasis on women's literacy to its historical evolution as a political movementbefore taking up arms.

In Latin America, women's reintegration into society, particularly in the case of the FARC, had positive aspects. Women significantly influenced the 2016 peace accords, with their voices heard through the "sub-commission of gender" during negotiations, ensuring the inclusion of women's perspectives (Rueda, 2018). However, in my perspective, the extensive consideration given to women in Colombia's peace process was largely influenced by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, recognizing the crucial role women play in promoting international stability (Gonzalez, 2014). In the case of the FMLN, the reintegration and reconstruction packages, known as the Land Transfer Program or Programa de Transferencia de Tierras (PTT), showcased the government's significant efforts in reintegrating former female fighters into society. The negotiation team responsible for these packages comprised six women and one man, ensuring a strong representation of women's perspectives and interests (Conaway & Martínez, 2004, pp. 14–17). Consequently, one-third of total PTT beneficiaries were women (Appendix L).

While the reintegration of former female guerrilla fighters in both Southern Africa and Latin America presents challenges and glimpses of hope, I tend to believe that insurgency movements, across regions, have not made enough efforts to reintegrate women, nor to enact their emancipation in the eyes of society. Enrolling women was a consequence of war, rather than a genuine desire to fully integrate them into this chapter of their country's history.

While each rebel movement aligns with its regional tendency, the MK again stands in contrast to the norm. Sources on MK female fighters lack mention of the challenges or successes of their reintegration. I interpret this absence as (1) the majority of women having non-combatant roles, easing their societal reintegration, and (2) the overshadowing difficulty of men's reintegration in South Africa, minimizing discussions about women's reintegration (Douek, 2020). However, obtaining more information about women's reintegration in South Africa would have been beneficial to gain a deeper understanding of the current status of gender dynamics and women's emancipation in the country.

VIII. Conclusion

This essay presented a comprehensive comparison of women's involvement in insurgency groups in Southern Africa and Latin America. It first argued that leftist-rebel movements across both regions consistently exhibited foundational similarities owing to their leftist ideology and patriarchal influences. When global trends were not discernable and similarities played a limited explanatory role, this paper successfully identified regional trends. While almost every group adhered to its regional trend, this paper delineated the distinctiveness of women's involvement in the MK compared to its counterparts in the region and Latin America. I suggest this difference is attributed to the close ties the ANC maintained with the MK, significantly influencing the rebel group's decision-making processes.

In the second part of this paper, I argued, leveraging our cross-regional comparison and emerging trends, that women's participation in left-wing insurgency groups did not lead to their emancipation from traditional gender narratives post-conflict. Despite the groups' advertised commitments, the emancipation of female participants was not a priority within their agendas, and their support in the fight for emancipation was either nonexistent or very limited. Gaining insights into the reasons behind the failure of women's emancipation within left-wing rebel groups, primarily attributed to its non-prioritization and entrenched patriarchy, can offer valuable lessons about the present state of gender relations in Latin American and Southern African countries. This holds particular relevance, especially considering that the cessation of activities for groups like the FARC or the FMLN is a recent development.

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Comparative Politics

How Social Capital Enhances Political Participation: An Empirical Analysis of Ukraine

Yuxing (Nemo) Chen

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Introduction

The relationship between war and democratization is a long-disputed topic in political science, with scholars examining how conflict reshapes political systems and societal structures (Gennaioli and Voth 2015, Dincecco and Onorato 2016, Self 2023, Johns and Davies 2012). While conventional wisdom often emphasizes the destructive effects of war, recent conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war offer a more nuanced perspective, demonstrating how war can paradoxically foster democratic resilience (Schmäing 2024, Onuch 2022). According to the KIIS survey, in Ukraine, the invasion by Russian forces in 2022 not only brought immense human and material losses but also catalyzed an unprecedented level of societal mobilization. This mobilization, however, transcended the mere defense of national sovereignty; it activated a more profound transformation within Ukrainian society, fostering networks of trust, cooperation, and collective action—essential components of social capital.

Social capital, defined as the networks and norms of trust and reciprocity that facilitate collective action (Putnam, 1994), plays a crucial role in shaping political participation. Civil society must fill the gap in conflict zones, where state institutions are often weakened leading to increased political engagement and democratic activities. Ukraine's case provides a unique opportunity to explore how social capital can contribute to the political participation process.

The Russian invasion has united a previously fragmented society, as seen in the widespread emergence of mutual aid organizations and community-driven efforts to rebuild war-torn infrastructure. This grassroots mobilization aligns with the concept of social capital as articulated by Putnam, where trust and cooperation among citizens promote political participation. As Ukrainian citizens organized volunteer groups and defense militias, they simultaneously fostered the development of civic networks, which are often precursors to more sustained democratic engagement.

This paper investigates how military mobilization during the Russia-Ukraine war has enhanced social capital and impacted political participation. Drawing on a dataset from the GDELT database, this study examines over 60,000 events between 2015 and 2024, focusing on the interplay between military mobilization, social capital, and democratization. By analyzing these dynamics, the paper aims to provide empirical evidence that wartime social cohesion can help democratic development, even in the face of external threats and internal disruptions.

I. Theoretical Framework

The relationship between social capital and political participation is a focal point in political science, particularly in understanding how social networks and trust facilitate collective action and political engagement (La Due Lake and Huckfeldt 1998, Lowndes 2004, Teney and Hanquinet 2012). The connections between citizens plays a pivotal role in fostering political participation, especially in societies undergoing transformative events like military mobilization. Conflict and post-conflict settings, as seen in Ukraine, create a unique environment for the development and activation of social networks, shaping the political behavior of citizens.

Existing research has explored various mechanisms through which social capital influences political participation. Putnam (2000) argues that social networks, built on mutual trust and cooperation, create the foundation for civic engagement, allowing individuals to organize and mobilize for political causes. In this context, military mobilization serves as a powerful catalyst for forming and strengthening these networks, as it brings together large groups of individuals who share common experiences and

challenges. Through their participation in the mobilization process, citizens develop bonds of trust and cooperation, which enhance their capacity for political action.

Furthermore, the impact of military mobilization on social capital is particularly pronounced among younger populations. As Leal and Teigen (2018) note, military service provides opportunities for young people to acquire leadership skills, organizational capabilities, and a strong sense of civic responsibility. These experiences are formative during a critical period of political identity development and will likely increase future participation in democratic processes. In Ukraine, where military mobilization has engaged many young people, these effects are expected to be especially notable, contributing to the overall enhancement of political participation.

At the same time, the relationship between social capital and political participation is not linear. Scholars like Rath (2012) emphasize that the mobilization process can produce varying effects depending on the nature of the conflict and the societal structures involved. While some forms of mobilization may foster a sense of solidarity and shared purpose, others might exacerbate divisions or reinforce authoritarian tendencies. In the case of Ukraine, the evidence suggests that social capital plays a largely positive role in promoting political participation, as the mobilization effort has strengthened social networks rather than undermined them.

One of the fundamental mechanisms through which social capital enhances political participation is reducing barriers to collective action. When individuals trust each other and share common values, they are more likely to engage in political activities, such as protests, voting, or grassroots organizing. This is particularly true in post-conflict societies where the restoration of social cohesion is essential for political stability. As Goffman (1961) and Verba (1995) have argued, the sense of collective efficacy that emerges from social networks encourages individuals to take political action, confident that their efforts will be supported by others within their community.

In the context of Ukraine, military mobilization has not only increased social capital but also provided a framework for the political activation of these social networks. Mobilization-related activities, such as conscription and participation in civic defense, have brought individuals into closer contact with one another, creating opportunities for political engagement. This dynamic aligns with the observations of Konzelmann et al. (2012), who suggests that political participation is often rooted in the everyday interactions and collaborations that occur within social networks. Thus, in Ukraine, the interplay between social capital and political participation is mediated by the social bonds formed during military mobilization.

In sum, military mobilization serves as a critical mechanism for enhancing social capital, facilitating greater political participation. The theoretical model proposed in this paper posits that the increase in social capital directly influences political participation by lowering the transaction costs associated with collective action, fostering trust, and creating a sense of shared purpose. This theoretical foundation will be tested empirically through an analysis of social capital and political participation in Ukraine during the period of military mobilization from 2015 to 2024.

II. Empirical Methodology

Definitions and Hypothesis

Political participation is essential to democratic governance, reflecting the degree to which citizens actively shape their political environment. This engagement can take many forms, from voting and protesting to forming civic organizations and contributing to public decision-making. Social capital is at the heart of this political engagement, a concept widely recognized in political science as the networks, norms of reciprocity, and trust that enable collective action (Putnam2000). Social capital becomes even more critical in times of conflict or social upheaval, such as the ongoing war in Ukraine. In these periods, the bonds between individuals and communities are tested, and the ability to maintain or build social capital can directly influence levels of political participation.

Social capital is a critical enabler of political participation as it facilitates trust and cooperation among citizens. When citizens have heightened credence among one another, they are more likely to collaborate on political initiatives and participate in

collective actions. In peaceful settings, this cooperation might manifest in civic organizations or public protests. In wartime, however, the role of social capital takes on an even greater significance. Conflict disrupts daily life and strains the relationship between the state and society. In such contexts, military mobilization often becomes a necessary response, drawing citizens together in defense of their country. This process can strengthen social capital by creating new bonds of faith and cooperation, as individuals unite around a common cause. This dynamic leads to the first hypothesis:

H1.A: Increased social capital driven by military mobilization leads to higher levels of political participation.

The concept of social capital as a facilitator of political engagement is rooted in the idea that individuals who are connected to their communities are more likely to engage in political activities. As Putnam (2000) suggests, social capital enhances individuals' ability to organize and participate in collective actions. These social networks not only provide the structure for political participation but also create an environment in which individuals feel empowered to act. In Ukraine, military mobilization has prompted citizens to form mutual aid organizations and community defense groups, bolstering the bonds between individuals and their communities. These actions demonstrate how, in the face of external threats, social capital can foster political engagement by creating opportunities for citizens to collaborate on shared goals.

The impact of social capital on political participation is especially pronounced in times of war because conflict forces individuals to confront issues of survival, safety, and governance in immediate and personal ways. During the Russia-Ukraine War, the need for citizens to unite in defense of their country has reinforced social bonds that were previously fragmented. These bonds, strengthened by the shared experience of military mobilization, directly contribute to increased political participation. As noted by scholars like Leal and Teigen (2018), the experiences of individuals during military mobilization—particularly young people—are formative in shaping their political views and willingness to participate in political processes. Military mobilization fosters leadership skills, a sense of civic duty, and a more profound commitment to the community, all of which contribute to long-term political engagement. Thus, I propose:

H1.B: Regions with higher levels of social capital are more likely to exhibit sustained political participation during periods of conflict.

The relationship between social capital and political participation is not only shaped by military mobilization but also by the everyday interactions among individuals within a society. When communities come together to address common challenges—whether rebuilding infrastructure, providing mutual aid, or organizing defense efforts—they build a shared sense of purpose. This shared experience fosters trust and cooperation, key components of social capital, promoting civil engagement. As Goffman (1961) and Verba (1995) argue, social interactions that build cooperation and collective efficacy are essential for sustained civic engagement. In Ukraine, these social interactions have taken on new urgency as citizens organize themselves to meet the needs created by the war, from providing aid to displaced populations to defending local communities. This process of cooperation builds social capital and, as a result, enhances the capacity for political participation. Therefore, I suggest:

H2.A: The more cohesive a region becomes through the development of social capital, the more likely its members are to engage in organized political participation.

In wartime, the strengthening of social capital can profoundly impact political behavior of individuals and communities. As war disrupts the traditional structures of governance and society, citizens are often forced to take on new roles and responsibilities. This shift in roles creates new opportunities for political engagement, as citizens become more involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Social capital provides

the foundation for this engagement by facilitating trust, cooperation, and the development of shared goals. In Ukraine, the experience of military mobilization has transformed country's social fabric, creating new networks of support and mutual aid that have empowered citizens to take political action. This transformation aligns with the findings of Konzelmann et al. (2012) and Gallego (2009), who emphasize that political participation often emerges from the social networks and partnerships that form during times of crisis.

Moreover, social capital plays a vital role in reducing the barriers to political participation. In times of discord, when formal institutions may be weakened or absent, social capital enables citizens to organize themselves and take collective action. Trust between individuals reduces the costs of political engagement, as citizens are more likely to participate when they believe that others will support their efforts. This dynamic is particularly evident in Ukraine, where the war has spurred formation of volunteer organizations and community groups that have played crucial role in sustaining political participation. These grassroots efforts have demonstrated the power of social capital in driving political engagement, even the most challenging circumstances.

