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Social Construction, Informed Preferences, and Citizens' Support for U.S. Counterterrorism Policies

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION, INFORMED PREFERENCES, AND CITIZENS'
SUPPORT FOR U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM POLICIES

By

Aleksandar Jankovski

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2013

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SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION, INFORMED PREFERENCES, AND CITIZENS'
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In the present study I address the following questions: “Why do U.S. citizens support the counterterrorism policy of their government? Why do they oppose it? Crucially – and noting that preferences over a particular policy domain determine the kinds of votes they cast – what informs citizens’ preferences?” I answer the questions by proposing the following *central assertion: three independent variables are crucial* to informing citizens’ preferences – and, in turn, their votes. These are: the social constructions of terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy. I hypothesize, therefore, that the work of determining and explaining citizens’ preferences is, *in the main*, performed by the various ways in which citizens have come to understand terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. engagement abroad. I test the hypotheses by way of an ordered probit model. The empirical findings lend support to the hypotheses.

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Chapter 1

Prelude to a Study

(1) The Problematique

Questions, Answers, Hypotheses, and Findings

Since the end of the Cold War the United States has been involved in a number of military confrontations and has continued to expend large amounts of money on these military operations and on the maintenance of almost 1000 overseas military bases. Much of this expenditure is justified as necessary to fight the “global threat of international terrorism.” To what degree and why do Americans support or oppose this policy. More specifically, in the present study I address the following questions: “Why do U.S. citizens support the counterterrorism policy of their government? Why do they oppose it? Crucially – and noting that preferences over a particular policy domain determine the kinds of votes they cast – what informs citizens’ preferences?” I answer the questions by proposing the following *central assertion: three independent variables are crucial to informing citizens’ preferences – and, in turn, their votes. These are: the social constructions of terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy. I maintain, therefore, that the work of determining and explaining citizens’ preferences is, in the main, performed by the various ways in which citizens have come to understand terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. engagement abroad.*

In the study I imagine social constructions as continua such that on one terminus are located orthodox social constructions, while on the other terminus are located heterodox social constructions (see chapters 2 and 3).¹ In turn, I operationalized the

¹ By “orthodox” social constructions I mean nothing more than a set of social constructions that are widely shared among the citizens and such that a majority of the citizens find it easy to agree with such

various continua on Guttman scales (see chapter 3). Finally, I maintain that the particular terminus (on the continua/scales) on which citizens find themselves will inform their preferences and, in turn, their votes. Therefore, I posit, and by way of an ordered probit model empirically test, the following hypotheses:

H₁: The probability² that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy in “Winthropian” terms to socially constructing the history in “agnostic” and, finally, “indignant” terms.

H₂: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from socially constructing terrorism in “orthodox” terms to socially constructing terrorism in “middle-of-the-road” and, finally, “heterodox” terms.

H₃: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from socially constructing security in “statist” terms to socially constructing security in “middle-of-the-road” and, finally, “emancipatory” terms.

H₄: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from self-identifying as conservative to self-identifying as a moderate and finally a liberal.

H₅: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from being “not knowledgeable” to being “somewhat knowledgeable” and finally “knowledgeable”.

In the main, the findings support the hypotheses. The probability of U.S. citizens’ support for the counterterrorism policy of their government is at 91.9% for citizens who have come to understand³ the history of U.S. foreign policy in Winthropian terms⁴ (on which, see chapter 5), terrorism in orthodox terms⁵ (on which, see chapter 4), and security in

constructions. By “heterodox” social constructions I mean nothing more than a set of social constructions that are not widely shared by the citizens and such that a majority of the citizens find it difficult to agree with such constructions.

² I employ an ordered probit model. Thus, the findings are expressed as probabilities (see chapter 3).

³ “Come to understand” refers to the particular terminus on which citizens find themselves.

⁴ In articulating one understanding of U.S. foreign policy as Winthropian, I borrow from John Winthrop’s 1630 sermon. The sermon set the stage for what has come to be the orthodox self-understanding of America and American foreign policy. This self-understanding has aptly been characterized as American exceptionalism. “In essence, this was the belief that America was a great experiment, fraught with risk but animated by the conviction—as John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts, famously described it in 1630 aboard a ship off the New England coast—that America should be ‘as a city upon a hill,’ the eyes of all people upon us, and if we should fail to make this city a beacon of hope and decency, and “deal falsely with our God,” we should be cursed (Chace, 2002: 2).”

⁵ The orthodox understanding of terrorism posits that terrorism is an act of violence, designed with a view towards advancing a political end, perpetrated by non-state actors. The violence is employed against a

statist terms⁶ (on which, see chapter 2). The probability of support drops precipitously, to mere 7.8%, for citizens who have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy in agnostic terms, terrorism in middle-of-the-road terms, and security in middle of the road terms. Finally, the probability of support is at a meager 1.2% for citizens who have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy in indignant terms, terrorism in heterodox terms, and security in emancipatory terms.

It is also important to note that I estimate the importance of the variables discussed above while controlling for factual knowledge and ideological self-identification.⁷ I find that – as posited – the main work in determining and explaining citizens’ preferences is performed by the variables for the social constructions. More precisely, in the sample used here factual knowledge has no effect – that is, it *does not determine or explain* – citizens’ preferences over the policy domain of U.S. counterterrorism policy. The heuristic (on which see chapter 2) “ideological self identification” *does* play a role, but one that – in the main – is not as strong as the role played by the social constructions. Finally, the most prominent role in the overall model is performed by the social construction of U.S. foreign policy. The social construction of security plays some role although not as strong as the role played by the social construction of U.S. foreign policy. Quite surprisingly, given that the substantive policy domain analyzed in the present study is the counterterrorism policy of the U.S. government, the social construction of terrorism – at least in the sample employed here –

subset of the target audience but is designed to intimidate the target audience into submitting to the terrorists’ demands. And, while the violence is carefully planned it is designed to appear random so as to enhance the intimidation.

⁶ The statist understanding of security posits that the state is the proper referent of security.

⁷ For the motivation behind this, see below.

does *not* perform a significant role. As indicated, ideological self-identification (in particular, self identifying as a conservative) does play a significant role.

Motivation for the Present Study

Classical democratic theory is the main motivator behind this study.⁸ It posits that democracy works well only when citizens' votes are well informed – that is, well considered. “Well informed” and “well considered” have been operationalized as votes buttressed by solid factual knowledge about the political world. Yet, a large body of literature⁹ notes Americans' generally low reservoir of factual political knowledge. This is troubling for democracy, if by democracy we mean “vertical accountability.”

Americans' lack of political knowledge means that their preferences as expressed in their

⁸ David Held (1987) suggests the existence of no less than nine different “models of democracy.” However one articulates it – whether, on one hand, in the expansive, civic virtue terms of the Periclean ideal contained in his funeral oration or, on the other hand, in terms of the minimalist utilitarian model of the night-watchman, neutral arbiter state favored by Przeworski – it seems clear that the *sine qua non* element of democracy is popular control of government policies, or “vertical accountability.” Consequently, Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl (1991: 75) conceive of democracy as a “unique system for organizing relations between rulers and the ruled” such that “*democracy is a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives.*”

The democratic narrative may be articulated as follows: the legitimacy of the policies enacted by the government – the “rulers” in the terms of Schmitter and Karl – must be based on “reason giving” (Humphrey, 2006: 311). Indeed, America’s “most valuable political practices” are informed by the notion of “commitment to reason giving,” or articulated differently, “political justification.” For instance, the practice of judicial review ensures that legislative and executive enactments comply with the strictures established by the U.S. Constitution. And, “In court it is not the fact of power but the display of reasons and evidence that counts (Macedo, 1990: 280).” Or, “Claims enter legal domains thick with reasons, justifications, descriptions, and in general with attachments that encourage reflections and judgments within a framework of accepted rules of inference, evidence, and argument (Frohock, 1997: 833).” Generally, then, government claims – if they are to be legitimized by morally equal citizens to whom these claims are addressed, and which citizens are imperfectly rational and hold vastly divergent moral, ethical, and religious beliefs – must be thick with reasons, justifications, and descriptions. After all, for the ruled to hold the rulers accountable, the latter must publicly communicate and justify their policies; Steven Wall (2002) has referred to this as the “publicity requirement.” And, after submitting the proposed policy to the tribunal of public opinion, the judgment and will of the public “confront the state as a social entity, a civil society asserting its independence from state tutelage; but its moral authority rest[s] on a metasocial claim to transcend the particularity of any and all social divisions and interests (La Vopa, 1992: 79-80).”

⁹ See, *inter alia*, Almond, (1956: 376); Holsti, (1992: 447); Page and Shapiro, (1992: 9); Lupia, (1992, 1994); Bartels, (1996); Powlick and Katz, (1998); Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell, (2002: 456); Lupia and Matsusaka, (2004).

votes may be different from what their preferences – and consequently their votes – would have been were they only better informed (Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell, 2002: 461; Lupia, 1992).

At least two approaches address the issue of democratic control under conditions of citizens' lack of knowledge. James Fishkin and his colleagues address the problem by way of deliberative polls. They design an approach – the deliberative poll – that yields a better informed electorate such that the citizens' expressed preferences *are* informed preferences. A second approach debates the “implications of voter ignorance.” On this account, Americans need not be “encyclopedias” to cast meaningful votes (Lupia, 1992; 1994; 2005) as this is almost prohibitively expensive for them (McKelvey and Ordershook, 1986: 910; Lupia, 1992; 1994; 2005). Instead, rational citizens can use “information shortcuts” to cast votes that closely mimic the votes that they would have cast if they were better informed (McKelvey and Ordershook, 1986; Lupia, 1992, 1994).

While these two approaches have good stories to tell, it is not clear that factual knowledge is the independent variable that best accounts for preference formation among voters. Terrorism, security, and foreign policy, the substantive policy areas under consideration in this study, are social facts. They exist merely because human beings intersubjectively understand them to exist. Thus, an act of violence is not intrinsically an act of terrorism. Terrorism is a social kind. It is an ideational construct that we attach to a particular class of violence to distinguish this class of violence from other classes of violence like, say, street crime. Moreover, terrorism – and this holds true for the social kinds security and foreign policy – is contested: it is not immediately apparent what one means when one invokes the concept; “there are a great many terrorisms,” posits Walter

Laqueur (1986). There are also great many ways to understand – that is, socially construct – security or foreign policy. What *is* terrorism? Who are terrorists? Who are their victims? Why this, and not other, definition of terrorism? To what end terrorism?

If factual knowledge underdetermines citizens' preferences, and if what citizens are actually voting on are social facts, is there a correlation between certain social constructions of terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy and levels of support for U.S. counterterrorism policies? As I indicate above, I suspect that such correlations exist. I hypothesize that certain social constructions of terrorism, security, and foreign policy are likelier to engender greater levels of support for terrorism policies.¹⁰ That is, I hypothesize that the ways in which one answers the foregoing questions about terrorism – and similar such questions about security and the history of U.S. foreign policy – will in large measure explain and determine that individual's level of support for the counterterrorism policies of the United States' government. Still, this is a hypothesis. While it is based on a sound theory (for a full development of the argument see chapters 2 and 3), there is no *a priori* reason this should be so. As such, this is a matter for empirical verification.

(2) The Remainder of the Study at a Glance

To such empirical verification the remainder of this study is directed. The general design of the study is as follows: chapters 2 and 3 delimit – respectively – the theoretical framework and the methodological approach of the study. Chapters 4 and 5 tell the “insider's stories” on terrorism and the history of U.S. foreign policy. Chapter 6 tells the “outsider's story” (on the insider's and outsider's stories see chapter 3) by way of testing

¹⁰ See above; the hypotheses are rearticulated in chapter 6.

the hypotheses that the probability of support for the counterterrorism policies of the United States' government declines as one moves along the continuum of socially constructing phenomena from (in general terms) more orthodox to more heterodox constructions. Chapter 7 brings the project to a close by once more connecting the different threads of the project's narrative and proposing a path for the research agenda subsequent to current project.

Chapter 2

Chapter two lays out the central theory of the present study. In so doing I divide the chapter in three parts: (1) I more fully outline and critique Fishkin's approach; (2) I outline and critique the rational choice literature that relies on heuristics. (3) I unify my critique of the two approaches into a formal model. I also suggest that the best way to approach the study of social kinds is through the hybridization (that is, a more productive dialogue between) of constructivism with more positivist political science. That is, I more fully account for the central premise of this study that factual knowledge underdetermines citizens' preferences.

The outline of Fishkin's approach takes the following form: I first delimit the general approach adopted by Fishkin and his colleagues. They design deliberative polls, the central aim of which is the creation of better-informed electorate.¹¹ The key feature of the deliberative polls is the grand treatment. A probability sample of citizens is selected. In advance of the poll, the participants are provided with briefing documents that lay out opposing arguments with respect to a particular policy domain. They also complete a

¹¹ The central operating assumption underpinning the approach of Fishkin and his colleagues is that factual knowledge determines and explains citizens' preferences and, consequently, their votes.

survey (a pre-test). The participants are then brought together for a weekend of deliberations (treatment) centered on the policy domain (which deliberations also include the questioning of experts in the field). After their deliberations, the citizens retake the survey (a post-test). Fishkin's central argument is that while in the pre-test the participants were evidently poorly informed, the post-test demonstrates that owing to the grand treatment the participants learned a great deal, are now fortified by factual information, and may, consequently, cast meaningful votes.

The grand treatment, I argue, suffers from a *social scientific shortcoming*. Namely, it is not together clear to what degree does factual knowledge about the political world determine and explain voters' preferences. I illustrate this claim by way of three hypothetical situations. In so doing, I demonstrate that, while not unimportant, factual knowledge *underdetermines* and *under-explains* voters' preferences. In response to this, I posit that the social – intersubjectively shared – construction of reality determines, to a large degree, the preferences of voters with respect to a given policy domain. That is, I argue, and formally model this, that citizens tap into a particular stream of social understandings and remain largely innocent of contemporaneous – and opposite – streams of socially constructing the physical world. And centrally, the particular stream to which they are connected determines and explains their preferences and, consequently, their votes.

In 2004, Fishkin and his colleagues applied the general approach to the policy domains of terrorism, security, and foreign policy. I analyze this application of the deliberative poll by examining the briefing documents and the composition of the panel of experts that were part of the grand treatment. The *main thrust* of my argument is that

this application of the deliberative poll contains a profound *substantive shortcoming*. Namely, both the briefing documents and the experts understand security and terrorism in highly statist terms. In itself, this is not troubling. After all, a meaningful discussion of security must include the statist, national security articulation of security. However, an exclusive reliance on this articulation, to the exclusion of all others, provides a remarkably skewed view of security. To buttress my case, I provide a concise review of the various articulations of the concept “security.” I posit that security (as well as terrorism and the history of U.S. foreign policy) is a social kind that can be most profitably envisioned as a continuum such that one terminus represents the statist (or orthodox) understanding of security, the middle is occupied by those who wish to broaden and/or deepen the concept, and the opposite terminus is occupied by those who have come to socially construct security in emancipatory (or heterodox) terms.

I also outline the main tenets of the rational choice literature. This literature argues that voters do not need to be fully informed to cast meaningful votes. The acquisition of such knowledge is – in fact – prohibitively expensive for citizens, absorbed as they are by the vicissitudes of their daily existence. In place of complete factual knowledge, voters can employ heuristics, or shortcuts.

In analyzing this literature I adopt the following approach: I first define heuristics; I then define and briefly discuss the von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function which is central to the understanding of this literature (as instrumentally rational voters aim at the maximization of a given utility function). In continuation, I illustrate the heuristics approach by closely analyzing two representative articles drawn from the literature.

I articulate two central shortcomings of the rational choice approach. *Firstly*, I argue that (and this the literature does quite self-consciously) this approach black-boxes preference formation in voters. The approach, on this account, does not bother to ask the logically prior question of precisely how a given citizen came to hold this (and not that) preference. What is the source of her preferences? And *secondly*, in line with the social scientific argument as against the approach by Fishkin (see above and chapter 2), I argue that heuristics (themselves substitutes for full information) underdetermine and under-explain preference formation in voters.

I connect all the various arguments in the chapter, and bring the chapter to a close, by articulating a formal model.

Chapter 3

In chapter three I continue the discussion on hybridization of the two approaches by way of delimiting the ontology, epistemology, and methodology of constructivism and positivist political science. In fact, then, I outline what have come to be referred to as the insider's story (constructivism's quest to uncover how social kinds are put together) and the outsider's story (positivist political science's quest for causation). Such productive dialogue between the two stories, therefore, becomes *the* methodology of the study taken as a whole.

The central ontological claim articulated by constructivists is that, while ontologically real, the meaning that we attach to physical reality is a matter for social construction. Social construction, on this account, is no less ontologically real than is physical reality. Indeed, social agents create their own practices and social structures.

Moreover, the social practices and structures – in turn – construct actors’ identities and preferences. And crucially, security, terrorism, and foreign policy are such social structures.

In terms of methodology, constructivists tell the “insider’s story.” Namely, constructivists ask a particular kind of question: they are interested in “how are things in the world put together so that they have the properties that they do (Wendt, 1998: 103)?” Moreover, to uncover how social kinds are put together, constructivists engage in an interpretative recovery of actors’ private and shared beliefs (Ibid).” I conclude the constructivism’s section of chapter 3 by providing a brief discussion in which I connect the main ontological, epistemological, and methodological arguments of constructivism with the substantive issues (social kinds) of concern to the present study: terrorism and foreign policy.

I continue the discussion by delimiting the positivist approach – an approach that tells the “outsider’s story.” The outsider’s story is the search for correlation. In delimiting the positivist approach I discuss internal – are we measuring that which we claim to measure? – and external – can we generalize from the study to the population? – validity. I also present a general ordered probit model and discuss maximum likelihood estimation (MLE).

Chapter 4

Chapter four is devoted to telling the insider’s story of the social kind terrorism. The central question asked – in line with the ontological and methodological approaches advocated by constructivists and sketched out in chapter 3 – is: “How have purposive

social actors, the constructors of their own reality, come to socially construct (and intersubjectively understand) terrorism?” The central aim of the chapter, then, is to illustrate the socially constructed nature of terrorism and to articulate the full ideational spectrum of terrorism, recalling that central to the present study is the question whether one’s location on the ideational spectrum is correlated to one’s support for the counterterrorism policies of the United States government.

I first analyze terrorism as an unstable historical contingency. I trace the history of the social kind terrorism from its use by the Jewish *sicarii* during the Roman empire; through the *régime de la terreur*; the Italian anarchists’ “propaganda by deed;” the embrace of this dictum by Russia’s *Narodnaya Volya*; the terror of the totalitarian states of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Stalin’s Soviet Union; the post-World War II terror of the various indigenous nationalist and anti-colonialist groups that emerged in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East during the late 1940s and 1950s to oppose the continued European rule; the left-wing terror in opposition to the Vietnam War and the internationalization of terror in the 1960s; the use of the concept subsequent to the Iranian Revolution and the post-Communist period; and finally the use of the concept up to the events of September 11, 2001.

Next, I outline the present-day orthodox social construction of terrorism. This section outlines the stream of understanding that most people are likely to tap into when it comes to the social kind terrorism. On an ideational continuum, the orthodox understanding is placed on the “easy to agree with” terminus. On this account, terrorism has several salient characteristics. (i) Terrorism is the irregular and extra-normal use of violence that is perpetrated by non-state actors. (ii) It has a political objective. (iii) It is

violence that seeks to communicate message by intimidating a large audience (indeed, an audience larger than the immediate targets of the actual violence). (iv) It involves the use of violence against innocents. (v) Terrorism is premeditated and carefully planned use of violence yet (vi) terrorists seek to simulate randomness so as to heighten the tension and fear experienced by the target audience. (vii) Terrorists are not bound by the customary laws of warfare. (viii) Terrorism is about power. (ix) Terrorism is collective action and not individual. And (x) terrorism is covert.

I next delineate the heterodox, or “difficult to agree with,” social construction of terrorism. The main thrust of the heterodox definitions of terrorism is to question the notion that terrorism is an act perpetrated by non-state actors. Indeed, if terrorism were abhorrent, and can only be perpetrated by nonstate actors, the moral odds are stacked against nonstate entities. Thus, if the crux of the issue is that terrorists target innocents – that is, morally inappropriate targets – there exists no reason to articulate terrorism as something that only nonstate actors can perpetrate. States have and continue to target inappropriate targets. Consequently, we should, this literature argues, be impressed with the similarities in the methods used and the choice of targets and not in the putative standing of the perpetrators. Finally, articulating terrorism as something that nonstate actors do paints an inaccurate portrait inasmuch as not all nonstate violence need be labeled terrorist.

Chapter 5

Chapter four having outlined the full ideational spectrum with respect to the social kind terrorism, chapter five does the same with respect to the history of U.S. foreign policy.

How have purposive social agents come to understand – and what do they mean by – the history of U.S. foreign policy? Put otherwise: what is the insider’s story on the history of U.S. foreign policy? On one end of the spectrum, U.S. foreign is understood as a continuation of John Winthrop’s call for the creation of a “city upon a hill” that will serve as a beacon of light for the rest of humanity. On this account the United States is the brightest beacon of freedom in the world; it “lead[s] by defending liberty and justice;” its approach is one of enlightened self-interest; in the words of President George W. Bush, the United States acts on the behalf of the “little ones.” On the other side of the spectrum, the United States foreign policy is understood as the policy of a powerful state that pursues its interest – quite frequently – at the *expense* of the little ones; and, in so doing, the United States has – with equal frequency – cuddled terrible regimes from Iran to Guatemala.

In outlining the two termini of the ideational spectrum, I adopt the following approach. *First*, I outline the discourse on terrorism in the administrations of presidents George W. Bush and Barack H. Obama. That is, I delimit the two administrations’ justification of their terrorism policy. I examine the two presidents’ speeches, statements, briefings, etc. – as well as the statements of other senior officials in their respective administrations – to establish the two administrations’ justifications. To what end? One, the statements by the two administrations represent the clearest example of the Winthropian articulation of the history of U.S. foreign policy. And two, the articulations of the two administrations represent *the* streams of social understanding that the two administrations employ to explicate their policies.

And *second*, having outlined the Winthropian terminus of the ideational spectrum, I find that in contrast to the determined assertions of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, there exists another articulation of U.S. foreign policy. Adherents of the second view argue that the historical record of U.S. foreign policy clearly shows that far from acting on the behalf of the little ones, the United States has consistently crushed the little ones to advance its national interest. Far from closing torture chambers and removing tyrants, the United States has opened scores of torture chambers, trained torturers in their brutal craft, and consistently supported and cuddled tyrants all in the name of the national interest. In illustrating this contention I rely on case studies. The case studies used in this study are the 1953 CIA-engineered coup in Iran, the 1954 coup in Guatemala (and the subsequent regimes that lead these two states), and the United States' relations with Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 6

Chapter six is devoted to telling the outsider's story. I first articulate the hypotheses. I propose that probability of support for the counterterrorism policies of the United States' government decreases as one moves along the different continua from socially constructing the phenomena under consideration in orthodox (or statist, or Winthropian) terms to constructing the phenomena in middle-of-the-road terms to, finally, socially constructing the phenomena in heterodox (or emancipatory or indignant) terms.

In continuation, I delineate the operationalization of the various social kinds. I discuss the survey and outline the way in which the variables were coded. Following this, I report the descriptive statistics for the various scales along which I measure the

variables; I also report the descriptive statistics for the collapsed variables. Indeed, I run the model on the collapsed variables. Finally, I report the probabilities, which, in the main, seem to support the hypotheses.

Chapter 7

The final chapter rounds out the discussion by once more bringing together the various threads of the study into one unified whole. Finally, I posit the future course that the research agenda can take.

Chapter 2

Theory: Social Construction as Explanatory Variable

(1) Introductory Remarks

The present chapter unfolds as follows: in part 1 I outline James Fishkin's deliberative polls. In so doing, (i) I outline the general approach; (ii) I delineate the way in which Fishkin and his colleagues have applied the general approach to the issues of security and terrorism. In part 2, I analyze shortcomings in (i) Fishkin's general approach and (ii) propose a resolution to the shortcomings of the approach. (iii) I outline shortcomings to the approach as applied to the issues of security and terrorism and (iv) propose solutions to these shortcomings as well. In part 3, I analyze the cognitive shortcuts approach. In so doing (i) outline the general setup and (ii) delineate the ways in which the general setup has been applied (I do so by analyzing two representative examples from the literature on cognitive shortcuts). I devote part 4 to analyzing the shortcomings of the cognitive heuristics literature. Finally, in part 5, I propose a formal model.

(2) James Fishkin's Deliberative Polls

The General Approach

Problematizing Americans' lack of political knowledge as one of the central obstacles to achieving more complete democracy, James Fishkin and his colleagues have designed deliberative polls – thereby building on Jürgen Habermas' notion of the ideal speech situation – in the hope of creating better informed electorate such that the citizens' expressed preferences *are* informed (considered) preferences. In addition, more than simply a vehicles for the creation of a better informed electorate such that the electorate's preferences are considered preferences, the deliberative polls are also social scientific

attempt to measure the extent of knowledge gained by way of the “grand treatment”¹² and, crucially, the effect of this knowledge gain on the citizens’ stated preferences over a policy domain.

The operating assumption underlying Fishkin’s approach is the notion that factual knowledge informs and explains our preferences, which preferences, in turn, inform our votes. Consequently, Fishkin’s pre-tests focus on the fact, and demonstrate that, *ex ante*, the participants in the deliberative polls on security were badly informed about current events – such as, for instance, the fact that the United States does *not* have veto in the WTO, that it *does* in the United Nations Security Council, that President George W. Bush opposed Kyoto, or that the United States spends mere 1% of GDP on foreign aid while spending upwards of 20% of GDP on its military. *Ex post*, and owing to the “grand treatment,” the participants emerge fortified by factual knowledge about the world – “participants typically learn a great deal,” proudly note Fishkin and his colleagues (see Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell 2002) – and, as a consequence, they are now ready to cast meaningful, informed votes. In the final analysis this leads, argue Fishkin and his colleagues, to more complete democracy.

¹² The “grand treatment” of Fishkin’s deliberative polls contains the following steps: first, a probability sample composed of citizens who have attained voting age is selected. Second, the members of the sample are interviewed by way of a questionnaire with respect to a particular “policy domain.” Third, the members of the sample are sent a “carefully balanced” briefing document that lays out the most salient issues and policy options respecting the same policy domain on which they were initially interviewed. Fourth, the deliberators are then brought to a single site where, over a weekend, they deliberate together – in small, randomly assigned groups led by trained moderators – on the same policy domain. In addition to deliberating among themselves, the deliberators generate questions that they then put to a carefully balanced panel of experts with respect to the same policy domain. Finally, after concluding their deliberations – on the Sunday of the same weekend – the deliberators are again given the same questionnaire as prior to the experiment (Luskin, Fishkin, and Jowell, 2002: 458-459; see also Fishkin, Luskin, and Jowell, 2000: 659-660; Brady, Fishkin, and Luskin, 2003: 17; Luskin, Fishkin, and Iyengar, 2004: 1; Luskin, Fishkin, and Hahn, 2007).

The General Approach Applied: Security, Foreign Policy, and Terrorism

Fishkin and his colleagues have applied the deliberative poll template to topics as varied as crime in Britain (1994), Britain and the European Union (1995), the status and significance of the British Monarchy, electric utilities in Texas, Denmark and the Euro (2000), Australian-Aboriginal reconciliation (2001), and integration of the Roma in Bulgarian society (2007).

The present study concentrates on the 2004 “By the People” application of the deliberative poll to U.S. foreign and security policy. In particular, I call the reader’s attention to the poll’s briefing documents and the composition of the panel of experts. The briefing document (By the People, 2004a) – supplied to the poll’s participants and designed to get their deliberation started – begins by noting America’s loss of sense of security since the September 11, 2001 attacks. It then asks: “What does it really mean to be secure as [a] nation?” The document offers a “range of answers.” One, it may be argued that by security one means “the security of U.S. territory from external threat.” Two, another view is that security entails the “protection of U.S. interests and citizens abroad. Such a view requires the use of American power to safeguard American allies and economic interests overseas.” Three, yet another view is that there is a link between “American well-being and that of others around the globe.” Namely, this view articulates an important American role in “maintaining global stability, protecting others from threats of war, famine, or abuse, and even addressing non-traditional security threats such as environmental dangers.” Finally four, “many have come to see U.S. security as a domestic as well as a foreign policy issue (By the People, 2004a: 2).”

The briefing document also spells out the way in which the United States' government has approached the issue of security "throughout American history." After George Washington's "Farewell Address," in which he admonished Americans to stay out of European affairs and jealousies, "[h]is strategy of looking inward and avoiding foreign contact as much as possible was largely followed for the next hundred and twenty years." Moreover, notwithstanding its involvement in the First World War, the United States quickly reverted to a policy of isolationism, "refusing to ratify the Charter of the League of Nations." Still, following the Second World War, the United States' "leaders decided security was dependent on foreign alliances like NATO and active intervention in Korea and Vietnam to prevent the spread of communism." Finally, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States' "power was unrivaled and its security largely unchallenged by existing governments." Security challenges to the United States, therefore, emanate from terrorism, rogue states, and WMDs (By the People, 2004a: 2).

The brief's authors also note that U.S. national security policy, at the time of their writing (that is, a year after the 2003 invasion of Iraq), rests on three pillars: American preeminence, preemption, and global promotion of democracy. American *preeminence* is the first pillar; namely, American national security policy recognizes U.S. superiority and status as the "world's sole superpower." It also recognizes the fact that American power has to be enhanced by way of "military development and deployment." Moreover, "America largely rejects the need for foreign approval or multilateral cooperation." *Preemption* is the second pillar of U.S. national security strategy. "Current American strategy sees a need to act first, preventing attacks before they occur." Finally the third pillar of "U.S. security strategy sees freedom and justice as common goals of all peoples

and tries to support these aspirations by *championing democracy around the globe* (By the People, 2004a: 2-3; emphasis added).”

Critics of the three pillars that inform U.S. national security policy – the briefing document (2004a) continues – have pointed that unilateralism ignores the fact that multilateral institutions play a significant role in the security of the United States. A second line of criticism points the American use of preemption may lead other countries to “rely on the same principle in ways that could be harmful to U.S. security.” Namely, other countries can “justify international conflict” by arguing preemption. Finally, the strategy of spreading democracy has been criticized for the high costs “both financial and military.” Particularly telling of the narrative that this document adopts is the following quote: “As America spreads its reach, building nations in its own image or pushing other countries to become more like America, the U.S. may find itself over-committed (By the People, 2004a: 3-4).”

Also worth analyzing is a second briefing document on national security and terrorism delivered for deliberation. The central question explored is “What do we need to do to be successful in the war on terrorism?” Surprisingly, the document (By the People, 2004b) does not actually define the concept “terrorism.” Instead, it seems to adopt the position of former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart in *Jacobellis v. Ohio* that – to paraphrase his well-known quip – we know terrorism when we see it. Nevertheless, the briefing document does seem to adopt a vaguely statist¹³ definition of terrorism, where terrorism is confined to acts perpetrated by non-state actors. This may be gleaned from the document’s assertion that “terrorist networks [are] without a nation or citizens to defend.”

