Media Rhetoric, Political Ideologies, and Public Opinion on Terrorism

Research Proposal
Instructor: Prof. David Carter

Weiye (Rex) Deng
Washington University in St. Louis

December 21, 2020

1   Introduction

The 21st century has witnessed a surge of terrorist incidents across the world. After the September 11 Incident that caused thousands of casualties in the United States, Western European countries including France, Spain, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Belgium, have also been victimized by the mass violence and terrorist attacks in the recent decade, where hundreds of died or got injured in each incident. The prevalence of terror, which has become the main concern of security and conflicts and been broadly covered across media, has great implications on policy formulation and the public opinion on terrorism.

The exact mechanism of how public opinion on terrorism is shaped may not be as straightforward as it seems, since it involves multiple actors and factors, such as individuals' prior predispositions and knowledge, the media rhetoric, as well as the government reactions. In this article, we first theorize and hypothesize the mechanism how the public opinion towards policies related to terrorism is shaped based on the extant literature, within which we identify the interaction between individuals' and media as one determining factor few scholars have explored yet. Specifically, scholars have discovered that various attitudes related to

terrorism are critically formed by citizens' perceptions of threat from terrorism (Gordon and Arian, 2001; Huddy et al., 2002; Jost et al., 2003; Davis and Silver, 2004; Huddy et al., 2005; Mueller, 2005a,b; Shambaugh et al., 2010; Bonanno and Jost, 2006; Lemyre et al., 2006; Das et al., 2009; Gadarian, 2010; Bozzoli and Müller, 2011; Van de Vyver et al., 2016; Dolan and Ilderton, 2017; Brouard, Vasilopoulos, and Foucault, 2018). Even though available channels of how perceptions of threat shape attitudes are contingent on the choices of the dependent variables, which can be for instance support for counterterrorist policies (Gordon and Arian, 2001; Huddy et al., 2005; Dolan and Ilderton, 2017), less civil liberties (Davis and Silver, 2004; Bozzoli and Müller, 2011), and foreign policy attitudes (Gadarian, 2010), this causal inference is generally robust. Taking a further step, scholars have also devoted to the identification of how perceived threat from terrorism are established, and previous research can be generally classified into two strands, one highlighting the role of information and media, and the other highlighting the significance of individuals' prior beliefs (Gadarian, 2010; Hetherington and Suhay, 2011; Brouard, Vasilopoulos, and Foucault, 2018; Dolliver and Kearns, 2019). These analyses have separately shed light on how individuals gather information from the media to form their own interpretations of terrorism and how their definitions can be swayed by their own ideological predispositions, which further impact the varying degree of threat perceptions.

It is meaningful to unravel this mechanism for three reasons. First, this synthesis of literature assembles a more complete picture to understand the social aggregation process of public opinion on terrorism. Previous literature has greatly shed light on the relationships among most components, but as we are going to show, the formation of public opinion is a chain reaction where the activation of psychological threat for terrorism by individuals' predispositions and media's rhetoric does not end in itself, but further shapes the public opinion and policy preferences. This leads to our second justification, which is that knowing where it starts and what it ultimately affects aggregates the information to appropriately react to it. More specifically, knowing where the perceived threat comes from may help both

prevent overreactive policies and unpreparedness. The last reason is that the portrayal of this mechanism helps us identify what factors are still left to determine the public opinion on terrorism.

As it turns out, based on the theoretical mechanism, we find that few scholars deal with an important fact that the public definitions of terrorism are not a passive acceptance of information from the media, but a result of interaction between citizens' own definitions of terrorism and the media rhetoric. This interaction makes it necessary to further investigate the link between citizens' self-definitions of terrorism and the media's, since the media's reporting rhetoric of terrorism do not necessarily conform to citizens' prior knowledge. It may not be problematic to omit this interaction to probe the relationship between perceptions of threat and attitudes when citizens' own definitions are congruent with the media reports, whereas it is often not the case. When an incident is classified as terrorism by media but an individual holds a different opinion, this divergence may lead to a less salient perception of threat than when the citizens' definition of terrorism is congruent with the media. Conversely, when an incident is not labelled as terrorism by media but an individual thinks it is, the perception of threat can be underestimated. Therefore, not accounting for the interactions between individuals' and media's definitions of terrorism can lead to estimation bias of threat perceptions and more importantly, the attitudinal measurements indicating the public opinion.