In conclusion, the hypotheses presented emphasize the direct and critical relationship between social capital and political participation, particularly in the context of military mobilization. This paper argues that social capital serves as the foundational element that enables citizens to engage in political activities, both during and after times of conflict. By building goodwill and cooperation within communities, social capital enhances the capacity for political participation, ensuring that citizens remain engaged in shaping their political future. This dynamic underscores the importance of social capital as a key factor in promoting political engagement in conflict-affected societies.

Data and Method

This section of the paper applies regression techniques to estimate the relationship between social capital and political participation. It begins by presenting the variables measurements, followed by the regression strategies employed in the analysis.

The sample of this paper contains 61,064 events from Ukraine, covering the period from 2015 to 2024. The data were obtained from the Global Database of Events, Language, and Tone (GDELT), a comprehensive tool that aggregates and indexes global media events along with their emotional tone and related responses. GDELT uses advanced algorithms for real-time processing of media events, providing three primary data streams: physical events worldwide, relational data between individuals and entities, and analysis of news imagery. These streams are updated every 15 minutes, enabling a nuanced analysis of global trends across multiple categories. GDELT thus offers a robust and multidimensional framework for examining social phenomena, making it ideal for studying the complex relationship between social capital and political participation.

For this study, I constructed a tailored dataset from GDELT, focusing on events where Ukraine (UKR) is listed as the primary actor (Actor1). To refine the dataset, we filtered events involving instances of nationalism where Russia (RUS) appears as the second actor (Actor2). After consolidating redundant entries from multiple reports on the same incidents, the data was meticulously cleaned, resulting in two specialized databases that categorize political participation events, social capital occurrences, and other relevant interactions spanning from 2015 to 2024. These curated datasets provide the foundation for our analyses by offering precise event frequencies and context.

Political participation in this study is measured through various event types in GDELT, explicitly focusing on spontaneous, citizen-led activities. Traditional indices for measuring democratic processes, such as V-Dem or Freedom House, tend to include a wide range of indicators, which often leads to high endogeneity complicating the statistical validity of the analysis. Therefore, I propose that a more direct measure of political engagement is the number of public participation events. These events indicate grassroots-level civic actions, which offer a clear view of political involvement.

In selecting the relevant events for political participation, I took care to exclude state-led activities, such as government-organized rallies or political marches, as these are often more reflective of political mobilization rather than genuine citizen- driven

participation. Charles Tilly (2000) argues that political participation is rooted in the expansion of civil rights and protections against arbitrary state actions, making it an inherently citizen-driven process. Similarly, Christian Welzel and Ronald Inglehart (2008) emphasize that true political engagement transcends formal electoral processes and instead involves empowering ordinary citizens to challenge elites and access resources. To maintain this focus on citizen-driven participation, we filtered out events categorized under Actor 1 Type as "GOV" (Government) or "MIL"(Military) in the GDELT database. Additionally, we excluded nationalist events that specifically express opposition to Russia, to ensure that the dataset reflects broader political participation rather than opposition to specific external actors.

The GDELT event codes selected to represent political participation include: 140 Engage in political dissent, 141 Demonstrate or rally, 142 Conduct hunger strike, 143 Conduct strike or boycott, 144 Obstruct passage or block, 011 Decline comment, 012 Make pessimistic comment, 0831 Accede to demands for leadership change, 0832 Accede to demands for policy change, 0833 Accede to demands for rights, 0834 Accede to demands for institutional or regime change, and 0812 Ease ban on political parties or politicians. These event codes capture a wide array of citizen-led activities that reflect political engagement and are used as key indicators in our analysis.

Regarding social capital events, I focused on citizen-initiated interactions aimed at cooperation, assistance, or support, excluding state-driven initiatives. Social capital is often measured by the extent to which individuals or groups collaborate, help one another, or engage in collective actions for the benefit of society. To isolate such events, we filtered the dataset to exclude any entries where state institutions were the primary actors. The event codes used to represent social capital in this study include: 031 Express intent to engage in material cooperation, 032 Express intent to engage in diplomatic cooperation, and 060 Engage in material cooperation. These codes capture activities where citizens autonomously engage in cooperative behaviors, which are indicative of social capital formation.

The dataset thus contains a rich and detailed account of political participation and social capital activities across Ukraine during the period of interest. By tallying the frequency of these events, we can analyze the interplay between social capital and political participation, using time series data and regression models to uncover the dynamics at play.

This analysis focuses on two primary regression models to examine the relationship between social capital and political participation over time. Both models utilize time series data, with the dependent variable being the number of political participation events. The models incorporate lagged independent variables to explore how previous social capital and political participation levels influence current political participation outcomes. All models account for fixed effects by year, month, and date, ensuring that time-specific variations are controlled.

The first regression model addresses the relationship between social capital and political participation. Specifically, I regress the current number of political participation events on the number of social capital events lagged by one period. This model aims to test the hypothesis that increased social capital leads to greater political engagement. After centering the data to address scale and potential multicollinearity issues, we run the regression (referred to as Model 1). This allows me to assess the direct impact of social capital on political participation over time, accounting for potential temporal effects.

The second regression model builds on the first by including both lagged social capital and lagged political participation as independent variables. This model aims to determine whether previous levels of political participation, alongside social capital, have a cumulative or reinforcing effect on current political participation. By adding lagged political participation, I can test whether the dynamics of political engagement are self-reinforcing over time, or whether social capital independently drives future political involvement. After centering and standardizing the data, we conduct this second regression (referred to as Model 2. In both models, the robustness of the results is ensured by including fixed effects for year and month, as well as by centering the data. The inclusion of lagged independent variables accounts for the time-sensitive nature of

political participation and social capital formation. Additionally, this approach allows for a control of potential confounding effects that could influence the relationship between social capital and political participation.

III. Empirical Results

Figure 1 presents the results of the regression analysis that examines the relationship between social capital and political participation, incorporating both lagged variables and time fixed effects. Model (1) estimates the impact of lagged social capital on current political participation, while Model (2) further includes the influence of lagged political participation on the dependent variable.

In Model (1), the coefficient for Centered_Lag Social Capital is positive and statistically significant at the 0.1% level ($\beta = 0.0451$, $t = 8.643$), indicating that higher levels of social capital in the previous period are strongly associated with increased political participation in the current period. This result confirms the hypothesis that social capital plays a critical role in fostering political engagement. Significantly, the inclusion of year, month, and day fixed effects does not alter the significance of this relationship, suggesting that the impact of social capital is robust across different time periods.

Model (2) adds Centered_Lag Participation to the regression, revealing that political participation in the previous period also has a positive and highly significant effect on current political participation ($\beta = 0.3993$, $t = 21.601$). The continued significance of Centered_Lag Social Capital ($\beta = 0.0451$, $t = 5.002$) in this model indicates that social capital remains an independent predictor of political participation, even when accounting for the self-reinforcing nature of political engagement. This suggests that while past political participation contributes to future engagement, social capital provides a foundational structure that enables sustained political involvement.

These results strongly support the notion that social capital is a crucial driver of political participation, while also highlighting the dynamic, self-reinforcing nature of political engagement over time. The significant and consistent relationship between social capital and political participation underscores the importance of community networks, assurance, and cooperation in fostering sustained political action, even when controlling for prior levels of engagement.

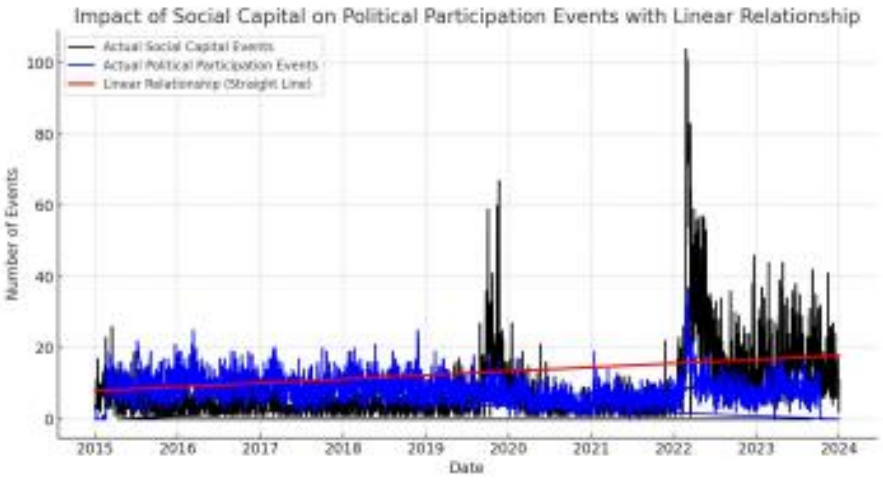


Figure 1. Impact of Social Capital on Political Participation

Figure 1 illustrates the temporal relationship between social capital events and political participation events from 2015 to 2024. The black line represents the frequency of social capital events, while the blue line indicates political participation events. A red linear trend line demonstrates the overall positive relationship between the two variables. As social capital events increase, a corresponding rise in political participation is observed, particularly in periods of heightened mobilization, such as during 2020 and

2022. The trend line highlights the steady, though modest, positive association, suggesting that social capital dynamics may serve as a key driver of political engagement across the observed timeline. This finding aligns with existing theories on social capital's role in fostering civic participation and democratic engagement.

IV. Conclusion

This paper offers a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between social capital and political participation, specifically in the context of Ukraine's military mobilization during the Russia-Ukraine war. By analyzing over 60,000 events from 2015 to 2024, it presents robust empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that social capital plays a critical role in enhancing political participation during periods of conflict. The regression models, incorporating lagged variables and fixed effects, reveal a positive and significant relationship between prior levels of social capital and subsequent political participation, even when accounting for the reinforcing nature of political engagement.

One of the primary contributions of this study lies in its focus on how social capital, driven by military mobilization, fosters political engagement in conflict zones. The paper adds to the growing body of literature on social capital by demonstrating how war-induced mobilization can paradoxically strengthen democratic processes by increasing civic cooperation, trust, and collective action. Furthermore, the inclusion of grassroots-driven events, rather than state-led activities, offers a more nuanced understanding of political participation that is genuinely citizen-led, enhancing the validity of the findings.

By centering on Ukraine, this study also extends the applicability of social capital theory to conflict-affected societies, providing empirical evidence that supports its relevance beyond peaceful or post-conflict environments. In doing so, it not only deepens our understanding of how social networks facilitate political engagement but also sheds light on the potential for democratic resilience in the face of external threats. Overall, this research underscores the importance of social capital as a vital component in promoting sustained political participation, especially in societies undergoing transformative crises.

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Comparative Politics

Hemispheres of Geoengineering: An Analysis of Motivations for the Pursuit of Geoengineering in the Global North and South

Zoe Leff

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The earliest human narratives revolved around weather, as early human survival depended on the success or failure of their crops. Helpless at nature's whims, early homo sapiens thought weather was the result of cruel gods. Humankind spent centuries praying to keep drought and famine away, dancing and performing rituals to appease their gods.

Now in the 20th century, humans have the ability to measure and interpret the weather but are unable to control it. For most of history the idea of controlling the weather was ascribed to superhuman beings and demigods, beings who had otherworldly powers compared to humanity. In the last 50 years, this story has changed. We now know that humans are in fact changing the weather, but not in a way in which early humans could have understood. We know that human activity is causing climate change, making the weather more intense and unpredictable, but we no longer believe that dances and rituals will help us against the impending catastrophes.

Scientists are beginning to research how to control the weather to reverse the impacts of climate change. From deploying fleets of drones to seed clouds with reflective particles, to constructing giant mirrors in space to deflect sunlight, the ideas that once seemed confined to science fiction stories are on the brink of becoming reality. Similar to protagonists of a science fiction story, humanity finds itself at a crossroads, grappling with the profound implications of wielding such immense power over the forces of nature.

Introduction

Not only have scientists been researching ways to impact the weather, but humans have also put political policies in place to curb the current climate crisis. For example, the Paris Agreement called for holding any increase in global temperatures from pre-industrial temperatures to well below 2 degrees Celsius, and to make vast efforts to limit this increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius to avoid serious climate impacts for human beings and ecosystems. To achieve this goal, the Agreement calls for governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible through rapid reductions within the "best available science" (Burns et al., 2021, p 2; The Paris Agreement, 2015). However, we are on track to exceed 1.5 degrees of additional warming before 2030, and 2 degrees of warming within the next 32-38 years. Temperature increases which exceed the target agreed upon in Paris are predicted to have dire consequences for humans and natural ecosystems. The sobering reality of the Paris Agreement and the climate predictions which have followed have led to the increased impetus for geoengineering solutions (Burns et al., 2021, p 3).