¹³ On statist definitions of security, foreign policy, and terrorism see below.

In addition to the second briefing document, the deliberative polls' statist understanding of terrorism can also be gleaned from the questionnaires. The questionnaires ask the participants the following questions about the best ways to combat terrorism: Generally speaking, who do you think should take the lead in trying to resolve international conflicts? Should (1) the U.S. take the lead acting by itself, (2) should the U.S. take the lead acting with close allies like NATO, (3) should the U.S. [and] its close allies take the lead acting through the United Nations, (4) should the United Nations take the lead, (5) or should nobody take the lead?" Clearly, the security referent here is the state and the only meaningful question is how best to defend it; or, who should take the lead in defending the state from non-state terrorists actors.

Finally, the composition of the panel of experts¹⁴ also points to the deliberative poll's statist understanding of, and approach to, security, foreign policy, and terrorism. Consider the composition of the panel: Lawrence Korb – currently a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, a former assistant secretary for defense in the administration of President Ronald Reagan, and also a former member of the U.S. armed forces – understands and analyzes both security and terrorism in statist and militarist terms (2002, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). Peter Brookes – a senior fellow on national security in the Heritage Foundation, and a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific affairs in the administration of President George W. Bush – fares no better. He (2003b; 2004a) also subscribes to a highly statist reading of security and terrorism.

¹⁴ It is important to note at this point that I have no first-hand knowledge of the questions that the participants in the poll posed to the panel of experts; nor do I have the answers that the experts offered. I am basing my analysis of the panel's statist understanding of security, foreign policy, and terrorism on the writings of the panel's members – which writings are widely available. I am – therefore – stipulating that the experts' writings can serve as a close (and meaningful) proxy for the kind of answers they were likely to give during their meeting with the poll's participants.

William Niskanen (2003a) opposed the invasion of Iraq. However, he also reads like a scholar who subscribes to statist and militarist readings of security and terrorism (2003b). Finally, the inclusion of Anne-Marie Slaughter – currently a professor of political science at Princeton and former Director of Policy Planning at the State Department in the administration of President Obama – is but a slight improvement, as she seems to waiver between statist and non-statist readings of terrorism.

(3) Problems with Fishkin's Approach

While there are a number of problems inherent in Fishkin's approach, each one of which may well merit a study all its own, in the present study I highlight two: a social scientific and a substantive shortcomings of Fishkin's endeavor.

Social Scientific Shortcoming

On the *social scientific* front, Fishkin and his colleagues argue that their polls demonstrate that the electorate can – as part of the grand treatment – learn and, as such, informed preferences with respect to policy choices are not beyond the powers of ordinary citizens.

On the surface of it, there is nothing wrong with this claim. However, a problem lurks underneath the surface: *it is unclear the extent to which factual knowledge about the political world explains – or, for that matter, shapes and determines – the preferences of the electorate.* To illustrate this contention, consider three scenarios: in the *first* scenario a citizen is involved in Fishkin's deliberative polls; *ex ante*, prior to the grand treatment, she does not know that the United States has no veto in the WTO. Absent that

knowledge, her stated (and, crucially, uninformed) preference over policy domain A (for instance, counterterrorism policy) is x^* . *As a result* of the grand treatment she is now informed and her preferences are considered; she has discussed the topic with randomly chosen group of fellow citizens; even in advance of so doing, she has been furnished with a briefing document relating to the subject matter at hand and she has the opportunity to query experts in the field.¹⁵ Nevertheless, notwithstanding the treatment, her *ex post* preference remains x^* . Factual knowledge, therefore, does *not* fully explain or determine her preference, which preference remains the same *after* the grand treatment as *before* the treatment.¹⁶

Consider a *second* scenario involving two citizens, He and She. They are *identical* with respect to their factual knowledge of the political world. That is, they are *both* equally (or approximately so) knowledgeable. Her preference is x^* ; his preference is x^{**} ; x^* is the polar opposite of x^{**} . These equally informed citizens, then, have preferences that are on the opposite ends of a continuum. Again, knowledge does not fully explain or determine the preferences of these two citizens.

Finally, consider a *third* scenario: She is a Washington insider, a political junkie hooked on C-Span; He is a busy single father who has neither the time nor the energy at the end of a long workday to worry about inside-the-beltway happenings. Her preference over policy domain A is x^* ; her preference is ostensibly based on considerable amounts of knowledge. His preference with respect to the same policy A is likewise x^* ; his preference is ostensibly based on virtual dearth of factual knowledge. Thus, and yet again, factual

¹⁵ I refer the reader's attention to the above discussion on the briefing documents and panel of experts as these relate to the 2004 deliberative poll on security, foreign policy, and terrorism.

¹⁶ Now, there may well be a case where her preference – owing to the grand treatment – *does* change. The claim of this study is *not* that factual knowledge is utterly unimportant. The essential claim of the study is that factual knowledge *underdetermines* preference formation among voters.

knowledge underdetermines citizens' preference formation; it does not fully explain the fact that these differentially informed citizens have the same preference with respect to the same policy domain. Something else must be doing the work of explaining their consonant preferences over the policy domain.

The Social Scientific Shortcomings Resolved

What, then, *does* explain the formation of voters' preferences over a policy domain? As with most answers in the social science, the answer offered in this study is heavily hedged. No single explanatory variable is perfectly linearly correlated with the variable that it seeks to explain. Nevertheless, the *central narrative of this study* proceeds along the following lines: the social (*intersubjective*) construction of reality determines, to a considerable extent, voters' preferences over a policy domain. As Max Weber would have it, human beings are "cultural beings" endowed with the ability to "take a deliberate attitude towards the world and to lend it significance (Weber, 1949: 81; quoted in Ruggie, 1998: 856)."

The ability to take a deliberate attitude towards the world and thus lend it significance means that there exist social facts,¹⁷ or facts that exist only based on human agreement. This "locate[s] the problem of explaining social action in an interpretative setting, which requires us to 'specify that there is meaning both in "the behavior of others" and in the "account" which the acting individual takes of it.'" On this account, every "action must always be understood from within (Weber, 1968; in Adler, 1997: 326)." As Adler (1997: 322) articulates it, "the human capacity for reflection or learning has its greatest impact on the manner in which individuals and social actors attach

¹⁷ On social facts and International Relations Theory Constructivism, see chapter 3.

meaning to the material world and cognitively frame the world they know, experience, and understand.”

Or, as Finnemore and Sikkink (2001: 392-393) write:

Specifically, constructivism is an approach to social analysis that asserts the following: (a) human interaction is shaped primarily by ideational factors, not simply material ones; (b) the most important ideational factors are widely shared or “intersubjective” beliefs, which are not reducible to individuals; and (c) these shared beliefs construct the interests and identities of purposive actors.

And, crucially for the present study, terrorism, security, and foreign policy are such social facts, which facts do *not* exist apart from our intersubjective understanding, and which facts determine to a considerable measure our preferences and, consequently, our support for certain government policies. That is, social constructions determine what we see as possible and desirable actions over a policy domain. Moreover, while social facts are intersubjectively shared they are individually held. Perhaps a good way to illustrate the ways in which individuals tap into a given social construction of reality is to imagine an individual who is channel-surfing on his TV. He settles on a particular channel; as a consequence of this, the individual taps into one particular stream of social understanding; nevertheless, the remaining channels contain cotemporaneous streams of differential understandings of the social world to which he is not tapped.

Consequently, in this study I argue, and model this below, that citizens tap into one particular stream of understanding, one particular way of socially constructing a concept, and their preferences over a policy domain – that which they see as possible and/or desirable government action with respect to a particular issue – are to a considerable extent determined by the particular “stream” to which they have tapped. That is, I argue that if an individual’s vote is a function of her preferences, her

preferences are, in turn, a function of the particular social construction of concepts pertinent to the vote that she has adopted as her worldview. Or, as the formal model reveals, her vote is a *composite* function of her preferences and social construction.

The Substantive Shortcoming

On the *substantive* front, the central shortcoming of the deliberative poll on security, foreign policy, and terrorism is its circumscribed and statist understanding of these three concepts. Thus, in their *substance*, and as evidenced above, the briefing documents (By the People, 2004a, 2004b) and the experts on the panel contemplate security with the “state” – the United States in particular – as their guidepost; namely, the central question that animated the deliberative poll on security and foreign policy is how to best secure the *state*.

In itself, and this must be clearly articulated at the offset of the discussion, statist understandings of security have, do, and are likely to continue to form the core of security studies and International Relations Theory more broadly. Such articulations of security rely on “a series of fundamental claims that are presented as ‘facts’ about the world. The most important of these claims concerns the centrality of the states as the subject of security (Krause and Williams, 1996: 232).” Thus, and inasmuch as the subject of security is the state, in his classic exposition of the statist understanding of security – and security studies – Stephen Walt (1991: 212) posits that the “main focus of security studies” is the “phenomenon of war” and the entire study centers around the use and control of military force. The state is presented as the solution to the Hobbesian state of nature. Helga Haftendorn (1991: 5-6; see also Ullman, 1983: 130) posits that the concept

of national security emerged in the seventeenth century along with the birth of the nation-state: “To end the ‘war of all against all’ and to secure a state of domestic peace, citizens defer to a powerful sovereign who, in turn, promises the end of religious and civil war.” In this narrative, however, the international arena continues to resemble the Hobbesian condition of “war of all against all” inasmuch as there are no “common rules and institutions of law enforcement;” or, in the language of Hobbes, no “common sword to keep us all in awe.”¹⁸

But contemplating security with the state as one’s guidepost is decidedly not the only approach; *this, Fishkin’s deliberative poll on security and foreign policy misses completely*. As an entry point to a different understanding of security, we may turn to Hedley Bull (1995 [1977]) who, in his classic in the field *The Anarchical Society*,¹⁹ takes to task for its “three weaknesses” – what he refers to as – the “domestic analogy,” which analogy rests on transposing Hobbesian analysis of domestic affairs to understandings of international affairs. The first weakness, Bull (1995 [1977]: 44) notes, is the fact that “the modern international system does not entirely resemble Hobbesian state of nature.” Indeed, “absence of a world government is no necessary bar to industry, trade[,] and other refinements of living (Ibid: 45).” Moreover, “notion of right and wrong in

¹⁸ Consequently, “there can be no security in the absence of authority. The state, accordingly, becomes the primary locus of security, authority, and obligation. Contractual obligations between citizens represent the limit (underwritten by the authority of the state) of effective coordination for collective action (or of ‘community’). The security of ‘citizens’ is identified with (and guaranteed by) that of the state; and, by definition, those who stand outside it represent potential or actual threats. Relations between states are thereby rendered purely ‘strategic’ (or contractual) in the instrumental senses of the word. This foundation provides the basis for claims about international anarchy. A particular state, as a ‘rational subject,’ looks to its own interests and security (and those of its constituents) first and foremost. Despite the fact that in the long run its interests might be better served through cooperation, a state cannot rationally assume that other states will act in a cooperative fashion. Therefore, it acts solely in its own interest, and all others do the same. The problem is *not* the lack of central agency to enforce promises but the absence of central authority to prevent the use of violence to destroy or enslave (Krause and Williams, 1996: 232; see also Krause, 1998: 306).”

¹⁹ The very title is telling: states form an international *society*, the central argument goes, notwithstanding the fact that they exist in international *anarchy*.

international behavior have always held a central place (Ibid: 46).”²⁰ The “second weakness” is that the domestic analogy “is based on the false premises about the conditions of order among individual and groups other than the state;” namely, “It is not...the case that fear of a supreme government is the only source of order within a modern state (Ibid: 46).”

Consequently, Bull suggests that instead of analyzing international affairs through the lens of Hobbes, we’d be better served to turn to John Locke’s “Second Treatise on Government” with its sunnier take on life in the absence of a government. Finally, the third shortcoming of the “domestic analogy” is the idea that states are not as fragile as individual human beings, prone as human beings are to diseases, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion (Ibid: 47).

Still, as telling as Bull’s analysis is, he (Bull, 1995 [1977]: 25) – as any good Grotian would – in no uncertain terms articulates the notion that states *are the principal reality* in international affairs. By contrast, other scholars have sought not only to escape the “domestic analogy” but to articulate an altogether different narrative on security. Thus, in between statist and critical understandings of security, some scholars have sought to “broaden” the definition of security so as to include all of those things that Walt (1991) and Nye and Sean-Jones (1988) bracket, namely problems such as poverty, AIDS, environmental degradation, etc. Others have sought to “deepen” the concept so as to include – in addition to the state – referents of security such as at the individual, community, society (*pace* the Copenhagen School), international, and the global levels. Thus, in contrast to circumscribed definitions, Richard Ullman defines “a threat to

²⁰ Hobbes, of course, posits that absent a “common sword”, industry, refinements of living, notions of “Mine or Thine”, and notions of right and wrong are unimaginable.

national security [as] an action or sequence of events that (1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or (2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, nongovernmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state (Ullman, 1983: 133).”

From a critical security studies perspective, Ken Booth (1991: 319) argues that “Emancipation should logically be given precedence in our thinking about security over the mainstream themes of power and order. The trouble with privileging power and order is that they are at somebody else’s expense (and are therefore potentially unstable).”²¹ The value-added of the critical approach to security is recapturing the notion of politics as “open-ended process and based in ethics.” Thus, “From this perspective, strategy becomes not the study of technological variable in inter-state politics, but a continuation of moral philosophy with an admixture of firepower (Booth, 1991: 321).” Moreover, not only is liberty implied in emancipation but liberty of a particular type. Namely, “emancipation implies an egalitarian concept of liberty. When the homeless are told, for example, that they now have more liberty, by people with hearts of pure polyester, because they can buy shares in privatized industries, that ‘liberty’ is meaningless (Booth, 1991: 321-322).”²²

²¹ Booth (1991: 319) writes forcefully: “True (stable) security can only be achieved by people and groups if they do not deprive others of it. ‘Security’ means the absence of threats. Emancipation is the freeing of people (as individuals and groups) from those physical and human constraints which stop them carrying out what they would freely choose to do. War and threat of war is one of those constraints, together with poverty, poor education, political oppression and so on. Security and emancipation are two sides of the same coin. Emancipation, not power and order, produces true security. *Emancipation, theoretically, is security* (Booth, 1991: 319; emphasis added).”

²² Finally: “It is only necessary to mention the polarization of order and justice, domestic and foreign policy, internal order and external anarchy, utopianism and realism, political and international theory, high politics and low politics, and peace research and strategic studies. Security conceived as a process of emancipation promises to integrate all these. It would encompass, for example, the ‘top down’ northern

The Substantive Shortcoming Resolved

The central substantive shortcoming, then, is not necessarily that the briefing documents and the composition of the panel of experts contemplate security in statist terms but they do so to the *exclusion* of other approaches. Thus, and recalling that security, foreign policy, and terrorism are social facts, in presenting but one face of security, the briefing documents and the panel of experts that were part of the 2004 deliberative poll have *truncated* what is in reality a continuum of different social constructions – or, referring the reader’s attention back to the channel-surfing analogy, different “streams” of understanding – down to one prominent social construction to the exclusion of others.

The approach taken in this study remedies this. Having already briefly outlined the full spectrum of social constructions of security – namely statist, broadening/deepening, and critical – in chapter 3 I take up the task of delineating the full spectrum of social constructions of terrorism and in chapter 4 I take up the task of delineating the full spectrum of social constructions of U.S. foreign policy. Moreover, as fully explained in chapter 5, I employ the three continua – of security, U.S. foreign policy, and terrorism – to construct survey scales and thereby examine whether there is a statistical correlation (causation, naturally, is theoretically established) between certain social constructions of security, U.S. foreign policy, and terrorism, and levels of support for the counterterrorism policies of the U.S. government.

‘national security’ view of security and the ‘bottom up’ southern view of ‘comprehensive security’ concerned with problems arising out of underdevelopment or oppression. Overall, therefore, the concept of emancipation promises to bring together Martin Wight’s ‘theories of the good life’ and ‘theories of survival’ into a comprehensive approach to security in world politics (Booth, 1991: 322).”

(4) Cognitive Shortcuts Approach

The General Setup

Voters' ignorance is also at the heart of the heuristics approach. In a passage characteristic of this literature, Richard Lau and David Redlawsk (2001: 951-952) write:

The "cognitive revolution" may not have revolutionized research in political science to the extent it has in psychology, but it did provide a pat answer to one of the most troubling and persistent questions in the field: how a public that is notoriously uninterested and largely "innocent" of political matters can provide any control over public policy. The widespread ignorance of the general public about all but the most highly salient political events and actors is one of the best documented facts in all of the social sciences.... While almost everyone in the United States knows who the President is, barely half of the public can name even the most prominent members of the cabinet, and only a third can name their two senators or their representatives in Congress.... Yet this widespread ignorance flies in the face of what is required of citizens by classic democratic theory,²³ which assumes that an informed and attentive public is necessary for democracy to work effectively. The problem is that democracy seems to be working pretty well, despite the "hands off" approach of most of its citizens. Lau and Redlawsk (1997) estimate that in recent U.S. presidential elections, about 75 percent of the voting public (which admittedly is barely half of the eligible electorate) voted "correctly," by which they mean "in accordance with what their fully informed preferences would be." And if we look not at individual opinions but at "aggregate" public opinion, that opinion appears far more stable and reasonable than the "minimalist" view of public opinion would suggest.

In contrast to Fishkin's approach, then, the two main assertions of the heuristics literature are: (1) voters need not be fully informed to cast the kinds of votes that they would have cast if they were knowledgeable about politics; this is almost prohibitively expensive for them. Instead, voters simply need to rely on heuristics. On this score, human beings are viewed as "limited information processors" or "cognitive misers"...who have become quite adept at applying a variety of information 'shortcuts' to make reasonable decisions with minimal cognitive effort in all aspects of their lives."

Two related points are advanced here: (i) we are all adept at using shortcuts and do, indeed, use them both in our nonpolitical and, *crucially*, political lives. Moreover, (ii)

²³ The reader will note that the notion of "what is required of citizens by classic democratic theory" is precisely the point of entry for Fishkin's approach.

the shortcuts can “at least partially *compensate for* lack of knowledge about and attention to politics, so that citizens who are largely unaware of events in Washington nonetheless can make reasonably accurate political judgments.”

And (2) even if individual opinions may not be “stable of reasonable”, on the aggregate public opinion is both stable and reasonable. Indeed, “Aggregate opinion can be much more stable and apparently ‘rational’ than individual opinions, as long as error in individual opinions is assumed to be random.... Even large proportions of random error ‘cancel out’ in the aggregate, resulting in fairly efficient ‘collective choices’ (Lau and Redlawsk, 2001: 952).”

But what are heuristics? Lau and Redlawsk (2001: 952) define heuristics as “problem-solving strategies (often employed automatically or unconsciously) which serve to ‘keep the information processing demands of the task within bounds.’” These, then, are “cognitive shortcuts” or “ways [to] produce cognitive ‘savings.’” Lau and Redlawsk (2001: 953-954) posit “five common cognitive heuristics employed by voters.” “The first and perhaps most important political heuristic is relying on a candidate’s *party* affiliation.” Second, “closely related heuristic is relying on a candidate’s *ideology* for cognitive savings.”²⁴ A third cognitive heuristic is endorsements: “In contrast to carefully considering each candidate’s stands on all policies that affect women in a particular election, say, a voter could instead simply learn a relevant group’s endorsement (like NOW) as a summary of all of the difficult candidate- and issue-specific information

²⁴ Lau and Redlawsk (2001: 953) further note that “Party and ideological stereotypes or schemata are among the richest and most widely shared in American politics. If the salient characteristics of a particular politician are consistent with or representative of the prototypic Republican, say, then voters may readily infer that she is for a strong defense, low taxes, against government intervention in the economy, against abortion, and so on; and will probably have a readily available affective response...to the party label. Relying on stereotypes or schemata provide an obvious cognitive saving, to the extent that particular attributes (e.g., issue stands) are assumed ‘by default’ rather than learned individually in each specific instance.”

processing.” A fourth heuristic is “poll results.” Namely, “Here the heuristic cues are coming from the electorate as a whole rather than a particular subsample of the electorate and as such provide less specific information.” In particular, polls indicate the “‘*viability*’ information” which may be of great use during candidate-saturated primaries. Finally, a fifth heuristic is “*candidate appearance*.” This heuristic is so important because it is not restricted to the political realm but is used in all aspects of our social lives.”²⁵

Of course, note Lau and Redlawsk (2001: 954), “Just because everyone uses some cognitive heuristics [at some point in time] does not mean that everyone uses all of them, or uses all of them effectively.” Moreover, they posit that “Situational or contextual factors should also influence heuristic use. Because heuristics provide cognitive efficiency, they should be relied upon more heavily in more cognitively complex situations and/or for decisions that involve more difficult choices.... When a choice is relatively easy, on the other hand, there is less need to use cognitive shortcuts (Lau and Redlawsk, 2001: 955).”

Delving deeper into the central tenets of this literature, the starting point for inquiry becomes a given utility function. Most often (see, for instance Sobel (1985) and Lupia (1992)) a reference is made to something like a once- or twice-differentiable and continuous *von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function*, $U(\bullet)$, such that the central goal of the actors inhabiting a given game (on which more below) is to maximize this function. Maximizing von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function, in turn, means casting

²⁵ Lau and Redlawsk (2001: 954) further note: “A single picture or image of a candidate provides a tremendous amount of information about the candidate, including gender, race, and age, and often general ‘likableness,’ which immediately brings many social stereotypes into play.... Visual images can also trigger emotions, which can have great impact on candidate evaluation.”

a vote such that on a policy space the distance between the vote cast and the voter's ideal point is minimized (and ideally zero).

von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function indicates the following preference relation:²⁶

$$p \succcurlyeq q \Leftrightarrow U(p) \equiv \sum u(z)p(z) \geq \sum u(z)q(z) \equiv U(q) \quad (1)$$

where Z is a finite set of prizes and $z \in Z$, and “the set P of all probability distributions $p : Z \rightarrow [0, 1]$ on Z , where $\sum_{z \in Z} p(z) = 1$,” and such that we “call these probability distributions lotteries.” von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function, then, is the “most well-known” theory that “constructs a player's preference on the lotteries from his preferences on the prizes (Yildiz, nd: 1-3).”²⁷

The General Setup Applied

The main thrust of the story, therefore, is that in order to cast the kind of votes they would cast if they were fully informed – that is, maximize their respective von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Functions – voters need simply lean on one of the five “cognitive savings” that “help keep the information processing demands of the task within bounds.”

²⁶ “A relation is a preference relation if and only if [iff] it is complete and transitive.” In turn, a relation is complete iff $\forall x, y \in X$, where X is a set of feasible alternatives, “either $x \succcurlyeq y$ or $y \succcurlyeq x$ ”; a relation is transitive iff $\forall x, y, z \in X$, $x \succcurlyeq y$ and $y \succcurlyeq z \Rightarrow x \succcurlyeq z$.

²⁷ von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function is a concave (or sometimes articulated as a quasi-concave) function. A function f defined on a subset $D \subset \mathfrak{R}^n$ is *concave* iff for any two points $x', x'' \in D$ and any number $t \in (0, 1)$ [that is, $0 \leq t \leq 1$] with $tx' + (1-t)x'' \in D$, we have $f(tx' + (1-t)x'') \geq tf(x') + (1-t)f(x'')$. Or, put simply, “the secant line [$tf(x') + (1-t)f(x'')$] must lie below the function [$f(tx' + (1-t)x'')$].” In turn, “Every concave function is quasicconcave, but not every quasicconcave function is concave. That is because $\min(f(x'), f(x'')) \leq tf(x') + (1-t)f(x'')$. quasicconcavity requires the function merely not to dip down and back up between x' and x'' , but concavity requires it to rise faster than linear from the lower point to the upper one. . . . In economics, we are interested in concavity and quasicconcavity because we usually assume *diminishing returns* to single activities as a result of mixtures being better than extremes (e.g., a taste for variety in food) or some activity levels being fixed (e.g., fixed capital in the short run). *Thus, the set of utilities obtainable from a given budget will be a concave set, and the utility function will be concave in each good and quasicconcave over all of them* (Connell and Rasmusen, 2011: 5; emphasis added).”

But what if those cognitive savings are unreliable? By way of an example, imagine a voter who finds herself in a “direct legislation environment,”²⁸ where “voters make selections from an exogenously determined menu of specific policy alternatives called propositions,” and where a “defining characteristic of many propositions is complexity.” Now, she can attempt to gather as much information about the proposition under consideration. “However, [the] documents [articulating the merits and demerits of the proposition] are usually lengthy and/or filled with technical language. As a result, voters in large electorates who consider their opportunity costs may decide that the acquisition of ‘encyclopedic’ information is not worthwhile activity (Lupia, 1994: 63).”

Given this complexity, our voter turns to a shortcut, say, an endorsement by a well-known non-for-profit think-tank. The problem is that such endorsement “may be unreliable, since relatively well informed information providers may have incentives to mislead relatively uninformed voters (Lupia, 1994: 63).” And, if the endorsement turns out to be misleading, the voter will *not* cast the kind of vote she would have cast if she were fully informed (recalling that casting informed vote – or, alternatively, casting uninformed vote buttressed by a reliable cognitive shortcut – maximizes her von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function). Our voter, then, finds herself in what has come to be known as a “signaling game.”²⁹

In a signaling game, a relatively well informed information provider has information that is relevant to a relatively uninformed decision maker. The information provider can attempt to affect the decision maker’s behavior by sending a “signal” about the consequences of the decision maker’s actions. The inferences that the decision maker is able to draw from the content of the signal depends on prior belief about both the information provider’s knowledge and the information provider’s incentives for truth telling.... When either the information provider or the content of the signal is known to be perfectly credible..., voters can use the content of a signal to make more accurate inferences about the personal consequences of an electoral outcome (Lupia, 1994: 66).

²⁸ “Direct legislative environment” refers to processes such as initiative, referenda, and recalls.

²⁹ For the canonical articulation of signaling games see Michael Spence (1973).

To illustrate this approach, I employ a heuristic of sort. Namely, I maintain that in analyzing two representative examples of the literature we can fully flesh out the ways in which the general heuristics approach has been applied.

I first turn to Arthur Lupia – likely the most prominent exponent of the heuristics literature. He (1992: 392) models a signaling game as follows: there are $n + 1$ players, where $n > 1$ and the $+ 1$ player is an agenda-setter in a “direct legislation environment;” they have “preferences over [a] policy space” $[0, 1]$ such that the “policy space can be distinguished by the location of his or her ideal point.” Voters’ ideal points are $T_i \in [0, 1]$; the voters “know their own ideal points and the distribution $[F]$ from which any other [voter’s] ideal point is drawn.” Still, “no voter knows any other voter’s ideal point;” and, “players in [the] model choose strategies to maximize expected utility.”

The setter moves first. Her strategy, “ $s(X)$, has two components:” facing a “nonnegative, common knowledge *cost of entry*, $K \in \mathfrak{R}^+$,” the setter’s *first* decision, $s_1(X) \in \{0, 1\}$, is whether or not to enter – “which equals 1 if the setter decides to contest the election, 0 otherwise.” If 1, the setter enters and faces her *second* choice: “the second component of the strategy (a location for [the exact content of] the ‘alternative to the status quo’)— $s_2(X) \in [0, 1]$.”³⁰ Thus, the election, when held, “is of the form: SQ [status quo] versus s_2 [the alternative to the status quo] (Lupia, 1992: 392).”

Voters move second (that is, they vote). Their decision is a binary one, $v_1 = \{-1, 1\}$, such that “ $v_1 = -1$ represents a vote for SQ and $v_1 = 1$ represents a vote for s_2 .” In turn, “voters can condition their choice of strategy on a piece of information provided to them about the setter’s strategy [i.e. about s_1 and s_2].” The message, $M(s, X) = (M_1(s_1)$,

³⁰ Status quo refers to policies “whose effects [voters] might be able to observe;” “alternative policies” refers to policies “whose effect cannot be observed until they are implemented (Lupia, 1992: 391).”

$M_2(s_2)$ ³¹ has two components: s “allows voters to observe whether or not the election is being contested.... [T]hat is, the voters directly observe whether the setter enters or not. The second component of the message allows voters to observe an *endorsement*.... [The] ‘endorsement’ provides voters with information about the location of s_2 . *In the model, it is common knowledge that the endorser possesses complete information and is perfectly reliable source of information* (Lupia, 1992: 393; emphasis added).”

Lupia subdivides the basic game into four game types, (1) a control case; (2) a game type with costly entry; (3) a game type with a setter’s endorsement; and (4) a game type where the voters learn the setter’s ideal point. In (1) the voters’ strategy is $\{v_1 | \text{where } v_1: [0, 1] \times \{0, 1\} \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}\}$; namely, choosing on the policy space $[0, 1]$, and given the setter’s decision to enter or not $\{0, 1\}$ – which decision the voters do *not* observe in the control case although they *do* have a prior belief about $f(X)$ (that is, the density of the setter’s cdf) – the voters choose SQ or s_2 – that is -1 or 1. They choose -1 or 1 on the basis of prior information and with a view toward maximizing their expected utility. Voters’ utility may be defined as: $U_i(x, T_i) = -(x - T_i)$. “*For voters, [therefore], utility is solely a function of the distance between the location of the winning policy $[x]$ and their ideal point $[T_i]$* (Lupia, 1992: 393-394; emphasis added).”

In (2) the voters’ strategy is $\{v_1 | \text{where } v_1: [0, 1] \times \{0, 1\} \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}\}$. Namely, in the “costly entry” game type, choosing on the policy space $[0, 1]$, and given the setter’s decision to enter (1), the voters choose SQ or s_2 – that is -1 or 1. What distinguishes the “costly entry” game type from the control case is the fact that the voters know the setter has decided to contest the election. The fact that the setter decides to incur cost K , and

³¹ “The value of the message is revealed to voters after the setter chooses a strategy but before the voters vote (Lupia, 1992: 393).”

given that the “setter need not contest the election [her decision *to* contest the election] conveys information to the voters. The information provided to voters by this action is that the setter believes that he or she can recover (at least) the cost of contesting the election (Lupia, 1992: 395).”³²

In (3) the voters’ strategy is $\{v_i | \text{where } v_i: [0, 1] \times \{0, 1\} \times \{-1, 0, 1\} \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}\}$. Namely, in the “endorsement” game type, choosing on the policy space $[0, 1]$, given the setter’s decision to enter or not $\{0, 1\}$, and given a setter’s endorsement $(-1, 0, \text{ or } 1, \text{ on which more below})$, the voters choose SQ or s_2 – that is -1 or 1 .³³ “The endorsement, $M_2(s_2) \in \{-1, 0, 1\}$,”³⁴ writes Lupia (1992: 396), “represents a costlessly verifiable, truthful opinion expressed by some individual or organization about the relative merits of SQ and s_2 . The endorsement allows us to characterize the effect that the statements of well-known individuals, trusted friends, political parties, and opinion leaders have on individual-level voting behavior.”³⁵

³² “Let $\epsilon(K)$... be a distance on the policy continuum that is an increasing function of K . ϵ determines the range of alternatives within which it will never be profitable for the setter to contest an election. Since K and the shape of the setter’s utility function is known, the correspondence between K and ϵ is common knowledge, and so is the distance from SQ within which it is impossible for the setter to recover the cost of contesting the election. [Therefore,] for setters whose ideal points are located within the ‘range of unprofitable alternatives’ $[SQ - \epsilon, SQ + \epsilon]$, there exists no policies which, given the cost of contesting the election K , will provide the setter with a higher level of utility than costlessly accepting SQ.