The bias of not considering the interplay between citizens and media is worsened by fact that media cannot be viewed as a unitary actor to provide homogenous information, which studies rarely take into account, either. A typical one that divides the media is political ideology. If there are differences of reporting the attributes of a violent incident or choosing to give a terrorist label or not, and if these differences can be attributed to the media's partisan stances, the public definitions of terrorism can be highly susceptible to the news sources and the interaction between the sources and their own ideological predispositions, because people tend to seek consistency between their ideological predispositions and the presented

information (e.g., Festinger, 1957; Kuklinski et al., 2000). For example, if conservative media label a violent incident as a terrorist attack while the liberal counterparts do not, a conservative American, even if her prior knowledge of terrorism dose not presume a terrorist definition, may tend to override her knowledge by maintaining a consistency between belief and information. Efforts to understand how perceptions are formed by the individual-media interaction and the moderating role of partisanship as a form of ideological predisposition can produce insights in the role of polarization in defining terrorism and its consequences of molding public opinion.

Therefore, the discussion that follows stresses the research significance of considering the interaction between individuals' own interpretations of terrorism and the media's strategies. First, we both theorize and hypothesize the mechanism of how public opinion to terrorism is shaped by perceptions of threat based on the extant literature. In this part, we also include scholarly discussions about the origins of threat perceptions, including the role of media as the major sources of information and ideological predispositions. Specifically, we emphasize the importance of considering the interaction between the public knowledge and media's strategies of defining terrorism as well as the moderator of political ideology, with our hypotheses attached. This research proposal ends with some brief thoughts on data sources and experimental design.

2 The mechanism: Perception of Threat and Public Opinion Related to Terrorism

To clarify why interaction between individuals and media reliably predict the public opinion related to terrorism, we first include the scholarly discussions on how public opinion on terrorism is critically shaped by the perceptions of threat. The coverage of this domain is extensive, and the conclusions are similar that threat perceptions are a good indicator of public opinion on terrorism. In a regional study supported by a national survey in Canada,

Lemyre et al. (2006) discover that Canadians generally perceive low levels of threat of terrorism, and one of the implications of this result, despite not being backed by evidence, is that support for investments in terrorism preparedness is expected to be low, since mass mobilization of fear is not easy. Subsequent studies have provided sufficient empirical evidence to identify a positive relationship between threat perceptions and willingness to trade off civil liberties for security and protections from the government (Davis and Silver, 2004; Bozzoli and Müller, 2011). Other scholars come to a similar conclusion except that they use support for antiterrorist policies as their dependent variable (Gordon and Arian, 2001; Huddy et al., 2005; Dolan and Ilderton, 2017) In addition, Shambaugh et al.'s analysis 2010 sheds light on the persistent effect of the September 11 attacks as a subset of traumatic events on Americans' threat perceptions of national security even after seven years, which adds robustness to this relationship since it signals how far-reaching these perceptions can be.

Huddy et al. (2002) also discuss the salience of threat perceptions in shaping public opinion on terrorism by noting the distinction between perceptions of personal and national threats. Even though they find that person concerns of being victimized are overshadowed by perceived national threats in explaining respondents' estimates of ramifications caused by terrorism, they suggest that personal threat perceptions can be translated into national views by both exaggerating the negative impacts of terrorist events and extending support for actions that reduce fear and threat from terrorism. Considering such compelling effect of uncertainty and threat perceptions on public opinion and government's reactions, Mueller (2005a,b) have advocated reducing the anxiety and fear driven by terrorism to prevent overreaction and excessive resource allocation.

Recent studies also explore dependent variables less directly linked with terrorism, such as migration attitudes, foreign policy attitudes, and ideologies. Psychological literature has discovered that prejudice and perceived threats from immigrants, particularly Muslims, as well as the adoption of more conversative stances are positively associated with the exposure

to the terrorist incidents, including the September 11 attacks and the London bombings in 2005, which results in the perceptions of danger and fear (Jost et al., 2003; Lemyre et al., 2006; Bonanno and Jost, 2006; Das et al., 2009; Van de Vyver et al., 2016). In a more recent study, Böhmelt, Bove, and Nussio (2020) further argues that such prejudice and perceived risk of immigrants resulting from perceived threats from terrorism are not confined to the national borders and can spread to neighbor states, since borders are only one way to define in-group favoritism and the news media also transmit the information across borders. For foreign policy attitudes, Gadarian (2010) provided experimental evidence to justify that increased perceptions of threat can explain more favor to hawkish foreign policies. For ideologies, scholars find that perceived threat from terrorism can explain ideological shift from left to right (Bonanno and Jost, 2006; Van de Vyver et al., 2016; Brouard, Vasilopoulos, and Foucault, 2018).