The controversy surrounding geoengineering has intensified in recent years as the urgency of addressing climate change becomes increasingly apparent. At its core, this discourse revolves around the fundamental question of whether humanity should intervene in Earth's natural systems to mitigate the impacts of climate change. We will explore the motivations of countries with established geoengineering research projects and question if countries with substantial investments or interests in fossil fuels exhibit a heightened inclination towards embracing geoengineering technologies. This hypothesis comes from the moral hazard that nations entrenched in fossil fuel economies may view geoengineering as a "quick fix" solution that enables the reduction of immediate climate risks without necessitating a transition away from fossil fuels. This essay delves into the motivations behind Global North and South geoengineering pursuits, exploring how these dynamics shape global climate policies and exacerbate the challenges associated with combating climate change.

Through comparative text analysis, our approach will examine the differences and similarities in the types of motivations that countries in the Global North and Global South have for geoengineering research from 2019-2024. Such an analysis will be a more recent and accurate portrayal of other analyses of the state of geoengineering. Huttunen et al (2015) adopted an idea-based approach, examining the emerging international policy perspectives through text analysis, identifying concerns and hopes raised by countries. Their approach focuses specifically on gray literature produced in 1997-2013 (Huttunen et al., 2015). While this idea-based analysis is of value to identifying potential geopolitical risks, it is outdated and only captures the perspectives of geoengineering, not the motivations/interests. A comparative analysis of national geoengineering research of Germany, China, Australia, and the United States by Horton et al. (2023) represents a more recent example like our approach. However, their analysis only focuses on four countries, three of which belong to the Global North. Our analysis will provide a more inclusive perspective. Additionally, these approaches have not included the influence of fossil fuels in geoengineering research.

We choose to focus on an interest-based approach. We can reject institutional approaches because governance surrounding geoengineering is in development and therefore institutional approaches are nonexistent. We can reject idea-based approaches because, as we will demonstrate in this essay, perceptions of geoengineering are diverse and controversial, yet countries are still pursuing it, meaning that ideas are not at the heart of this issue. Therefore, we must investigate the motivation of geoengineering through an interest-based lens.

I. Geoengineering

Geoengineering describes the technologies which aim to lower global temperatures through the reflection of sunlight away from the Earth or through removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere (Tollefson, 2019). The concept that humans can manipulate the climate dates back to at least 1830 where scientists suggested lighting huge fires to change rain intensity and frequency (Rasch et al., 2008; Tollefson, 2018). There is increasing concern among scientists and society that the aggressive progression of climate change met with the slow transformation of our energy system will result in the inability to avoid catastrophic risks for humankind. The scale of energy transformation needed, coupled with lack of societal response have motivated the exploration of other more extreme strategies to reduce the rise of global temperatures. For this purpose, geoengineering is being considered to cool the planet (Rasch et al., 2008).

There are two main areas of geoengineering that are the focus of most analyses. The first is solar geoengineering, or solar radiation modification (SRM), which includes technologies such as atmospheric aerosol injection, marine cloud brightening, marine sea surface brightening, and modifying the albedo of polar ice (CIEL, 2019, p 9; Burns et al., 2021, p 3-4). SRM technologies do not attempt to reduce the production of GHGs into the atmosphere but aim to alter the amount of infrared radiation absorbed by Earth through the enhancement of planetary albedo. Increasing the Earth's albedo can be done through injecting sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere, seeding clouds with water droplets, or spaced-based methods which position sunshields in space to deflect radiation that would have otherwise entered Earth's atmosphere back into space (Burns et al., 2021, p 4). The second type of geoengineering is carbon dioxide removal (CDR), which includes technologies such as bioengineering, afforestation/reforestation, ocean alkalinization/fertilization, direct air capture and carbon storage, and soil sequestration. CDR technologies aim to remove emitted carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through either the creation or enhancement of carbon sinks or through chemical engineering (CIEL, 2019, p 9; Burns et al., 2021, p 4).

II. Solar Radiation Modification Discussion

Table 1: Types of Solar Radiation Modification and their Definitions

Approach	***Definition***	***Concerns***	***Source***
Stratospheric Aerosol Injection	The injection of sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere will have a chemical reaction to form sulfate aerosols by scattering solar radiation back to space. Modeled after the cooling observed from volcanic eruptions.	Can affect stratosphere chemistry and ozone concentrations. Can alter regional climates and natural modes of climate variability (El Nino, polar vortex, monsoons seasons, etc.)	Burns et al., 2021, p 4; Caldeira et al., 2013; UNEP, 2023
Marine Cloud Brightening	Increase the reflectivity of marine clouds by increasing the number of droplets in the cloud while reducing droplet size, which would increase the surface area of the cloud. This is achieved by spraying fine seawater mist into remote marine clouds by ships or aircraft. The feasibility of this method is supported by observations of ship exhaust which releases aerosol particles into marine clouds.	Can alter regional climates and precipitation patterns. No peer reviewed publications have assessed this experiment.	Caldeira et al., 2013; UNEP, 2023
Surface Albedo approaches	Installing white painted roofs on buildings and reflectors on the ground.	May impact desert ecosystems and local rainfall patterns. High labor and maintenance costs, no impact on carbon emissions.	Mathur & Roy, 2019
Space-based approaches	Positioning sunshields in space to deflect radiation.	High cost and large-scale deployment needed to offset significant emissions.	Burns et al., 2021, p 4; Caldeira et al., 2013
Cirrus Cloud Thinning	Decrease the amount of cirrus clouds by injecting ice-nucleating particles in the clouds. This increases the rate of ice crystallization, thinning the clouds and allowing more infrared radiation to escape.	This approach has only been studied with climate models and analyses. No outdoor experiments have been conducted.	UNEP, 2023

The research suggests that redirecting incoming sunlight away from Earth could counteract many consequences of rising greenhouse gas levels. However, this strategy is not without risks, and it may worsen climatic conditions in certain areas (Rasch et al., 2008; Caldeira et al., 2013). While aimed at mitigating climate risks, implementing such systems introduces new potential problems. Studies exploring the effects of solar geoengineering suggest that even localized interventions could have broader regional impacts (Caldeira et al., 2013). While there is limited research of the potential impacts of SRM regarding human and natural systems, many concerns have been raised. Environmental concerns surround the impacts to crop yields, plant productivity, acid rain, flood risk, vector-borne diseases, and ocean ecosystems and fisheries. Human health concerns also include impacts to vector borne diseases, UV exposure, air pollution, and malaria risk. Potential climate impacts include overcompensated cooling, residual warming at the poles, and interference with natural modes of climate variability such as tropical monsoon seasons, North Atlantic hurricanes, El Nino Southern Oscillation, and polar vortex (UNEP, 2023). There are also geopolitical risks, such as unilateral or unauthorized deployment of SRM, which disregards the potential negative effects of SRM on other countries and would lead to international conflict (MacMartin et al., 2022). Additionally, If SRM deployment were to be abruptly terminated, this would lead to sudden, significant warming, representing a transfer of risk across generations (UNEP, 2023).

Research on SRM has not been conducted on a large scale but is based on climate models which aim to project the climate response and associated human and ecosystem impacts (MacMartin et al., 2022; UNEP, 2023). Robust research is needed to deduce the efficacy and risks of SRM approaches and how they would alter regional climates under various scenarios. This poses a challenge as the scientific research on SRM is limited and there are no established protocols or practices for SRM climate model projections, which leads to uncertainty and misleading results (MacMartin et al., 2022). Small scale outdoor SRM experiments are being proposed to obtain necessary knowledge that cannot be produced from modeling. Concerns have been raised that these experiments will make the deployment of SRM more likely and that the decision to conduct experiments is not inclusive of the interests of global interests (UNEP. 2023).

III. Carbon Dioxide Removal Discussion

Table 2: Types of Carbon Dioxide Removal and their Definitions

Approach	***Definition***	***Concerns***	***Source***
Biomass energy with CO2 sequestration	Capturing carbon dioxide from electric power plants fueled by biomass and pumping it deep underground in geologic formations for storage.	Potential land use conflicts by diverting land use from food production. Expensive compared to other CDR approaches.	Caldeira et al., 2013; Mathur & Roy, 2019
Afforestation	Human-induced growth of forests on land that was not historically forested.	Afforestation in boreal and temperate regions could result in net warming. Susceptible to forest fires. May divert land use from food production, increasing food insecurity.	Caldeira et al., 2013

Reforestation	Human-induced growth of forests on non-forest land that had historically been forested before being converted for other uses.	Susceptible to forest fires. May divert land use from food production, increasing food insecurity.	Caldeira et al., 2013
Ocean Fertilization	The process of dispersing iron in iron-deficient areas of the ocean to stimulate the production of phytoplankton who emit dimethyl sulfide which oxidizes in the atmosphere as sulfate aerosols.	Increase carbon dioxide uptake of the ocean, threaten integrity of ocean ecosystems.	Burns et al., 2021, p 5; Caldeira et al., 2013
Ocean Alkalinization	The process of adding lime or olivine to oceans and coastal regions	Increase carbon dioxide uptake of the ocean	Burns et al., 2021, p 5
Direct Air Capture and Carbon Storage	The capture of carbon dioxide in the air, which is transported and used for either commercial purposes or stored in deep geologic formations.	Would benefit the fossil fuel industry by providing more sources of carbon.	Caldeira et al., 2013

Most Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) methods offer limited potential to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide levels within this century significantly. However, a combined approach that utilizes various methods could potentially remove around 150 ppm of CO2 from the atmosphere, if coupled with widespread adoption of emission-reducing energy technologies. Direct air capture, especially when paired with geological storage, is the most effective method, albeit potentially costly at scale. Direct air capture has the potential to reverse the effects of climate change without integration with emissions-reducing technology (Caldeira et al., 2013).

Deploying specific CDR techniques on a large scale may lead to unintended environmental consequences. For instance, ocean fertilization could exacerbate ocean acidification, harming ecosystems that rely on calcifying organisms like coral reefs (Burns et al., 2021, p 4; Caldeira et al., 2013). Carbon storage methods, such as afforestation and reforestation, require extensive spatial areas due to low efficiencies of carbon sequestration of forest ecosystems. Additionally, some ocean-based strategies or strategies involving carbon storage in deep geological formations necessitate significant mining activities, potentially conflicting with other land uses. CDR methods may reduce plant productivity and are generally slow to eliminate atmospheric CO2, posing challenges for widespread implementation. Nevertheless, if deployed extensively over time, they could contribute to reducing atmospheric CO2 levels (Caldeira et al., 2013). Scaling up CDR options alongside emission reductions could lead to negative global net emissions, offering a pathway to lower CO2 concentrations in the atmosphere.

IV. Mixed Views of Geoengineering

Geoengineering has quickly transformed from a topic of interest among climate scientists to a publicly debated issue, heavily discussed in the media and among governments. Geoengineering has proven to be a controversial topic, with extensive debate within the public, experts, and policy makers. The following section will discuss the views and opinions of these three groups about geoengineering and review the literature that has studied their perceptions.

Public Opinions

Studies examining public perceptions in geoengineering have found that the discourse is divided (Corner et al., 2013; Huttenen et al., 2015; Johnson & Kennedy, 2021). A recent study by the Pew Research Center found that 41% of Americans think solar geoengineering would make a difference in reducing climate change while 53% say it would not (Johnson & Kennedy, 2021; Figure 1). Their study also found that most US adults were at least somewhat concerned about using solar geoengineering and cloud seeding, and this concern was not dependent on political affiliations (Johnson & Kennedy, 2021).

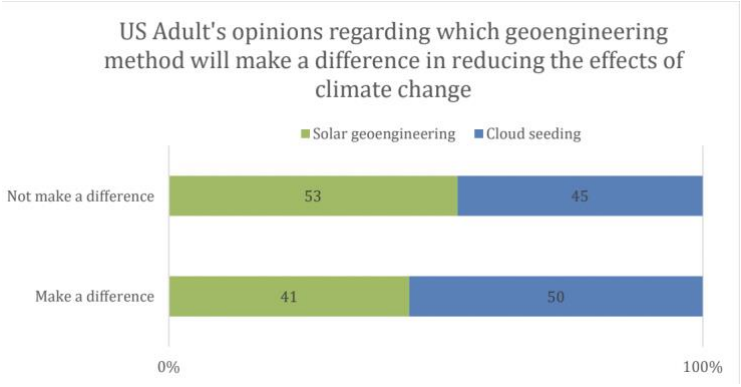


Figure 1. Data sourced from Pew Research Center

According to a review by Burns et al. (2016), there are five common findings within studies examining public perceptions around geoengineering: (1) public awareness and education about geoengineering technology is low and differs significantly among regions; (2) the public favors mitigation strategies over climate engineering; (3) the public favors CDR over SRM; (4) the public recognizes there is a potential moral hazard in the research and deployment of geoengineering; (5) the public supports international governance (Burns et al., 2016; Sugiyama et al., 2020).