[Consequently, a] voter given a single opportunity to guess the exact location of s_2 before and after observing ‘costly setter entry’ would more likely guess correctly after the observation. The increased likelihood is due to the fact that there are fewer possible responses after the updating, and the responses that are eliminated by the updating would have been correct guesses. Therefore, I claim that after observing costly setter entry, voters can make more accurate inferences about the location of s_2 (Lupia, 1992: 395).”

³³ SQ or s_2 is “determined by majority vote”. Consequently: “for any $s \in \{1\} \times [0, 1]$, and $v_i \in \{-1, 1\}$, $o(s, v_1, \dots, v_n) = s_2$ if $\sum v_i > 0$, and = SQ if $\sum v_i \leq 0$ (Lupia, 1992: 393).

³⁴ That is, the setter transmits a message (M) about the location of s_2 such that the she indicates whether s_2 is to the left of SQ (-1), at SQ (0), or to the right of SQ (1).

³⁵ “The effect of introducing costly setter action and perfectly credible endorsement suggests that the voters’ access to simple and publicly available sources of information can help direct legislation voters make ex post more accurate inferences. The fact that we observe political elites making efforts to provide these types of cues suggests that these actors recognize and adapt to the information problems that are inherent in political decision making. If obtaining these forms of information requires less effort than obtaining information about the true location of an alternative, then the comparative statics suggest that

Joel Sobel (1985) proposes a similar model. Dispensing first with the notation, this is a two-person game where the two actors are a Sender (S) and a Receiver (R). In turn, there are two types of Senders: a Friend (F) and an Enemy (E) (on which more below). t represents a “finite sequence of dates” such that t is indexed backward where $t = T, T - 1, \dots, 1$; “Thus, at date t there are t periods remaining.” A_t is an “identically-distributed random variable” that “measures the importance of a date’s play,” where \bar{A} denotes the idea that a particular date’s play is of high importance and \underline{A} denotes the idea that a particular date’s play is of low importance. Consequently, if a date’s play is \bar{A} then a “correct decision becomes more valuable, and incorrect decision becomes more costly.” At time t , S observes M_t , which in the present model takes on either of two values -1 or 1 . Having observed M_t , the sender (S) signals the receiver (R) by selecting an element n from a set of possible signals, N . “ R processes the information in S ’s signal and chooses a real-valued action, y , which determines players’ payoffs for that period. After R learns the [actual] value of M_t , and both players learn their payoffs, the process repeats (Sobel, 1985: 558).”

The problem is that M maximizes R ’s utility (as explained in more detail below, R wants to select y such that y is as close as possible to M , and ideally $y - M = 0$) but in advance of S ’s signal, R does not know M directly. Thus, all that R has is S ’s message with respect to the value of M , which message is but an “estimate of M .” And, given R ’s uncertainty about S ’s motives” – that is R faces “prior probability” $p_t \in (0, 1)$ that S is a

when credible endorsements are available, a voter can cast an ‘informed’ vote while possessing what might appear to be very limited information” (Lupia, 1992: 397).

friend (F) and $1 - p_i$ that S is an enemy (E) – R “must decide how to use” S ’s message. In effect then, $U^R(\bullet) = U^F(\bullet)$.

Sobel (1985: 559) makes the following assumptions: $U^i(\bullet)$ is a continuously differentiable (C^1) quasi-concave von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function, such that, if $i = R$ and E , $U^i(\bullet)$ depends only on $|y - M|$ and A . Thus, “utility depends only on the distance between y and M ” as well as the import of a given date’s play; moreover, $\max_y U^i(y - M, A)$ is $y = M$ if $i = R$ and $y = -1$ if $i = E$. Consequently, if i “believes that the probability that $M = 1$ is r ,” player i ’s “best action” as $y^i(r, A)$ becomes $\max_y rU^i(y - 1, A) - (1 - r)U^i(y + 1, A)$.

Combining the assumptions, and keeping with the idea that player i ’s “best action” is $y^i(r, A)$, we obtain the following: $y^R(0, A) \equiv y^E(1, A) \equiv -1$; $y^R(1/2, A) \equiv y^E(1/2, A) \equiv 0$; $y^R(1, A) \equiv y^E(0, A) \equiv 1$; $y^i(r, A) + y^i(1 - r, A) \equiv 0$. Putting the foregoing in the vernacular, and recalling that M_t can take on -1 or 1 , and r is i ’s belief that $M = 1$, the Receiver maximizes her utility by playing -1 when $r = 0$, and she maximizes her utility by playing 1 when $r = 1$, that is, R prefers higher actions in $[-1, 1]$ to lower if $M = 1$, and lower actions in $[-1, 1]$ to higher if $M = -1$. E ’s preferences are the reverse. Thus, the interests of E and R are totally opposed in the sense that if M is known and E weakly prefers an action u to another action v , then R weakly prefers v to u .” Finally, if S ’s signal is “totally uninformative,” S ’s best play is $y^R(1/2, A)$, which play “yields zero utility to E and F (Sobel, 1985: 559).”³⁶

³⁶ In continuation, Sobel analyzes the game as a one-stage game, multi-stage game, etc. Nothing substantive to the argument in this chapter is lost by not analyzing this aspect of Sobel’s model.

(5) Problems with the Cognitive Shortcuts Approach

The Problems

As more fully developed in chapter 3, and as evidenced by my own use of formal modeling (see below), I do not here adopt an approach that is even remotely anti-positivist. Quite the contrary is the case. Indeed, as I argue in chapter 3, there is a great deal of collaboration space for – what on the surface of it appear to be two disparate approaches – constructivism and positivist approaches to political science. For instance, the formal modeling enterprise is, in my view, perfectly appropriate and highly useful approach to studying social phenomena.

I fault the heuristics approach on two accounts: *The first problem with the heuristics (rational choice) approach is its black-boxing of preference formation.* Namely, as demonstrated above, the starting point for discussion is a von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function, such that we know it to be twice-differentiable, continuous, single-peaked, and concave. The central goal of actors, then, becomes the maximization of this function. Thus, in Lupia's model, voters' utility may be defined as: $U_i(x, T_i) = -(x - T_i)$; and, Sobel's model simply posits $U(\bullet)$ as von Neumann-Morgenstern Utility Function and then models the idea that $U^i(\bullet)$ depends chiefly on $|y - M|$. Finally, in a model presented by McKelvey and Ordeshook (1986), on a simple unidimensional space, a voter has a single-peaked utility function such that she most prefers position x^* .

Again, I do not fault the cognitive shortcuts literature for assuming the existence of some utility function and then modeling utility maximization. As an empirical fact, most of the time, most people, seek to maximize their utility and *are* instrumentally

rational in so doing. Where I *do* fault the heuristics approach is in not probing more deeply into the *sources* of the actors' preferred positions. Thus, in Lupia's model, he does not ask the logically preceding questions of: "Precisely how is it that a given voter came to hold T as her ideal point? Why not T^* ? What is the *source* of T ?" Neither does Sobel ask the logically preceding question of: "How did the Receiver come to hold M as her ideal point?" Finally, how did the voter in McKelvey and Ordershook's model come to hold x^* as her most preferred position? Why x^* ; why not x^{**} ?

Now I understand that the quest for parsimony precludes the asking of such questions; or so the argument goes. I disagree. I see no reason why formal modeling cannot be enhanced by way of deeper inquiry into the sources of preferences while keeping within the bounds of rational choice's quest for parsimony. Indeed, I attempt such an undertaking here. Stubborn turf battles of the kind endemic to the so-called "third debate" (Lapid, 1989) need to – in my opinion – give way to infinitely more productive cross-fertilization between avowedly positivist and more critical approaches. Indeed, I lay out the notion of cross-fertilization between the two approaches more fully in the next chapter.

The second problem with the heuristics (rational choice) approach is the very notion of heuristics. Heuristics are, it will be recalled, "problem-solving strategies...which serve to 'keep the information processing demands of the task within bounds.'" Heuristics, then, are substitutes for political knowledge, such that in using them, voters can approximate the heroic demands made of them by classic democratic theory. Or, as Lupia (1999, 2000, 2001) argues, if we define voting as "competence," and X , Y , and Z are pieces of factual information that a voter needs to competently carry out

task A (that is, vote), then short of her knowing X, Y, and Z, she is incompetent to vote. X, Y, and Z, therefore, (i) inform her vote and (ii) render her a competent voter.

However, as argued above, it is not altogether clear to what extent do pieces of *factual* information X, Y, and Z inform or determine an individual's vote. Indeed, as the three hypotheticals suggest, political knowledge under-determines voters' preferences.

Consider, once more, a scenario with two voters: She and He. They both observe an endorsement, recalling that an endorsement "represents a costlessly verifiable, truthful opinion expressed by some individual or organization about the relative merits" of a particular policy. "The endorsement allows us to characterize the effect that the statements of well-known individuals, trusted friends, political parties, and opinion leaders have on individual-level voting behavior (Lupia, 1992: 396)." Now imagine that *ex ante* – prior to observing the endorsement – He and She had a preferred positions x^* and x^{**} , respectively. The endorsement expresses a high opinion of the merit of x^* . She votes x^{**} – notwithstanding, therefore, the endorsement. Having received the endorsement, she now has the competence need to cast a vote. Yet she still votes x^{**} . Again, then, knowledge – whether directly obtained by the voter herself, or indirectly, by way of an endorsement – underdetermines preference formation in voters.

The Problems Resolved

The problems with the heuristics literature are readily resolved by way of productive dialogue between constructivism and positivist approaches. Namely, constructivists are great at telling the insider's story (more on which in chapter 3) but not so great at telling the outsider's story (the story of causation). Positivist approaches can be said to be great

at telling the outsider's story exceedingly well but can be accused of completely disregarding preference formation (the insider's story). Cross-fertilization between the two approaches is certainly in order. That is, if we are to examine why voters support or oppose the government's policy with respect to a particular issue, we would do well to examine with greater care the intersubjectively shared ideas which, as this study claims, in large measure determine the preferences of the voters. The formal model articulated below as well as the discussion on ontology, epistemology, and methodology contained in chapter 3 point in the direction of just such cross fertilization.

(6) The Formal Model

Consider a case with n social constructions (imagined here as endogenous variables).³⁷ In voting, then, voters transform these n inputs into m outputs (or, votes). There are m such voting functions (v) as voters vote on m number of policy areas using n social constructions (s).

The foregoing is captured by:

$$\begin{aligned} v_1 &= f_1(s_1, \dots, s_n) \\ v_2 &= f_2(s_1, \dots, s_n) \\ &\vdots \\ v_m &= f_m(s_1, \dots, s_n) \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

That is, a voter's vote on particular policy 1 is a function of the combination of n social constructions. A voter's vote on particular policy 2 is a function of the combination of n social constructions. Finally, a voter's vote on particular policy m is a function of the combination of n social constructions. Turning generalities into particulars, a voter's vote on U.S. counterterrorism policy (USCTP) is a function of various social constructions

³⁷ The model presented here owes in large measure to Simon and Blume (1994: 323-325 and *passim*).

such as, terrorism (T), security (S), and the history of U.S. foreign policy ($HUSFP$). If we label these endogenous variables as s_T , s_S , and s_{HUSFP} respectively, it is here imagined that the value of v_{USCTP} – that is, the value of the vote on U.S. counterterrorism policy – is a function of the values that s_T , s_S , and s_{HUSFP} take, such that $s_T \neq 0$, $s_S \neq 0$, and $s_{HUSFP} \neq 0$. Put otherwise, s_T , s_S , and s_{HUSFP} take on values other than 0 as these constructions – theoretically at least – should circumscribe what voters see as meaningful and appropriate counterterrorism actions.

We can transform (1) into a single function from \mathbf{R}^n to \mathbf{R}^m .

$$F(\mathbf{s}) = f_1(s_1, \dots, s_n), f_2(s_1, \dots, s_n), \dots, f_m(s_1, \dots, s_n) \quad (2)$$

Given a point $\mathbf{s}^* = (s_1, \dots, s_n)$ – that is, given a particular combination of social constructions – we would like to know two things about $F(\mathbf{s})$. Firstly, we would like to know the behavior of $F(\mathbf{s})$ at \mathbf{s}^* . Secondly, we would like to “estimate the effect of a change” at \mathbf{s}^* by $\Delta \mathbf{s} = (\Delta s_1, \dots, \Delta s_n)$.

The behavior of $F(\mathbf{s})$ at \mathbf{s}^* is well captured by the Jacobian derivative of F at \mathbf{s}^* .

$$\begin{vmatrix} \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_1}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_2}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \dots & \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_n}(\mathbf{s}^*) \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial f_m}{\partial s_1}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \frac{\partial f_m}{\partial s_2}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \dots & \frac{\partial f_m}{\partial s_n}(\mathbf{s}^*) \end{vmatrix} \quad (3)$$

Multiplying (3) by the column matrix $\begin{vmatrix} \Delta s_1 \\ \vdots \\ \Delta s_n \end{vmatrix}$ we obtain:

$$\begin{vmatrix} \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_1}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_2}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \dots & \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_n}(\mathbf{s}^*) \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial f_m}{\partial s_1}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \frac{\partial f_m}{\partial s_2}(\mathbf{s}^*) & \dots & \frac{\partial f_m}{\partial s_n}(\mathbf{s}^*) \end{vmatrix} \begin{vmatrix} \Delta s_1 \\ \vdots \\ \Delta s_n \end{vmatrix} \quad (4)$$

such that (4) captures the effect on \mathbf{s}^* by changes $\Delta \mathbf{s} = (\Delta_{s_1}, \dots, \Delta_{s_n})$. Put differently, (3) captures the voter's votes on m policy proposals given the n social constructions that the voter holds at any time. And, (4) captures the way in which those m different votes will change given a change in the voter's n social constructions.

The preceding was used to develop the intuition. However, in the present study we are not interested in votes on m policy domains given n social constructions. We are interested in one particular policy domain ($m = 1$), U.S. counterterrorism policy. Moreover, throughout the study I maintain that, theoretically, three particular social constructions inform a voter's vote on USCTP: her social construction of terrorism (T), security (S), and the history of U.S. foreign policy ($HUSFP$). Thus, (3) becomes:

$$\left| \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_T} \mathbf{s}^*, \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_S} \mathbf{s}^*, \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_{HUSFP}} \mathbf{s}^* \right| \quad (5)$$

such that (5) is the linear approximation of a voter's behavior (her vote) with respect to U.S. counterterrorism policy given the particular social constructions of terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy to which she has tapped at that particular time, that is $\mathbf{s}^* = (s_T, s_S, s_{HUSFP})$.

And, (4) can be changed as follows:

$$\left| \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_T} \mathbf{s}^*, \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_S} \mathbf{s}^*, \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_{HUSFP}} \mathbf{s}^* \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} s_T \\ s_S \\ s_{HUSFP} \end{array} \right| \quad (6)$$

such that (6) captures the change in a voter's vote on U.S. counterterrorism policy given a change in the social constructions which she held prior to the change.

Of course, we can rewrite (5) as a column matrix

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_T} \\ \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_S} \\ \frac{\partial f_1}{\partial s_{HUSFP}} \end{pmatrix} \mathbf{s}^* \quad (7)$$

in which case (7) is the gradient vector $\nabla F(\mathbf{s}^*)$. And, calculus tells us that if F were a \mathbf{C}^1 function, at “any point \mathbf{s} in the domain of F at which $\nabla F(\mathbf{s}) \neq 0$. The gradient vector $\nabla F(\mathbf{s})$ points \mathbf{s} into the direction in which F increases most rapidly” (Simon and Blume, 1994: 322).³⁸

The formal model articulated here can be readily connected with the discussion on Fishkin and the heuristics literature. As evidenced above, Fishkin's enterprise estimates (6) such that the endogenous variable is some scalar k , where k is political knowledge. That is, Fishkin and his colleagues estimate the effect of change in k (Δk) on a voter's vote. I have argued that political knowledge underdetermines voters' preferences. Thus, I propose a model where (6) measures the effect not of $\Delta \mathbf{k}^* = (\Delta k_1, \dots, \Delta k_n)$ but rather the effect of $\Delta \mathbf{s}^* = (\Delta_{ST}, \Delta_{SS}, \Delta_{SHUSFP})$ on v_{USCTP} .

³⁸ Note that in articulating the theorem Simon and Blume use the variable “x” and not “s”. As evidenced above, “s” stands for social construction.

(7) Conclusion

Looking back, the central argument in the present chapter is that factual knowledge underdetermines preference formation in voters. Looking ahead, chapter 3 points in the direction of a profitable intellectual arbitrage between constructivism and positivist political science with the view towards estimating the effects of intersubjectively shared ideas on the voting preferences of citizens.

Chapter 3

Ontology, Epistemology, and Methodology: In Search of Two “Stories”

(1) Introductory Remarks

The chapter unfolds as follows: in part 1 I discuss constructivist ontology, epistemology, and methodology. In so doing, I delineate the central tenets of constructivism. In continuation, I connect these central tenets to the empirical questions at the heart of the present study. In effect, then, I outline constructivism’s emphasis on telling the insider’s story and relate that to the concepts of terrorism, security, and U.S. foreign policy, concepts that are central to the present study. In part 2, I outline the central tenets of the outsider’s story. This is the story of the search for causation, search that informs the very core of positivist political science. I first discuss the problems of internal and external validity in measuring social kinds. I also discuss reliability. Finally, I propose and outline a general ordered probit model and discuss Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE).

The *central argument* of this chapter is that the best approach to the study of social kinds and social action is by way of opening up the research space and combining the insider’s story with the outsider’s. The insider’s story is essential as it opens up the black box and thereby unpacks and analyzes voters’ interest formation. On this account, and witness also the brief discussion in chapter 2, meaningful understanding of social action *must* begin with understanding the ways in which social agents themselves have come to construct their social environment. Still, as important as it is to tell the insider’s story – if, as this story suggests, intersubjectively shared social constructions are the propellants of social actions – it is also important to examine *causation* – that is, to tell the outsider’s story. In so doing, we are led to unearth precisely how strong is the correlation between social constructions held by social agents and the social action that

these constructions propel. The urgent need to weave both stories into a coherent narrative, then, becomes the main focus of the present chapter and, indeed, of this study taken as a whole.

(2) Constructivism: The “Insider’s” Story

Constructivist Ontology

Constructivism’s central ontological claim is that “the environment in which agents...take action is social as well as material (Checkel, 1998: 325).”³⁹ Social reality is “constructed (Pouliot, 2007: 361).” Social agents, on this account, “are far from being structural ‘idiots’.... They *are* the social constructors of their own practices and structures (Adler, 1997: 325; emphasis added).” Indeed, “material structures...are given meaning only by the social context through which they are interpreted (Checkel, 1998: 326).” Or, to paraphrase Alexander Wendt (1992), the material world is what social actors make of it. Thus,

Constructivism’s importance and its added value...lie mainly in its emphasis on the *ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge and on the epistemological and methodological implications of this reality*. Constructivists believe that International Relations consist *primarily of social facts*, which are facts only by human agreement. At the same time, *constructivists are “ontological realists”*; they believe *not only in the existence of the material world, but also that “this material world offers resistance when we act upon it”* (Adler, 1997: 322-323; emphasis added; quote comes from Knorr Cetina, 1993: 184).⁴⁰

Inasmuch as the material world pushes back and inasmuch as material structures are not irrelevant, constructivists posit a “process of interaction between agents and structures

³⁹ “[H]uman interaction is shaped primarily by ideational factors, not simply material ones (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 392).”

⁴⁰ Finnemore and Sikkink (2001: 393) add: “Constructivism focuses on what Searle (1995) has called ‘social facts’—things like money, sovereignty, and rights, which have no material reality but exist only because people collectively believe they exist and act accordingly. Understanding how social facts change and the ways these influence politics is the major concern of constructivist analysis.”

[such that] the ontology is one of mutual constitution, [and such that] neither unit of analysis—agents or structures—is reduced to the other and made ‘ontologically primitive’ (Checkel, 1998: 325-326).” Or, as Wendt (1995: 75) has it: “The world is still out there constraining our beliefs and may punish us for incorrect ones. Montezuma had a theory that the Spanish were gods, but it was wrong, with disastrous consequences.” Finally, in positing mutual constitution, constructivists “*open up what for most theorists is the black box of interest and identity formation; [agents’] interests emerge from and are endogenous to interaction with structures* (Checkel, 1998: 325-326; emphasis added).”⁴¹

Closely related to constructivists’ core ontological claim is a second claim: the social setting – that which *they* construct – provides social agents with “understanding of their interests;” the social setting “constitutes” those interests (Checkel, 1998: 326).⁴² Social agents, thus, “bear identities, rights[,] and obligations (to name a few) in their own consciousness (Adler, 1997: 325).” As such, ideas have “structural characteristics;” they are the “*medium and propellant of social action; they define the limits of what is cognitively possible and impossible for individuals* (Adler, 1997: 325; emphasis added).”⁴³ And, more than simply delimiting that which is “cognitively possible and impossible,” intersubjectively shared ideas also delimit what is seen as right, correct, or morally appropriate action.

⁴¹ Indeed, this was the essence of the formal model proposed in chapter 2.

⁴² Intersubjectively “shared beliefs construct the interests and identities of purposive actors” (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 392-393).”

⁴³ “Also implicit in many constructivist accounts is a model of human... where rule-governed action and logics of appropriateness prevail. Such logics involve reasoning by analogy and metaphor and are not about ends and means. Under them, agents ask ‘What kind of situation is this?’ and ‘What should I do now?’— with norms helping to supply the answer. Norms therefore constitute...agents, providing them with understanding of their interests (Checkel, 1998: 326).”

Constructivist Epistemology and Methodology: The “Insider’s” Story

Emerging from their core ontological tenets, the central claim with respect to epistemology and methodology is that “constructivists do not reject science or causal explanation (Checkel, 1998: 327; see Adler, 1997; Wendt, 1998; Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001).” Constructivists “share a largely common epistemology” with mainstream positivist IR (Checkel, 1998: 327).

In assessing...evidence and arbitrating among interpretations, constructivists use similar criteria, as other researchers. They judge an interpretation of evidence by comparing it with alternative explanations. They search for evidence that would confirm alternatives and disconfirm the explanation being assessed. They ask if an explanation is supported by multiple streams of data.... Depending on the type of research, modern constructivists might also ask if the research can be duplicated. Good research need not be completely replicable (as participant-observer research may not be), but replication can enhance the plausibility of an interpretation” (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 395).⁴⁴

Constructivist methodology rests on three pillars: *First*, “induction is the primary mode of knowing because social facts constitute the essence of constructivism.” This pillar, then, is a direct outgrowth of constructivism’s central ontological claim about the socially constructed nature of reality. Consequently, the “necessary starting point for any constructivist inquiry” is to “move from the local to the general.... This is because theorization destroys meanings as they exist for social agents.” Thus, “Research must

⁴⁴ In fact, constructivism is not dissimilar to rational choice. Finnemore and Sikkink (2001: 393) once more: “Constructivism is a different kind of theory from realism, liberalism, or Marxism and operates at a different level of abstraction. Constructivism is not a substantive theory of politics. It is a social theory that makes claims about the nature of social life and social change. Constructivism does not, however, make any particular claims about the content of social structures or the nature of agents at work in social life. Consequently it does not, by itself, produce specific predictions about political outcomes that one could test in social science research. Constructivism in this sense is similar to rational choice. Like rational choice, it offers a framework for thinking about the nature of social life and social interaction, but makes no claims about their specific content. In a rational choice analysis, agents act rationally to maximize utilities, but the substantive specification of actors and utilities lies outside the analysis; it must be provided before analysis can begin. In a constructivist analysis, agents and structures are mutually constituted in ways that explain why the political world is so and not otherwise, but the substantive specification of agents and structures must come from some other source. Neither constructivism nor rational choice provides substantive explanations or predictions of political behavior until coupled with a more specific understanding of who the relevant actors are, what they want, and what the content of social structures might be.”

begin with what it is that social agents, as opposed to analysts, believe to be real”; research must “recover” the meanings that purposive social actors attach to social phenomena (Pouliot, 2007: 364).

Second, “interpretation constitutes the central methodological task as constructivism takes knowledge very seriously.” Constructivists must “search for meaning” (Geertz, 1973: 5; quoted in Pouliot, 2007: 364). Finally *three*, constructivist methodology is “inherently historical.” On this account, constructivists “see the world as a project under construction, as becoming rather than being (Adler, 2005: 11; quoted in Pouliot, 2007: 364).” Still, Wendt notes that even though “all systems, natural and social, are always in process, continually being reproduced through time...constitutive theories [theories central to the constructivists’ insider story] abstract away from these processes and take *'snapshots'* instead, in an effort to explain how systems [of meaning] are constituted (Wendt, 1998: 105; emphasis added).”

Finnemore and Sikkink concur. They, too, note that given their approach’s “core assumptions,” constructivists “need methods that can capture the intersubjective meanings at the core of their approach.” Still, Finnemore and Sikkink quickly add that:

There is no single constructivist method or research design. Constructivism opens up a set of issues, and scholars choose the research tools and methods best suited to their particular question. In some cases, quantitative methods yield particular insight. In other cases, qualitative and interpretative methods are more appropriate. Many research projects have used a combination of these methods to illuminate different parts of a larger puzzle. In this sense, designing constructivist research is not fundamentally different from designing other kinds of research. Constructivists, like any other researchers, use the full array of available tools (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 395-396).

In the main, then, constructivists seek to tell the “insider’s” story, the “essence” of which, notes Alexander Wendt (1998: 103), is its “interest in particular kind of *question*.” This key “constitutive” question is “how are things in the world put together so that they have

the properties that they do?” This “question transcends the natural/social science divide”. Echoing Wendt, Finnemore and Sikkink (2001: 394) point out that “Just as understanding how the double-helix DNA molecule is constituted materially enables understandings of genetics and disease, so, too, an understanding of how sovereignty, human rights, laws of war, [terrorism], or bureaucracies are constituted socially allows us to hypothesize about their effects in world politics.”

Nevertheless, and as noted above, researchers in the social sciences inquire into the nature of “objects” that are “made of different kinds of stuff” from a double-helix DNA. Consequently, social scientists produce different answers to the key question that animates the insider’s story. Wendt (1998: 103) notes that “if we are interested in the question of how social kinds are put together we will have to engage in an interpretative recovery of actors’ private and shared beliefs.”

Adequate answers to how-possible and what-questions [i.e., the questions central to the insider’s story] must satisfy different truth conditions than answers to causal questions. As with the latter, the answers to constitutive questions must support a counterfactual claim of necessity, namely that in the absence of the structures to which we are appealing the properties in question would not exist. But the kind of necessity required here is conceptual or logical, not causal or natural. The relationship between the factors constituting the social kind 'Cold War' and a Cold War is one of identity, in the sense that those factors define what a Cold War is, not one of causal determination. And this in turn means that the answers to constitutive questions will necessarily violate the first two assumptions of causal explanations, independent existence and temporal asymmetry. The factors constituting a Cold War do not exist apart from a Cold War, nor do they precede it in time; when they come into being, a Cold War comes into being with them, by definition and at the same time. This means that the “independent variable/dependent variable” language that characterizes causal inquiries makes no sense, or at least must be interpreted very differently, in constitutive inquiries. The effects of constitutive structures might be said to “vary” with their constituting conditions, but the dependency reflected in this variation is conceptual rather than causal. When constituting conditions vary, then so do their constitutive effects, by definition (Wendt, 1998: 105-106).

Terrorism and the History of U.S. Foreign Policy: The Insider’s Story

Ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically, the present study fits most comfortably within the constructivist approach. On the ontological front, the formal

model proposed in the previous chapter reflects the acceptance in the present study of the core ontological tenets of constructivism. Namely, I modeled constructivism's two core ontological tenets: (1) that "social reality is constructed" and social agents are the "social constructors of their own practices and structures;" and (2) that the agent-constructed social world informs agents' interests and thereby circumscribes what they see as possible and morally appropriate courses of action. Building on the first core ontological tenet of constructivism, the exogenously given (that which is axiomatic) in the model is the premise that terrorism is a social kind. Building on this premise *and* on the second core ontological tenet of constructivism, I model the social kind terrorism as the "medium and propellant of social action." The social kind "defines the limits of what is cognitively possible and impossible for individuals." And in defining the limits of what is possible and desirable social action, the social kind terrorism in large measure determines the kind of vote a voter will cast along the policy domain of U.S. counterterrorism policy.⁴⁵

On the epistemological front, it will be remembered that constructivists "do not reject science or causal explanation". They are "ontological realists" who "share a largely common epistemology" with mainstream (read, positivist) IR. I accept these tenets. Not anything goes; it is not ideas all the way down. There is a real world out there that can – and needs to be – explained. After all, whether one tells the insider's story (see above) or the outsider's story (see below), "[b]oth kinds of theories [that is, stories] are true or false in virtue of how well they correspond with the world.... [C]orrespondence to states of the world is also an important goal for constitutive theories (Wendt, 1998: 106)."

⁴⁵ See chapter 2 for an in-depth discussion.

Wendt writes cogently:

Post-positivists might object that a correspondence test of truth for constitutive theories is problematic because human beings do not have direct access to how the world is constituted. What we see in the world is always and necessarily mediated by the background understandings we bring to bear on our inquiries. I agree that all observation is theory-laden, and this means that we can never test our theories directly against the world, but only indirectly via other, competing theories. But this is equally true of causal and constitutive theories (and, note, it also compatible with what is today called 'positivism' in IR). Moreover, for both kinds of theory the “scientific” solution to the problem is the same, namely to rely on publicly available, albeit always theory-laden, evidence from the world, which critics of our theoretical claims can assess for relevance, accuracy, and so on. *The importance of such evidence is not lost even on the most hardened post-positivists who, while perhaps overtly rejecting the correspondence theory of truth, in their empirical work routinely try to find accurate and relevant evidence from the world to support their claims. Why limit themselves in this way if the external world does not somehow set the truth conditions for their theories? Why not be creative and choose arbitrary “evidence”* (Wendt, 1998: 106; emphasis added; see also Adler 1997; Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001)?

Epistemologically, therefore, the insider’s story *is* social science. In telling it, constructivists, and this is certainly true for the present study, do not “choose arbitrary ‘evidence.’” The merits of an insider’s story can be assessed by how well the story stacks up against a rival story, where both stories attempt to account for the world around us.

On the methodological front – given the “ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge,” which subjective knowledge delimits social agents’ preferences and as such acts as a “medium and propellant of social action” – I follow Wendt (1998) and Pouliot (2007) and tell the insider’s story by questioning “how social kinds are put together:” “How are things in the world put together so that they have the properties that they do?” In addressing these questions, I “engage in an interpretative recovery of actors’ private and shared beliefs.” That is, I tell the insider’s story by uncovering “what it is that social agents, as opposed to analysts, believe to be real;” I begin by recovering the “meanings that purposive social actors attach to social phenomena.”