Clearly, even the dependent variables vary to represent and measure the public opinion on terrorism, the threat perceptions are extensively regarded a robust psychological predictor of those variables. To establish the mechanism of how public opinion on terrorism is formed, we attach great importance to the threat perceptions. Specifically, we (tentatively) choose support for antiterrorist policies and foreign policies attitudes to represent public opinion on terrorism because they are both highly related to terrorism and have been extensively discussed. Therefore, our first set of hypotheses is:

H_{1a}: Individuals with higher perceived threat from terrorism are more likely to extend more support for antiterrorist policies.

H_{1b}: Individuals with higher perceived threat from terrorism are more likely to have more hawkish foreign policy preferences.

3 The Mechanism: Sources of Threat Perceptions

3.1 The Role of Media

Given that perceptions of threat are a recognized predictor of public opinion on terrorism, it is possible to further identify the channels that form public opinion through this psychological mechanism. One notable channel is media that convey most information for the public. Huff and Kertzer (2018) classifies such information into objective and subjective attributes. The objective attributes mainly include "facts on the ground", such as types, severity, target, and location of the violence, while subjective attributes are related to the categorization of actors and motivations, which helps citizens form the varying degree of threat perceptions by inferring from such information. For example, it could make a difference if the actor is categorized as Muslim instead of a Christian, or an individual attack instead of organizational. A more detailed summary of previous literature related to this discussion can be referred to Avdan and Webb (2018). In addition, they also implement the information of the coordination among teams of militants as a significant source of threat perceptions, since citizens can infer more sophistication and thus higher odds of being harmed by such information is available. Essentially, this subset of literature highlights the processes of how the public defines terrorism and form their own threat perceptions by acquiring and inferring information from the media.

Discussions have been also particularly devoted to how media can shape public opinion on terrorism through its reporting rhetoric. Scholars contend that negative information about destructions and casualties, provocative visual imagery, and sensationalistic rhetoric of terrorist news covered by media can explain citizens' prejudice towards immigrants (Das et al., 2009), more support for antiterrorist policies (Landau et al., 2004), more hawkish foreign policy attitudes (Gadarian, 2010; Merolla and Zechmeister, 2009), and prejudice towards immigrants (Böhmelt, Bove, and Nussio, 2020), because such negative information and images evokes public fear and perceived threat. More generally, Druckman and McDermott (2008)

signify that the individuals tend to be more risk-seeking if issues are framed as losses and arouse their negative emotions. In the context of terrorism, this suggests that negative information about terrorism framed by the media can induce more public support for more risky policies to counter terrorism because such media rhetoric readily stimulate threat perceptions.

Given that previous scholars have articulated how media form threat perceptions from terrorism through information provision and negative rhetoric, to complete the mechanism by implementing the origins of perceived threat, it is reasonable to hypothesize that:

H_{2a} : Individuals with higher media consumption are likely to perceive higher threat from terrorism.

H_{2b} : Individuals with more exposure to negative information in the media are likely to perceive higher threat from terrorism.

3.2   Individual Predispositions

Besides the salience of media in profoundly shaping threat perceptions, studies have also investigated how individuals' predispositions are substantially involved in this psychological process. One strand of literature referring to the social identity theory, though it does not explicitly explain whether such identity demarcations have led to different threat perceptions of terrorism, suggests the validity of the influence from ideological predispositions. These studies stress that citizens' demarcations of identities such as race, partisanships, and religions help them distinguish in-group from out-group members and therefore, view the out-group members as more likely to be perpetrators and label such incidents as terrorism (see for example, D'Orazio and Salehyan, 2018; Dolliver and Kearns, 2019, for a more detailed summary of related literature).