A study by Corner et al. (2013) analyzed a series of workshops with the UK public in 2012 about geoengineering. Their analysis revealed various perspectives on geoengineering as a response to climate change. They noted that the most dominant narrative in their research was the idea that geoengineering is (or is not) "messing with nature" (Corner et al., 2013). They found that in 100% of groups studied, this idea was brought up unprompted, which suggests that this is a fundamental idea among the general public's views and perspectives. In general, they found the public is most concerned about the uncertainty and possible adverse effects of geoengineering. The relationship with nature and ethical concerns regarding its manipulation are common in public discourse. However, they also found that many participants see geoengineering as hope for the climate crisis. These individuals see geoengineering as no different from other human interventions in nature, such as GMOs, IVF, or invasive plant management. These participants saw geoengineering as a way to "fix" the climate by undoing the damage humans have caused. Overall, they concluded there is public support for continued research into geoengineering but hesitation towards its implementation (Huttenen et al., 2015; Corner et al., 2013).

A more recent study by Sugiyama et al. (2020) examined the public perceptions of stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI) of college students in six Asia-Pacific countries (Australia, China, India, Japan, Philippines, South Korea). They found that students from China, India, and the Philippines were more likely to see geoengineering as a potential option for addressing climate change. They also found an overwhelming consensus supporting the advancement of geoengineering governance principles and pre-deployment regulation (Sugiyama et al., 2020). This study acknowledges the lack of representation of the global South's perspectives on geoengineering, with most studies having sample bias skewed towards wealthier countries in the global North (Sugiyama et

al., 2020; Huttenen et al., 2015; Corner et al., 2013; Burns et al., 2016; Johnson & Kennedy, 2021).

Expert Opinions

Experts agree that reductions in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are essential to avoid dangerous levels of warming. However, removing or lessening the amount of carbon in the atmosphere through SRM and CDR technologies is not as widely agreed upon. In 2010, The Convention on Biological Diversity invited 196 parties to abstain from using geoengineering until there is an "adequate scientific basis" (Tollefson, 2019; Dannenburg et al., 2019). A study by Dannenburg et al. (2019) analyzed the views of 723 negotiators and climate scientists who participated in international climate making policy. They found that respondents who expect severe climate change impacts combined with low confidence in the current mitigation efforts are more opposed to geoengineering.

In contrast, they found that respondents who are more optimistic about the severity of climate change impacts and mitigation efforts are less opposed to geoengineering (Dannenburg et al. 2019). This shows that experts with higher climate risk perception are equally risk averse when it comes to the uncertainties regarding geoengineering. A deep ethical concern among scientists is whether humans can deliberately change the climate, to what extent, and for what condition. Another ethical concern is whether it is justified to fix problems caused by technology with more technology (Huttenen et al., 2015).

Political Opinions

As geoengineering has become a potential tactic to mitigate the impacts of climate change, policymakers around the world need to address it. Governing geoengineering will become a difficult challenge as more countries begin to pursue research. Geoengineering includes many technologies and methods that will require many forms of governance. Since any practice of geoengineering in any part of the world will impact all parts of the world, governance for geoengineering will require international treaties and regulations to govern the global commons properly (Huttenen et al., 2015). It is expected that there will not be international consensus on the deployment and experimentation of SRM, and that these decisions may not be globally inclusive or equitable. This may lead to a risk of political and military conflict (UNEP, 2023).

Research in geoengineering discourse mentioned earlier has shown the diversity of views and opinions of the public and experts alike (Sugiyama et al., 2020; Huttenen et al., 2015; Corner et al., 2013; Burns et al., 2016; Johnson & Kennedy, 2021; Tollefson, 2019; Dannenburg et al., 2019). This presents policymakers with another challenge: as the discourse of the public and experts are entirely diverse, policymakers must represent diverse opinions (Huttunen et al., 2015).

A study by Huttunen et al. (2015) examined documents from multiple countries' governments, NGOs, and international organizations to gain insights in how geoengineering is viewed on a policy level. Their text analysis focused on concerns, hopes, and action proposals in policy documents from 1997 to 2013. They found that most documents originated in the USA, Germany, and the UK, with the USA having the most significant number of documents as well as the earliest dated document. They identified eleven categories of concerns and two categories of hopes related to geoengineering (See Table 2). They found that hopes were more commonly expressed in documents written in the US, UK, and in international NGO's, compared to other countries and organizations. Germany was the most opposed and risk adverse to geoengineering. Huttenen et al. (2015) suggests this correlated with Germany's opposition to nuclear power and genetically modified organisms. Their analysis demonstrates the common concerns among countries and shows that the US and UK dominate the geoengineering political discourse.

Table 3: Policy Concerns of Geoengineering from Huttunen et al. (2015)

Arguments	***Frequency in Documents***
Concerns	
General risk concern	60%
Management and implementation	18%
General implications of technological solutions	18%
Legitimacy and transparency	34%
Ethical implications	35%
Moral hazard	25%
Implementation (state and non-state)	38%
Cost-efficiency	29%
Technical feasibility	26%
Environmental consequences	46%
Skeptical of geoengineering technologies	33%
Hopes	
Geoengineering suggested because of climate policy failure	34%
Hopes related to technological solutions	40%

V. Research Questions

Research Question 1: What countries are pursuing geoengineering and at what scale?

The literature reviewed exemplifies the risks associated with geoengineering and the diverse views and perceptions of geoengineering among the public, scientific experts, and political experts. Despite the controversial nature of geoengineering, countries are researching its technologies and methods at a grander scale than ever before. This first poses the question: which countries are pursuing geoengineering research and at what scale?

Method

Data was obtained from the ETC Group and Open Street Maps using the Geoengineering Monitor to determine which countries were engaged in geoengineering research and at what scale. Projects were filtered by date to show completed and ongoing projects from 2019-2024. Projects were further filtered only to show CDR and SRM projects.

Results

The result was 771 projects spanning 75 countries. CDR projects composed most of the research, with 757 projects. For the complete list of countries, please see Appendix A.

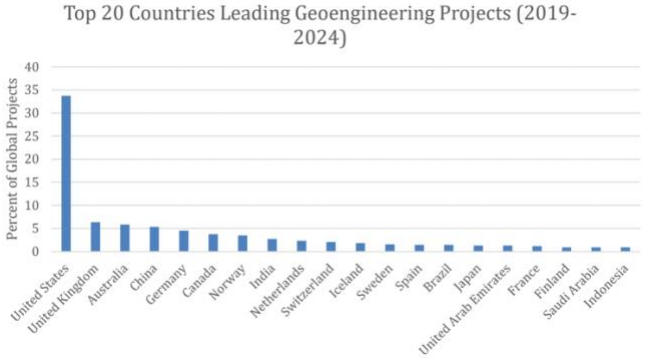


Figure 2: Data sourced from ETC Group and Open Street Maps

The United States leads 33.7% of geoengineering projects globally, with the following highest percentage being 6.3% lead by the United Kingdom. The top 50% of projects are led by the U.S., U.K., Australia, and China. This leaves 71 countries to compromise the bottom 50% of projects.

For further analysis, each country was coded as part of the Global North or Global South to demonstrate patterns of variability within the hemispheres of development (World Population Review, 2024). There was an exact split, with 37 countries considered to be in the Global North, and 37 countries considered to be in the Global South. Despite the even representation of countries in both hemispheres, the Global North accounted for 78.2% of geoengineering projects, while the Global South lead 21.8% (Figure 3).

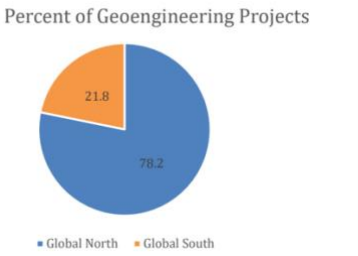


Figure 3: Data sourced from World Population Review, ETC Group and Open Street Maps

Research Question 2: Why are there greater efforts for geoengineering research in the US and Europe than in the Global South?

The preliminary analysis shows that the Global North leads most of the geoengineering research and projects. However, the Global South is not absent from the conversation, with six countries (China, India, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia) part of the top 20 countries. The next step of the analysis is to determine why countries are pursuing geoengineering – specifically what motivates them to pursue geoengineering development despite it being controversial among the public, experts, and international politics. We hypothesize that countries with higher dependence on fossil fuels will have more projects in geoengineering because they view geoengineering as a "quick fix" that will allow them to limit the immediate risks of climate change without transitioning away from fossil fuels.

Methods

Data for rate of Fossil Fuel energy consumption by country was sourced from Bing. This rate is out of 100, where 100 is the highest rate of fossil fuel consumption and 0 is the lowest. Data for geoengineering projects was sourced from the ETC Group and Open Street Maps using the Geoengineering Monitor. Projects were filtered by date to show completed and ongoing projects from 2019-2024. Projects were further filtered to only show CDR and SRM projects.

Results

See Appendix A for result of fossil fuel consumption rates.

Analysis

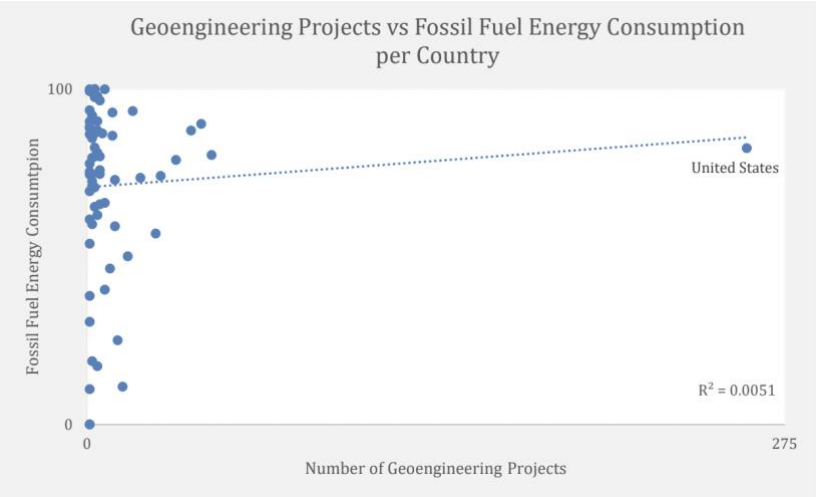


Figure 4: Data sourced from Bing, ETC Group and Open Street Maps

Figure 4 shows the relationship between the number of geoengineering projects and that country's fossil fuel energy consumption rate. The correlation coefficient is 0.0051, meaning there is a weak positive correlation between the two variables. Most of the data is clustered where there is a relatively small number of geoengineering projects and high fossil fuel consumption. There is an outlier on this graph at 260 projects. This outlier is the United States. To get a more detailed picture of the relationship between geoengineering projects and fossil fuel consumption, the US was removed from the following graph.

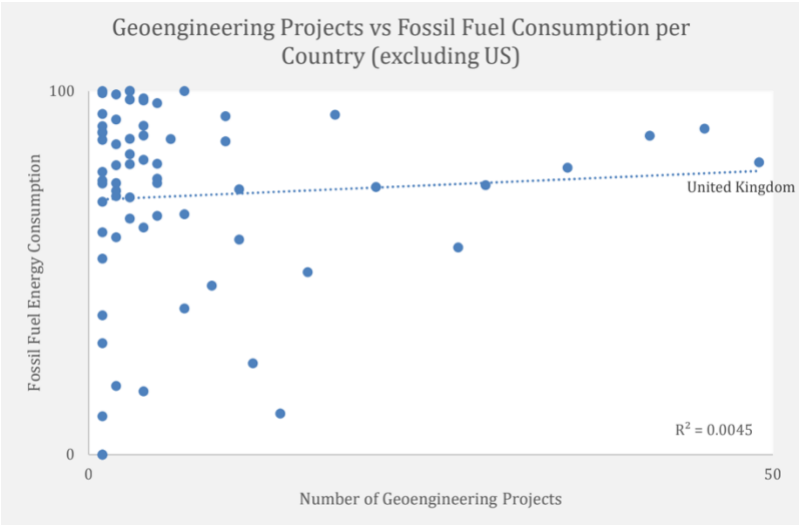


Figure 5: Data sourced from Bing, ETC Group and Open Street Maps

Figure 5 shows a more detailed depiction of the relationship between the variables. The correlation coefficient is slightly lower at 0.0045, still representing a weak positive correlation. There is a large cluster of countries where fossil fuel usage is high, but the number of geoengineering projects is very low. This correlation is not strong enough to confidently support our hypothesis and suggests that further investigation is warranted.

Research Question 2a: If motivations are not due to fossil fuel dependence, what motivates countries to pursue geoengineering and why may these motivations differ among the Global North and South?