Specifically, I ask: “How are the social kinds terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy put together? What is it that social agents believe to be ‘real’ with respect to these three social kinds? What meanings have ‘purposive social actors’ attached to the phenomena terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy?” Chapters 4 (terrorism) and 5 (the history of U.S. foreign policy) take up the task of telling the respective insider’s stories.⁴⁶ In so doing, I propose, and demonstrate, that terrorism and the history of U.S. foreign policy are social kinds which are best imagined along continua of intersubjectively shared understandings. There is *no one* social construction of terrorism just as surely there is no one way of socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy.

Indeed, in telling the insider’s stories I am mindful of the fact that social kinds are unstable historical contingencies. Terrorism, security, and U.S. foreign policy are not only multifaceted social kinds; they are “project[s] under construction;” they are in the process of “becoming rather than being.” Still, following Wendt (1998) even though social kinds are “continually being reproduced through time,” in the present study I take “snapshots” of the social kinds. I “abstract away from these processes and take ‘snapshots’ instead, in an effort to explain how systems are constituted.”

(3) Positivism: the “Outsider’s” Story

The Outsider’s Story

Telling the insider’s story is important. After all, one cannot tell a compelling outsider’s story if one proceeds from the assumption of black-boxing preference formation. But if the insider’s story is necessary – if socially constructed and intersubjectively shared

⁴⁶ Chapter 1 briefly tells the insider’s story with respect to the social kind “security.”

knowledge is the “medium and propellant of social action” – it is not sufficient. One is still left with the question, “What is the correlation between the various social constructions of terrorism, security, and U.S. foreign policy and the social action of approving or opposing U.S. counterterrorism policy?”

Answering the causal question is the job of the outsider’s story. In telling the story, three assumptions are central to establishing causation: “in saying that ‘X causes Y,’ we assume...: 1) that X and Y exist independent[ly] of each other, 2) that X precedes Y in time, and 3) that but for X, Y would not have occurred (Wendt, 1998: 105).” That is, variations in the dependent variables “social construction of terrorism,” “social construction of security,” and “social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy” cause variations in the dependent variable “support for U.S. counterterrorism policy.” The independent variables and the dependent variable, therefore, exist independently; the independent variables are temporally prior to the dependent; and, were it not for the independent variables, the dependent variable would not have occurred.

The argument of this section proceeds as follow: I first briefly discuss the internal validity of measuring social kinds by way of using scales. In continuation, I discuss general ordered probit model and Maximum Likelihood Estimation.

Telling the Outsider’s Story I: The Question of External Validity, Internal Validity, and Reliability in the Measurement of Social Kinds

Internal Validity

Measuring social kinds is not straightforward. How does one measure intersubjectively shared knowledge? How does one measure that which, by definition, is shared among individuals? The central question asked here, then, is: are we actually measuring the

variables that we are claiming to measure (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 66)? Is our measurement internally valid? Measuring validity is “difficult to demonstrate empirically...because validity involves the relationship between the measurement of a concept and the actual presence or amount of the concept itself (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 67).”

One may evaluate validity in a number of ways. In the present study, I assert *content validity*; that is, I propose a “logical argument rather than a test (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 67)” which demonstrates the validity of the measurements. The logical argument proceeds as follows: In the study I “determin[e] the full domain or meaning” (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986) of all three concepts. Indeed, as more fully developed above, the “logical argument” approach is perfectly in keeping with constructivism’s ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Thus, in chapter 1, I delimited the full domain of meaning of the social kind “security.” I take the same approach with the social kinds terrorism (chapter 4) and the history of U.S. foreign policy (chapter 5). In the following two chapters, therefore, I lay out the full domains of meaning of terrorism and U.S. foreign policy; I take (*pace* Wendt) “snapshots” (see above) of the two social kinds.

In taking the “snapshots,” I posit that these three social kinds are best understood along three respective continua. In turn, I measure the concepts by translating the three continua into three Guttman scales. Scales refer to the “spatial, temporal, quantitative, or analytical dimensions used by scientists to measure and study objects and processes.” The characteristic that makes scales an excellent tool in studying social kinds is the fact that scales are “closely related to the concept of hierarchy. A hierarchy is a conceptually or causally linked system for grouping phenomena along an analytical scale...whereby

the objects at the higher level do not contain the objects at a lower level (Gibson et al., 2000: 219-220).” Thus, the “universe is said to be scalable for the population if it is possible to rank the people from high to low in such a fashion that from a person’s rank alone we can reproduce his response to each of the items in a simple fashion,” keeping in mind that “a perfect scale is not to be expected in practice (Guttman, 1947: 249).”

Guttman scales employ a series of items to produce a scale score for respondents. [It] is designed to present respondents with a range of attitude choices that are increasingly difficult to agree with; that is, the items composing the scale range from those easy to agree with to those difficult to agree with. Respondents who agree with one of the “more difficult” attitude items will also generally agree with the “less difficult” ones (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 80).

How, then, does the idea of a scale connect with the social kinds terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy? As noted above, these social kinds are multifaceted and historically contingent. Their multifaceted nature, then, lends itself well to being captured along a scale. Consider the following example: Generally speaking (this is more fully developed in the next chapter) by terrorism, purposive social agents have come to mean an act of violence executed by a non-state (quite often, clandestine) organization. The violence is strategically employed to create fear in an audience – the target audience – far larger than the immediate targets of the violence. And, the terrorist organization calculates (terrorism is instrumentally rational undertaking) that this fear will force the target audience to put pressure on their government. This pressure will, in turn, lead to change in government’s policy. Socially constructing terrorism thus, and referring back to Johnson and Joslyn, represents the “less difficult” construction of terrorism (this is fully explained in chapter 4). On the other terminus of the continuum (and of the scale) lies a far “more difficult” construction of terrorism such that the construction of terrorism at the lower level (the “less difficult” construction) does not contain the higher level.

Namely, a citizen cannot – contemporaneously – hold both the “less difficult” *and* “more difficult” constructions of terrorism – or, for that matter, security and the history of U.S. foreign policy.

Internal validity may be compromised by “history, maturation, testing, statistical regression, and several other factors (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 89).” The research in the present study was carried out at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU), a Master’s granting institution in Chicago, IL.⁴⁷ The participants were students at NEIU. They were asked to fill out survey instruments that asked them a battery of questions (see chapter 6). Thus, “history” was not an issue inasmuch as there were no control groups or experimental groups. For much the same reason, “maturation,” “testing,” “experimental mortality,” and “instrument decay” were not problems.⁴⁸

External Validity

External validity speaks to the “representativeness of the research findings and whether it is possible to generalize from them to other situations.” As it currently stands, the study does not present generalizable results. The sample size (N = 132) is too small – especially given that I am running ordered probit. Moreover, the participants in the survey were not truly randomly chosen and were not necessarily representative of the population as a whole. Nevertheless, the study is replicable (which in itself speaks to reliability) and its central aim was to probe the extent to which social kinds determine and explain social

⁴⁷ I had the approval of the Institutional Review Boards at both Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) and the University of Miami (UM).

⁴⁸ “Maturation” refers to the “passage of time...between experimental and control groups.” “Testing” refers to the idea that the “act of measuring the dependent variable prior to the experimental stimulus may itself affect the post-treatment scores of subjects.” “Experimental mortality” refers to the “differential loss of participants from comparison groups.” Finally, “instrument decay” refers to the “changes [in the instrument] *during* the experiment so that the pre-test and post-test measures are not made the same way” (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 90-91).

action. As such, given better resources the study can readily be replicated to include considerably larger sample as well as a sample that is truly random. Finally, it is worth noting that the participants in the study were *not* my students. I purposefully excluded my students from the study in fear that (i) they would tailor their responses to what they know to be my views and (ii) so as that there is no conflict of interest.

Telling the Outsider's Story II: Ordered Probit

The data gathered with the view of telling the outsider's story is at the ordinal level. As such, the "coding...reflects only a ranking: the difference between a 1 and a 2 cannot be treated as equivalent to the difference between a 2 and a 3, for example (Kennedy, 2003: 263)." Thus, estimation by way of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) is unavailable. The ordered probit model is used and the coefficients are estimated using Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE). In what follows I (i) outline a general ordered probit model and (ii) outline the MLE procedure.

General Ordered Probit Regression Model

The logic behind ordered probit is that for "some polychotomous dependent variables there is a natural order...which could be viewed as resulting from a continuous unobserved measure (Kennedy, 2003: 263; see also Becker and Kennedy, 1992: 127; Gujarati, 2003: 623)." The "unobservable index" is denoted as y^* and is "determined as:"

$$y^* = \alpha + \sum \beta_i x_i + \varepsilon. \quad (1)$$

The "summation is over $i = 1, \dots, K$, the x_i are K independent variables, and ε is a disturbance (Becker and Kennedy, 1992: 127-128)."

The “dependent variable has $J + 1$ categories.” Thus, while we do not observe y^* directly, we do observe the following:

$$\begin{array}{lll}
 y = 0 & \text{if} & y^* \leq \delta_0 \\
 y = 1 & \text{if} & \delta_0 < y^* \leq \delta_1 \\
 y = 2 & \text{if} & \delta_1 < y^* \leq \delta_2 \\
 \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\
 y = J & \text{if} & \delta_{J-1} < y^* \quad (\text{Becker and Kennedy, 1992: 128})
 \end{array}$$

The δ 's represent “unknown ‘threshold’ parameters” that are estimated using MLE, such that ε is “assumed to be distributed as a standard normal (Becker and Kennedy, 1992: 128).”

Thus, the “probability of obtaining an observation $y = 0$ is equal to”

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{prob}(y^* = \alpha + \sum \beta_i x_i + \varepsilon \leq \delta_0) \\
 &= \text{prob}\{\varepsilon \leq \delta_0 - \alpha - \sum \beta_i x_i\} \\
 &= \int_{-\infty}^{\delta_0 - \alpha - \sum \beta_i x_i} f(\varepsilon) d\varepsilon
 \end{aligned}$$

such that $f(\varepsilon)$ is a “standard normal density function.” The concomitant “probability of obtaining an observation with $y = 1$ is equal to:”

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{prob}(y^* = \alpha + \sum \beta_i x_i + \varepsilon \leq \delta_1) \\
 &= \text{prob}\{\delta_0 - \alpha - \sum \beta_i x_i < \varepsilon \leq \delta_1 - \alpha - \sum \beta_i x_i\} \\
 &= \int_{\delta_0 - \alpha - \sum \beta_i x_i}^{\delta_1 - \alpha - \sum \beta_i x_i} f(\varepsilon) d\varepsilon
 \end{aligned}$$

Finally, “Similar expressions can be found for the probabilities of obtaining other observed y values (Becker and Kennedy, 1992: 128).”

*Maximum Likelihood Estimation*⁴⁹

Consider (1) again. Without losing anything, we can rewrite it as: $Y_i = \beta_1 + \beta_2 X_i + u_i$. Y_i 's are considered to be normally and independently distributed. And the joint probability density function (pdf) of the Y_i 's, where Y_i is Y_1, Y_2, \dots, Y_n , can be written as:

$$f(Y_1, Y_2, \dots, Y_n | \beta_1 + \beta_2 X_i, \sigma^2) \quad (2)$$

The pdf can also be “written as a product of n individuals density functions:”

$$f(Y_1 | \beta_1 + \beta_2 X_i, \sigma^2) f(Y_2 | \beta_1 + \beta_2 X_i, \sigma^2) \dots f(Y_n | \beta_1 + \beta_2 X_i, \sigma^2) \quad (3)$$

such that

$$\frac{1}{\sigma\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{\left\{-\frac{1}{2} \frac{(Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i)^2}{\sigma^2}\right\}} \quad (4)$$

“which is the density function of a normally distributed variable with the given mean and variance.”⁵⁰

Substituting (2) into (4) we obtain:

$$f(Y_1, Y_2, \dots, Y_n | \beta_1 + \beta_2 X_i, \sigma^2) = \frac{1}{\sigma^n (\sqrt{2\pi})^n} e^{\left\{-\frac{1}{2} \sum \frac{(Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i)^2}{\sigma^2}\right\}} \quad (5)$$

If we know Y_i , but not β_1 , β_2 , and σ^2 , then (5) becomes a likelihood function, LF (β_1 , β_2 , σ^2), which can be written as:

$$\text{LF}(\beta_1, \beta_2, \sigma^2) = \frac{1}{\sigma^n (\sqrt{2\pi})^n} e^{\left\{-\frac{1}{2} \sum \frac{(Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i)^2}{\sigma^2}\right\}} \quad (6)$$

MLE, then, consists of maximizing (6). For ease in calculation, we first take the natural log (ln) of (6)

$$\ln \text{LF} = -n \ln \sigma - \frac{n}{2} \ln(2\pi) - \frac{1}{2} \sum \frac{(Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i)^2}{\sigma^2}$$

⁴⁹ For the discussion on MLE I am indebted to – and all quotes and formulae come from – Gujarati (2003: 114-116).

⁵⁰ This, of course, is a Gaussian function: $\frac{1}{\sigma\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{\left\{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{(2\sigma^2)}\right\}}$.

$$= -\frac{n}{2} \ln \sigma^2 - \frac{n}{2} \ln(2\pi) - \frac{1}{2} \sum \frac{(Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i)^2}{\sigma^2} \quad (7)$$

Differentiating (7) “partially with respect to β_1 , β_2 , and σ^2 , we obtain”

$$\frac{\partial \ln \text{LF}}{\partial \beta_1} = \frac{1}{\sigma^2} \sum (Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i) \quad (-1) \quad (8)$$

$$\frac{\partial \ln \text{LF}}{\partial \beta_2} = \frac{1}{\sigma^2} \sum (Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i) (-X_i) \quad (9)$$

$$\frac{\partial \ln \text{LF}}{\partial \sigma^2} = -\frac{n}{2\sigma^2} + \frac{1}{2\sigma^4} \sum (Y_i - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_i)^2 \quad (10)$$

To optimize (8), (9), and (10) we set them to 0, and “letting β_1 , β_2 , and σ^2 denote the

MLE estimators, we obtain”

$$\frac{1}{\tilde{\sigma}^2} \sum (Y_i - \tilde{\beta}_1 - \tilde{\beta}_2 X_i) = 0 \quad (11)$$

$$\frac{1}{\tilde{\sigma}^2} \sum (Y_i - \tilde{\beta}_1 - \tilde{\beta}_2 X_i) X_i = 0 \quad (12)$$

$$-\frac{n}{2\tilde{\sigma}^2} + \frac{1}{2\tilde{\sigma}^4} \sum (Y_i - \tilde{\beta}_1 - \tilde{\beta}_2 X_i)^2 = 0 \quad (13)$$

Simplifying (11) and (12), we obtain:

$$\sum Y_i = n\tilde{\beta}_1 + \tilde{\beta}_2 \sum X_i \quad (14)$$

$$\sum Y_i X_i = \tilde{\beta}_1 \sum X_i + \tilde{\beta}_2 \sum X_i^2 \quad (15)$$

Viewing (14) and (15) it is evident that these are the “normal equations” obtained by

using OLS. The MLE estimators, $\tilde{\beta}$'s, therefore, are “the same as the OLS estimators,”

$\hat{\beta}$'s.

(4) Conclusion

Looking back, its central contention of the present chapter is the pressing need to

combine the insider's story with the outsider's. This combination, it was argued, has the

value added of unpacking preference formation – examining social kinds’ formation from within – and then measuring the strength of the correlation between the independent variable social kind and the dependent variable social action.

The arguments in the chapter developed as follows: social reality is constructed by social agents. Moreover, the social setting, that which they construct, in turn informs the preferences of social actors and as such acts as the propellant of social action. This, then, is the insider’s story. To tell it, scholars need to work from the inside out – that is, induction becomes the central to constructivist methodology. Scholars need to unearth how social kinds are put together – how is that they have the properties that they do. In so doing – inasmuch as social kinds are constructed by social agents – scholars need to “engage in an interpretative recovery of actors’ private and shared beliefs.”

The outsider’s story is the story for the search for causation. I discussed validity, presented a general ordered probit model, and discussed Maximum Likelihood Estimation.

Looking ahead, the next chapters dive right into the insider’s stories with respect to terrorism (chapter 4) and the history of U.S. foreign policy (chapter 5). There I answer the following questions: “What have purposive social actors come to mean by terrorism?” And: “How have purposive social actors come to understand (and mean) by the history of U.S. foreign policy?”

Chapter 4

Terrorism: The Insider's Story

(1) Introductory Remarks

How have purposive social agents come to understand – and what do they mean by – the social kind terrorism? Put otherwise: what is the insider's story on terrorism? The present chapter suggests answers to these questions. In so doing, it unfolds as follows: in part 1, I analyze terrorism as an unstable historical contingency. This, it will be recalled from the discussion in the previous chapter, is in perfect keeping with the emphasis in constructivist methodology on seeing the world “as a project under construction, as becoming rather than being.” In parts 2 and 3 I take “snapshots” – that is, I “abstract away from [historical] processes...in an effort to explain how systems [of meaning] are constituted” – of the orthodox (“easy to agree with) and heterodox (“difficult to agree with”) ways in which terrorism has come to be socially constructed. Finally, in part 4 I connect terrorism's insider's story with the current study.

(2) Terrorism as an Unstable Historical Contingency

Terrorism is “age old (Shughart, 2006; see also Laqueur, 2009).” At the very least, it may be traced back to the Jewish Zealots (*sicarii*, or “dagger men”) “who were active during Rome's occupation of Palestine 66-73 A.D. (Shughart, 2006: 13; see also Laqueur, 2009: 7; Kainz, 1999; Bergesen and Lizardo, 2004).” In more modern times, the term “terrorism” was first used during the French Revolution's *régime de la terreur*, 1793-1794 (Teichman, 1989; Kainz, 1999; Rodin, 2004; Tilly, 2004: 8-9; Hoffman, 2006; Shughart, 2006; Alvanou, 2008: 54; Laqueur, 2009: 6). Still, in marked contrast to the

present-day use of the concept, terrorism had a “decidedly *positive* connotation” at the time of the French Revolution. Whereas terrorism is currently understood “to mean a revolutionary or antigovernment activity undertaken by nonstate or subnational entities, the *régime de la terreur* was an instrument of governance wielded by the recently established revolutionary state.” It was employed to intimidate counterrevolutionaries and thereby “consolidate the new government’s power.” Wide powers to arrest and guillotine “reactionaries” were vested in the People’s Court. “In this manner, a powerful lesson was conveyed to any and all who might oppose the revolution or grow nostalgic for the ancien regime (Hoffman, 2006: 3; see also Kainz, 1999; Shughart, 2006: 13-14).”

The concept acquired a new meaning after the French Revolution. The Italian anarchists of the nineteenth century are usually credited as being the progenitors of modern-day terrorism. Best known for their dictum “propaganda by deed,” they argued that violence serves didactic purposes. Errico Malatesta, Carlo Cafiero, and Emilio Covelli “conceived and developed the idea of *Propaganda by Deed* through a series of letters to each other between July and October 1876 (Garrison, 2004: 265; see also Alvanou, 2008).” The Italian anarchists’ “propaganda by deed” was embraced by the Russian organization *Narodnaya Volya* (the People’s Will), the entity usually articulated as the first instance of a modern terrorist organization. Found in 1878, *Narodnaya Volya* sought to challenge czarist rule. Its founders felt that the “apathy and alienation of the Russian masses afforded few alternatives besides resorting to daring and dramatic acts of violence designed to attract attention to the group and its causes (Hoffman, 2006: 5; see also Iviansky, 1977; Crenshaw, 1981; George, 1988; Garrison, 2004; Shughart, 2006; Laqueur, 2009).”

By March 1881, every member of *Narodnaya Volya* was apprehended (Garrison, 2004). Still, other groups emerged inspired by their example. An age of anarchist terror commenced with the Anarchist International in London. And, even though it was unorganized, and carried out by “small cells of like-minded radicals,” anarchist wave of violence “spread from Russia to Western Europe, the Balkans, and Asia” reaching its apex with the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901 (Shughart, 2006: 14; Hoffman, 2006: 7; Laqueur, 2009: 15). In fact, the anarchist violence of the 1890s has been posited as the “high tide of terrorism in Western Europe” (Laqueur, 2009: 14).

The 1930s saw yet another change in the meaning of the concept terrorism. It now connoted the “practices of mass repression employed by totalitarian states and their dictatorial leaders against their own citizens (Hoffman, 2006: 14).” This understanding of the concept is usually applied to Mussolini’s Fascist Italy, Hitler’s Nazi Germany, and Stalin’s communist Soviet Union. By way of an example, Mussolini owed his hold on power in large measure to “the mobilization and deployment of gangs of brown- or black-shirted thugs to harass and intimidate political opponents and root out other scapegoats for public vilification and further victimization(Ibid).” Indeed, Mussolini claimed that what he and his thugs were doing really ought not to be characterized as “terrorism” but as “social hygiene,” purifying society of undesirables much like “a doctor would take out a bacillus (quoted in Hoffman, 2006: 14; see also Laqueur, 1986).” Hitler’s extermination of Jews, Gypsies, and other undesirables and Stalin’s Great Terror are two other examples of states unleashing their brutality on citizens.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, “in another swing of the pendulum of meaning, ‘terrorism’ regained the revolutionary connotations with which it is most

commonly associated today. At that time the term was used primarily in reference to the violent revolts then being prosecuted by the various indigenous nationalist and anticolonialist groups that emerged in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East during the late 1940s and 1950s to oppose the continued European rule (Hoffman, 2006: 16).” William Shughart (2006: 14) also finds a “unifying theme” in the post-Second World War terrorism: it “originated,” he notes, “in the grievances of ethnic and religious groups marginalized politically in artificial nation-states created by the colonial powers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”

And, in opposition to the Vietnam War, the 1960s witnessed the emergence of left-wing radical terrorism organizations which “undertook campaigns of political kidnappings, assassinations, and bombings in furtherance of vague Marxist-Leninist-Maoist political agendas and woolly headed demands for ‘social justice’ (Shughart, 2006: 21).” These universalist or millenarian groups – “whose indistinct ambitions center on a world socialist revolution” – can be contrasted to “parochial or separatists (whose objectives are limited, usually focusing on specific territorial gains) (Midlarski et al., 1980: 276-277).” For instance, ETA – the separatist group pressing for Basque autonomy from Spain – has professed adherence to millenarian Marxist tenets. Successful infiltration of these groups by undercover counterterrorism agents, “the capture of key terrorist-group leaders and the collapse of the Soviet Union, which put paid to the radicals’ never-very-well-articulated purposes, combined to bring the second post-war wave of terrorism to an end (Shughart, 2006: 21; see also Midlarski et al., 1980; Bernholz, 2006).”

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were two watershed moments in the contemporary history of terrorism. The Iranian Revolution signaled the emergence of a new brand of terrorism – religious terrorism (Hoffman, 2002: 5; Shughart, 2006). The new government in Tehran was an “able and active sponsor” of terror, aiding a number of “Shi’a terrorist groups in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Lebanon, most notoriously in the last of these were Hezbollah (Shughart, 2006: 29).” And, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan “contributed to the rise of Islamist terrorism in several ways.” Firstly, it produced experienced and skilled militants. Secondly, it thrust into prominence Osama bin Laden.

Third[ly], the flotsam of the Arab world who participated in the Afghan war drew from the Soviet Union’s humiliation on the battlefield “the lesson that violence and Islam could defeat anyone,” including the “Great Satan” left standing as the world’s sole remaining superpower after 1989. Fourth[ly], following the Soviet exist... Afghanistan was left awash in money, guns, and idle, battle-hardened Arab veterans, providing an immense stockpile of resources available for redeployment in support of Islamist terrorism wherever opportunity knocked (Shughart, 2006: 29).

(3) Orthodox Social Construction of Terrorism: A “Snapshot”

The task of this section is to delineate the present-day orthodox understanding of terrorism. Put otherwise, this section takes a Wendtian “snapshot” (see chapter 3) of the social kind terrorism – with particular emphasis on the orthodox social construction of terrorism. In so doing, this section outlines what *most* purposive social agents *presently mean* when they speak of terrorism. Connecting the present discussion with the discussion in chapter 2, *this section delimits the stream of understanding that most people are likely to tap into when it comes to the social kind terrorism*. This stream of understanding is – therefore – on the “easy to agree with” terminus (see chapter 3) of the continuum of socially constructing terrorism. And, when translating the continuum of social understandings of terrorism to the scale employed in telling the outsider’s story,

the orthodox understanding of terrorism will be accordingly placed on the “easy to agree with” terminus of the scale.

The orthodox social construction of terrorism is well articulated by Walter Enders and Todd Sandler. They write: “Terrorism is the premeditated use or threat of use of extranormal violence or brutality by subnational groups to obtain a political, religious, or ideological objective through intimidation of a huge audience, usually not directly involved with the policy making that the terrorists seek to influence (Enders and Sandler, 2002: 146).” Thus: (i) terrorists’ motives are political; (ii) terrorists seek to intimidate a large audience by “targeting of those outside of the decision-making process.” In fact (iii) “Terrorists choose their targets to appear to be random, so everyone feels at risk—when getting on a plane, entering a federal building, or strolling a market square.”

Shughart (2006: 9) cites approvingly the definition of terrorism articulated in United States Code (USC), Title 22. On this account, terrorism is the “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.” Indeed, thus articulated, this has become the “orthodox definition of terrorism,” argues Shughart (2006: 10). Still,

As the literature on terrorism has evolved, the definition of the term has been progressively embellished. Contemporary scholarship attributes at least four distinctive characteristics to it. First and foremost, terrorism is violence (or the threat of its use) for political effect. Second, terrorism is “a planned, calculated, and indeed systematic act [Hoffman, 1998: 15].” Third, terrorists are not bound by established rules of warfare or codes of conduct, and fourth, terrorism is “designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target [Hoffman, 1998: 43]” (Shughart, 2006: 10).

David Lake (2002: 17-18) defines terrorism as the “irregular use of violence by nonstate groups against nonmilitary targets and personnel for political ends.” Moreover, “since they often target civilians, terrorists lack moral strictures against the use of violence.” And, with respect to extremists, Lake notes that “two attributes seem key:” extremists’ “political beliefs are not widely shared even within their own societies” and “extremists currently lack the means or power to obtain their goals. Both traits are important in understanding their choice of strategy.” Indeed, inasmuch as extremists are constrained by their weakness, they adopt a two-pronged tactic: one, “in a form of political jujitsu, extremists use the strengths of the target against itself.” And two, “extremists seek to provoke a response from the target that, through its disproportionate and indiscriminate nature, punishes the broad population of which the terrorists are part.” By provoking a disproportionate response, extremists hope to radicalize the population that extremists ostensibly seek to lead (Lake, 2002: 19-20).

Bruce Hoffman (2002: 27-28) notes that:

First..., terrorism is, always has been, and always will be instrumental: planned, purposeful, and premeditated.... Second..., terrorism is fundamentally a form of psychological warfare. Terrorism is designed, as it has always been, to have profound psychological repercussions on a target audience. Fear and intimidation are precisely the terrorists’ timeless stock-in-trade.... Terrorists seek to elicit an irrational, emotional response.

Robert Art and Louise Richardson (2007: 1-2) write that “Terrorism is both a tactic and a strategy.... In today’s world, terrorism involves the deliberate and often random maiming and killing of noncombatants for political effects by subnational groups and nonstate actors.” Martha Crenshaw notes (1981: 179) that terrorism can be understood in the “context of violent resistance to the state as well as in the service of state interests.” Focusing, however, on the former, terrorism is the “premeditated use of threat of

symbolic, low-level violence by conspiratorial organizations.” The aim of the violence is to “communicates a political message.” As such, the aims of terrorism is not to simply damage the “enemy’s material resources. The victims of objects of terrorist attacks have little intrinsic value to the terrorist group but represent a larger human audience whose reaction the terrorists seek. Violence characterized by spontaneity, mass participation, or a primary intent of physical destruction can therefore be excluded from our investigation.”

Robert Pape writes similarly when he notes (2003: 345; emphasis added) that

Terrorism involves the use of *violence by an organization other than a national government* to cause intimidation or fear among a target audience. Although one could broaden the definition of terrorism so as to include the actions of a national government to cause terror among the opposing population, adopting such a broad definition would distract attention from what policy makers would most like to know: how to combat the threat posed by subnational groups to state security. Further, it could also create analytic confusion. Terrorist organizations and state governments have different levels of resources, face different kinds of incentives, and are susceptible to different types of pressures. Accordingly, the determinants of their behavior are not likely to be the same and, thus, require separate theoretical investigations.

Walter Laqueur (1987:72) defines terrorism as “the use of covert violence by a group for political ends.” This definition, writes Anthony Oberschall (2004: 26-27; emphasis added), “highlights four key attributes of terrorism: (1) it is collective action, not individual; (2) it is political, not criminal; (3) it is covert, not conventional warfare; and (4) it is of course violent. The political ends sought – national independence, social justice, and equal treatment for a minority – are viewed widely as legitimate political goals and often have much popular support. What is distinctive about terrorism is not its ends but the means: violence by a covert group *striking without warning and often indiscriminately victimizing, even purposely targeting, innocent bystander.*”

(4) The Heterodox Social Constructions of Terrorism: A “Snapshot”

The previous section took a “snapshot” of the stream of socially constructing terrorism that most people are currently likely to tap into. The orthodox understanding is, thus, placed on the “easy to agree with” end of the continuum and scale. This section takes a similar snapshot of the heterodox, or “difficult to agree with” social construction of terrorism. It is the stream of understanding terrorism that most people are *unlikely* to tap into.

The essential component of the orthodox social construction of terrorism analyzed above involves the notion that terrorism is violence directed against “innocent” victims. C. A. J. Coady (2004: 772-773) concentrates on this “key element” of the orthodox construction. He notes that the emphasis on “innocents” is at the center of “the heated debate about the evils of terrorism.” Moreover, the emphasis on “innocents” as victims of terrorism helps connect the discourse on terrorism with the “moral apparatus of just war theory, specifically the principle of discrimination and its requirements of noncombatant immunity.”

Coady defines terrorism as:

...the organized use of violence to attack noncombatants or innocents (in a special sense) or their property for political purposes. This might be thought too restrictive in one direction since the threat to use such violence, even where the violence does not result, would be regarded by some as itself an instance of terrorism. If you think that plausible, you could amend the definition accordingly (Coady, 2004: 772-773).

He places emphasis on terrorism as (i) “organized use of violence;” (ii) designed to advance a “political purpose” and (iii) directed against noncombatants. Having thus defined it, Coady distinguishes between two species of definitions of terrorism. He refers to his definition as a “*tactical* definition” inasmuch as this type of definition focuses “on

the means and intermediate goals used to pursue political ends.” On the other end of the spectrum are “*political status* definitions” which “view terrorism essentially in terms of the use of political violence by those who are unauthorized to use it.” Moreover, it is important to note that some of the political status definitions “make it clear that only substate agents can engage in terrorism; others are vaguer but tend to imply this (Coady, 2004: 773).”