Scholars do accentuate a clear relationship between ideological predispositions and threat perceptions from terrorism, and they frequently use liberal-conservative spectrum as one form

of predisposed beliefs. Jost et al. (2003) discover that fear of threat as a social-cognitive motive is a reliable predictor for political conservatism. Meanwhile, the element of aversion to uncertainty in political conservatism may indicate that political conservatism can lead to fear and perceived threat for incidents challenging stability of social system, such as terrorist attacks. Consistent with this result, Davis and Silver (2004) also ascertain that conservatives in the United States are more willing to trade off civil liberties for security in the face of terrorism. Liberals also have this inclination, but their predicted level of pro-civil liberties is still higher than the conservatives. Similarly, Shambaugh et al. (2010) finds that when other social and demographic covariates are controlled, Republicans, during the Bush Administration, are significantly more susceptible to terrorism with both higher national and personal threat perceptions Comparatively, other studies that apply liberal-conservative spectrum as a control variable show more mixed results (e.g., Huddy et al., 2005; Dolan and Ilderton, 2017).

Besides this spectrum, scholars also investigate other types of political ideologies that affect threat perceptions and attitudes towards terrorism. For example, scholars have claimed how citizens' prior attachment to authoritarianism manifests when confronted with situational threat (e.g., Feldman and Stenner, 1997; Feldman, 2003; Merolla and Zechmeister, 2009). Given this psychological mechanism, Hetherington and Suhay (2011) further explore whether predisposed authoritarianism, including less political tolerance, more support for aggression, and more submission to authorities, explains support for war on terror. Their analysis based on two cross-sectional opinion surveys finds that those with low level of authoritarianism are more supportive of the war on terror because a higher level of perceived threat. This negative relationship does not conform to what previous scholars have claimed, but this paper does illustrate the close relationship between ideological predispositions and threat perceptions.

Based on such insights, we would like to improve the mechanism how threat perceptions from terrorism is shaped by adding the dimension of ideological predispositions. Specifically,

we hypothesize that:

H_3: More conservative individuals are likely to perceive higher threat from terrorism.

4 What is left: Interactions between Media and Invidiuals

However, even though we successfully verify all the hypotheses related to the mechanism, there is one component left rarely explored with only a few exceptions (e.g., Dolliver and Kearns, 2019) but we argue that is highly important, which is the interaction between individuals' predispositions and the media's rhetoric. There are two reasons why we argue that this perspective is also one critical process yet different from either component that forms this interaction to shape the perceived threat from terrorism. The first reason is that the public definitions of terrorism are not necessarily congruent with the media's. Indeed, individuals acquire most information about violent incidents from the media, but it is problematic to assume that citizens would passively accept all the information from the media to shape their own definitions. Rather, we argue that individuals actively interpret the information from the media with their prior knowledge to define terrorism (references required). Accounting for this perspective is crucial to measure the magnitude of the media's effect on the perceived threats from terrorism more precisely. If not, it is possible that we overestimate the effect of media's rhetoric when some individuals think the media are exaggerating the attributes of a violent incident.

While the first reason deals with a cognitive perspective, the second reason is related to beliefs. Previous studies that delve into how media affect threat perceptions mostly implicitly presume that media are perceived to be a unitary actor and provide homogeneous information. However, it is not a realistic assumption because the media in our world are highly split and this fragmentation often leads to different and even competing reporting frames (Huff and Kertzer, 2018). One of sharpest "knives" that cuts the media is political ideol-

ogy. Even though there is still a heated debate on whether elite polarization has resulted in mass polarization (e.g., Fiorina, Samuel, and Jeremy, 2006; Abramowitz and Saunders, 2008; Hetherington et al., 2012), scholars reveal that citizens have developed increasing antipathy towards ideological opponents (Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes, 2012) and a partisan motivated reasoning in policy preferences (Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative to take into consideration that media are ideologically split because they can frequently interact with and even reinforce individuals' political ideologies and partisanship. Essentially, we expect that people tend to trust the media sharing similar ideologies with them due to the potential trend of increasing mass polarization.