From the preliminary analysis, it is evident that the Global North leads the majority of geoengineering research and projects. However, the Global South is not absent from the conversation, with 6 countries (China, India, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia) part of the top 20 countries. The next step of the analysis is to determine why countries are pursuing geoengineering, specifically what motivates them to pursue geoengineering development despite it being controversial among the public, experts, and international politics. The following analysis seeks to understand the differences in motivations among countries within the Global North and South as well as countries leading the charts in geoengineering research and countries who are just beginning to join the conversation.

Method

A sample of 9 countries were selected to investigate. These countries were selected to get a representation of countries in both hemispheres and with a varying number of geoengineering projects. Three text documents were analyzed for each country, with some overlap for papers which discussed multiple countries (n=22). The documents were composed mostly of peer reviewed research papers, but also include government correspondences and dissertations. Documents chosen were focused on one or a combination of these factors:

1. The document reviewed or presented a country's plan for geoengineering research (n=13).
2. The document was a feasibility study for geoengineering research in a country (n=7).
3. The document was a case study for past small-scale geoengineering research (n=3).
4. The document examined the role of geoengineering within a country's policies or public perceptions (n=9).

I used descriptive analysis to compare the document's contents to make an initial assessment of the different themes and motivations presented. Four categories were used to describe the motivations of a country's geoengineering process:

Ecological - meaning the motivations were rooted in solving an ecological problem such as climate change, ocean acidification/warming, drought, etc.
Egoistic - meaning the motivations of scientific prestige, political power/dominance, or economic interests of the country were at the forefront.
Altruistic - meaning motivations were not only for the benefit of the country, but for people worldwide.
Security - meaning research was motivated by concerns of possible threats to the country and its inhabitants.

Results

Table 3: Count of documents with each motivation by country

Motivation	*Total*	*US*	*Australia*	*China*	*Germany*	*India*	*Switzerland*	*UAE*	*Indonesia*	*Nigeria*
Ecological	20	3	3	2	0	3	3	1	3	2
Egoistic	10	2	1	3	0	0	2	1	0	1
Altruistic	8	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	0
Security	19	0	2	2	3	3	1	3	3	2

Ecological motivations were present in 66.7% of documents, followed by Security with 63%, Egoistic with 33.3%, and Altruistic with 26.6%. The countries with the highest scores for ecological motivations are the US, Australia, Switzerland, India, and Indonesia. Germany and the UAE had the lowest Ecological motivations. The countries with the highest scores for Security motivations were Germany, India, UAE, and Indonesia. The countries with the lowest scores for Security were the US and Switzerland. Egoistic and Altruistic motivations were the less common motivations found in documents. Countries with the highest egoistic motivations were China, US, and Switzerland. Countries with the highest altruistic motivations were Germany and Indonesia.

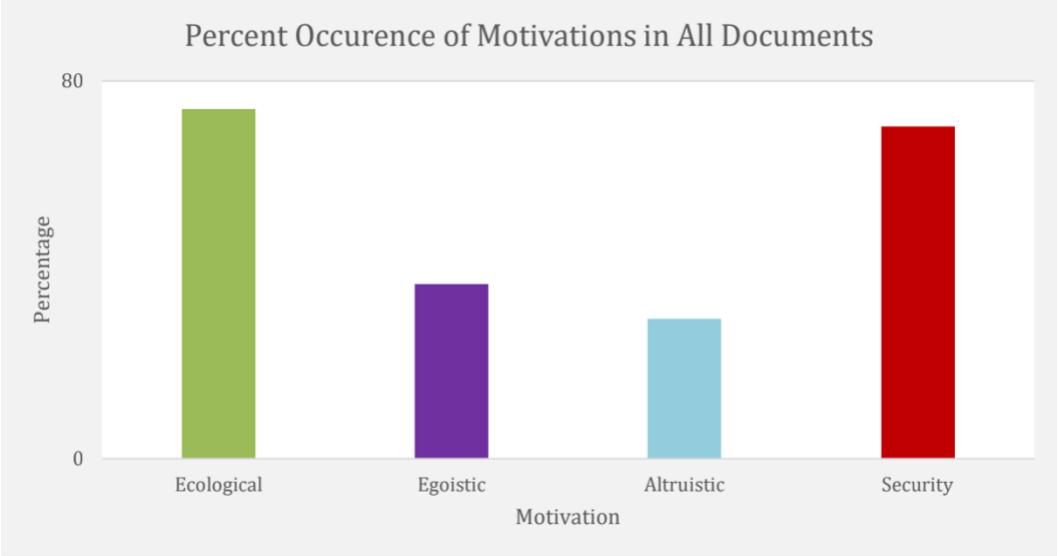


Figure 6: Data sourced from Appendix B

Analysis

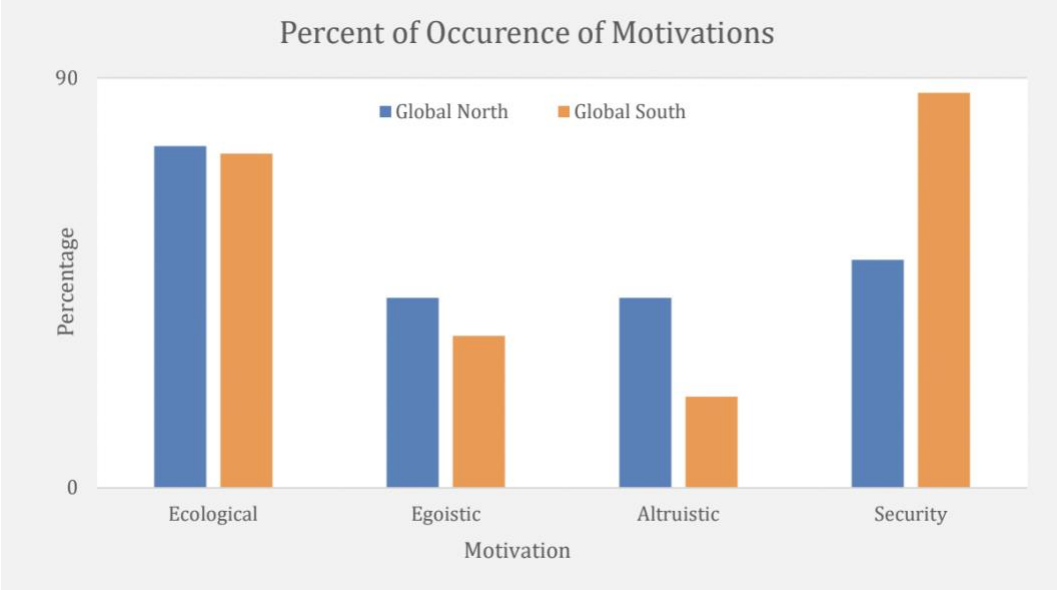


Figure 7: Data sourced from Appendix B and World Population Review

Figure 7 shows the difference in occurrence of motivations of the Global North and South. Ecological motivations are high in both hemispheres with a percentage difference of 1.67. Egoistic motivations are comparatively lower in both hemispheres, but the Global north is slightly higher with a percent difference of 8.33. Altruistic motivations

occurrence is similar in the Global North to Egoistic motivations, but is much lower in the Global South, with a percent difference of 21.67. Most notable is the dominance of Security in the Global South compared to the Global North, with a percent difference of 36.67.

Ecological Motivations: North vs South

In our text analysis, ecological motivations were present in the most documents - 66.7%. Ecological motivations remained dominant in documents among the Global North and South. Climate change and its environmental impacts was a highly discussed motivation for geoengineering in both the Global North and South. Countries such as the US, Australia, Germany, China, Switzerland, and India discuss geoengineering as both a national and international action plan and agreement, similar to the Paris Agreement. The Global South is more vulnerable to impacts of climate change, and therefore their reasons for ecological motivations are tied to those risks. In addition to motivations for geoengineering to combat climate change risks, motivations for research also include assessing the climate risks associated with geoengineering. Countries such as Germany, China, India, Indonesia, and Nigeria express concerns with the impact to global and regional climates because of geoengineering deployment. This concern is more evident in the Global South than the Global North.

Table 4: Ecological Motivation: North vs South

	Reasons for Ecological Motivation
Global North	- Climate change - Impacts to historical, cultural, and national environmental resources
Global South	- Climate change - Impact on regional climate mechanisms - Climate related issues such as food security, heat, drought - Water resource management and sustainable water supplies

Egoistic Motivations: North vs South

In our text analysis, egoistic motivations had an overall low presence but a higher presence in the Global North than South. Egoistic motivations in the North and South are based on potential economic and political power. The US is motivated by hopes to push the frontiers of climate science and be the leader in geoengineering so they can set the precedents for governance and research practices. Despite its small size, Switzerland demonstrates significant involvement in geoengineering governance initiatives and hopes to lead climate conversations. Australia's allyship with the US leads to their close coordination with US interests. Australia and Nigeria are motivated by impacts to their natural resources. Australia's Great Barrier Reef restoration efforts require research into mitigating warming waters, so it is already tied to advancing geoengineering research. Motivations to restore the reef are the revival of the tourism industry and historically valuable ecosystems. Nigeria's motivations for geoengineering are centered around its economic reliance on cocoa cultivation, with concerns that SRM could decrease rainfall and affect suitable land for cocoa production. Recognizing its status as a developing country with high emissions, Nigeria sees CDR as crucial for carbon sequestration and job creation, with potential economic benefits. China and Indonesia express motivation to increase their presence and influence regionally and catch up to Global North's scientific advancements.

Table 5: Egoistic Motivations: North vs South

	Reasons for Egoistic Motivation
Global North	- National pressure to push the frontiers of climate science - Leaders in geoengineering will set the precedence for governance and research practices - Preservation of environmental resources for tourism industry benefits - Allyship with other countries pursuing geoengineering - Increase its presence and influence regionally - Compensation for lack of emissions reductions
Global South	- Preservation of environmental and agricultural resources for economic benefits - Increase its presence and influence regionally - Desire to catch up to Global North's scientific advancements - Compensation for lack of emissions reductions

Altruistic Motivations: North vs South

Altruistic motivations were low in both hemispheres but higher in the Global North. Altruistic motivations in the Global North are centered around a "savior complex" where they express their research and resources in geoengineering will help countries most impacted by climate change. The Global South is focused on understanding the impacts of geoengineering on the climates of developing countries in the Global South.

Table 6: Altruistic Motivations: North vs South

	Reasons for Altruistic Motivation
Global North	- Hopes to assist countries without resources to pursue geoengineering - Global CO2 sequestration - Concerns of unilateral deployment leading to research global risks
Global South	- Understand the impacts of geoengineering in developing countries

Security Motivations: North vs South

Security motivations were a dominant narrative in the Global South's documents. While the topics within motivations for security are similar in both hemispheres, the majority of the conversation surrounding security comes from Germany in the Global North. As mentioned earlier, Germany poses a unique view in the Global North on geoengineering, where they are a leader in geoengineering research but are strongly opposed to its deployment. Otherwise, the countries in the Global North only discuss security implications regarding risks associated with geoengineering, which motivates further research to better understand these risks. In the Global South, India, Indonesia, and China are much more concerned with the unilateral deployment of geoengineering which appears inevitable as the US continues its aggressive research. Within the UAE, there is focus on addressing climate-related challenges such as poor visibility from dust storms, supporting freshwater resources, and ensuring sustainable water supplies for arid climates, indicating a proactive approach to managing environmental challenges in the region. Indonesia is also focused on sustainable water management. China is conducting extensive research to understand mechanisms, assess climate impacts, and evaluate risks associated with geoengineering. Chinese researchers are hesitant to endorse outdoor experiments due to perceived geoengineering risks and aim to prioritize the country's stability and internal development.

Table 7: Security Motivations: North vs South

	Reasons for Security Motivation
Global North	- Climate related risks and vulnerabilities - Geopolitical risks associated with unilateral deployment - Understand regional environmental risks associated with geoengineering
Global South	- Climate related risks and vulnerabilities - Geopolitical risks associated with unilateral deployment - Understand regional environmental risks associated with geoengineering

VI. Discussion

Our analysis did not find a strong relationship between fossil fuel consumption and geoengineering pursuits. There are multiple reasons for this: (1) Consumption metrics and 'number of projects' may not have been the best variables to analyze. Future analyses may benefit from looking at investments instead; (2) The majority of countries with geoengineering projects had fewer than 5 projects, making it difficult to compare when there is such little difference in number of projects for the majority of countries; (3) A relationship between fossil fuel consumption and geoengineering may not be causally related, but may be attributed to wealthier nations having the resources to pursue geoengineering.