In a marked contrast to the orthodox versions rehearsed above, Coady’s version of the tactical definition “has several consequences.” Firstly, Coady posits that “states can themselves use terrorism.” Secondly, he posits that “much political violence by nonstate agents will not be terrorist (Coady, 2004: 773).” He writes forcefully:

... many people would doubtless be surprised⁵¹ at the idea that governments and authorized governmental agencies do or can use terrorist methods for their political purposes, but such surprise is quite often *the product of naiveté or prejudice*. Certainly if we see terrorism as a *particular kind of employment of political violence* (and this seems a central strand in all the varied and often confused uses of the expression), then *we should surely be impressed by analogies and identities between methods used rather than dissimilarities between the powers and standings of the agents using them* (Coady, 2004: 773; emphasis added).

To be sure, some commentators argue that terrorism ought to be restricted to nonstate actors inasmuch as terrorism is understood as a “phenomenon, or as an object of concern, in the arena of civic order and presenting terrorism as a threat to the civic order maintained by states.” Indeed, this theoretical gambit goes to the heart of political status definitions of terrorism. Coady makes it clear, however, that he finds this troubling “not only because it makes unavailable the *natural characterization* of ‘terrorism’ in the case of certain tactics involved in war between states but also because *it allows only for one-*

⁵¹ Thus, the heterodox understanding of terrorism may properly be placed on the “difficult to agree with” terminus of the continuum (and, therefore, scale) of socially constructing terrorism.

sided application of the term [i.e., terrorism] in conflicts between state authorities and substate revolutionary or resistance groups (Coady, 2004: 773-774; emphasis added)."

Thus, if terrorism is morally wrong, and Coady argues that there is a compelling case to be made for this assertion, and states cannot be terrorists, the moral balance is skewed in the state's favor. Finally, with respect to the connection that Coady seeks to establish between his definition of terrorism and just war theory, he notes that his use of the term noncombatants does not map out "simple contrast between warrior and civilian." Indeed, the distinction that the just war theory draws "between combatant/noncombatant or guilty/innocent" properly avoids "a complete equation between noncombatant (or innocent) and civilian." Coady writes approvingly when he notes that "there will be many civilians in armed conflicts...who are engaged in prosecuting the conflict." There, then, exist advantages to be gained from distinguishing – "discriminating, in the language of just war theory – between noncombatants and innocents since this "suggest[s] a rich notion of moral innocence that would count many attacking soldiers as innocent if, for example, they had been coerced to fight (Coady, 2004: 774-775)."

But is terrorism wrong? It certainly is, if we see terrorism in light of just war theory and the tactical definition which Coady postulates. Terrorism "violates a central principle of the *jus in bello*, the principle of discrimination that declares the immunity of noncombatants ('innocents') from direct attack." Coady makes two points:

The first is that terrorism is not the only wrong that political violence can commit. The intentional killing of noncombatants is morally reprehensible, but so is the bringing it about that combatants are killed in an unjust war.... And even the mutual slaughter of combatants in a war that is unjust on both sides has a profound ethical dimension when we consider the moral futility of their deaths and the moral responsibility of those who direct such carnage as occurred in World War I. Moreover, the killing of noncombatants as 'collateral damage' can also be a great wrong.... The second thing is that the wrong of terrorism, even on my relatively restricted definition, is not undifferentiated. For one thing, attacks upon noncombatant property can be much less grave a matter than direct attacks upon life and limb (Coady, 2004: 775-776).

Lionel McPherson (2007: 525-526) agrees with the distinction between noncombatants and innocents and defines terrorism as the “deliberate use of force against ordinary noncombatants, which can be expected to cause wider fear among them, for political ends. My definition focuses on the aspect of terrorism—namely, targeting of ordinary noncombatants—that commonly is thought to characterize its distinctive wrongness as compared to conventional war. Left out of the definition, for instance, is the claim that noncombatants are ‘innocent’ I will assume provisionally that ordinary noncombatants in general are innocent.”

If we were to evaluate terrorism from the standpoint of morality, the most appropriate place to start, argues McPherson, would be to ask the question: Is the use of force that leads to ordinary noncombatant casualties morally objectionable? The “popular notion” that terrorism is “distinctively wrong because of the fear it usually spreads among ordinary noncombatants” is doubtful. On this reading, we cannot distinguish morally between terrorism and conventional war. After all, the “brute reality of war for noncombatants indicates that in general they have more to fear from conventional war than (nonstate) terrorism, particularly since (nonstate) terrorists rarely have had the capacity to employ violence on a mass scale (McPherson, 2007: 529-530).”

Still, those who distinguish between conventional war and terrorism may build their argument on the proportionality principle of just war theory. That is, standard just war theory – and this has been embodied in Article 51 (5)(b) of the 1977 Geneva Protocol I – proscribes force which causes “incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.” McPherson disagrees.

First, terrorists may well have “some concern about disproportionate harm to noncombatants.... Terrorists may possess a normative if flawed sensibility that disapproves of instrumentally gratuitous violence, for the harm done would serve no strategic purpose.” And secondly, “the proportionality principle requires rather modest due care for noncombatants. Force may be used against them, provided that the incidental, or collateral, harm to them is not excessive when measured against the expected military gains.... We find, then, that the proportionality principle does not express a commitment to minimizing noncombatant casualties. The principle more modestly would reduce noncombatant casualties in requiring that they be worth military interests (McPherson, 2007: 530-531).”

David Rodin defines terrorism as the “*deliberate, negligent, or reckless use of force against noncombatants, by state or nonstate actors for ideological ends and in the absence of a substantively just legal process*” (Rodin, 2004: 755). His definition focuses on the “use of force” as this is “deliberately broader notion than that of violence, with its connotations of wild and explosive physical harming. Clearly the kinds of force used and the methods of its deployment must be interpreted widely. Use of conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction, hostage taking, poisoning, systematic incidences of rape, and destruction of property may all be terroristic.” Thus, terrorism refers – in its paradigmatic articulation – to the *shocking use of force*, such that “slapping or spanking could never count morally as terrorism (Rodin, 2004: 755).”

Rodin’s definition focuses on “ideological ends” inasmuch as ideology refers to the “systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics or society, or to the conduct of a class or group, and regarded as justifying actions.” As such, terrorism arises out of “a

commitment to some systematic and socially directed end beyond the motives of fear, anger, lust, and personal enrichment, which are the typical motives of common violent crimes.” Consequently, although terrorism is a subspecies of crime, it must be directed towards a broader, ideological agenda (Rodin, 2004: 756).

Clearly the noncombatants

...clause of the definition contains the crux of the moral argument. It is designed to capture the intuition that terrorism has the significance it does in our moral thinking because the targets it attacks are morally inappropriate. Put simply, terrorism involves the use of force against those who should not have force used against them, and to do so is a moral crime. Thus, terrorism is the political or ideological species of common violent crime. It is the criminality (and in its most serious form, the murderousness) of terrorism which explains its moral status and the reaction we rightly have to it.... [The] immunity of noncombatants from attack is the foundational element in our moral thinking, and whether or not the just war theory is ultimately able to sustain the permissibility of killing combatants is irrelevant to this fact. It is this basic moral judgment that ordinary people who are not engaged in any threatening combat operations should not be subject to attack that explains and underlies the moral repugnance we justifiably feel about acts of terrorism (Rodin, 2004: 758).

Indeed, the term “noncombatant,” as against “civilian,” is preferable. For instance, the crew who were killed on the *USS Cole*, argues Rodin, “were uniformed servicemen and therefore not civilians, but they were noncombatants in the morally relevant sense.” The servicemen were on a “routine friendly visit and were not involved in any combat operations at the time. Because of this, the attack on the *Cole* is rightly seen by most observers as terroristic (Rodin, 2004: 758).”

With respect to terrorism as the use of force by both state and nonstate agents, Rodin writes that the “proposition that acts of terrorism may be committed by state as well as nonstate actors should be obvious once one has accepted that the key to a moral understanding of terrorism is that it uses force against inappropriate objects (Rodin, 2004: 758-759).” And, with respect to terrorism as the use of force without a substantively just

legal process, Rodin posits what amounts to distinction between procedural due process and substantive due process. He writes that the

...purpose of this clause is to create a qualified exception to the definition. The exception is required because without it the use of force by agents of the state to enforce the law would be classed as terrorism. That cannot be right. Proper enforcement of the law by state agents is not an instance of terrorism; indeed it is a paradigm of morally justified use of force. However, the wording of the clause is designed to capture the limits of this claim. For not all uses of force which are sanctioned by a legal process are morally justified. If the legal process itself is substantively unjust, then it cannot confer moral justification on the use of force. There are both historical and moral reasons for thinking that when this is the case the use of force may properly be regarded as terroristic (Rodin, 2004: 759).

Finally, with respect to the negligent and reckless use of force clause, Rodin writes that the clause “implicitly entails that some harms unintentionally inflicted on noncombatants in the course of war *are* a form of terrorism (emphasis added).” Namely, standard just war theory treats unintentional noncombatant casualties as regrettable but permissible side effect, which, while to be avoided, does not constitute a moral wrong. Rodin “cast[s] doubt on this assessment. Doing so will entail examining a feature of moral theory which has long been thought to support it: the doctrine or principle of double effect. A standard formulation of the principle of double effect is as follows. One may never intentionally bring about an evil, either as an end in itself, or as a means to some greater good. Nonetheless, one may use neutral or good means to achieve a good end which one foresees will have evil consequences provided that (i) the evil consequences are not disproportionate to the intended good, (ii) the action is necessary in the sense that there is no less costly way of achieving the good (Rodin, 2004: 762).”

Rodin defines recklessness as the “culpable bringing about of unintentional evil consequences (or the risk thereof) that are in fact unreasonable and unjustified in the circumstances.” While not on the same plane as intention, recklessness, argues Rodin, *is*

a form of *mens rea*. The law distinguishes between “subjective recklessness, which requires that the agent consciously foresaw the risk of evil consequences, and objective recklessness, in which the agent did not foresee the risk but where a reasonable person would have done so.” Indeed, “Persons have rights against being harmed or used for the benefit of others, rights which can only be alienated in very specific ways, usually having to do with actions and decisions they have freely and responsibly taken. Because of this there is an additional element to the reasonableness test which goes beyond the necessity and proportionality requirements, namely: is it justifiable to inflict such a risk upon this particular person (Rodin, 2004: 764).”

Virginia Held suggests that the notion that civilians are innocents becomes complicated if we view this innocence in the context of democracy. For one, even though he may not have needed much help in this regard, the Israeli public *demand*ed of Ariel Sharon the “violent reoccupation of Palestinian territories and massive destruction there.” Moreover, in democracies “where citizens elect their leaders and are ultimately responsible for their government's policies, it is not clear that citizens should be exempt from the violence those policies may lead to while the members of their armed services are legitimate targets. If a government's policies are unjustifiable, and if political violence to resist them is justifiable (these are very large "ifs," but not at all unimaginable) then it is not clear why the political violence should not be directed at those responsible for these policies (Held, 2004: 66-67).”

Held continues:

I do not mean to suggest that no distinction at all can be made between combatants and civilians, or that the restraints on the conduct of war demanding that civilians be spared to the extent possible be abandoned. Rather, I am suggesting that the distinction cannot do nearly as much moral work as its advocates assign it. I reject the view that terrorism is inevitably and necessarily morally worse than war, which many assert because they

declare that, by definition, terrorism targets civilians. In sum, then, I decline to make targeting civilians a defining feature of terrorism. Terrorism is political violence that usually spreads fear beyond those attacked, as others recognize themselves as potential targets. This is also true of much war. The "Shock and Awe" phase of the U.S.'s war against Iraq in March of 2003 was a clear example. Terrorism's political objectives distinguish it from ordinary crime.... No form of violence can be justified unless other means of achieving a legitimate political objective have failed. But this is also a moral requirement on the governments that oppose change and that seek to suppress terrorism. And those with greater power have a greater obligation to avoid violence and to pursue other means of obtaining political objectives.... It is not only potential terrorists who should find non-violent means to press their demands; those resisting these demands should find non-violent means to oppose terrorism - to give a voice to opponents, and not just an empty voice, but to respond to legitimate demands to, for instance, end an occupation, cease a colonization, and stop imperialistic impositions. Governments that use violence - military and police forces - to suppress their opponents are often as guilty of using unjustified violence as are those struggling for a hearing for their legitimate grievances. And sometimes they are more at fault because alternative courses of action were more open to them (Held, 2004: 68-71).

Rohini Hensman (2001: 4185) agrees with the notion of terrorism as violence against innocents and writes that terrorism consists of:

... acts or threats of violence against ordinary, unarmed civilians carried out in the pursuit of a political objective. It should be irrelevant whether the perpetrators are state parties or non-state parties, and other characteristics (like skin color, ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, social origin, or anything else) of the perpetrators and victims should likewise be irrelevant. Further, the stated political objective should not come into the picture either, whether it is a religion, nationalism, national interest, national security, national liberation, democracy, socialism, communism, infinite justice of enduring freedom. A murderer's claimed motive does not change the fact of a murder.

She continues forcefully (Hensman, 2001: 4185):

In this connection, we need to dispense with another term: "collateral damage." In the context of terrorism as defined above, it makes no sense, because the purpose of terrorism is not to kill or injure people, it is merely a means to some political end. For example, in the case of September 11 attacks, we cannot know for sure the motives of the hijackers because they are all dead, but if we assume for the sake of argument that they were in some way connected to Osama bin Laden, then the demands are very clear: the US must stop supporting Israeli aggression against the Palestinians, stop the bombing of Iraq [clearly this was written before 2003] and lift sanctions against that country, stop supporting corrupt regimes in the west Asia, and move their armed forces out of Saudi Arabia. The purpose was not to kill all those people in the airplanes, the World Trade Center and [the] Pentagon; they were merely collateral damage. Does that sound outrageous? Of course it does. Because we are not used to hearing dead Americans referred to as "collateral damage." But shouldn't it sound equally outrageous when Bush, Blair, and their cohorts justify the killing of Afghan civilians in the bombings as "collateral damage?" According to Michael Tonry..., "In the criminal law, purpose and knowledge are equally culpable states of mind. An action taken with a purpose to kill is no more culpable than an action taken with some other purpose in mind but with

knowledge that a death will probably result. Blowing up an airplane to kill a passenger is equivalent to blowing up an airplane to destroy a fake painting and thereby to defraud an insurance company, knowing that the passenger will be killed. Both are murder....” So let us forget about collateral damage. Murder is murder, and mass murder is mass murder. Terrorist acts which result in mass murder can additionally be defined as crimes against humanity.

(5) Discussion

Central to the present study is the idea that social kinds (i) are ontologically real and (ii) social kinds inform the preferences of purposive social agents. Still, as the above analysis demonstrated with respect to terrorism, social kinds are generally unstable, historically contingent, and constantly produced *and* reproduced. Certainly, then, if social kinds are propellants of social action, different streams of understanding (that is, different propellants) ought to, all things being equal, give rise to different social actions. Taking this argument to its logical end – and noting the obvious that voting *is* social action – different social constructions of terrorism (social kinds as propellants) will, all else being equal, yield different levels of support (the social action) of U.S. counterterrorism policy.

More precisely, I hypothesize that the “easy to agree with” social construction of terrorism (the orthodox construction) will, all things being equal, yield higher levels of support for U.S. counterterrorism policy. And the “difficult to agree with” social construction of terrorism (the heterodox construction) will, all things being equal, yield lower levels of support for U.S. counterterrorism policy.

These hypotheses, therefore, link the insider’s story (how are social kinds put together and what have social agents come to mean by certain social kinds?) with the outsider’s story (what is the correlation between certain social constructions and certain social actions?). This link speaks to the second central theme of the present study.

Namely, in addition to suggesting that political knowledge underdetermines social

preferences and what does the real work of preference formation are social kinds, the present study also serves as a conscious attempt for establishing a productive dialogue between the more narrative-inclined approaches in International Relations and the more positivist ones. Thus, the hypotheses-as-links serve to affirm the value-added to the discipline by such productive dialogues between the different approached in IR.

Chapter 5

The History of U.S. Foreign Policy: The Insider's Story

(1) Introductory Remarks

How have purposive social agents come to understand – and what do they mean by – the history of U.S. foreign policy? Put otherwise: what is the insider's story on the history of U.S. foreign policy? Just like the social kinds security (chapter 2) and terrorism (chapter 4) I take snapshots of the orthodox and heterodox social constructions of the history of U.S. foreign policy.

In articulating the orthodox social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy, which I hear label Winthropian (for reasons explained below), I rely on the statements made by presidents George W. Bush and Barack H. Obama – as well as high-level officials in their respective administrations. The reasons for so doing are two-fold: (i) the two administrations' justifications of their foreign policies are just about the most cogent and lucid articulations of the Winthropian social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy. The orthodox social construction is placed on the “easy to agree with” terminus of the continuum of social constructions of the history of U.S. foreign policy. Placing the orthodox social construction of U.S. on the “easy to agree with” (see chapter 3) terminus of the continuum (and, consequently, scale) is readily justified inasmuch as even a cursory look at elementary school social studies and high school American history textbooks will demonstrate that the Winthropian stream of understanding *is* the one disseminated through the U.S. educational system. And (ii) the articulations of the two administrations represent not only cogent examples of Winthropianism but are *the* streams of social understanding (see chapter 2) that

successive administrations have released in the media so as to buttress and justify their counterterrorism policies.

It should also be noted that while I turn to the administrations of presidents Bush and Obama for the Winthropian stream of understanding, the themes of Winthropianism and “American Exceptionalism” – as evidenced below – are themes that have provided continuous self-understanding for Americans ever since 1630. Thus, in turning to the narratives emanating from the administrations of presidents Bush and Obama, I do not mean to suggest that somehow these two administrations “invented” the Winthropian social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy. I turn to the two administrations’ narratives only inasmuch as they represent cogent articulations of the orthodox social construction. I – as a matter of course – could have turned to the narratives emanating from the administrations of presidents from George Washington onward.

By contrast, the heterodox social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy I rely on critical examinations of the Winthropian articulation.

(2) The Winthropian, Orthodox, Social Construction of the History U.S. Foreign Policy: A “Snapshot”

Winthropian “American Exceptionalism”: Preliminaries

Why characterize the orthodox social construction the history of U.S. foreign policy as “Winthropian?” The reason is rather straightforward: John Winthrop’s 1630 sermon on-board the *Arabella* off the coast of Boston Bay set the stage for what has come to be the orthodox self-understanding of America and American foreign policy. This self-understanding has aptly been characterized as “American exceptionalism.”

In essence, this was the belief that America was a great experiment, fraught with risk but animated by the conviction—as John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts, famously described it in 1630 aboard a ship off the New England coast—that America should be ‘as a city upon a hill,’ the eyes of all people upon us, and if we should fail to make this city a beacon of hope and decency, and “deal falsely with our God,” we should be cursed (Chace, 2002: 2).

Or, as James Chace has written elsewhere – placing a particular accent on U.S. foreign policy:

...we continue to view foreign policy in the context of moral purpose, and we are probably right to do so.... Winthrop’s evocation of the ideal city prefigured two centuries later Secretary of State John Quincy Adams’s evocation of America as bearing the “standard of freedom and Independence.” *Both were talking about America as a moral exemplar....* [The] America of Woodrow Wilson and John Foster Dulles, the crusader nation prepared in 1917 to “make the world safe for democracy” or to roll back communism by liberating Eastern Europe in the Eisenhower-Dulles years.... Whatever wrongs we committed, surely, we believed, they were in the service of a higher end—the establishment of democracy and free markets, which would bring about prosperity for all and Immanuel Kant’s ideal of perpetual peace (Chace, 1997: 105; emphasis added).

Writing in the context of the 2003 Invasion of Iraq, Francis Fukuyama, assuming the role of a lapsed neocon, writes:

The reasons why the Iraq war provoked such an upsurge of anti-Americanism are complex.... But there was a short-term reason for this resistance that was built into the *National Security Strategy* doctrine of preventive war: its implicit recognition of American exceptionalism. Clearly, a doctrine of preventive war is not one that can be safely generalized throughout the international system. Many countries face terrorist threats and might be inclined to deal with them through preemptive intervention or the overturning of regimes deemed to harbor terrorists. Russia, China, and India all fall into this category, yet if any of them announced a general strategy of preemptive/preventive war as a means of dealing with terrorism, the United States would doubtless be the first country to object. *The fact that the United States granted itself a right that it would deny to other countries is based, in the NSS, on an implicit judgment that the United States is different from other countries and can be trusted to use its military power justly and wisely in ways that other powers could not* (Fukuyama, 2006: 101; emphasis added).

Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale has also addressed the issue of American (Winthropian) self-understanding in terms of “American Exceptionalism.” He writes:

The idea of American exceptionalism runs through almost all of American history, probably beginning during the colonial days when John Winthrop famously told his flock in Boston Harbor that “we shall be as a city upon a hill,” to act in covenant with God, a new Israel, to live nobly in his service. We thought of ourselves as different from other societies: new, innocent, and free from the old cynical world, *committed to doing good*.

Since then, we have believed not only that we are good but at times that we are the 'goodest.' If you read Teddy Roosevelt's hot rhetoric about the need to civilize the Indian or about the virtue of remaking the Philippines in our image you get an idea of how potent and enduring this idea has been" (Mondale, 2005: 169).

Mondale continues: "The idea that America should be a world leader—the 'indispensable nation' as Madeline Albright put it—in support of democracy, freedom, and human rights is an old one, and, in my view, a precious principle of American life (Mondale, 2005: 170)." Johannes Thimm also notes that "There have...been numerous variations of this theme, among them America as: mankind's last best hope, beacon on a hill, god's own country, the indispensable nation[,] and Jacksonian idea of Manifest destiny"(Thimm, 2007: 2; footnote 3)."

Winthropian "American Exceptionalism" in the Administration of George W. Bush

President George W. Bush announced that the attacks of September 11 were deliberate acts, perpetrated by "stealth and deceit" and amounting to acts of war, that were executed by evil people with complete disregard for human life. Indeed, terrorists are "enem[ies] who prey on innocent and unsuspecting people." He further posited that the attacks on the United States were attacks on civilization itself. The perpetrators of the attacks on September 11 are "evildoers" and "barbarians" that are completely out of the pale. The President spoke movingly about a Gambian citizen who perished in a tomb of rubble and his wife who, on September 12, their wedding anniversary, searched in vain for her husband (Bush, September 11, 2001; September 12, 2001; September 13, 2001; September 14, 2001).

The barbarians hate America, President Bush announced, because America is a country that loves freedom: "freedom of religion...freedom of speech...freedom to vote

and assemble and disagree with each other.” The United States “rejects hate, rejects violence, rejects murderers, rejects evil;” it “values life.”⁵² The United States’ is a “democratically elected government.” In stark contrast, the terrorists “want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia.” The terrorists are heirs to the monstrosities of Hitler’s fascism and Stalin’s totalitarianism (September 20, 2001). They are, in the words of John Negroponte – at that time the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations – men “suicidally intoxicated with a vision of the void perverted the basic elements of civilized life and dared call their deeds the works of God.” The terrorists’ only value is “will to power.” They “force every life into grim and joyless conformity. They celebrate death, making a mission of murder and a sacrament of suicide.” The terrorists are, returning to Negroponte’s speech, a cancer that has metastasized. They have no conscience; they have no mercy (Negroponte, October 1, 2001).

President Bush delineated the distinction between the barbarians and the United States as a “freedom-loving nation.” It is his duty, the President told the nation, to “use the resources of this great nation, a freedom-loving nation, a compassionate nation, a nation that understands values of life, and rout terrorism out where it exists.” He noted that he speaks for Americans when he expressed his amazement at the “vitriolic hatred for America (Bush, October 10; October 11, 2001).” America is good, argued President Bush. Indeed, not only is America “good” but the President noted that – owing to the September 11 attacks – America is “sadder and less innocent.” Indeed, the President spoke of his pride and love for the United States. Contrary to some perceptions, the

⁵² These sentiments are in perfect keeping with the notion of Winthropian, “city upon a hill,” self-understanding of “American Exceptionalism.”

United States is not a “shallow,” “materialistic,” consumer-oriented nation where people “care only about getting rich or getting ahead;” it is a “wonderful place, full of kind and loving people.” Given this, the President further noted that the United States must do a better job of articulating its case to international and particularly Muslim audiences: America’s is a “great story, and we must tell it – through our words and through our deeds (Bush, November 8, 2001).”⁵³

President Bush further underscored the importance of speaking the truth about terror. There is no just terror. He argued forcefully, “In this world there are good causes and bad causes, and we may disagree on where the line is drawn. Yet, there is no such thing as a good terrorist. No national aspiration, no remembered wrong can ever justify the deliberate murder of the innocent. Any government that rejects this principle, trying to pick and choose its terrorist friends, will know the consequences (Bush, November 10, 2001).”⁵⁴

⁵³ The President outlined the stark contrasts between the terrorists and the United States: “We value life; the terrorists ruthlessly destroy it. We value education; the terrorists do not believe women should be educated or should have health care, or should leave their homes. We value the right to speak our minds; for the terrorists, free expression can be grounds for execution. We respect people of all faiths and welcome the free practice of religion; our enemy wants to dictate how to think and how to worship even to their fellow Muslims. This enemy tries to hide behind a peaceful faith. But those who celebrate the murder of innocent men, women, and children have no religion, have no conscience, and have no mercy. We wage a war to save civilization, itself. We did not seek it, but we must fight it – and we will prevail (Bush, November 8, 2001).”

⁵⁴ The President continued advancing the message he delivered to the United Nations in Fort Campbell, KY, where he shared a Thanksgiving meal with the soldiers. There he told the soldiers that “Our enemies are evil and they're ruthless. They have no conscience. They have no mercy. They have killed thousands of our citizens, and seek to kill many more. They seek to overthrow friendly governments to force America to retreat from the world.” America’s cause is just; and, fighting now will ensure that subsequent generations do not live in fear. In the President’s own words, “They seek weapons of mass destruction. But we’re seeking them. We’re fighting them. And one by one, we’re bringing them to justice. We fight now – this great nation fights now – to save ourselves and our children from living in a world of fear.” Of course, he continued, fighting terrorism means fighting all those who harbor and aid terrorists: “America has a message for the nations of the world: If you harbor terrorists, you are terrorists. If you train or arm a terrorist, you are a terrorist. If you feed a terrorist or fund a terrorist, you're a terrorist, and you will be held accountable by the United States and our friends (Bush, November, 21, 2001; see also November 29, 2001; December 7, 2001).”

By contrast, the United States' cause is just. The United States is defending justice and liberty; indeed, these two values are "true and unchanging for all people everywhere. No nation owns these aspirations, and no nation is exempt from them." And while the United States does not seek to impose its values and way of life on others, "America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance (January 29, 2002)." Or, in the words of Dr. Condoleezza Rice – speaking as the Adviser to the President for National Security – you "cannot condemn al Qaeda and hug Hamas. United States draws no distinction between the terrorists and the regimes that feed, train, supply and harbor them. Simply put, harboring terrorists isn't a very good business to be in right now (Rice, February 1, 2002)."

President Bush was relentless in articulating this theme. He spoke forcefully of viewing the conflict as "us versus them" and "evil versus good." "And there's no in between," continued the President, "There's no hedging (Bush, February 20, 2002)." He pressed the theme about loving freedom.⁵⁵ He further noted that while the United States is not perfect, it is a land of opportunity and freedom; it is "a beacon of hope and opportunity"⁵⁶ so many around the world (Bush, February 22, 2002). Indeed, "History has called us into action, and this nation is responding. You've got to understand my mind set and what we think. We've got to act on behalf of the little ones. We've got to secure

⁵⁵ President Bush said: "And let me explain why I made the comments I did. I love freedom. I understand the importance of freedom in people's lives. I'm troubled by a regime that tolerates starvation. I worry about a regime that is closed and not transparent. I'm deeply concerned about the people of North Korea. And I believe that it is important for those of us who love freedom to stand strong for freedom and make it clear the benefits of freedom. And that's exactly why I said what I said about the North Korean regime. I know what can happen when people are free; I see it right here in South Korea (Bush, February 20, 2002)."

⁵⁶ Another sign post of socially constructing U.S. foreign policy as "American Exceptionalism." "City upon hill" becomes a "beacon of hope".

the world and this civilization as we know it from these evil people (Bush, April 9, 2002).” Dr. Rice again echoed the main themes: “As the world's most powerful nation, the United States has a special responsibility to help make the world more secure (Rice, April 29, 2002).”

And, explicating President Bush’ foreign policy, Dr. Rice noted that it “draws inspiration from the ideas that have guided America's foreign policy at its best: that the spread of democracy leads to peace, that democracies must never lack the will, or the means to meet and defeat freedom's enemies, that America's power and purpose must be used to defend freedom.” Indeed, buttressing the pillars of the Bush foreign policy is a simple premise that human beings are not created to live under tyranny (Rice, February 28, 2004).

Winthropian “American Exceptionalism” in the Administration of Barack H. Obama

President Barack Obama began his tenure noting – much like President Bush – that the United States will defeat the terrorists, a message echoed by his Vice President Joe Biden. President Obama also concurred with the Bush administration’s articulation of terrorists as those who slaughter innocents. And, as President Bush, the forty-fourth President noted with considerable pride that America’s “security emanates from the justness of [her] cause, the force of [her] example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint.”⁵⁷ America’s spirit is stronger and it will not apologize for its way of life nor waver in its defense. Moreover, President Obama picked up on President Bush’s theme of admonishing heinous regimes who torture and murder their citizens. President Obama

⁵⁷ Another clear example of socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy as Winthropian “city upon a hill.”

noted that “those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent” should “know that [they] are on the wrong side of history (Obama, January 20, 2009).”

In his 2009 Munich speech, Vice President Joe Biden allowed that the United States is not perfect. The United States has erred in the past and it is likely to do so again. However, the United States is striving to live up to its ideals. And while, like President Bush, Vice President Biden promised that the United States will bring the terrorists to justice, the Vice President noted that the United States will do that justly – without torturing. Still, like President Obama – and indeed like the Bush administration – Vice President Biden noted that some terrorists are beyond the pale – “beyond the call of reason” in his words. They simply have to be defeated by force (Biden, February 7, 2009).

Continuing his theme about the “force of our example” and the “justness of our cause,” President Obama noted that the United States “shut down torture chambers and replaced tyranny with the rule of law. That is who we are. And where terrorists offer only the injustice of disorder and destruction, America must demonstrate that our values and our institutions are more resilient than a hateful ideology (Obama, May 21, 2009).” Still, President Obama noted that he thought the Bush administration – albeit acting with the sincere desire to protect American lives, made a mistake in torturing. The President continuously underscored the notion that torture – if anything – makes the United States less safe.

Finally, perhaps the finest exposition of President Obama’s thinking on foreign policy is contained in his Nobel Prize speech. A few of the key assertions bear repeating.

(i) The President – while noting that there is nothing naïve in the examples of Gandhi and King (on whose shoulders President Obama claims he stands) – articulated the idea – which clearly positions him as the intellectual heir of Reinhold Niebuhr – that he faces the world as it is. Indeed, it is not cynical to argue, the President continued, that history has demonstrated the imperfections of men and their frequent want of reason. Consequently (ii) while nonviolence is laudable, evil can only be met by force; nonviolence would not have stopped Hitler, argued President Obama. (iii) “[T]he world must remember that it was not simply international institutions – not just treaties and declarations – that brought stability to a post-World War II world. Whatever mistakes we have made, the plain fact is this: The United States of America has helped underwrite global security for more than six decades with the blood of our citizens and the strength of our arms.” Therefore, the instrument of war plays a role in preserving peace. (iv) We need to seek “practical, more attainable peace” – for the achievement of which the President outlines certain steps – as well as seek more permanent and lasting peace. The President linked permanent peace to the notions articulated in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulates that lasting and universal is impossible without securing human rights based on the inherent dignity of the individual.

Indeed, the President noted specifically that peace is inherently unstable where it is delinked from fundamental rights. He added: “America has never fought a war against a democracy, and our closest friends are governments that protect the rights of their citizens.” Still, President Obama noted – in an argument reminiscent of Dr. Rice’s question and answer session at SAIS – that the United States must engage with repressive regimes, no matter how much this “lacks the satisfying purity of [moral] indignation.”

Finally, in nod to economic rights, and not just civil and political, President Obama noted that just peace includes – in addition to freedom from fear – freedom from want (Obama, December 10, 2009).

Winthropian Social Construction of U.S. Foreign Policy: A Summary

Summarizing: a clear picture of the Winthropian – orthodox – social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy emerges out of the two administrations’ justifications of their counterterrorism policies. As delimited above, the similarities between the two administrations may be profitably articulated thus: (i) both administrations stress the notion that terrorists are those who attack innocent civilians. (ii) Both administrations stress the notion that terrorists are evildoers and barbarians who are beyond the call of reason. (iii) Both administrations stressed – therefore – that this is a civilizational struggle between good and evil, between civilized life and those who are beyond the pale. (iv) Both administrations stress the notion that the United States reserves the right to defend itself. The Obama administration may be more vocal in positing that it is willing to listen and consult with allies – although in fairness, the Bush administration argued similarly – but both administrations stress the notion that the enormity of the terrorist evil must be met with arms.⁵⁸ President Bush argued that he will not shirk from his duty to defend Americans. And President Obama, perhaps mindful that Democrats are frequently viewed as soft on international relations, never tires of stressing that he is completely mindful of the fact that as a Commander-in-Chief his first duty is to protect Americans.

⁵⁸ The United States must take the fight to the terrorists: “the best defense is a good offense,” argued Dr. Rice. The Obama administration argues similarly. President Obama is adamant about taking the fight to al Qaeda and their extremist allies along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and in the self-administered tribal territories in Pakistan, where al Qaeda has taken refuge and is planning future attacks not only on American interests abroad but in the United States itself.

And, in a classical exposition of the Winthropian social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy (v) both administrations stress the innate goodness of the United States. The Bush administration expressed disbelief in the vitriolic hatred and misunderstanding of the United States; it stressed the “goodness” of America and argued that – indeed – the attacks have left the United States sad and less innocent. The United States, announced President Bush in articulation similar to Winthrop’s notion of a “city upon a hill,” is the brightest beacon of freedom in the world; it “lead[s] by defending liberty and justice;” its approach is one of enlightened self-interest. After all, in President Bush’s words, the United States acts on the behalf of the “little ones.”⁵⁹ The Obama administration noted that “force of our example” and the “justness of our cause.” Indeed, it posits that the United States has underwritten – with the blood and treasure of its people – the security of the post-World War II world order and has never fought other democracies. Moreover, the United States closes torture chambers and removes tyrants from power; that is who the United States is. (vi) Both administrations stress the notion that human rights and human dignity are – in the words of the Bush administration “nonnegotiable” and “true and unchanging for all people everywhere” such that there is no “hedging” about this issue. And, in the words of the Obama administration, lasting and universal peace cannot be delinked from the observance of human rights. Finally (vii) both administrations stress the notion that the United States’ cause is not only just (*jus ad bellum*) but that it prosecutes the war justly (*jus in bello*).⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Indeed, it is the duty of the United States, as one of the great powers, to “help make the world more secure;” this is one of the “verities” of which Dr. Rice spoke at SAIS.

⁶⁰ Incidentally, as evidence above, the Obama administration, although less vocal about it, does articulate the conflict against al Qaeda as a “war.”

(3) The Heterodox Social Construction of the History U.S. Foreign Policy: A “Snapshot”

I delimit the heterodox social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy by critically examining the seven elements common to the articulations emanating from the administrations of presidents Bush and Obama. I commence the critical assessment with point (v): President Bush argues that the United States acts on behalf of the little ones. Consonant with this, President Obama argues that the United States closes torture chambers and removes tyrants from power; that is who the United States is. Both presidents extol the example that is the United States; President Bush does so in the messianic language akin to that of John Winthrop.

This is certainly one way to socially construct the history of U.S. foreign policy (that is, United States’ outward thrust within the international system). In contrast to this, it has been argued that the historical record shows that far from acting on the behalf of the little ones, the United States has consistently from the end of the 19th century crushed the little ones if deemed necessary to advance its national interest. Far from closing torture chambers and removing tyrants, the United States has opened scores of torture chambers, trained torturers in their brutal craft, and consistently supported and cuddled tyrants all in the name of the national interest.

By way of an example, in Guatemala, the United States overthrew the democratically elected president Jacobo Arbenz because he dared to articulate the need – and indeed implemented the policy – for Guatemala to “exploit its own resources, increase the rate of employment of its population, and develop a diversified economy that was technologically innovative and fiscally sound” and had the audacity of hope – to

borrow Obama's felicitous phrase – to implement this vision in the form of Decree 900. Moreover, not only did the United States help overthrow Arbenz, but it followed that with its quest to professionalize the Guatemalan army and turn it into a “killing machine”; the killing machine – with the backing of its U.S. apologists – went on to brutally slaughter the “little ones.”⁶¹

The Guatemalan civil war that emerged out of the political chaos created by the U.S. intervention took upwards of 200,000 lives. It was during the civil war that we “first saw such phenomena as death squads and ‘disappearances,’ which subsequently became standard operating procedure in counterinsurgency wars throughout the hemisphere. U.S. military advisers were involved in the formation of the death squads, and the head of the U.S. military mission publicly justified their operations (Jonas, 1996: 146-147; see also Smith, 1990: 9-10; Quigley, 2006).”

In addition to Guatemala, one may look at U.S. support for a score of other regimes in the region to recognize that the United States consistently crushed the “little ones,” cuddled dictators, and helped them open terror chambers while acting as apologists for them. One entity that perfectly exemplifies the U.S. approach to foreign policy is the School of the Americas (SOA) – rechristened in 2001, for cosmetic reasons, into the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC). George Monbiot (2001) points out that “60,000 Latin American soldiers and policemen” – including the worst of Latin American human rights abusers – were educated at

⁶¹ On Guatemala see Immerman (1980-1981); Bowen (1983); Gleijeses (1989); Aryeh (1996-1997); Streeter (2006); Jonas (1996); Smith (1990); Quigley (2006).

SOA/WHISC.⁶² Returning briefly to the case of Guatemala, SOA/WHISC alumni include Colonel Byron Lima Estrada who “was convicted in Guatemala City of murdering Bishop Juan Gerardi in 1998.”⁶³ Indeed, “Forty per cent of the cabinet ministers who served the genocidal regimes of Lucas Garcia, Rios Montt, and Mejia Victores⁶⁴ studied at the School of the Americas.” With respect to El Salvador, the UN “truth commission on El Salvador named the army officers who had committed the worst atrocities of the civil war. Two-thirds of them had been trained at the School of the Americas. Among them were Roberto D'Aubuisson, the leader of El Salvador's death squads; the men who killed Archbishop Oscar Romero; and 19 of the 26 soldiers who murdered the Jesuit priests in 1989 (Monbiot, 2001).”

With respect to Chile, scholars argue that “the school's graduates ran both Augusto Pinochet's secret police and his three principal concentration camps.” Moreover, “Argentina's dictators Roberto Viola and Leopoldo Galtieri, Panama's Manuel Noriega and Omar Torrijos, Peru's Juan Velasco Alvarado and Ecuador's Guillermo Rodriguez all benefited from the school's instruction. So did the leader of the Grupo Colina death squad

⁶² “Among its graduates are many of the continent's most notorious torturers, mass murderers, dictators and state terrorists. As hundreds of pages of documentation compiled by the pressure group SOA Watch show, Latin America has been ripped apart by its alumni (Monbiot, 2001).”

⁶³ On Byron Lima Estrada see also Oettler (2006: 9) and Quigley (2006: 5). Monbiot (2001) notes that “Gerardi was killed because he had helped to write a report on the atrocities committed by Guatemala's D-2, the military intelligence agency run by Lima Estrada with the help of two other SOA graduates. D-2 coordinated the ‘anti-insurgency’ campaign which obliterated 448 Mayan Indian villages, and murdered tens of thousands of their people.”

⁶⁴ On these three see Richards (1985: 95). He notes, “Rios Montt, trained in counterinsurgency in the United States, pursued the anti-guerrilla fight with the zeal of a crusader. His particular brand of religious fundamentalism imbued counterinsurgency doctrine in Guatemala with biblical overtones, and he justified pursuing guerrillas and suspected guerrilla collaborators with a combination of biblical passages and the clinical terms of counter-insurgency jargon. Portraying the guerrillas as near-satanic agents, Rios Montt, in his weekly television sermons, called for the need to surgically excise evil from Guatemala. To carry out his task, Rios Montt virtually gave carte blanche to military zone commanders to “dry up the human sea in which the guerrilla fish swim.” See also Valentino et al. (2004).

in Fujimori's Peru; [and] four of the five officers who ran the infamous Battalion 3-16 in Honduras (which controlled the death squads there in the 1980s) (Monbiot, 2001).”⁶⁵

How do we know this? In 1996, under intense NGO and congressional pressure, the executive branch released “seven of the school's training manuals. Among other top tips for terrorists, they recommended blackmail, torture, execution and the arrest of witnesses’ relatives (Monbiot, 2001; and Koopman, 2008).” In 2000, SOA Watch and a few Congressmen attempted to shut down SOA. “They were defeated by 10 votes. Instead, the House of Representatives voted to close it and then immediately reopen it under a different name (Monbiot, 2001).” Rechristened WHISC, the change was cosmetic.⁶⁶

Turning to Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the broader region, it is again evident that far from protecting the little ones, closing torture chambers, and removing tyrants, the United States opted to pursue its national interest even if that meant crushing the little ones,

⁶⁵ Sara Koopman (2008: 828) notes much the same: “In the 1980s the line connecting death and torture in El Salvador to training at the School of the Americas was not hard to trace, as thousands of troops were being trained there. Over the years, countries with the worst human rights records have consistently been the ones sending high numbers of students to the school during peaks of repression. The SOA, in Fort Benning, Columbus, Georgia, is a US Army school that trains Latin American military officers in counterinsurgency warfare. The SOA is the most elite and prestigious site of this training that happens widely throughout the Americas. It was founded in Panama in 1946 and moved to Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia in 1984. The long string of notorious graduates includes Manuel Noriega (military leader of Panama), Roberto D’Aubisson (leader of the Salvadoran Death Squads) and Efraim Rios Montt (former dictator of Guatemala). SOA graduates have played key roles in nearly every coup and major human rights violation in Latin America in the past 50 years, including the massacre of the six Jesuit professors, their housekeeper and her daughter in El Salvador in 1989 (in their memory the annual vigil is held on or near 16 November, the date of this attack). In 1993, the United Nations Truth Commission Report on El Salvador cited the officers responsible for the worst atrocities committed during that country’s brutal civil war. Over two-thirds of those named were trained at the SOA.”

⁶⁶ “As the school's Colonel Mark Morgan informed the Department of Defense just before the vote in Congress: ‘Some of your bosses have told us that they can’t support anything with the name “School of the Americas” on it. Our proposal addresses this concern. It changes the name.’ Paul Coverdell, the Georgia senator who had fought to save the school, told the papers that the changes were ‘basically cosmetic’ (Monbiot, 2001).” Koopman (2008: 828-829) writes in similar vein: “In 1996, after copies were leaked, leading to intense grassroots and Congressional Freedom of Information Act pressure, the Pentagon formally released seven training manuals used for nearly 10 years at the SOA. The manuals explicitly recommend targeting union organizers and those who say the government is not meeting the basic needs of the people. The manuals detailed forms of torture, advocated ‘neutralization’ (i.e., execution), and tactics such as arresting the relatives of those being questioned.”

opening torture chambers, and installing, cuddling, and buttressing (financially, politically, and ideologically) various tyrants. Subsequent to the overthrow of Iranian Prime Minister Mohamed Mossadegh,⁶⁷ the Shah's regime, most notably in the form of the loathed SAVAK, tortured, murdered, and disappeared scores of "little ones" in Iran. Even *Time*, not known as a bastion of harsh criticism of U.S. foreign policy, had to admit that the Shah was a "despot." The story continued to note that "An Amnesty International report 'described other methods of torture: electric shock, burning on a heated metal grill, and the insertion of bottles and hot eggs in the anus (*Time Magazine*, December 10, 1979).'"⁶⁸

⁶⁷ For Mossadegh's overthrow, the following may profitably be consulted: Ruehsen (1993); Gasiorowski (1987); Abrahamian (2001); Abidi (1979); Forsythe (1992); Zahrani (2002); Marsh (2003); Lankford (2010).

⁶⁸ On the "viciousness of the SAVAK" see Cmiel (1999: 1234). Richard Cottam (1979: 6) notes that the period of the last Shah's reign "were the years of seeming stability in Iran. The coercive control apparatus, especially SAVAK (the security and information agency), convinced the Iranian people that it was omnipresent, omniscient, and entirely ruthless. It was generally accepted in opposition circles that the number of political prisoners was in the range of 50,000-100,000, and there were detailed and convincing reports of brutal torture. Iran's military was nearly half a million strong, and its equipment was becoming the best that money could buy. For all but the committed core of opponents and each year's crop of student-aged activists, the regime appeared invulnerable. To Iranians, the power behind this apparatus giving instructions to everyone, including the torturers, was the U.S. government." Isabel Hilton (2004) writes that "In Iran under the Shah's regime, the [SAVAK] used methods outlined in CIA training manuals." Richard Falk (1980: 411) notes that U.S. "embassy personnel evidently helped establish and train the SAVAK, the secret police that committed so many crimes against the people of Iran." Yahya Armajani (1979: 16) writes that "The original purpose of SAVAK was to prevent subversion by the Communists. But the SAVAK in Iran proved to be no better in distinguishing the subversive from the innocent than have similar organizations in many countries of the world. To the SAVAK everyone was suspect, and it saw little difference between the criticism of the concerned patriot and the activity of a subversive. With the passage of time SAVAK widened the scope of its activities and 'improved' its means of physical and psychological torture. The popularity of the shah decreased in proportion to the cruelty of the SAVAK. Many simply disappeared, thousands were jailed and tortured without trial, and hundreds of thousands were alienated. All trials were held in military court. The defense lawyers of a few were arrested by SAVAK on the ground that they had repeated the views of the accused in open court, and this in itself was subversive! Everyone who complained against injustice and torture was put in jail as a Communist, as though the Communists were the only ones who were against injustice and torture." Afshari (2002: 294) notes that the SAVAK received training from "American and Israeli counter-insurgency specialists." Jerry Laber (2006: 125) writes "I will never forget my first interview with a torture victim. In 1977, I met with an Iranian poet and professor who had been imprisoned and tortured in 1973 by the Shah's secret police, the dreaded SAVAK. He described beatings that tore apart the soles of his feet, threats to rape his wife and daughter, and a mock execution in which he thought he was about to die. He depicted torture chambers with iron beds to which prisoners were tied and 'roasted.' He spoke of whips and electric prods that shocked the chest and genitals. He described how torturers hung their victims upside down and raped them." Allan Goodman (1987: 122)

U.S. presidents – Carter being a notable example – pointed to the Shah’s regime as an oasis of stability and peace, and the Shah himself as an enlightened and benevolent monarch (*Time*, December 10, 1979). The obsequious language that Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and Secretaries of State Madeline Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton have employed to describe the leadership of Saudi Arabia sounds eerily familiar to Carter’s articulation of the benevolence of the Iranian Shah. Madeline Albright (February 2, 1998) noted how much she valued the advice of Crown Prince Abdullah and extolled his “great wisdom and insight.” Barack Obama sought the now King Abdullah’s “counsel” and also noted about being “struck by [the King’s] wisdom and his graciousness” (June 3, 2009). George W. Bush spoke warmly about renewing the “personal friendship” with the Crown Prince (Bush, April 25, 2005). Hilary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice spoke in similar terms. For her part, Secretary Clinton noted the improvement in the position of women in the kingdom.⁶⁹

Why is this problematic? What is wrong with the United States having a close working relationship⁷⁰ with the government of Saudi Arabia? The problem is Saudi

notes that President Carter, during his 1977 visit to Tehran, “personally praised reports he received from non-intelligence sources indicating that the shah was an effective, benevolent, and popular monarch. Carter's desire to support the shah also influenced intelligence analysis by making it much more difficult to gain an audience at the policy level for the argument that the shah's regime was in danger of being overthrown by the many who had suffered under the shah's intelligence service, SAVAK, or by elements of the military who resented the Pahlavi family's corruption and association with the United States. The CIA's close relationship with SAVAK also caused the agency to refuse to collect information under ground rules set by the White House against spying on the shah-about the torture and other abuses that this secret-police organization used to repress the regime's opponents.”

⁶⁹ Scores of HRW and AI reports would beg to differ when it comes to the position of women in the kingdom.

⁷⁰ Human Rights Watch has also noted the close relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia. In underscoring the theme of a close relationship and an “unwavering” U.S. commitment to Saudi security, the 2000 Human Rights Watch Report on Saudi Arabia notes that although the Saudi Arabia and the United States do not have a “formal defense treaty,” the “informal and discreet security relationship between the two [states] is nonetheless extensive.” The report continues by pointing that Saudi Arabia continues to be a “major customer for U.S. manufactured weapons systems as well as training and maintenance contracts, and the U.S. had 4,873 military personnel in the country as of September 1998.” Moreover, “According to the latest U.S. Congressional Research Service annual report on conventional weapons, U.S. arms

Arabia's abysmal human rights record (Human Rights Watch, 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006). Indeed, the techniques used by the Saudi security apparatus are jarringly similar to the techniques employed by the SAVAK.⁷¹ And, it is worth noting once more

deliveries to Saudi Arabia increased from \$10.5 billion in 1991-94 to \$16.4 billion in 1995-98. The State Department reported that in fiscal year 1998 it authorized commercial military exports to Saudi Arabia worth \$528.8 million (Human Rights Watch, 2000).” The 2000 Human Rights Watch report also notes that “Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson visited in February to discuss investments by U.S. firms in Saudi oil and natural gas industries. When Secretary of Defense William Cohen met with Saudi leaders in Riyadh in March he announced the sale of advanced air-to-air missiles and an increase in joint ground forces training activities.” Moreover, “Other than the chapter on Saudi Arabia in the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1998, U.S. officials made no public comments on Saudi Arabia's human rights record, although the U.S. statement on women's rights at the 55th session of the Commission on Human Rights observed that ‘[w]omen in Saudi Arabia continue to face institutionalized discrimination affecting their right to equality in employment and education.’ Saudi Arabia, however, was not mentioned in the State Department's budget presentation to Congress in connection with programs to promote democratic values, civil society, and human rights (Human Rights Watch, 2000).”

Subsequent Human Rights Watch reports on Saudi Arabia read like carbon copies of the 2000 report. For instance, the 2001 report continues the theme of close partnership between the two states. “Saudi Arabia was the largest market in the region for American products, and the U.S. once again was Saudi Arabia's number one trading partner, with military and civilian exports of U.S. \$7.9 billion in 1999, according to an April 2000 report of the U.S. embassy in Riyadh.” The Saudi Minister of Defense visited Washington November 1-4, 1999, “at the invitation of Secretary of Defense Cohen, and had meetings with President Clinton, Secretary of State Albright, Secretary Cohen and other senior officials. The State Department issued a joint statement on November 5, saying that topics of discussion included ‘the close cooperation of the two governments, particularly military and economic cooperation,’ and that the two countries ‘agreed that continuing high-level military contact and joint military training enhance[d] preparedness help[ed] sustain security and peace in the Middle East and throughout the world (Human Rights Watch, 2001).”

And, in fear of redundancy, the 2002 report also notes that the “Ties between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia were cemented by long-standing mutual military and economic interests. The U.S. remained the world's leading supplier of defense equipment and services to the kingdom, with military exports in 2000 totaling almost U.S. \$2 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce. The department also reported that Saudi Arabia was the twenty-fourth-largest export market for U.S. companies, with merchandise exports of \$6.2 billion in 2000, and that U.S. investment in the kingdom climbed to \$4.8 billion in the same year. Saudi exports to the U.S. were \$14.2 billion in 2000 as oil prices increased (Human Rights Watch, 2002).”

⁷¹ For instance, “Saudi courts continued to impose corporal punishment, including amputations of hands and feet for robbery, and floggings for lesser crimes such as ‘sexual deviance’ and drunkenness. The number of lashes was not clearly prescribed by law and varied according to the discretion of judges, and ranged from dozens of lashes to several thousand, usually applied over a period of weeks or months. A court in Qunfuda sentenced nine Saudi alleged transvestites in April. Five drew prison terms of six years and 2,600 lashes, and the other four were sentenced to five years and 2,400 lashes. The floggings reportedly were to be carried out in fifty equal sessions, with a fifteen-day hiatus between each punishment. In August, the daily *Okaz* reported that a court had ordered the surgical removal of the left eye of an Egyptian, Abd al-Muti Abdel Rahman Muhamed, after he was convicted of throwing acid in the face of another Egyptian, injuring and disfiguring his left eye. The operation was performed in a hospital in Medina. In addition to this punishment, Abdel Rahman was reportedly fined U.S. \$68,800 and sentenced to an undisclosed prison term. The inherent cruelty of such sentences was heightened by due process concerns about the fairness of legal and administrative procedures. Under the 1983 Principles of Arrest, Temporary Confinement, and Preventative Regulations, detainees had no right to judicial review, no right to legal

that Iran under the Shah and Saudi Arabia are but two examples. This narrative could easily have included, for instance, Egypt under Mubarak (who was removed from power by a largely peaceful revolution and as of this writing was “sentenced to life imprisonment for his crimes”⁷²). It was convenient for President Obama to feign taking the high road and suggest that President Mubarak should heed the call of his people to step down. I write “feign” inasmuch as even a quick perusal of White House speeches, remarks, briefings, policy statements, etc., on Egypt prior to the so-called Arab Spring, evinces the fact that Barack Obama’s administration, as well the administration of President Bush, showered President Mubarak with generousities, praising his clam, steady, and statesman-like leadership, thereby conveniently ignoring the many – now manifestly evident – brutalities of his regime. Indeed, much like with Saudi Arabia, the United States and Egypt enjoy close military cooperation.

The heterodox social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy articulates, therefore, a most uncomfortable – if “difficult to accept” – counterpoint to the orthodox Winthropian social construction. The history of United States engagement abroad seems to demonstrate the fact that the United States, far from helping the little ones, closing

counsel, and could be held in prolonged detention pending a decision by the regional governor or the minister of interior. Suspects had no right to examine witnesses, or to call witnesses of their own, and uncorroborated confessions could constitute the basis for conviction and sentencing (Human Rights Watch, 2001).”

In terms of religious freedom, the 2001 report notes that “The government heavily restricted religious freedom and actively discouraged religious practices other than the Wahhabi interpretation of the Hanbali school of Sunni Islam.” In addition, the “state-financed religious police,” the *mutawwa’in*, “policed public display of religious icons and public worship or practice of religions other than Wahhabi Islam, and had the authority to detain Muslims and non-Muslims for up to twenty-four hours for offenses such as indecent dress and comportment. Official intolerance extended to alternative interpretations of Islam, and members of Saudi religious minorities continued to be harassed or detained for the peaceful practice of their faith (Human Rights Watch, 2001).” Finally, in terms of women’s rights “Saudi women continued to face severe discrimination in all aspects of their lives, including the family, education, employment, and the justice system. Religious police enforced a modesty code of dress and institutions from schools to ministries were gender-segregated (Human Rights Watch, 2001).”

⁷² BBC News Middle East, “Profile: Hosni Mubarak.” Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12301713>. Last accessed on August 5, 2012.

torture chambers, and removing tyrants, has crushed the little ones, opened torture chambers (and helped train personnel), and cuddled tyrants all in the name of the national interest of the United States. Any assertion to the contrary is wrong. And, if one were to return to David Rodin's definition and analyze U.S. foreign policy through the lens of Rodin, it become evident that U.S. foreign policies have been terroristic.

This may be so – some would argue – but the United States is a great power and that is simply what great powers have done, do, and will likely continue to do. This, then, represents the middle point on the continuum. Foreign policies of great powers, this social construction posits, may not be profitably analyzed through a moralistic lens. On the surface, and particularly if one is willing to take this agnostic argument to its logical conclusion, there is nothing wrong with arguing that this is simply what powerful states do. However, if one pushes the argument to its logical conclusion, then moral indignation is unavailable. Thus, what *is* galling here – especially to those who have tapped into the heterodox stream of understanding – is the fact that the United States positions itself as champion of international morality while crushing the little ones in the name of its national interest. It is not, as President Obama argues, that the United States has no choice but to engage “repressive regimes.” It is not that those who are incensed by the U.S. duplicitous behavior are seeking the “satisfying purity of [moral] indignation” as President Obama notes in his Nobel speech. Of course, the United States should engage regimes with problematic human rights records. The problem is that the United States blatantly supports such misanthropic regimes and has the temerity – at the same time – to position itself as the champion of a Winthropian “city upon a hill.”

What about (vi) the notion that human dignity and human rights are nonnegotiable – or, nonderogable in the language of international law? Of course this is so, and indeed President Obama was correct to point out in his Nobel speech that this notion is the bedrock to the so-called international bill of rights composed of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). After all, the preambles to all three instruments articulate as much. However, those who have come to construct the history of U.S. foreign policy along heterodox lines point to the inescapable fact that the history of United States foreign policy negates the proclamations by the two administrations that the United States thinks of human rights and human dignity as nonnegotiable. As the preceding paragraphs demonstrate, the human dignity of the Guatemalan Indians was very much negotiable. Uppermost on the minds of Reagan administration officials was not the nonnegotiable human dignity and human rights; rather it was the putative U.S. national interest. Indeed, Reagan portrayed Rios-Montt as a “man of great integrity” who was receiving a “bum rap (Stahler-Sholk, 1994: 2).” And, as demonstrated, Rios-Montt – this man of great integrity – slaughtered his citizens;⁷³ he took lives indiscriminately.⁷⁴

⁷³ “Unlike the counterproductive repression of his predecessor...Rios Montt's approach was methodical and politically sophisticated, albeit no less brutal. It required massacres of selected Indian villages identified with the guerrillas and, as terror neutralized support for the rebels in surrounding areas, a strategy known as ‘beans and rifles’ was applied, involving distribution of food and creation of civil patrols among the rural population. In a matter of six months, between 3,000 and 5,000 Indians were killed, some 250,000 were displaced from their homes, 30,000 fled into Mexico, 80,000 peasants were press-ganged into civil patrols—and the guerrillas' popular base was largely destroyed. The government also launched a propaganda offensive, blaming the massacres on the guerrillas, an argument that failed to convince Amnesty International, Americas Watch and assorted other human rights groups, but did persuade President Reagan, who proclaimed that Guatemala had suffered a ‘bum rap’ after he met Rios Montt in Honduras, on December 4. And, having been assured that Guatemala was on the road back to democracy, Mr. Reagan lifted the five-year-old arms sales embargo in January, allowing Guatemala to buy \$6.3 million in military equipment from the United States (Riding, 1982: 654).”

Nor was the human dignity of the Iranians negotiable; uppermost on the minds of Carter administration officials was not the nonnegotiable human dignity and human rights but rather the putative U.S. national interest. Carter, for all of his human rights rhetoric, called the Shah an enlightened, benevolent leader who is a leader of an oasis of peace and stability in a volatile region. Yet again, and as demonstrated above, the historical record belies this.

Finally, and in fear of becoming repetitive, the human dignity and human rights of ordinary Saudis *is* negotiable for the United States. The Saudi King, whose security forces torture by placing hot rods in the rectum, and whose courts sentence people to be paralyzed (Human Rights Watch, 2011) and have their eyes removed (Human Rights Watch, 2001) is cuddled by the United States; U.S. presidents and secretaries of State go to Riyadh to seek his counsel and extol his wisdom. Quite simply this is because Saudi Arabia is a major importer of U.S. weapons systems and a major exporter of oil. In conclusion, then, human dignity and human rights are very much negotiable for Washington.

With respect to terrorism, it will be recalled that both administrations stress the notion that (i) terrorists are those who attack innocent civilians and (ii) terrorists are evildoers and barbarians who are beyond the call of reason. Let us examine these two assertions in light of the previous chapter's discussion on terrorism as well as the present chapter's discussion of U.S. foreign policy. Are terrorists those who attack innocent

⁷⁴ It bears pointing out at this point that Article 4 of ICCPR stipulates, in no uncertain terms, that the right to life is a non-derogable right. It is a substantive guarantee that has risen to the level of *jus cogens*. The implication of this substantive guarantee having reached the status of *jus cogens* is that all states are obligated (*obligatio erga omnes*, or, an obligation which flows to all) to either prosecute or extradite those who have breached this norm (see Bassiouni, 1996). Not only did Reagan not go after Rios-Montt, he acted as an apologist for Rios-Montt.

civilians? The answer is, quite naturally, yes. As demonstrated in the chapter on terrorism, the thing that makes terrorism so morally repugnant is the targeting of innocents; that is, the notion of noncombatants' (or, innocents') immunity "contains the crux of the moral argument. It is designed to capture the intuition that terrorism has the significance it does in our moral thinking because the targets it attacks are morally inappropriate (Rodin, 2004:758)." Consequently, terrorism, as David Rodin (2004: 755) would have it, is the "deliberate, negligent, or reckless use of force against noncombatants, by state or nonstate actors for ideological ends and in the absence of a substantively just legal process."

How does U.S. foreign policy stack up against Rodin's nuanced definition of terrorism? In one word: badly. The United States has – as repeatedly articulated in the preceding paragraphs – been a state-sponsor of terror and itself been an active perpetrator of state terror. Indeed, no other reading of the history of U.S. foreign policy would be satisfactory. The United States sponsored terroristic regimes throughout Latin America and the Middle East.