Despite this, we still need to acknowledge the historical and testimonial evidence. A report by the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) documents how the advancement of geoengineering risks the further entrenchment of our energy systems in fossil fuels. Direct air capture requires the operation of carbon storage facilities to effectively dispose of captured carbon - unless the carbon was simply processed into carbon-based fuels combusted and reintroduced into the atmosphere—a scenario aligned with the interests of fossil fuel industries. The IPCC emphasizes that curbing warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius necessitates transitioning from fossil fuels toward sustainable alternatives, rather than merely accounting for emissions adding and subtracting to a desired amount. Geoengineering threatens this transition by perpetuating the very systems that need redesigning. Carbon sequestration's primary advantage lies in its compatibility with existing fossil fuel infrastructure. CIEL states that fossil fuel companies control the technologies required for large-scale deployment of CDR and SRM, actively engaging in geoengineering research and discourse since its inception. Their vested interest in such technologies delays the imperative transition from fossil fuels and diverts attention and resources from more practical solutions, bolstering the interests at the root of the climate crisis. Moreover, CIEL concludes that fossil fuel companies have a significant stake in understanding and potentially manipulating the weather to safeguard their assets and core markets (CIEL, 2019).

Despite this, not all academic inquiry into weather modification or climate control is driven by fossil fuel industry motives; well-intentioned researchers are still pursuing these technologies. As demonstrated in part 2a of our analysis, countries are motivated to pursue geoengineering by ecological, egoistic, altruistic, and security interests. Fossil fuel interests would fall under the egoistic category of motivations – we saw in our analysis that egoistic motivations were low among all countries, and the reasons did not specifically refer to fossil fuel interests. Instead, ecological and security motivations were the highest, disproving our original hypothesis.

VII. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

It is crucial to acknowledge the broader implications of geoengineering research, such as the increased likelihood of deployment with increased research, the risk of termination shock, and the diversion of attention from other essential mitigation strategies such as the decline of fossil fuel-based systems. While some actors, including

fossil fuel industries, may stand to benefit from geoengineering technologies, the motivations driving countries' pursuits extend beyond narrow self-interests. With most scientific advancements, research is always ahead of its governance. With geoengineering, this presents a particularly dangerous risk that is applicable on a global scale. This means that the political hemisphere must work to get ahead of the research. Policy recommendations to achieve this are outlined below.

1. Governance Framework for outdoor SRM and CDR Experiments

Governance frameworks are needed to guide decisions of what is an acceptable research activity for all geoengineering approaches. Most research into geoengineering has only been conducted through computer models and we are just starting to see small-scale outdoor experiments. To minimize the risk of an outdoor experiment having harmful environmental or ethical consequences, strict and specific governance framework for research procedures need to be established.

2. Robust Scientific Review Processes Representative of Global Interests

Along with research procedure, a globally inclusive, transparent, and equitable scientific review process of geoengineering research is needed to guide future research and decision making. A multi-dimensional review process would compare the risks of SRM and CDR deployment with the risks of climate change without its deployment (UNEP, 2023). The scientific review process is essential to validate the accuracy and credibility of research methods, data analysis, and research conclusions. A review process that reflects global interests ensures that research addresses issues comprehensively and considers their impacts on diverse communities worldwide. It helps to prioritize research questions, methodologies, and solutions that are relevant and applicable across different regions and populations.

3. Governance Framework for Large-scale Deployment of SRM and CDR

SRM and CDR technologies have the potential to significantly alter the Earth's climate system and ecosystems. Implementing a governance framework ensures that the risks associated with large-scale deployment, such as unintended consequences, ethical concerns, and geopolitical implications, are adequately assessed, monitored, and managed. Additionally, fostering international collaboration and trust-building allows governments to better navigate geopolitical complexities and foster collective responses to climate change.

4. Globally Inclusive Public Education and Media Discourse

The conversations of geoengineering within the public and in the media should involve the discussion of all stakeholders, with an emphasis of including the global south and dispelling a U.S centered narrative. Public education empowers individuals to make informed decisions about geoengineering and its potential implications. By providing accessible and accurate information, education enables citizens to critically evaluate the risks, benefits, and ethical considerations associated with geoengineering technologies. Informed decision-making is essential for shaping public opinion, influencing policy debates, and guiding collective responses to climate change.

5. Prohibit Policies that Subsidize or Extend Fossil Infrastructure

Subsidizing or extending fossil infrastructure directly contradicts efforts to mitigate climate change. This includes subsidies for carbon capture and storage and direct air capture. Once infrastructure is built, it tends to have long lifespans and can create dependency on fossil fuels, hindering the adoption of cleaner alternatives. Prohibiting subsidies or extensions for fossil infrastructure helps prevent lock-in effects and facilitates the transition to clean energy. This would also decrease the risks associated with termination shock.

Final Thoughts

This research paper has delved into the complex landscape of geoengineering research, seeking to understand the motivations driving countries' pursuits in this controversial field. Through an extensive literature review and analysis of geoengineering projects across the globe, several key findings have emerged. First, despite the inherent risks associated with geoengineering and the diverse discourse among various stakeholders, countries worldwide are actively engaged in researching its technologies and methods. The investigation into which countries are leading these endeavors revealed a dominance of projects spearheaded by the United States and Europe, with a significant proportion of research concentrated in the Global North.

While the initial hypothesis suggested a potential correlation between countries' fossil fuel dependence and their engagement in geoengineering, the analysis did not yield substantial evidence to support this claim. Instead, motivations for geoengineering were found to be multifaceted, ranging from ecological concerns about climate change to security considerations regarding the risks posed by unilateral deployment. A more detailed examination of motivations across different regions highlighted disparities between the Global North and South. While ecological motivations remained prevalent across both hemispheres, the Global South exhibited a greater emphasis on security concerns, reflecting their vulnerability to climate-related risks and geopolitical dynamics.

This analysis underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the motivations and implications surrounding geoengineering with emphasis on global equity and inclusion. As countries continue to navigate the challenges of climate change, it is imperative to approach geoengineering research with caution, ensuring that it is guided by ethical considerations, global cooperation, and a commitment to long-term sustainability.

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Appendix A: Number of CDR and SRM Projects (2019-2024) by Country

Country	*CDR*	*SRM*	*Total Projects*	*Percent of Global Total Projects*	*North or South*	*Fossil Fuel Rate*
United States	255	5	260	33.72244	N	82.4
United Kingdom	47	2	49	6.355383	N	80.4
Australia	42	3	45	5.836576	N	89.6
China	41	0	41	5.317769	S	87.7
Germany	35	0	35	4.539559	N	78.9
Canada	29	0	29	3.761349	N	74.1
Norway	27	0	27	3.501946	N	57.0
India	21	0	21	2.723735	S	73.6
Netherlands	18	0	18	2.33463	N	93.5
Switzerland	15	1	16	2.075227	N	50.2
Iceland	14	0	14	1.815824	N	11.3
Sweden	12	0	12	1.55642	N	25.1
Brazil	11	0	11	1.426719	N	59.1
Spain	11	0	11	1.426719	S	73.0
United Arab Emirates	10	0	10	1.297017	N	86.1
Japan	10	0	10	1.297017	S	93.0
France	9	0	9	1.167315	N	46.5
Finland	7	0	7	0.907912	N	40.2
Saudi Arabia	7	0	7	0.907912	S	99.9
Indonesia	7	0	7	0.907912	S	66.1
South Africa	6	0	6	0.77821	S	86.8
Chile	5	0	5	0.648508	N	74.6
Scotland	4	1	5	0.648508	N	NA
Belgium	5	0	5	0.648508	N	75.9
Italy	4	1	5	0.648508	N	79.9
Austria	5	0	5	0.648508	S	65.7
Malaysia	5	0	5	0.648508	S	96.6
Mexico	3	1	4	0.518807	N	90.4
Argentina	4	0	4	0.518807	N	87.7
Israel	4	0	4	0.518807	N	97.4
Egypt	4	0	4	0.518807	S	97.9
Kenya	4	0	4	0.518807	S	17.4
Philippines	4	0	4	0.518807	S	62.4
South Korea	4	0	4	0.518807	S	81.0
Denmark	3	0	3	0.389105	N	64.9
Croatia	3	0	3	0.389105	N	70.7
Greece	3	0	3	0.389105	N	82.6

Turkey	3	0	3	0.389105	N	86.8
Jordan	3	0	3	0.389105	S	97.6
Qatar	3	0	3	0.389105	S	100.0
Oman	3	0	3	0.389105	S	100.0
Thailand	3	0	3	0.389105	S	79.8
Peru	2	0	2	0.259403	N	79.6
Republic of Ireland	2	0	2	0.259403	N	85.3
Bulgaria	2	0	2	0.259403	N	71.0
Romania	2	0	2	0.259403	N	72.5
Iran	2	0	2	0.259403	N	99.0
Nigeria	2	0	2	0.259403	S	18.9
Botswana	2	0	2	0.259403	S	74.7
Russia	2	0	2	0.259403	S	92.1
Taiwan	2	0	2	0.259403	S	NA
Papua New Guinea	2	0	2	0.259403	S	NA
New Zealand	2	0	2	0.259403	S	59.7
Dominican Republic	1	0	1	0.129702	N	86.6
Puerto Rico	1	0	1	0.129702	N	NA
Slovenia	1	0	1	0.129702	N	61.1
Czech Republic	1	0	1	0.129702	N	77.7
Poland	1	0	1	0.129702	N	90.3
Hungary	1	0	1	0.129702	N	69.5
Moldova	1	0	1	0.129702	N	88.7
Ukraine	1	0	1	0.129702	S	75.3
Armenia	1	0	1	0.129702	S	74.6
Kuwait	1	0	1	0.129702	S	93.7
Bahrain	1	0	1	0.129702	S	99.4
Algeria	1	0	1	0.129702	S	100.0
Morocco	1	0	1	0.129702	S	88.5
Cape Verde	1	0	1	0.129702	S	0.0
Senegal	1	0	1	0.129702	S	53.9
Burkina Faso	1	0	1	0.129702	S	NA
Cameroon	1	0	1	0.129702	S	38.3
Zambia	1	0	1	0.129702	S	10.6
Malawi	1	0	1	0.129702	S	NA
Madagascar	1	0	1	0.129702	S	NA
Cambodia	1	0	1	0.129702	S	30.6
East Timor	1	0	1	0.129702	S	0.0

Section 4:

Political Theory

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Featuring:

"Reciprocal Altruism: Rebuilding America's Reputation in the Middle East"

Written by Eleanor Schoenbrun
Yale University, Political Science and Global Affairs Major, Class of 2025

Political Theory

Reciprocal Altruism: Rebuilding America's Reputation in the Middle East

Eleanor Schoenbrun

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In the process of evaluating and rebalancing whether or not the United States should intervene in the affairs of other countries or stay out of world events, the nation's leaders must shift their current narrative of American exceptionalism into one that takes an objective look at America's capabilities. If the country admits it is no better than other nations, the United States can take a step down from its presumed moral high ground. This myth of exceptionalism has eroded over time but has also led the United States down a dangerous path in the last two decades that must be corrected.

The United States should intervene in foreign affairs from the perspective that it is no better than other countries. America, of course, has its limitations, shortcomings, national interests, reputation, and security to think about. But, before going to make an impact in the world, the United States needs to look internally and see that its foundations were correct with the Powell Doctrine. Additionally, I believe an eighth rule should be added, calling for reciprocal altruism. The Powell Doctrine, combined with reciprocal altruism, can be incentivized both at home and abroad, changing how the United States plays the long game of international relations and evolving its strategies of diplomacy.

A prime example of how the Powell Doctrine should be reinstated today is the cultural revolution after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks that even its namesake could not deter. Through President George Herbert Walker Bush's 'War on Terror' and the moral hypocrisy following the Abu Ghraib torture and prisoner abuse carried out by US military members, overambition and recklessness meant that Secretary of State Colin Powell could not "slow down a unilateralism that gained speed after September 11."[1] When fear overpowered reason, getting even turned into bullying, overreach, and soured into incompetence that put service members and others at risk. President Bush's famous State of the Union calling out an Axis of Evil told the entire world that "all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security."[2] The message was loud and clear – the United States would be willing to go it alone merging exceptionalism and power into unilateralism with unruly consequences on the geopolitical stage, and, more importantly, in the lives lost because of it.

As Walter LaFeber mentions in his analysis of The Bush Doctrine, "the attacks challenged the American (and especially the Bush administration's) faith that the United States was truly set apart from the rest of the world."[3] Rather than realize the country was far from exceptional and just as susceptible to attacks as the rest of the world, America took it personally and got sloppy. The direct result of the administration's attitude was the full force of American military power going into the world with a black eye looking for someone to blame for the 9/11 attacks, justifiably so. "Rather than exemplify the nation's highest values"[4] that have driven policy decisions for spreading democracy and capitalism for centuries, Carlos Lozada mentions in his essay for the Washington Post that 9/11 was a test that the United States failed. "In the name of counterterrorism, security is politicized, savagery legalized, and patriotism weaponized"[5] in a way that had anti-American sentiment growing at an alarming rate after the attacks, turning away the United States's closest sympathizers in a time of crisis.