And what about the notion that terrorists are evildoers and barbarians who are beyond the call of reason? Some certainly are. However, proponents of the heterodox reading of the history of U.S. foreign policy would point out, there is no sense in which Osama bin Laden (who, at the time of this writing, has been assassinated by the United States) is beyond the call of reason and somebody like Rios-Montt a "man of great integrity" who was receiving a "bum rap." Indeed, at this point it is worth recalling the statements of the two administrations' officials. For instance, it will be recalled that NSA Rice spoke forcefully when she announced that "You cannot condemn al Qaeda and hug

Hamas. The United States draws no distinction between the terrorists and the regimes that feed, train, supply and harbor them.” And she further stressed that “our enemy is not just al Qaeda, but every terrorist group of global reach. This is not just our struggle; it is the struggle of the civilized world (Rice, February 1, 2002).” There, then, is no equivocation: you cannot condemn al Qaeda and hug King Abdullah.

(iii) Is this a civilizational struggle? Yes, it is. It is a struggle between those who think that they can sacrifice noncombatants for the achievement of ideological ends and those who oppose this. Inasmuch as the United States has sacrificed noncombatants to advance its putative national interest, its government and citizens are in no position to reproach others. One cannot articulate moral strictures and then include provisos exempting oneself from the very same strictures. Even Hobbes recognizes in the *Leviathan* that might is not the same as right.

(4) Conclusion

Looking back, the present chapter offered two stark social constructions of U.S. foreign policy. These visions represent two end-points on a continuum of socially constructing U.S. foreign policy. On one end of this continuum are those who have come to socially construct U.S. foreign policy as but a continuation of John Winthrop’s clarion call for the establishment of a “city upon a hill;” to flesh-out this vision I examined – as perfect exemplars of this vision – the articulations of U.S. foreign policy offered by the administrations of presidents Bush and Obama. On the other extreme are those who view U.S. foreign policy as the policy of a rapacious great power. To flesh-out the second way of socially constructing I relied on brief case studies that belie the assertions by the two

administrations. The middle of this continuum is occupied by those who are agnostic about the prospects of analyzing foreign policy through a moralistic lens. This continuum serves as the basis for the construction of a survey scale that will ask the participants to indicate the location on the spectrum that best matches the way in which they have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy.

Looking forward, chapter 6 presents the empirical findings.

Chapter 6

Social Construction as an Explanatory Variable of Policy Preferences: The Case of Support for U.S. Counterterrorism Policy

(1) Introductory Remarks

Chapters 1, 4 and 5 told the “insider’s story.” The present chapter concerns itself with the “outsider’s story.” Namely, in keeping with the theoretical framework presented in chapter 2 – as well as the methodological framework presented in chapter 3 – in the present chapter I consider whether various ways of socially constructing security, terrorism, and the history of U.S. foreign policy *actually* matter in determining – and explaining – the kind of vote that citizens will cast. In presenting the findings of the outsider’s story, I adopt the following approach: in part 1, I articulate the hypotheses that inform the outsider’s story. In part 2 I discuss the survey and the operationalization of the various social kinds. In part 3 I report the descriptive statistics. Finally, in part 4 I present an ordered probit model.

(2) Hypotheses

I test the following hypotheses:

H₁: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy in “Winthropian” terms to socially constructing the history in “agnostic” and, finally, “indignant” terms.

H₂: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from socially constructing terrorism in “orthodox” terms to socially constructing terrorism in “middle-of-the-road” and, finally, “heterodox” terms.

H₃: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from socially constructing security in “statist” terms to socially constructing security in “middle-of-the-road” and, finally, “emancipatory” terms.

H₄: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their government decreases as one moves along the continuum from self-identifying as conservative to self-identifying as a moderate and finally a liberal.

H₅: The probability that U.S. citizens will support the counterterrorism policies of their

government decreases as one moves along the continuum from being “not knowledgeable” to being “somewhat knowledgeable” and finally “knowledgeable”.

(3) The Survey: Operationalizing Social Kinds

The Survey

Over the course of four days, I conducted a survey of students at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). The participants represented NEIU’s undergraduate student body. I conducted the survey in natural sciences classes (two in biology; two in chemistry; and one in physics) thereby avoiding conducting the survey in either humanities or social sciences classes. Moreover, as stipulated in chapter 3, I did not include my students in the survey as (i) that might give rise to the probability of students tailoring their answers to what they perceive to be my biases (as expressed by me, consciously or unconsciously, in my lectures) and (ii) that might raise concerns about conflict of interest between students and faculty (the fear on the part of a student, for instance, that in not doing the survey she will be punished; the student, therefore, might feel pressured into doing the survey). Finally, I had IRB permission for conducting the survey from NEIU (where I am on the faculty) and the University of Miami (whose doctoral candidate I am).

While the following is admittedly impressionistic, a substantial majority of the students appeared to take seriously the task of completing the survey. Even though the students were under the pressure of time, they carefully read the statements and seemed to endeavor hard to connect the same with the ways with which *they* had come to construct the various social kinds under consideration. Naturally, there were a few students who disinterestedly rushed through the survey paying scant attention to the statements and selecting statements – it seemed – almost randomly. (I discuss this and other problems with the survey in the concluding chapter.)

Operationalizing Social Kinds

The independent variables are “social construction of terrorism,” “social construction of security,” “social construction of U.S. foreign policy,” “ideological identification,” and “factual knowledge.” How were the variables operationalized?

It will be recalled that that I posit security, terrorism, and the history of U.S. foreign policy as social constructs best imagined along three respective continua. Thus, in chapter 4, I argued that if one were to imagine an ideational continuum on which to place different social constructions of terrorism, there are two primary ways of socially constructing terrorism that represent the two termini on the continuum. On one end is what I referred to as the orthodox construction – the “easy to agree with” stream of understanding – which articulates terrorism as an act that only non-state actors can perpetrate. On the other end is the non-orthodox construction of terrorism – the “difficult to agree with” understanding – which posits that since terrorism is, in the main, violence directed against innocents, and states have with alarming frequency unleashed violence against innocents, there is no good reason why terrorism should be articulated as an act that only non-state actors can perpetrate.

Chapter 5, by contrast, delineated the full continuum of socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy. On the “easy to agree with” terminus – it was argued – is the Winthropian way of socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy. The middle of the continuum is occupied by those who are agnostic about the prospects of analyzing foreign politics through moralistic lens. Finally, the other terminus is occupied by those whom I refer to as “indignant” – that is, those who have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy along highly critical lines.

Chapter 1 delimited the social construction of security. On the “easy to agree with” terminus is the statist way of socially constructing security. The middle is occupied by those who largely accept the state as the referent point for analyzing security but seek to broaden (by adding problems such as environmental degradation and drug trafficking to the list of security concerns) and/or deepen (by including referents such as “society,” “community,” international system/society,” etc.) the concept. Finally, on the “difficult to agree with” terminus is the emancipatory/human security way of socially constructing security, such that the state is frequently posited as a barrier to – and decidedly not a provider of – greater security.

Operationalizing the Social Kind Terrorism

The social kind terrorism was operationalized as follows: the continuum of the social construction of terrorism served as the basis for the construction of a survey scale that asked the participants to indicate the location on the spectrum that best matches the way in which they have come to understand terrorism. The participants in the survey were asked to read a series of statements about terrorism and then select the statement – only one statement – that best matches the way in which *they* have come to understand terrorism. They were presented with the following series of statements:

Below, I will propose a series of statements about terrorism. Please take the time to think carefully about these statements. After reflecting on the statements, kindly **circle** the statement (**one statement**) that best captures the way in which you have come to understand terrorism. That is, what does terrorism mean for you?

- (a) Only fighters who are not members of a country’s regular armed forces can properly be called “terrorist.” (The duty of a country’s regular armed forces is defending the independence and territorial integrity of their country. Members of a country’s regular armed forces cannot be terrorists.)
- (b) Only fighters who are not members of a country’s regular armed forces can properly be called “terrorist” but only if their strategy involves the explicit morally inappropriate use of violence against innocent non-combatants. (Note that innocents

are those who have done nothing to deserve the violence that is unleashed against them.)

(c) Only fighters who are not members of a country's regular armed forces can properly be called "terrorist" but only if their strategy involves the careless morally inappropriate targeting of innocent civilians. (Note that innocents are those who have done nothing to deserve the violence that is unleashed against them.)

(d) Some violence by fighters who are not members of a country's regular armed forces will not be terroristic.

(e) If regular armed forces explicitly target innocents their strategy would amount to terrorism.

(f) If regular armed forces are negligent and careless in their targeting, and if the result of this negligence and carelessness is the unintended harming and death of innocents, this too would amount to terrorism.

(g) If the regular armed forces are very careful in selecting their targets but choose a strategy that results in the deaths of innocent non-combatants, where the armed forces could have selected a strategy that would not have resulted in the deaths of innocent non-combatants, this would also amount to terrorism.

It is readily apparent that the statements on terrorism proposed to the participants of the survey were drawn from the ideational continuum of terrorism posited and discussed in chapter 2. The statements are – moving from top to bottom – coded as follows: statement (a) is coded 1; statement (b) is coded 2; statement (c) is coded 3; statement (d) is coded 4; statement (e) is coded 5; statement (f) is coded 5; and statement (g) is coded 7. The statements are escalating such that each statement presents a more demanding way of understanding terrorism, and such that it is impossible for a respondent to construct terrorism via statement (a) and statement (g) concurrently; these statements represent the two termini on the continuum of the social construction of terrorism. Finally, (a) – the top most statement – represents the orthodox ("easy to agree with") social construction of terrorism, while statement (g) – the bottom statement represents – the most demanding of heterodox ("difficult to agree with") social constructions of terrorism, such that even if the military were very careful in selecting targets, its actions would qualify as "terrorism"

unless it selected the option that would not have resulted in the deaths of innocent non-combatants.

It also bears noting – and this holds true for the scales respecting the variables “social construction of security” and “social construction of U.S. foreign policy” – that if a respondent circled more than one statement I coded the response based on the lowest – that is, the most demanding way of understanding terrorism, security, or the history of U.S. foreign policy – statement circled. The rationale behind this is the escalating nature of the statements (recalling the discussion in chapter 3). It is conceivable, therefore, that – reading from top to bottom – a respondent read a statement, agreed with it, circled it, and having read a subsequent statement agreed with that one as well and also circled the second statement. However, the second statement that the respondent selected is (or – at the very least – is designed to be) more demanding than the previous. Thus, it makes sense for a respondent to “go down the list” and keep circling statements such that the lowest is the one that *really* best matches his understanding.

Operationalizing the Social Kind Security

Much as with the social constructs terrorism (see above) and the history of U.S. foreign policy (see below), I operationalize the continuum of the social construction of security by way of a scale containing a series of statements that become more demanding as one reads “down the list” so that one cannot have come to understand security in both statist and non-statist terms (the two termini). Again, I asked the participants to indicate the location on the scale that best matches the way in which they have come to understand security. The participants were presented with the following series of statements:

Below, I will propose a series of statements about the idea of security. Please take the time to think carefully about these statements. After reflecting on the statements, kindly **circle** the statement (**one statement**) that best captures the way in which you have come to understand security. That is, what does security mean for you? (Please note that there are no right or wrong answers; select the choices that best capture **your** understanding of security!)

- (a) The state is the primary source of security for citizens; the main sources of insecurity are other countries as well as foreign and domestic groups that do not officially represent countries. Security refers to the protection of the state from outside threats. States are important in their own right. The state is essential for the realization of justice. There can be no justice without the authority of the state.
- (b) The state has no one to turn to for help. There is no international police to provide order and security. Therefore, a country's security is achieved exclusively by strategic use of the country's power (mainly military and economic power).
- (c) In fact, security is best realized not against one's adversary but in cooperation with the adversary.
- (d) In addition to other countries and groups that do not represent countries, the security of the state is also threatened by problems such as poverty, crime, drug trafficking, AIDS, environmental degradation, etc. Therefore, security means more than simply the security of the state; to really understand what security means we must include these problems and, therefore, broaden the meaning of the term security.
- (e) In fact, security is not only about the state. Security should be analyzed also with reference to concepts such as the community, the society, as well as the international system. There are situations in which it is more important to protect one's community and society rather than the state.
- (f) Security is not about the state. In fact, there are instances when the main source of insecurity for citizens is actually the state. We can properly analyze security only in terms of individual human beings; security is about freeing of human beings from all of the barriers that prevent them from fully realizing the kinds of lives that they have imagined. In the final analysis, therefore, security is about the realization of justice. It is about emancipation.

The statements with respect to security proposed to the participants were drawn from the discussion – contained in chapter 1 – on the different ways in which security has been constructed. The top statement – statement (a) – represents the statist (“easy to agree with”) construction of security while the bottom statement – statement (f) – represents the most demanding (“difficult to agree with”) non-statist, human security/critical security studies construction of terrorism. Finally, as in the case of the scale with respect to terrorism, the statements in the scale with respect to the social construction of security

were coded – moving from top to bottom – as follows: statement (a) is coded 1; statement (b) is coded 2; statement (c) is coded 3; statement (d) is coded 4; statement (e) is coded 5; and statement (f) is coded 6.

Operationalizing the Social Construction of the History of U.S. Foreign Policy

I operationalized the continuum of socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy by way of a survey scale containing a series of statements that become more demanding as one reads “down the list” so that one cannot have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy in both Winthropian and “rapacious great power” terms (the two termini). I asked the participants to indicate the location on the spectrum that best matches the way in which they have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy. The participants were presented with the following series of statements:

Below, I will propose several statements about the history of United States’ foreign policy (namely, United States involvement abroad). Please take the time to think carefully about these statements. After reflecting on the statements, kindly **circle** the statement (**one statement**) that best captures the way in which you have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy.

- (a) The United States is a great nation, a freedom-loving nation, a compassionate nation, and a humane nation; it is a nation that understands the value of life. The United States defends justice and liberty. America’s security emanates from the justness of her cause, the force of her example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint. The United States protects the little ones. It is a land of opportunity and freedom; it is “a beacon of hope and opportunity” to so many around the world. The United States shuts down torture chambers and replaces tyranny with the rule of law. That is who the United States is.
- (b) The record of the United States in its dealings with other countries is not as perfect and just as the previous statement indicates. On the balance, however, the United States has been a force for good in the world.
- (c) The United States has been a force for good in the world but it has also done things of which it should not be proud. Nevertheless, the United States is a powerful country and powerful countries have – throughout history – pursued their interests. This is neither moral nor immoral. It is simply the way in which international politics operates.
- (d) Far from closing torture chambers and removing tyrants, the United States has opened scores of torture chambers, trained torturers in their brutal craft, and consistently supported and cuddled tyrants (and terrorists) all in the name of the national interest.

- (e) The record of the United States' foreign policy is abysmal. Not only has United States supported and cuddled tyrants and terrorists, it has employed terrorist tactics in the pursuit of its national interest.

The same principles articulated with respect to the preceding two scales apply to the present scale.⁷⁵ From top to bottom I code the statements (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) respectively as: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

The Remaining Variables

In chapter 1, I argued that the extent to which factual knowledge determines *and/or* explains citizens' preferences is not altogether clear. I also designed a brief questionnaire that asked the participants in the survey to answer some basic questions about international politics. In estimating the effect of the social constructions of terrorism, security, and the history of U.S. foreign policy, I can also control for factual knowledge.

The participants in the survey were presented with the following questions:⁷⁶

Below I will ask you a series of questions. Please write the correct answer.

- (a) Name the current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom? _____
- (b) Name the current Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany? _____
- (c) Name the current President of the Russian Federation? _____
- (d) What does the acronym NATO stand for? _____
- (e) How many countries have a veto in the World Trade Organization? _____
- (f) Name one country, other than the United States, which has a veto in the United Nations' Security Council. _____
- (g) What does the acronym IMF stand for? _____
- (h) Name one country, other than China or Cuba, which has a socialist system of government. _____
- (i) Who elects the Supreme Leader of Iran? _____
- (j) What does the acronym NAFTA stand for? _____
- (k) Name the current Secretary General of the UN. _____

⁷⁵ The readers will have noticed that statement (a) in the section on the social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy is taken verbatim from the speeches made by Presidents Bush and Obama (more on which in chapter 5).

⁷⁶ To what extent is knowledge of this sort even remotely relevant to the core questions/concerns? Classical democratic theory holds that to make meaningful decisions – and therefore be in a position to exercise meaningful control over government policy – the general public should have broad knowledge of international politics. These questions reflect such knowledge.

I code each correct answer as 2 and each partially correct answer as 1 (clearly no answer, or a completely wrong answer is coded 0). For instance, if participants answered question (a) by writing “David Cameron,” or just “Cameron,” their answers were coded as 2. If they answered “Tony Blair” (or just “Blair”) or “Gordon Brown” (or just “Brown”), their answers were coded as 1. The rationale behind this is that a respondent who answered “Blair” or “Brown” exhibited some factual knowledge – albeit not current.

The study also asked the respondents to indicate, on a scale from 0 to 7, such that 0 means most conservative and 7 means most liberal, their ideological self-identification. Finally, the dependent variable was measured on a scale from 0 to 7 where 0 means absolutely no support and 7 indicates full support of U.S. counterterrorism policy.

(4) Descriptive Statistics

Socially Constructing Terrorism: The Survey’s Findings

131 out of 132 participants indicated an answer to the question: “What does terrorism mean for you” (see Table 1)? The median score was 3.64, with standard deviation of 1.692.

Table 1 Descriptive Information
Variable: Social Construction of Terrorism

Valid N	131
Missing N	1
Mean	3.64
Median	3.00
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	1.692
Range	6
Minimum	1
Maximum	7

Source: Survey

Of the 131 participants selecting a statement with which they agree in the social construction of terrorism section (see Table 2), 3 participants (2.3%) selected statement

(a) – and received a score of 1. In so doing, these participants indicated that have come to understand the social kind terrorism thus: “Only fighters who are not members of a country’s regular armed forces can properly be called ‘terrorist.’ (The duty of a country’s regular armed forces is defending the independence and territorial integrity of their country. Members of a country’s regular armed forces cannot be terrorists).” 38 participants (29%) selected statement (b) – and received a score of 2. In so doing, they indicated that: “Only fighters who are not members of a country’s regular armed forces can properly be called ‘terrorist’ but only if their strategy involves the explicit morally inappropriate use of violence against innocent non-combatants. (Note that innocents are those who have done nothing to deserve the violence that is unleashed against them).” 41 participants (31.3%) selected statement (c) – and received a score of 3. In so doing, they indicated that: “Only fighters who are not members of a country’s regular armed forces can properly be called ‘terrorist’ but only if their strategy involves the careless morally inappropriate targeting of innocent civilians. (Note that innocents are those who have done nothing to deserve the violence that is unleashed against them).” 4 participants (3%) selected statement (d) – and received a score of 4. In so doing, they indicated that they have come to understand the social kind terrorism thus: “Some violence by fighters who are not members of a country’s regular armed forces will not be terroristic.” 22 participants (16.8%) selected (e) – and received a score of 5. In so doing, they indicated that: “If regular armed forces explicitly target innocents their strategy would amount to terrorism.” 12 participants (9.2) percent selected (f) – and received a score of 6. In so doing, they indicated that: “If regular armed forces are negligent and careless in their targeting, and if the result of this negligence and carelessness is the unintended harming

and death of innocents, this too would amount to terrorism.” Finally, 11 participants (8.4%) selected statement (g) – and received a score of 7. In so doing, they indicated that they have to come to understand terrorism in the following way: “If the regular armed forces are very careful in selecting their targets but choose a strategy that results in the deaths of innocent non-combatants, where the armed forces could have selected a strategy that would not have resulted in the deaths of innocent non-combatants, this would also amount to terrorism.”

Table 2

Frequencies: Social Construction of Terrorism

Response	Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
(a)	1	3	2.3	2.3
(b)	2	38	29.0	31.3
(c)	3	41	31.3	62.6
(d)	4	4	3.0	65.6
(e)	5	22	16.7	82.4
(f)	6	12	9.2	91.6
(g)	7	11	8.4	100
Total		131		
Missing		1		
Total		132		100

Source: Survey

I also collapsed the independent variable “social construction of terrorism” (see Table 3). The participants who selected statements (a), (b), or (c) on the survey were classified as belonging in the “orthodox” category of socially constructing terrorism. This category is coded 1; 82 participants (62.6%) were thus classified and may be articulated as having constructed terrorism in highly statist – or orthodox – terms (see chapter 4 for the orthodox understanding of terrorism). Participants who chose statements (d) or (e) on the survey were classified as belonging to the “middle-of-the-road” category; the “middle-of-the-road” category is coded 2; 26 participants (19.8%) were so classified. Finally, the participants who selected statements (f) or (g) on the survey were classified as belonging to the “heterodox” category of socially constructing terrorism. This category is coded 3;

23 participants (17.6%) were so classified.

Table 3

Frequencies: Social Construction of Terrorism (collapsed)

Category	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Orthodox	82	62.6	62.6
Middle-of-the-Road	26	19.8	82.4
Heterodox	23	17.6	100
Total	131		
Missing	1		
Total	132		100

Source: Survey

Socially Constructing the History of U.S. Foreign Policy: The Survey's Findings

128 participants in the survey indicated an answer to the question: “How have you come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy (see Table 4)?” The mean score is 2.98 with a standard deviation of 1.053.

Table 4 Descriptive Information

Variable: Social Construction of the History of U.S. Foreign Policy

Valid N	128
Missing N	4
Mean	2.98
Median	3.00
Mode	3
Standard Deviation	1.053
Range	4
Minimum	1
Maximum	5

Source: Survey

Of the 128 participants who indicated an answer (see Table 5), 13 participants (10.2%) selected statement (a) – and received a score of 1 – as the statement that best matches the way in which *they* have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy. In so doing, the participants indicated they have come to understand “The United States [as] a great nation, a freedom-loving nation, a compassionate nation, and a humane nation; it is a nation that understands the value of life. The United States defends justice and liberty. America’s security emanates from the justness of her cause, the force of her example, the

tempering qualities of humility and restraint. The United States protects the little ones. It is a land of opportunity and freedom; it is “a beacon of hope and opportunity” to so many around the world. The United States shuts down torture chambers and replaces tyranny with the rule of law. That is who the United States is.”

19 participants (14.8) percent selected statement (b) – and received a score of 2. In so doing, they indicated that: “The record of the United States in its dealings with other countries is not as perfect and just as the [the first] statement indicates. On the balance, however, the United States has been a force for good in the world.” 68 participants (53.1%) selected statement (c) – thereby receiving a score of 3 – as the statement that best matches the way in which they have to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy. In so doing, these participants indicated that: “The United States has been a force for good in the world but it has also done things of which it should not be proud. Nevertheless, the United States is a powerful country and powerful countries have – throughout history – pursued their interests. This is neither moral nor immoral. It is simply the way in which international politics operates.” 14 participants (10.9%) selected statement (d) – and received a score of 4. In so doing, they indicated that: “Far from closing torture chambers and removing tyrants, the United States has opened scores of torture chambers, trained torturers in their brutal craft, and consistently supported and cuddled tyrants (and terrorists) all in the name of the national interest.” And, an equal number (14, or 10.9%) selected statement (e) – and received a score of 5 – thereby indicating that: “The record of the United States’ foreign policy is abysmal. Not only has United States supported and cuddled tyrants and terrorists, it has employed terrorist tactics in the pursuit of its national interest.”

Table 5

Frequencies: Social Construction of the History of U.S. Foreign Policy

Response	Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
(a)	1	13	10.2	10.2
(b)	2	19	14.8	25
(c)	3	68	53.1	78.1
(d)	4	14	10.9	89.1
(e)	5	14	10.9	100.0
Total		128		
Missing		4		
Total		132		100.0

Source: Survey

I also collapsed the independent variable “social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy” into three categories: “Winthropian,” “agnostic,” and “indignant (see Table 6).” Participants who selected either statement (a) or (b) on the survey were classified as belonging in the “Winthropian” category. This category is coded 1; 32 participants (25) understood the history of U.S. foreign policy through a strictly Winthropian lens. Those participants who selected statement 3 on the survey were classified as belonging in the “agnostic” category. This category is coded 2; 68 participants (53.1%) were thus classified and may be articulated as in the main dismissive of the prospects of analyzing international relations through moralistic lens. Finally, participants who selected statements 4 or 5 on the survey were classified as belonging in the “indignant” category. The category is coded 3; 28 participants (21.9%) have come to understand the history of U.S. foreign policy in such highly critical terms.

Table 6

Frequencies: Social Construction of the History of U.S. Foreign Policy (collapsed)

Category	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Winthropian	32	25	25.0
Agnostic	68	53.1	78.1
Indignant	28	21.9	100.0
Total	128		
Missing	4		
Total	132		100.0

Source: Survey

Social Construction of Security: The Survey's Findings

128 out of 132 indicated an answer to the question: “What does security mean for you (see Table 7)?” The mean is 4.14 with a standard deviation of 1.630.

Table 7 Descriptive Information
Variable: Social Construction of Security

Valid N	128
Missing N	4
Mean	4.14
Median	4.00
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	1.630
Range	5
Minimum	1
Maximum	6

Source: Survey

Of the 128 indicating participants selecting a statement on the social construction of security section (see Table 8), 18 participants (14.1%) selected statement (a) – receiving a score of 1 – and thereby indicated that they have come to understand the social kind security as follows: “The state is the primary source of security for citizens; the main sources of insecurity are other countries as well as foreign and domestic groups that do not officially represent countries. Security refers to the protection of the state from outside threats. States are important in their own right. The state is essential for the realization of justice. There can be no justice without the authority of the state.” 7 participants (5.5%) selected statement (b) – receiving a score of 2 – and thereby indicated that: “The state has no one to turn to for help. There is no international police to provide order and security. Therefore, a country’s security is achieved exclusively by strategic use of the country’s power (mainly military and economic power).” 3 participants (2.3%) selected statement (c) – receiving a score of 3 – and thereby indicated that: “In fact, security is best realized not against one’s adversary but in cooperation with the adversary.” 40 participants (31.3%) selected statement (d) – and received a score of 4 –

thereby indicating that: “In addition to other countries (and groups that do not represent countries) the security of the state is also threatened by problems such as poverty, crime, drug trafficking, AIDS, environmental degradation, etc. Therefore, security means more than simply the security of the state; to really understand what security means we must include these problems and, therefore, broaden the meaning of the term security.” 31 participants (24.2%) selected statement (e) – receiving a score of 5 – and thereby indicated that: “In fact, security is not only about the state. Security should be analyzed also with reference to concepts such as the community, the society, as well as the international system. There are situations in which it is more important to protect one’s community and society rather than the state.” Finally, 29 participants (22.7%) selected statement (f) – receiving a score of 6 – and thereby indicated that: “Security is not about the state. In fact, there are instances when the main source of insecurity for citizens is actually the state. We can properly analyze security only in terms of individual human beings; security is about freeing of human beings from all of the barriers that prevent them from fully realizing the kinds of lives that they have imagined. In the final analysis, therefore, security is about the realization of justice. It is about emancipation.”

Table 8
Frequencies: Social Construction of Security

Response	Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
(a)	1	18	14.1	14.1
(b)	2	7	5.5	19.5
(c)	3	3	2.3	21.9
(d)	4	40	31.3	53.1
(e)	5	31	24.2	77.3
(f)	6	29	22.7	100
Total		128		
Missing		4		
Total		132		100

Source: Survey

I collapsed the independent variable “social construction of security” into three categories: “statist” (coded 1), “middle-of-the-road” (coded 2) and “emancipatory” (coded 3) (see Table 9): 25 participants (19.5%) received scores of 1 or 2 – having checked statements (a) or (b) on the survey – and were thus classified as having understood security in statist (or orthodox) terms. 43 participants (33.6%) received scores of 3 or 4 – having checked statements (c) or (d) on the survey – and were thus classified as having understood security in “middle-of-the-road” terms. Finally, 60 participants (46.9%) received scores of 1 or 2 – having checked statements (e) or (f) on the survey – and were thus classified as having understood security in emancipatory (or heterodox) terms.

Table 9

Frequencies: Social Construction of Security (collapsed)

Category	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Statist	25	19.5	19.5
Middle-of-the-Road	43	33.6	53.1
Emancipatory	60	45.5	100
Total	131		
Missing	1		
Total	132		100

Source: Survey

Ideological Self-Identification

125 out of 132 participants indicated an answer to the ideological self-identification question (see Table 10). The mean score was 4.63, with standard deviation of 1.423.

Table 10 Descriptive Information

Variable: Ideological Self-Identification

Valid N	125
Missing N	7
Mean	4.63
Median	5.00
Mode	5
Standard Deviation	1.423
Range	7
Minimum	0
Maximum	7

Source: Survey

2 participants (1.6%) indicated a score of 0. 1 participant (0.8%) indicated a score of 1. 4 participants (3.2%) indicated a score of 2. 17 participants (13.6%) indicated a score of 3. 30 participants (24%) indicated a score of 4. 39 participants (31.2%) indicated a score of 5. 20 participants (16%) indicated a score of 6. And 12 participants (9.6%) indicated a score of 7 (see Table 11).

Table 11
Frequencies: Ideological Self-Identification

Response	Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
0	0	2	1.6	1.6
1	1	1	0.8	2.4
2	2	4	3.2	5.6
3	3	17	13.6	19.2
4	4	30	24.0	43.2
5	5	39	31.2	74.4
6	6	20	16.0	90.4
7	7	12	9.6	100.0
Total		125		
Missing		7		
Total		132		100.0

Source: Survey

I collapsed the independent variable “ideological self-identification” into three categories: “conservative,” “moderate,” and “liberal” (see Table 12): 7 participants (5.6%) were classified as “conservatives” inasmuch as when prodded to indicate their ideological identification on the survey they marked a number in the range 0-2. The “conservative” category is coded 1. 47 participants (37.6%) were classified as “moderates” inasmuch as when prodded to indicate their ideological identification on the survey they marked a number in the range 3-4; the “moderates” category is coded 2. Finally, 71 participants (56.8%) were classified as “liberals” inasmuch as when prodded to indicate their ideological identification on the survey they marked a number in the range 5-7; the “liberal” category is coded 3.

Table 12
 Frequencies: Ideological Self-Identification (collapsed)

Category	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Conservative	7	5.6	5.6
Moderate	47	37.6	43.2
Liberal	71	56.8	100.0
Total	125		
Missing	7		
Total	132		100.0

Source: Survey

Factual Knowledge: The Survey's Findings

All 132 received a score on the “factual knowledge” portion of the survey (see Table 13).

Table 13 Descriptive Information

Variable: Political Knowledge

Valid N	132
Missing N	0
Mean	4.22
Median	2.00
Mode	0
Standard Deviation	4.941
Range	22
Minimum	0
Maximum	22

Source: Survey

Those participants who didn't attempt an answer received a score of 0. All others received scores (see Table 14) according to the formula indicated above.