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[1] Walter LaFeber, "The Bush Doctrine," *Diplomatic History* No. 144 (Fall 2002) 543:558
[2] President George W. Bush to the American People, January 29, 2002, President Delivers State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush Presidential White House Archives, paragraph 22.
[3] LaFeber, *The Bush Doctrine*, 550.
[4] Carlos Lozada, "9/11 was a test. The books of the last two decades show how America failed," *The Washington Post* (September 3, 2021).
[5] Carlos Lozada, *9/11 was a test. The books of the last two decades show how America failed,* paragraph 4.

The largest example of this issue was the antithesis of American values – injustice, arrogance, overreach, unchecked power, government-sponsored terror – when the Abu Ghraib prison scandal took the world by storm. The 'outrages against personal dignity' that occurred under the American flag's intervention made it clear that the quick radicalization of the Bush administration's efforts was dangerous and showed the consequences of actions left unattended. As Hooks and Mosher point out, "we must fear the person who obeys the law more than the one who breaks it,"[6] now that those executing the American mission abroad turned the United States into a hypocritical and rogue superpower. When the assumption that "before they go abroad to fight and possibly die, [American troops] have "the support of the American people and… Congress?"[7] is violated, how can the country hold itself accountable to the same standards that it was promoting that the War on Terror was not just about America's freedom but the safety of all nations? When President Bush was arguing that "this is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom,"[8] asking every nation to join the United States without first earning this kind of support with other nations given how diplomacy is cumulative, and second, when its actions speak louder than its words. This narrative that America is exceptional, including its resurgence in today's modern domestic politics should be viewed with skepticism; otherwise, the United States will lose even more ground than it has already lost in recent decades.

"The world's tolerance of the US has decreased," during this time, and the self-fulfilling prophecy of a United States already losing its credibility became a "self-absorbed, bullying hegemon, heedless of the consequences of its actions"[9] that made us no better than those the country was fighting. The United States stooped to a generalized enemy's level to fulfill personal agendas and lost moral clarity while putting those sacrificing the most in harm's way. Recognizing America's limits rather than overreaching and placing itself on a pedestal only to face self-destruction or redirected targets by aggressors, America can implement an improved, tried and true intervention strategy: The Powell Doctrine.

The Powell Doctrine still resonates with foreign intervention, its steps calling for America to set clear, tangible goals, invest sufficient resources, minimize casualties, and carry out an exit strategy. The logic makes interventionist catalysts take a step back to ensure that America will "not only set goals but set the right ones – whether it's destroying an enemy or rebuilding a society,"[10] as David Rothkopf points out in his Foreign Policy article, *Lessons Learned (and Not)*. In clearly defining who the enemy is, more importantly understanding the country's limitations with the world's greatest military capabilities, and being wary of certainties and the last success, American intervention can humble itself with the right intentions and ensure that the country never cross our own 'red line,' given that it has its own reputation and repercussions at the national and international level to think about.

In the case of President Barack Obama's administration, attempts to move in the right direction of intervention were made, but faced issues with the Libyan intervention and the infamous Syrian 'red line.' In trying to learn from past mistakes from previous administrations, Obama found himself in the middle of the Arab Spring and a NATO-led military intervention in Libya, even after decades of working with the Libyans after the 1998 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. Progress paved the way for "Libya's reversal on terrorism,"[11, 12] including their denuclearization and compensation for the families killed in the terrorist attack. The progress set in 'The Libya Precedent' got as far as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice rescinding Libya's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism, the

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[6] Gregory Hooks & Clayton Mosher, "Outrages Against Personal Dignity: Rationalizing Abuse and Torture in the War on Terror," *Social Forces* Volume 83, No. 4 (June 2005), 1635
[7] Walter LaFeber, "The Rise and Fall of Colin Powell and the Powell Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* Volume 124, No. 1 (Spring 2009), 71:93.
[8] LaFeber, *The Bush Doctrine*, 553.
[9] Robert Kagan, "The September 12 Paradigm," *Foreign Affairs* Volume 87, No. 5 (September/October 2008), 25:39.
[10] David Rothkopf, "Lessons Learned (and Not), *Foreign Policy* (March 4, 2013).
[11] Jonathan B. Schwartz, "Dealing with a "Rogue State": The Libya Precedent," *American Journal of International Law* Volume 101, No. 3 (July 2007), 553: 580.
[12] Rothkopf, *Lessons Learned (and Not),* paragraph 14.

work of "diplomats and business – not soldiers"[13] moving the world into long-term interests to avoid intervention as long as possible. However, when intervention was necessary, the efforts that united American and Libyan interests in continued nonproliferation and fighting terrorism were lost when some argued that America should not have intervened agreed that the true root of the problems arose when the United States failed to execute a proper exit strategy, leaving Libya worse off than before intervention.

The original intent of the Obama administration was to "save the lives of peaceful, pro-democracy protesters who found themselves the target of a crackdown by Libyan dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi."[14] Without a clear exit strategy that the Powell Doctrine emphasizes, the Libyan state "had not only failed to evolve into a democracy; it had devolved into a failed state"[15] when America reached too far. America's pro-democratic peace-spreading and postwar assistance failed, leaving Libya, a country, where it had "limited influence over a government that had not been eager to accept help and its limited ability to deliver that help even if the government wanted it."[16]

America's limitations led to "a cautionary tale of how humanitarian intervention can backfire for both the intervener and those it is intended to help."[16] In the process, America opened the door for more humanitarian suffering, sectarianism, and the rise of radical Islam in a region where the country should have been able to minimize negative consequences and maximize positive impact. The United States' regional impact is something that can be another turn of a page for American military intervention history, but for those in the region and America's regional power there today, the people remember. Now, the United States is left in the conundrum of undercutting "its own nuclear proliferation objectives" in losing Qaddafi in power as the incumbent power willing to play ball but only created skepticism for future interventionist efforts because Qaddafi's "reward, eight years later, was a US-led regime change that culminated in his violent death."[17] The region remembers, other countries in the Arab Spring, including Egypt's leadership, remember how the United States turned its back on President Hosni Mubarak, a long-term cooperator, when he was ousted.

America's reputation of intervention often precedes itself abroad, reinforcing Rothkopf implored lessons learned after President Bush's Iraq War: be wary of its last successes and follow the Powell Doctrine to have a clear exit strategy. Without working within its power and knowledge, America's role in intervention is incapable of achieving success and could make a worse mess if a nation is already in turmoil, especially if the long-run effect also undermines American interests. With his feet wet after Libya's intervention, President Obama decided that he would "not end up like the second President Bush – a president who became tragically overextended in the Middle East,"[18] and was able to align closer to the Powell Doctrine than before. In trying to learn the lessons of the Powell Doctrine and the mistakes of past administrations, there was discord in Powell's model of committing "U.S. forces to combat [as] a last resort"[19] and when President Obama instituted the infamous Red Line in the Syrian Civil War in 2012.

The problem of upholding and reinvigorating the reputation of American intervention is not mutually exclusive regarding conflict. The belief that "big nations don't bluff," as it was put by then-Vice President Joe Biden, means that once the United States says it is going to do something, the expectation is that it follows through. So, when President Obama said that the use of chemical warfare in the Syrian civil war was a red line that "would change [his] calculus," there was the expectation that it would not be backed away from. President Obama's threats against Syrian president Bashar al-Assad gassing his own people had to be credible and costly in order to work. Still, the double-

[13] Alan J. Kuperman, "Obama's Libya Debacle: How a Well-Meaning Intervention Ended in Failure," *Council of Foreign Relations* Volume 94, No. 2 (March/April 2015) 66:77.
[14] Kuperman, *Obama's Libya Debacle*, 67.
[15] Derek Chollet & Ben Fishman; Alan J. Kuperman,"Who Lost Libya?: Obama's Intervention in Retrospect," *Foreign Affairs* Volume 94, No. 3 (May/June 2015).
[16] Kuperman, *Obama's Libya Debacle,* 67.
[17] Kuperman, *Obama's Libya Debacle,* 74.
[18] Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine," *The Atlantic* (April 2016).
[19] LaFeber, *The Rise and Fall of Colin Powell and the Powell Doctrine*, 75.

edged sword of intervention is the costs that would occur on both sides in terms of casualties and reputation.

Yes, as Jeffrey Goldberg lays out in his Atlantic article, *The Obama Doctrine,* "history may record August 30, 2013, as the day Obama prevented the U.S. from entering yet another disastrous Muslim civil war, and the day he removed a threat of a chemical attack on Israel, Turkey, or Jordan… or it could be remembered as the day he let the Middle East slip from America's grasp, into the hands of Russia, Iran, and ISIS."[20] Both statements are true – President Obama saved potentially tens of thousands of American lives by choosing not to intervene when his red line was crossed. Still, at the same time, he undermined what the word of American sway held if threats were backed away from. His breaking away from the 'Washington playbook' of intervention was in defiance of internal and external regional pressures, taking back presidential agency but shrinking the share of power the United States has in the Middle East. The question is if the relatively short American president's power, which exchanges hands as quickly as every four years, can fluctuate as much as it does if each new leader of the free world builds off of the last's reputation. Without anything to back itself up other than its own reputation and its lessons ideally enforced, America must establish itself as a nation no better than others. The United States must know the values of its actions, inaction, and where we can make a difference as a hegemonic power in today's world order.

In fitting its national interests through the lens of the Powell Doctrine, American intervention has to be grounded in admitting it is no better than other countries. America must hold itself to the same standards that it expects of others in the geopolitical sphere, if not higher. Without that mutual understanding that everyone is equal on the world stage, there is no path to build a rapport without hypocrisy, especially given the United States' efforts to lead and intervene around the world based on a moral code. By reinventing itself, America has a high ground to stand on if it changes its expectations of itself and where it fits in the international game of diplomacy without falling into the traps laid by precedent.

The first efforts of the Powell Doctrine call for intervention only when "deemed vital to our national interest or that of our allies," and United States service men and women being "sent with the clear intention of winning."[21] But the question of what America wins and how it does so vary from administration to administration. Looking to reverse "the Obama administration's preferred posture of "leading from behind…" an accommodationist strategy that incorrectly signaled diminished American power and influence,"[22] there was criticism from a highly transactional Trump administration wanting to put American security at the forefront of policy. Trump's isolationist policy changed the question of intervention into a business deal, asking what is in it for the United States? What does America gain from being a big dog that is trying to scale back to proper size, bite, and bark?

Moving forward, the incentive of making America no better than other nations allows the United States to go back to its "national motives [not] perceived as driven solely by the desire for material gain but also a dedication to principles of liberty and freedom for all humankind,"[23] a task easier said than done. But the desire to make an impact and intervene moving forward does not have to be based in a school of interventionist thought, but rather an expectation of reciprocal altruism to be fulfilled at a later date. This idea that with good nature and intentions, the United States can intervene and help a country with the expectation of something in return in the future can be used to stabilize rapport, diminish internal polarization, and create an accountability system that both America and its partners hold each other if everyone commits to playing the long game together.

The implementation of reciprocal altruism as the eighth and final rule of thumb in the Powell Doctrine takes the necessitation of an exit strategy to another level. Not only

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[20] Goldberg, *The Obama Doctrine,* paragraph 46.
[21] LaFeber, *The Rise and Fall of Colin Powell and the Powell Doctrine*, 73.
[22] Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, October 15, 2018, Confronting Iran: The Trump Administration's Strategy, Foreign Affairs, paragraph 5.
[23] Trevor B. McCrisken, *American Exceptionalism and the Legacy of Vietnam: U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1974* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 11. h

is there a newfound and reinforceable accountability that ensures a timeline of proactive efforts to prevent conflict, or in the aftermath of conflict, it does not leave a region flailing after its humanitarian and military aid leaves. With reciprocal altruism, the United States can shed its disliked white knight persona that is "blinded by moral clarity and hamstrung by its enormous military strength," and become a country with "a truly effective grand strategy"[24] by admitting that America wants something tangible and reasonable out of the success in these interventions and that it is willing to get its hands dirty in the rebuilding processes.

The United States has continued to isolate itself from the entire world since the 1990s, when America was viewed as a rogue superpower that is "intrusive, interventionist, exploitative, unilateralist, hegemonic, hypocritical."[25] This pattern was exacerbated after President H.W. Bush's foreign policies further inflamed Anti-Americanism as it hit new depths and breadths worldwide. Recklessness and entrenchment had the United States losing support from Europe and its allies, the Muslim world beginning to justify the attacks on Americans and Western nations. The United States was walking alone "to fight an axis of evil, [when] even a superpower needs an axis of its own"[26] to stand with. America has the military strength, but it is not enough when alliances are vital to sanctions, finance, police, intelligence, diplomacy, and most importantly, the trust that must be re-earned on the national stage to be a sound body that follows through on what commitments the country has.