Table 14
Frequencies: Political Knowledge

Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
0	42	31.8	31.8
1	6	4.5	36.4
2	21	15.9	52.3
3	4	3.0	55.3
4	15	11.4	66.7
5	7	5.3	72.0
6	7	5.3	77.3
7	3	2.3	79.5
8	3	2.3	81.8
9	4	3.0	84.8
10	3	2.3	87.1
11	2	1.5	88.6
12	4	3.0	91.7
13	1	0.8	92.4
14	1	0.8	93.2
15	3	2.3	95.5
16	2	1.5	97.0
17	2	1.5	98.5
19	1	0.8	99.2
22	1	0.8	100.0
Total	132		
Missing	0		
Total	132		100.0

Source: Survey

I collapsed this variable as well (see Table 15). Participants who scored within the range 0-6 were classified as “not knowledgeable” (the “not knowledgeable” category is coded 1); 103 participants (78%) were so classified. Participants who scored within the range 7-13 were classified as “somewhat knowledgeable” (the “somewhat knowledgeable” category is coded 2); 19 participants (14.4%) were so classified. Finally, participants who scored within the range 14-22 were classified as “knowledgeable” (the “knowledgeable” category is coded 3); 10 participants (7.6%) were so classified.

Table 15
Frequencies: Political Knowledge (collapsed)

Category	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Not Knowledgeable	103	78.0	78.0
Somewhat Knowledgeable	19	14.4	92.4
Knowledgeable	10	7.6	100.0
Total	132		
Missing	0		
Total	132		100.0

Source: Survey

Support for the Counterterrorism Policies of the United States' Government: The Survey's Findings

131 participants indicated an answer on the dependent variable (see Table 16). The mean level of support was 3.89, with a standard deviation of 1.995.

Table 16 Descriptive Information
Variable: Support of U.S. Counterterrorism Policy

Valid N	131
Missing N	1
Mean	3.89
Median	4.00
Mode	4
Standard Deviation	1.995
Range	7
Minimum	0
Maximum	7

Source: Survey

3 participants (9.9%) indicated a support of 0. 5 participants (3.8%) indicated a support of 1. 11 participants (8.4%) indicated a support of 2. 19 participants (14.5%) indicated a support of 3. 31 participants (23.7%) indicated a support of 4. 25 participants (19.1%) indicated a support of 5. 13 participants (9.9%) indicated a support of 6. Finally, 14 participants (10.7%) indicated a support of 7 (see Table 17).

Table 17
Frequencies: Support for U.S. Counterterrorism Policy

Response	Score	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
0	0	13	9.9	9.9
1	1	5	3.8	13.7
2	2	11	8.4	22.1
3	3	19	14.5	36.6
4	4	31	23.7	60.3
5	5	25	19.1	79.4
6	6	13	9.9	89.3
7	7	14	10.7	100.0
Total		131		
Missing		1		
Total		132		100.0

Source: Survey

I collapsed the variable “support for the counterterrorism policies of the U.S. government” into three categories (see Table 18). The participants who on the survey indicated support in the range of 0 to 2 were classified as exhibiting “no support;” 48 participants (36.6%) fell into this category. The category “no support” is coded 1. The participants who on the survey indicated support in the range of 3 to 4 were classified as exhibiting “lukewarm support;” 56 participants (42.7%) fell into this category. The category “lukewarm support” is coded 2. The participants who on the survey indicated support in the range of 5 to 7 were classified as exhibiting “strong support;” 27 participants (20.6%) fell into this category. The category “strong support” is coded 3.

Table 18
Frequencies: Support for U.S. Counterterrorism Policy (collapsed)

Category	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Low Support	48	36.6	36.6
Lukewarm Support	56	42.7	79.4
Strong Support	27	20.6	100.0
Total	131		
Missing	1		
Total	132		100.0

Source: Survey

(5) Ordered Probit*Coefficient Estimates*

Table 19 displays the model's estimated coefficients.

Table 19

Parameter estimates of the ordinal probit model: support of U.S. counterterrorism policy as the dependent variable (the link function is probit)

Variable	Estimate	Std. error	Wald	Sig.	95% CI ⁷⁷
<i>Threshold (intercept)</i>					
support = 1	1.297**	.619	4.392	.036	.084 to 2.509
support = 2	3.024**	.654	21.373	.000	1.742 to 4.305
<i>Location (explanatory variables)</i>					
ideology = 1	1.260**	.558	5.108	.024	.167 to 2.353
ideology = 2	.217	.243	.796	.372	-.260 to .694
ideology = 3	0				
terrorism = 1	.536	.350	2.343	.126	-.150 to 1.223
terrorism = 2	.373	.421	.786	.375	-.452 to 1.199
terrorism = 3	0				
security = 1	.515*	.305	2.848	.091	-.083 to 1.114
security = 2	-.016	.279	.003	.955	-.563 to .532
security = 3	0				
forpol = 1	2.242**	.413	29.449	.000	1.432 to 3.051
forpol = 2	1.423**	.343	17.166	.000	.750 to 2.096
forpol = 3	0				
knowledge = 1	-.130	.470	.076	.782	-1.051 to .791
knowledge = 2	-.391	.536	.532	.466	-1.441 to .659
knowledge = 3	0				

Source: Survey

** indicates statistical significance at the .05 level

* indicates statistical significance at the .1 level

The first thing to note is that the independent variable *support* has three categories and thus two threshold (or cut) points. Note also that the only coefficients that are statistically significant at the 95% level are forpol = 1, forpol = 2, and ideology = 1. Finally, note that the coefficients obtained via MLE (and reported in Table 19) do not immediately lend themselves to the kind of interpretation that OLS coefficients do. The customary interpretation of OLS coefficients is that they denote the change in the dependent variable for one unit (i.e., marginal) change in the independent variable to which the particular

⁷⁷ 95% CI is the 95% confidence interval.

coefficient is attached. MLE coefficients are unstandardized. As a result, they do not indicate the expected change in the dependent variable given one unit change in the independent. Luckily, standardizing them is a straightforward matter. If σ_k is the standard deviation of some independent variable X_k , then the *standardized* version of the coefficient (denoted β_k^s) is obtained thus:

$$\beta_k^s = (\sigma_k \beta_k) / \sigma_y$$

Table 20 reports the standardized coefficients:

Table 20

Standardized Coefficients ($\sigma_y = .742$)

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Deviation	Standardized Coefficient
ideology = 1	1.260	.604	1.026*
ideology = 2	.217	.604	.177
terrorism = 1	.536	.777	.561
terrorism = 2	.373	.777	.391
security = 1	.515	.771	.535*
security = 2	-.016	.771	-.017
forpol = 1	2.242	.687	2.076**
forpol = 2	1.423	.687	1.318**
knowledge = 1	-.130	.602	-.105
knowledge = 2	-.391	.602	-.317

Source: Survey

** indicates statistical significance at the .05 level

* indicates statistical significance at the .1 level

As Table 20 demonstrates, the three coefficients that were shown to be statistically significant (ideology = 1, forpol = 1, and forpol = 2) are *the* three coefficients that have the greatest impact on the dependent variable.

Probabilities

I ran the model using the collapsed variables (see above). The results are telling. The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 1$, where 1 is “no support” of U.S. counterterrorism policies, and such that we set the independent variables at 1, equals:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Prob}(y = 1|x = 1) &= 1 - \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 1) \\ &+ \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 1) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 1) + \\ &\beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 1) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 1) - \alpha_1) = 1 - \Phi(2.242 \\ &+ .536 + .515 + 1.260 - .130 - 1.297) = 1 - \Phi(3.126) = 1 - 0.999 = 0.001 = 0\%.^{78} \end{aligned}$$

The probability, as expected, of “no support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “Winthropian” terms, constructs terrorism in orthodox terms, constructs security in statist terms, self-identifies as conservative, and is not knowledgeable, is indistinguishable from 0.

The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 2$, such that 2 is “lukewarm support” of U.S. counterterrorism policy, and such that we set the independent variables at 1, equals:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Prob}(y = 2|x = 1) &= \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 1) + \\ &\beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 1) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 1) + \\ &\beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 1) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 1) - \alpha_1) - \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social} \\ &\text{construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 1) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of} \\ &\text{terrorism} = 1) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 1) + \beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} \\ &= 1) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 1) - \alpha_2) = \Phi(2.242 + .535 + .515 + 1.260 - .130 - 1.297) \\ &- \Phi(2.242 + .535 + .515 + 1.260 - .130 - 3.024) = \Phi(3.126) - \Phi(1.399) = 0.999 - 0.919 \\ &= 0.08 = 8\%. \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the probability of “lukewarm support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “Winthropian” terms, constructs terrorism in orthodox terms, constructs security in statist terms, self-identifies as conservative, and is not knowledgeable is 8%.

Finally, the probability of obtaining an observation $y = 3$, where 3 is “support” of U.S. counterterrorism policies, and such that we set the independent variables at 1, equals:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Prob}(y = 3|x = 1) &= \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 1) + \\ &\beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 1) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 1) + \end{aligned}$$

⁷⁸ Where Φ is the cumulative distribution function (see Mallick, 2009: 3).

$$\beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 1) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 1) - \alpha_2 = 1 - \Phi(2.242 + .536 + .515 + 1.260 - .130 - 3.024) = \Phi(1.399) = 0.919 = 91.9\%.$$

Thus, the probability of “support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “Winthropian” terms, constructs terrorism in orthodox terms, constructs security in statist terms, self-identifies as conservative, and is not knowledgeable is 91%. These findings are in line with expectations; namely, if we know that a citizen has come to adopt the foregoing social constructions, self-identifies as conservative, and is not knowledgeable, we can say with 91% certainty that he will support U.S. counterterrorism policies.

The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 1$, where 1 is “no support” of U.S. counterterrorism policies, and such that we set the independent variables at 2, equals:

$$\text{Prob}(y = 1|x = 2) = 1 - \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 2) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 2) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 2) + \beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 2) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 2) - \alpha_1) = 1 - \Phi(1.423 + .373 - .016 + .217 - .391 - 1.297) = 1 - \Phi(0.309) = 1 - 0.621 = 0.379 = 37.9\%.$$

The probability, therefore, of “no support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one identifies as a moderate, constructs terrorism in “middle of the road” terms, constructs security in “middle of the road” terms, constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “agnostic” terms, and is somewhat knowledgeable, is 37.9%. Again, this is in line with expectations. That is, little more than one third of those who have the foregoing qualities will not support U.S. counterterrorism policies.

The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 2$, where 2 is “lukewarm support” of U.S. counterterrorism policy, and such that we set the independent variables at 2, equals:

$$\text{Prob}(y = 2|x = 2) = \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 2) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 2) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 2) +$$

$$\beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 2) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 2) - \alpha_1) - \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 2) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 2) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 2) + \beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 2) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 1) - \alpha_2) = \Phi(1.423 + .373 - .016 + .217 - .391 - 1.297) - \Phi(1.423 + .373 - .016 + .217 - .391 - 3.024) = \Phi(0.309) - \Phi(-1.418) = 0.621 - 0.078 = 0.543 = 54.3\%.$$

Thus, the probability of “lukewarm support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one identifies as a moderate, constructs terrorism in “middle of the road” terms, constructs security in “middle of the road” terms, constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “agnostic” terms, and is somewhat knowledgeable, is 54.3%.

The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 3$, such that 3 is “support” of U.S. counterterrorism policy, and such that we set the independent variables at 2, equals:

$$\text{Prob}(y = 3|x = 2) = \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 2) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 2) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 2) + \beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 2) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 1) - \alpha_2) = \Phi(1.423 + .373 - .016 + .217 - .391 - 3.024) = \Phi(-1.418) = 0.078 = 7.8\%.$$

Thus, the probability of “support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one identifies as a moderate, constructs terrorism in “middle of the road” terms, constructs security in “middle of the road” terms, constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “agnostic” terms, and is somewhat knowledgeable, is 7.8%.

These findings are also in line with expectations. Thus, if we know that a citizen has come to adopt the foregoing social constructions, self-identifies as moderate, and is somewhat knowledgeable, we can say with only 7.8% of certainty that he will support U.S. counterterrorism policies. Now, there is – this has to be added – 54.3% probability that this citizen will express “lukewarm support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies. However, there is also 37.9% probability that she will not support U.S. counterterrorism policies. This, naturally, is in marked contrast to the probabilities found when we set the

independent variables at 1, that is when the citizens construct the history of U.S. foreign policy in “Winthropian” terms, construct terrorism in orthodox terms, construct security in statist terms, self-identify as conservatives, and are not knowledgeable.

Finally, the probability of obtaining an observation $y = 1$, where 1 is “no support”, and such that we set the independent variables at 3 is given by:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Prob}(y = 1|x = 3) &= 1 - \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 3) \\ &+ \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 3) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 3) + \\ &\beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 3) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 3) - \alpha_1) = 1 - \Phi(- \\ &1.297) = 1 - 0.097 = 0.903 = 90.3\%. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the probability of “no support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one identifies as a liberal, constructs terrorism in “heterodox” terms, constructs security in “emancipatory” terms, constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “indignant” terms, and *is* knowledgeable, is 90.3%.

The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 2$, where 2 is “lukewarm support”, and such that we set the independent variables at 3 is given by:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Prob}(y = 2|x = 3) &= \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 3) + \\ &\beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 3) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 3) + \\ &\beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 3) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 3) - \alpha_1) - \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social} \\ &\text{construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 3) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of} \\ &\text{terrorism} = 3) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 3) + \beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} \\ &= 3) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 3) - \alpha_2) = \Phi(-1.297) - \Phi(-3.024) = 0.097 - 0.012 = \\ &0.085 = 8.5\% \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the probability of “lukewarm support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one identifies as a liberal, constructs terrorism in “heterodox” terms, constructs security in “emancipatory” terms, constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “indignant” terms, and *is* knowledgeable, is 8.5%.

The probability of obtaining an observation $y = 3$, where 3 is “support”, and such that we set the independent variables at 3 is given by:

$$\text{Prob}(y = 3|x = 3) = \Phi(\beta_1(\text{social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy} = 3) + \beta_2(\text{social construction of terrorism} = 3) + \beta_3(\text{social construction of security} = 3) + \beta_4(\text{ideological self-identification} = 3) + \beta_5(\text{political knowledge} = 3) - \alpha_2) = \Phi(-3.024) = 0.012 = 1.2\%.$$

Therefore, the probability of “support” for U.S. counterterrorism policies if one identifies as a liberal, constructs terrorism in “heterodox” terms, constructs security in “emancipatory” terms, constructs the history of U.S. foreign policy in “indignant” terms, and *is* knowledgeable, is only 1.2%.

These, then, are telling numbers, and obverse of the numbers for citizens who are on the opposite side of the different continua. Table 21 puts things in perspective.

Table 21

Probabilities compared

Continua	No Support	Lukewarm Support	Support	Total
(1) Winthropian/ orthodox/statist/ conservative/ not knowledgeable	0%	8%	91.9%	99.9%
(2) agnostic/ middle-of-the-road/ moderate/somewhat knowledgeable	37.9%	54.3%	7.8%	100%
(3) indignant/ heterodox/ emancipatory/liberal/ knowledgeable	90.3%	8.5%	1.2%	100%

Source: Survey

Summarizing, support for U.S. counterterrorism policies drops precipitously from a high of 91.9% if one is on the Winthropian/orthodox/statist/conservative/not knowledgeable end of the continua to mere 7.8% if one is on the agnostic/middle-of-the-road/moderate/somewhat knowledgeable end, to a meager 1.2% if one is on the indignant/heterodox/emancipatory/liberal/knowledgeable end of the continua.

Marginal Probabilities

I also estimate the marginal effects. Marginal effects determine how “much do cell probabilities change due to the (marginal) increase of one regressor” (Boes and Winkelman, 2005: 2)? Table 22 reports that marginal probabilities.

Table 22

Marginal Effects

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>	<u>Marginal Effect</u>
ideology = 1	1.260**	1.259
ideology = 2	.217	.205
terrorism = 1	.536	.535
terrorism = 2	.373	.352
security = 1	.515*	.514
security = 2	-.016	-.015
forpol = 1	2.242**	2.241
forpol = 2	1.423**	1.345
knowledge = 1	-.130	-.129
knowledge = 2	-.391	-.369

Source: Survey

** indicates statistical significance at the .05 level

* indicates statistical significance at the .1 level

As the marginal effects in Table 22 indicate, the three independent variables that are statistically significant at the .05 level have the greatest impact on the dependent variable “support”. Therefore, the way in which one has come to socially construct the history of U.S. foreign policy greatly impacts support for the counterterrorism policies of the U.S. government. It should also be noted, however, that identifying as a conservative, too, (ideology = 1) has significant impact. Thus, the heuristic “ideological self-identification” is important in determining support. Finally, the independent variable “security = 1” – if we accept its significance at the .1 level – also impacts the dependent variable. Therefore, the way in which one has come to social construct security matters in determining the probability of support for the counterterrorism policies of the United States’ government.

The empirical findings are consonant to the main substantive argument of the paper: factual knowledge and heuristics *underdetermine* and *under-explain* preference formation – and consequently the kinds of votes they cast – in voters. Social constructions matter, and they matter a lot. More to the point, the way in which one has come to construct the history of U.S. engagement abroad is of *particular importance* in determining the probability of support for the government’s counterterrorism policies. It is, of course, worth stressing that the italicization of “underdetermine” and “under-explain” is not accidental. Factual knowledge seems to matter not at all. However, the coefficient for the heuristic “ideological self-identification” (at least when considering self-identification as a conservative) is strong and statistically significant.

The Overall Model

Test of Parallel Lines

The results in an ordered probit model are a “set of parallel lines or planes.” To verify this assumption I ran a test of parallel lines (see Table 23). The suggestion is that “If the lines or planes are parallel, the observed significance level...should be large.” We “don’t want to reject the null hypothesis that the lines are parallel (Norušis, 2012: 74).” The significance level for the test of parallel lines is .486. Thus, we may not reject the null hypothesis that the lines are parallel. In the “constrained model” – that is, “the model that assumes the lines are parallel” – the -2 Log Likelihood for the null hypothesis is 129.718; by contrast, the -2 Log Likelihood for the “model with separate lines or planes” is 120.220. This means that the model with separate lines or planes “doesn’t improve the fit very much.” Consequently, the parallel model is “adequate” (Norušis, 2012: 74).

Table 23

Test of Parallel Lines

Model	- 2 Log Likelihood	Significance
Null Hypothesis	129.718	
Model with Separate Lines	120.220	.486

Source: Survey

Measuring the Strength of Association: Pseudo R²

Table 24 reports the Nagelkerke's Pseudo R². The necessary caveat here is that the R² in ordered probit might not have the same interpretation as it does in linear regression.

Nevertheless, Nagelkerke's Pseudo R² is bound between 0 and 1 and so it may still be meaningful to report it. The Nagelkerke's Pseudo R² for the overall model (see Table 22) is .451. This signifies that the overall model explains 45% of the variance in the dependent variable.

Table 24

Pseudo R²

Nagelkerke's R ²	.451
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Source: Survey

(6) Conclusion

Looking back, in the present chapter I reported the findings of the outsider's story on the relationship between various ways of socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy, terrorism, and security and support for the counterterrorism policy of the United States' government. The outsider's story is telling. The findings seem to lend support to the hypothesis that social construction matters greatly in determining whether a citizen will vote to support or oppose the counterterrorism policy of the United States' government (as Table 21 demonstrates). Indeed, the probability of support for the counterterrorism policies of the U.S. government drops precipitously as one moves from socially constructing the history of U.S. foreign policy in Winthropian terms to socially

constructing terrorism in agnostic and, finally, indignant terms.

Looking ahead, chapter 7 rounds out the discussion. In particular, I connect all the different threads comprising the project and propose the path that the research agenda can take subsequent to the current project.

Chapter 7 Postlude

Central Substantive Claim Revisited: Or, so What Have We Learned?

James Fishkin's deliberative polls and the rational choice literature that emphasizes heuristics have good stories to tell. But – as the present study demonstrates – *factual knowledge about the political world underdetermines and under-explains preference formation in voters*. This, then, becomes the *central substantive claim* of the study: in deciding to support or oppose the counterterrorism policies of the United States government, the participants leaned heavily on the way in which they have come to understand social kinds. Referring the reader back to the theoretical discussion in chapter two, the stream of understanding into which one is connected matters; it matters greatly. In the present study, of considerable importance are the social construction of the history of U.S. foreign policy and the social construction of security (at least the social construction of security in statist terms). Notably unimportant, on the other hand, is the social construction of terrorism. I write “notably” because the present study's substantive focus (or, policy domain under consideration) is on the counterterrorism policy of the U.S. government. This, as a matter of course, should lead one to believe that the ways in which citizens understand terrorism play an important role in determining their preferences over this policy domain. In the sample obtained here, the social construction of terrorism matters not. We should, however, be cautious of making definite pronouncements on the importance of socially constructing terrorism in informing preferences. The reasons for this caution are developed below.

Of course, the related point is that the heuristic ideological self-identification also matters. This I account for. In chapter two I go to considerable length to argue that

heuristics and factual knowledge matter, but that they underdetermine preference formation. In the present study, however, factual knowledge plays virtually no role in determining (and consequently explaining) preference formation among voters. This, I suspect (more on this below), has to do with the small N rather than the complete insignificance of factual knowledge about the political world in determining voters' preferences.

Central Methodological Claim Revisited: Or How Do We Go about Learning

The *central methodological claim*, and related to the substantive claim, is that the intellectually most profitable method for the study of political phenomena is the fusion of the insider's and outsider's stories. The case for this was built in chapter 3. The emphasis that the insider's story places on meticulous unearthing the ways in which social kinds are put together permits us to construct finely-tuned variables. With this in mind, chapters 4 and 5 of the present study carry out such unearthing of the ways in which the social kinds terrorism and the history of U.S. foreign policy are put together. Chapter 2 does the same with the concept of security. In so doing, the present study *avoids* the substantive shortcomings of Fishkin's 2004 deliberative poll on terrorism, security, and foreign policy. Moreover, the telling of the insider's story *corrects* the shortcomings of the rational choice literature. In telling the insider's story, the present study opens the black box of preference formation and in so doing tells a far more meaningful outsider's story. Indeed, the deep investigation into the DNA of these social kinds permitted the creation of scales, as evidenced by chapter 6, which were then used in the survey.

Consequently, the scales derived from the telling of the insider's story permit a more meaningful telling of the outsider's story. Thus, proceeding from a rich theory of why there exists *causation* between the independent variables of the various social constructions and the dependent variable "support for the counterterrorism policies of the United States government," I was able to test whether there is a *probabilistic relationship* between the variables. Again, one can readily envision any number of instances where carefully crafted variables drawn from a rich telling of an insider's story can provide for a far more meaningful telling of the outsider's story. This, indeed, is a promising approach.

Shortcomings of the Present Iteration of the Study

Two reasons exist that call for caution when interpreting the results. *First*, on the external validity front, the sample is too small and is *not* representative of the population. The findings obtained here are, as a result, *not* generalizable. This is particularly true in light of the fact that I use ordered probit, an econometric technique that usually requires an *N* of considerable size if it is to perform properly. We can only guess at what sort of results we would obtain if the sample were larger and representative. This problem is, fortunately, readily resolvable. Casting a wider and more representative net can be accomplished with the right funding opportunity.

And *second*, questions could be raised about the extent to which the questionnaire measures the concepts well. This is no small matter. It is of tremendous importance to demonstrate as unambiguously as possible that we are in fact measuring that which we are claiming to measure. It will be recalled that in the study I assert *content validity*; that is, I propose a "logical argument rather than a test (Johnson and Joslyn, 1986: 67)" which

demonstrates the validity of the measurements. Future iterations of the study should include a much more expanded and sophisticated questionnaire that will provide multiple measures of the same concepts thereby ensuring that we *are* actually measuring that which we claim to measure.

Moreover, in addition to expanding the questionnaire to include multiple measures of the same concepts, it is of importance to further enlarge the questionnaire, so as to control for demographic factors such as age, gender, religion, service in the military, and ethnicity. The pilot study I ran included such measures, but they proved insignificant. Consequently, in the study I report here I excluded these from the questionnaire. However, their inclusion will be essential in a future study, particularly given that future studies will have a significantly expanded N and will be truly random – and thereby representative of the population. Future iterations of the survey must also include a battery of questions that will examine the participants' factual knowledge of the social kinds – this in addition to examining their general knowledge about the international system. The present study does not do this.

Additionally, it is important that future projects embedded in the research agenda permit the participants enough time so that they may carefully and deliberately read the statements that make up the survey instruments. This is essential. If the participants are not permitted enough time, then the instrument has to – out of necessity – contain simpler (simplistic really) statements. The problem with this is that a survey instruments built around simple statements are unable to capture the richness and nuance of the social kinds under investigation. But such richness is sorely needed. After all, the research agenda advocated here cannot – on the one hand – criticize Fishkin's approach (see

chapter 2) for diluting nuanced social-scientific concepts while – on the other hand – watering-down its own concepts. I did not dilute the concepts. The scales employed here sought to capture the richness and nuance of the concepts. However, that came at a cost: the participants simply did not have enough time to sift through all the statements. Indeed, writing from an admittedly impressionistic vantage point, lack of time – and, note, *not* the complexity of the statements – was the principal complaint of a number of the participants of the survey used for this study. This, then, is the opportunity cost: time or nuance; one has to be sacrificed. For the sake of social science, it is much better that nuance *not* be sacrificed. Indeed, carefully crafted variables – as argued here, the direct benefit of telling the insider’s story – will be for naught if the participants are not allocated ample time to just as carefully consider the survey’s statements.

This expansion of the survey instrument, along with the significant expansion of the sample size, should yield pretty robust findings on what are the most important factors in determining support for the government’s policy.

Future Research Agenda

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the current iteration of the study, the methodological approach articulated in the present study opens up several avenues that should lead to a fruitful research agenda. In continuation, I suggest a few avenues. *One* avenue may be to extend the model suggested here to states other than United States. How do various social constructions determine and explain citizens’ preferences in, say, Russia (with Chechnya), Spain (with ETA), or the United Kingdom (with IRA)? In fact, it might be particularly fruitful to extend the approach suggested here and explore the effects that various social constructions have on citizens’ preferences over the policy

domain of counterterrorism in the Muslim world. Indeed, the questionnaire could be expanded to control for the events of the Arab Spring.

A *second* avenue for future research might be to extend the model presented here in time. Taking, for instance, September 11, 2001 as a threshold, one can ask how have social constructions evolved over time and what sort of effect have these changes had on policy preferences. Such a study could commence, say, ten years before the events of 9/11, and terminate at the tenth anniversary of the attacks. Naturally, such a study would necessitate the use of time series.

The theoretical model used here need not be used to study only the substantive area of counterterrorism policy. Any foreign policy area may profitably be subsumed under the model proposed here. Thus, a *third* avenue for future research might be to study the effects of various social constructions on citizens' preferences over various other policy domains. The Iranian nuclear program comes to mind. Or, even more broadly – and recalling here Fishkin's *We the People* project – we can study the effects of social construction on citizens' preferences with respect to the standing of the United States in the world and the general foreign policy approach that it needs to adopt.

It has been frequently argued that foreign policy elites, while not completely, are in large measure isolated from the effects of public opinion. A *fourth* possible avenue for future research is to explore the relationship between social construction and foreign policy preferences among the foreign policy elites. Thus, it may be profitable to examine – holding other things constant – the effects of the kinds of social constructions that foreign policy elites hold on the kinds of policy proposals that they advocate. We should here keep in mind that foreign policy elites in economic matters such as trade may be less

well isolated from the effects of public opinion. Nevertheless, the approach here may – for example – be integrated with societal, sectoral, and statist models of trade preferences to better explain the formation of states’ trade policies. Finally, the model presented here can be fruitfully merged with Fishkin’s deliberative polls. Naturally, the central difference would be that such a deliberative poll would have to address the two shortcomings addressed in the present study. Thus one, in addition to, quite properly,⁷⁹ measuring changes in factual knowledge – and the effects of these changes on citizens’ preferences – the proposed hybrid study would also measure social construction in both the pre- and post-test. And two, the members of a potential panel of experts will have to be chosen such that they articulate all the various ways in which the social kinds under consideration can be understood and constructed.

The reader will have noticed the qualifier “potential” before “panel of experts.” It was strategically placed there insomuch as I am troubled by its existence in Fishkin’s deliberative polls. Put otherwise, I maintain – though I do not explicitly explore this in the present study – that the panels of experts must be jettisoned if Fishkin’s deliberative polls are to be fully in keeping with the deliberative democracy tradition. Namely, deliberative democracy begins from the premise that the creation of a certain kind of public sphere is essential to the development of public opinion that seeks to critique and control the government. On this account, the public sphere is a “specifically political space distinct from the state and the economy, an institutionally bounded *discursive arena that is home to citizen debate, deliberation, agreement, and action* (Villa, 1992:

⁷⁹ I write “quite properly” because it will be recalled that I do not suggest that factual knowledge plays no role in determining and explaining preference formation. I simply maintain, and empirically demonstrate, that social constructions play the most important role in determining and explaining preferences formation, while factual knowledge underdetermines and under-explains preferences formation.

712; emphasis mine).” The public sphere is the space for Arendtian positive political power to act together; it is the space that gathers us together. As Villa points out:

... Arendt consistently emphasizes the idea of the public realm as a space of ‘tangible freedom’—a space that is physically separate from those of work and labor, [those] bounded or constituted by law, and [as such is a space] that can serve as an arena or stage for political action. *Not only coercion and violence but all relations of hierarchy or command are excluded from this space* [emphasis mine]. The public realm is the space of freedom precisely because it creates an artificial *equality* among persons whose individual talents make them naturally unequal and because it preserves the human condition of *plurality* by relating and separating persons simultaneously. The public realm is the artificial ‘world’ common to us as citizens, an ‘in-between’ that makes both equality and individuality possible (1992: 713-714).

Owing to the foregoing, Villa articulates, what he terms, the “*spatiality* of the public realm as conceived by Arendt.” Namely,

Unless this sphere has the power to gather us together, to remove each of us from the private while simultaneously guaranteeing each of us a distinct *place* in this ‘common world,’ genuine politics is not possible. *Where this sphere is invaded by matters and ends that are not essentially open to debate, plurality is effectively neutered and the public realm loses its three-dimensionality: the ‘world’ ceases to be constituted from a variety of perspectives. Where this space is forcibly collapsed or eliminated (as Arendt argues it is under totalitarianism), the ‘boundaries and channels of communication between individual men’ are replaced by ‘a band of iron which holds them so tightly together that it is as though their plurality had disappeared into One Man of gigantic dimensions’* [Arendt, 1986c: 164]. The space between individuals is destroyed, with the result that action is no longer possible. So long as the spatial dimension of the public realm is preserved and the ‘boundaries and channels of communication’ remain intact, freedom in the distinctively Arendtian sense is possible (Villa, 1992: 714; emphases mine).

Inasmuch as in the public sphere “all relations of hierarchy or command are excluded from this space,” and inasmuch as the “public realm is the space of freedom precisely because it creates an artificial *equality* among persons whose individual talents make them naturally unequal and because it preserves the human condition of *plurality* by relating and separating persons simultaneously,” it is clear that citizens arrive at the truth not by way of expert testimony but via – what amounts to – unmediated, unconstrained, and respectful conversation. Consequently, future projects that are hybrids of the approach adopted in the present study and Fishkin’s deliberative poll should eschew the use of any panels of experts.

Concluding the discussion, notwithstanding the methodological shortcomings – most of which can easily be remedied – the present study has much to recommend. Future research – as demonstrated in this chapter – can be readily built out of the present model.

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