Without that rapport with allies and others, America is at risk of another 9/11, where President Bush did not have the international investment, the support built up over time before asking for help, nor the reputation that people would want to help America in times of need. In continuously pushing the agenda that America is superior, America has created a cloud of cynicism behind its motives and distrust of its intentions. If America shed the myth of exceptionalism, it would be clear to other nations that the country would have just as much to gain and lose as everyone else. If America owns the responsibility that comes with its share of an intervention – no more, no less, no ulterior motives – with the intention of not blind trust and self-flagellation, but the expectation of something in return later down the line, it will have far more diplomatic success.

Rather than taking a zero-sum approach as its interventionist strategy, the United States can evolve into a team player under reciprocal altruism. There is a level of buy-in required across the aisle; there is respect, a newfound precedent to uphold, and a system of accountability to be built to ensure everyone upholds their end of the bargain. However, there will also be a chance to reinvigorate current alliances and strengthen relationships that need the reinforcement to stand the test of time.

An example of how reciprocal altruism is salvaging the present-day relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia under President Joe Biden and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman al Saud. It is well known that the Saudis preferred working with the Trump administration, a combination of the different charisma of the two presidents, President Biden's campaign commentary about how there is "very little social redeeming value in the present government in Saudi Arabia." The provocation of human rights violations by Saudi Arabia threaten to buckle relations that have "survived 15 presidents and seven kings through an oil embargo, two Persian Gulf wars, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks."[27] As a regional hegemon in its own right, the fact that "there's almost no trust and absolutely no mutual respect"[28] between the two nations can deteriorate relations and could further alienate the United States' impact in the Middle East. America needs to recognize that finance, security, and regional stability for the US and its allies are on the line should reciprocal altruism not be enacted.

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[24] Melvyn P. Leffler, "Bush's Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy* No. 144 (September/October 2004), 22:24, 26:28.
[25] Kagan, *The September 12 Paradigm*, 25.
[26] The Economist, "George Bush and the Axis of Evil," *The Economist*, January 31, 2002. Stephen Kalin, Summer Said, & Dion Nissenbaum, "US-Saudi Relations Buckle, Driven by Animosity Between Biden and Mohammed bin Salman," *Wall Street Journal*, October 24, 2022.

[27] Stephen Kalin, Summer Said, & Dion Nissenbaum, "US-Saudi Relations Buckle, Driven by Animosity Between Biden and Mohammed bin Salman," *Wall Street Journal*, October 24, 2022.
[28] Kalin, Said, & Nissenbaum, *US-Saudi Relations Buckle, Driven by Animosity Between Biden and Mohammed bin Salman*, paragraph 5.

The United States is still in the position today to remedy Saudi Arabia's frustration that its "relationship is still viewed through the narrow lens of oil and security."[29] Saudi Arabia wants to be considered a player on the world stage, and if America is responsible for granting Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's desire to be in "a NATO-level mutual-security-treaty with the US," it reaps the benefits of molding what the relationship looks like and its bounds while holding hegemonic power in today's geopolitical sphere. But again, reciprocal altruism does not have America blindly trusting Saudi Arabia as it keeps its distance and recognizes each country's positions at face value. Under the United States' umbrella of hegemony, fostering reciprocal altruism means America does something for its allies now, then they help when their assistance is "deemed vital to our national interest and that of our allies," including progress in the human rights arena. Each side must fulfill its end of the bargain to have a symbiotic relationship, and it can come in spheres of human rights, energy and climate impact, regional stability, give us another ally against a looming Iran, and even push President Biden's current agenda to have Saudi Arabia join the Abraham Accords to normalize the Arab world's relationship with Israel given their leadership in the Arab Peace Initiative approved by the entire Arab League in 2002.

With something greater than each country's stake on the line, reciprocal altruism in times of peace will fortify the relationships that will be dire when future necessary intervention causes strain, a critical piece America has been missing in its foreign intervention efforts. It also reinforces the idea that the United States is not superior: it is a partner, but it is not the partner's job to carry the other party's weight too. It also means that partners hold accountability over America, and America holds accountability over its network. In taking ownership of everything before intervention, America commits itself to only doing what it can without overstretching and overextending its limitations if tangibility is at the forefront of reciprocal altruism.

As Aaron David Miller argues in his Foreign Policy article, the pursuit of Middle Eastern peace was under the assumption that "only America could help the Arabs and Israelis bring that peace to fruition." In contrast, reciprocal altruism pushes the narrative that America is not exceptional, but has its strengths and is "aware of what it cannot do, as much as what it can."[30] This line of thinking puts everyone on the same level with a unifying goal that proactive de-escalation intervention is key, and asks for buy-in before costly signals, in the form of money, sanctions, lives, and military force, are borne by everyone. Without this transformation, as Miller bluntly puts it, "America has neither the opportunity nor frankly the balls to do truly big things on Arab-Israeli peacemaking,"[31] but in reciprocal altruistic fashion, America could be the one that brings everyone to the table to negotiate, take ownership, and make reform to current policies without exceeding each party's carrying capacity as modern conflicts evolve. If the United States holds itself to the same standards and faces the same risks of those around them. America, then, does not deny the risks and reform necessary by both its policies and the policies of its allies, especially as it becomes more politically salient in today's climate, and it takes advantage of the strong leaders who "cut to the core of the political and religious identity and political survival"[32] while keeping American policy in the folds. If American interventionist policy requires ownership over achievable and tangible goals, the rapport and accountability brought about by reciprocal altruism can only bring stability.

As America continues to change how it plays the long game of diplomacy under an updated Powell Doctrine, it allows for reflection on domestic challenges, where reciprocal altruism may fall flat, what looms ahead, and how its role in the game can evolve to best suit the ever-changing world stage.

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[29] Kalin, Said, & Nissenbaum, *US-Saudi Relations Buckle, Driven by Animosity Between Biden and Mohammed bin Salman*, paragraph 9.

[30] Aaron David Miller, "The False Religion of Mideast Peace," *Foreign Policy*, April 19, 2010.
[31] Miller, *The False Religion of Mideast Peace,* paragraph 51.
[32] Miller, *The False Religion of Mideast Peace,* paragraph 35.

In the newly permeable school of thought that the United States is no better than everyone else, but rather has a unique set of capabilities, its room for growth can only reinforce what must rebalance American intervention. First, America has a lot of work to do to rebuild itself on the world stage, and that will be difficult given the nature of elections changing the make-up of its governing bodies at a minimum of every two years. A unifying factor is the desire to refine American life and what it represents at home and abroad, and if America is no different from other countries, all parties have to play the game in order to bring reform. With that thought, America's career politicians that can utilize their gravitas, be a mouthpiece of the party, and have the influence to be a catalyst for unity in the American legislature. The Powell Doctrine recognizes that for the sake of national security and the security of America's allies, intervention can happen as a last resort, but it does not take into account what is a driver for all politicians: the next election. In doing something today, politicians can bring sound policies back to their constituents, re-humanize the polarized legislature that unites our country rather than fragmenting us further, and provide action that refines America's national identity and security on the world stage as a positive changemaker.

It is important to note that reciprocal altruism requires a great amount of risk and trust that some may not be willing to give up. There is always the chance that American interventionist policies that are carried out are potentially wrong or taken advantage of without receiving anything in return. However, in accountability, the United States can hold onto the fact that it did what was as risk averse as possible; learn and refine for next time; and place heavier emphasis on accountability rather than attaching strings that were not originally needed. The opposite of interventionism, additionally, does not translate into isolationism in every case; the United States still has strong endowments in cutting-edge military technology, the hard and soft power of its culture, and if its word will not be reinforced and validated by one, it means something to another. Reciprocal altruism is not bilateral and isolated, and as American interventionist policy zooms out to the big picture, it is important to recognize the change in America's role today, and what it can do to optimize its position in geopolitics and foreign policy.

In the United States' role in the Abraham Accords, America served as the mediator that assisted in normalizing relationships between Israel and the Arab world. Its signatories, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan, were the first to agree on this fundamental shift in Arab-Israeli affairs under the unifying Abrahamic religions: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. America maximized what it could out of each of the signatories, which was foundational but lacked tangibility and avoided the 'Palestinian issue.' Yes, the splintering in support for Israel is remarkable, but as Secretary of State Blinken addressed, "Arab normalization is no substitute for a political solution between Israelis and Palestinians,"[33] which came to fruition in October 2023 after Hamas committed terrorist atrocities against Israel. Under reciprocal altruism, there could have been stronger calls for accountability on all fronts given how Israeli politics is a defining characteristic of Middle Eastern intervention, but in the US's role in the middle and a trusted ally, its facilitation moved American and Middle Eastern relations in times without conflict.

Mediation is not a new concept in Middle Eastern intervention, given the role of the Sultanate of Oman as the 'friends of all, enemy of none.' Its strategic placement in intervention allows for Oman to be in the middle of everything without having a horse in the race, hosting Iran, Middle Eastern, and Western countries alike when they genuinely and morally push for peacemaking. The ability to stay under the radar, Oman's reciprocal altruism asks for stability and relevancy in return for a place for monumental discussions to take place under their roof – insight that open doors may not let all thieves in under the right conditions.

Additionally, and more realistically, there is the most volatile situation where intervention looms when resolution is not possible, such is the case with growing tensions in Iran. Iran's reach in the Middle East has created an "anti-Israel, anti-American, anti-

[33] Zaha Hassan & Marwan Muasher, "Why the Abraham Accords Fall Short: Sidelining the Palestinians is a Recipe for Violence, not Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, June 7, 2022.

Western axis"[34] where its proxies allow it to pressure Israel and America from all directions. With funding in Hamas in Palestinian territories, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Shiite militias in Iraq, Assad's regime in Syria, and the Houthi rebels in Yemen as its beneficiaries, Iran is able to reap all of the benefits of furthering more radical Islam, cast a farther net of power, and continue benefiting from the metastasizing of American hatred across the Middle East. As America continues to lose traction in the Middle East thanks to Iranian opposition, the United States is left to put out the fires Iran has financially backed and try to emphasize nonproliferation while we have the chance to. One of the main takeaways from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was the use of economic and diplomatic unified efforts from the P5 + 1, or the permanent seat holders on the United Nations Security Council: China, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, the United States, and Germany on behalf of the European Union. With their hands tied, Iran was not given a choice in the matter of the unified front – that was until America cut off its nose to spite its face after the Trump administration rejected a deal with Iran and pulled out of the JCPOA. Without the mentality that diplomacy is cumulative and mutual, the pressure the Iranian puppeteer was under depleted, and Iran went back to its expansion, meaning that the United States is left to "fight the war in the Middle East on Iran's terms"[35] rather than its own. In every violation of the rules in the Powell Doctrine, most certainly not considering the role that reciprocal altruism could have played in American interventionist policy, the United States must crawl out of this hole, among others, to prove itself again as a team player that makes good on its promises for the future.

Grasping the United States' role in the game of diplomacy with a reformed Powell Doctrine from a place of indifference requires a bit of analogous playground politics, and the irony is not lost. There is the golden rule that you should treat others the way you want to be treated; sometimes a person has to wait their turn for the monkey bars and the people cutting in line are called out for it; everyone has scabs on their knees from falling down once or twice; but most importantly, it is everyone's responsibility to stand up to bullies while walking the fine line of not becoming a bully yourself. It is no different in interventionist conflict: temperamental children on a playground, this time they just have access to war missile codes. There is the opportunity to be no different, play along and change the way games are played, but there is always the security of a parent or recess monitor there to step in and hold others accountable for their actions; or there is a nearby host offering their playground such as Oman where recess can be held next time. Accountability in reciprocal altruism argues that everyone plays on the playground together, with the promise that if everyone is on their best behavior, they can come back the next day.

In playing the long game, the United States must change the way it plays the game by taking ownership over its intervention before, during, and supremely after. With the complexity of the crisis in the Middle East, it must make its main goals known: Avoid the metastasis of Iran's power and Israel's isolation in today's conflict and utilize American influence in a region where anti-terrorist and non-proliferation efforts will not just affect today and tomorrow, but future generations. By following the Powell Doctrine with my proposed eighth rule calling for reciprocal altruism in policy, the United States can stop its diplomatic backsliding in its tracks, righting wrongs under the assumption that this nation is no better than others and rebuild American capabilities while the opportunity to do so still exists.

[34] Thomas L. Friedman, "A Titanic Geopolitical Struggle is Underway," *The New York Times,* January 25, 2024.
[35] Friedman, *A Titanic Geopolitical Struggle is Underway,* paragraph 12.

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