The interaction between individuals' and media's ideologies may even moderate potential discrepancies between citizens' prior knowledge about terrorism and media's reporting rhetoric. That is, even though we expect that people will actively process the information and not necessarily conform to the media's definitions, citizens are more likely to override their prior knowledge and trust the media close to their ideologies, because people tend to seek consistency between their ideological predispositions and the presented information (see Festinger (1957) for the origin of this theory and Kuklinski et al. (2000) for a good summary of related literature). This theory suggests that people seek this consistency to avoid cognitive dissonance, so they make inferences to fit the information into their beliefs. Such beliefs tend to blur the "hard data" and become dominant if they frequently use them. In the context of terrorism, we can infer that when citizens notice the news source, they tend to make judgments in a most comfortable way, which is to conform to the media's definitions of terrorism if their ideologies are sufficiently close. If not, citizens are more likely to ignore the media's definitions and stick to their own regardless of their prior knowledge about terrorism.

Therefore, how individuals' own definitions of terrorism and ideological predispositions interact with the media's classification and their inherent ideologies critically determines the perceptions of threat and therefore, policy attitudes and reactions to terrorism. Dolliver and Kearns (2019) touch on this aspect and probe how the public definition of Las Vegas shooting

11

is influenced by the media, their political ideology, and the news sources by analyzing the survey sampling the U.S. adults. They discover that conservatives are less likely to define this incident as terrorism. They also ask the participants what change of attributes would be necessary to change their definitions, and they find that the significant factors include both objective attributes (weapon, scale of the attack, or number of victims) and subjective attributes (perpetrator with a different political ideology, religious view, or motivation). We would like to extend this analysis by including how people's political ideologies can interact with the news sources and make a causal inference by providing experimental evidence, where we can manipulate the attributes of an incident. Using a hypothetical incident instead of a real-world one also helps prevent any potential effect of citizens' prior impressions.

Therefore, based on the discussions above, our hypotheses are:

H_{4a}: When the news source is unknown, individuals' perception of threat is the highest when they and the media both define an incident as terrorism, second highest when they define an incident as terrorism but the media do not, third highest when the media define an incident as terrorism but they do not, and lowest when neither they nor the media define the incident as terrorism.

H_{4b}: When the news source is disclosed but is noncongruent with individuals' political ideologies, the level of threat perception depends on the individuals' prior knowledge about terrorism. The more likely they define an incident as terrorism, the higher level of threat they perceive.

H_{4c}: When the news source is disclosed and is congruent with individuals' political ideologies, the level of threat perception depends on the media's classification. Concretely, regardless individuals' prior knowledge about terrorism, the level of threat perception is the higher when the media define the incident as terrorism.

5   Data and Experimental Design (outline)

Dolliver and Kearns (2019) suggest that there are differences how media frame terrorism across the political spectrum, where conservative media tend to put more weight on the radical Islamist terrorism and the liberals tend to label a wider range of violence as terrorism, including those committed by the Whites. However, this observation is based on limited news coverage and reference from other journals (e.g. Huff and Kertzer, 2018). Therefore, we would like to compile an original dataset to cover violent incidents with a sufficient span of time and space to disentangle whether media indeed frame and label violent incidents differently based on their political ideologies. If there are indeed any notable differences, this can serve as some preliminary evidence that our hypotheses related to the role of media hold true.

The experiment will be modeled as below with three parts. First, all respondents answer a series of questions about their personal characteristics. Most importantly, we would like to make the respondents self-identify their partisanship, political ideologies, as well as frequencies and preferences of media consumption. The second part of survey is the core of the experiments, which both manipulate the information of media's ideologies (absence vs. liberal vs. conservative) and media's definitions of terrorism (explicitly label it as terrorism or not). For the control group that serves as a baseline for measurement, they will read a piece of news unrelated to political violence nor terrorism before any attitudinal measurement. For the treatment group, they will be presented an artificial violent incident, where the subjective and objective attributes (here using the Huff and Kertzer (2018)'s term) of the incident are manipulated so that it is likely to be a terrorist incident. At this step, the term "terrorism" is deliberately absent because we need to prevent any endogenous definitions. Then, we will ask to what extent the respondents agree that it is a terrorist incident to measure their prior knowledge of terrorism. After that, the treatment group will be randomly divided into six categories, which are defined by the possible combinations of the treatment conditions. The last part concerns on the measurement of our dependent variables, which are public opin-

ion on terrorism for H_{1a} and H_{1b}, and perceptions of threat for the rest of the hypotheses, Essentially, we need to develop appropriate questions for measurement. Specifically, we will first measure threat perceptions to ensure that respondents can confirm their psychological responses to the terrorist news before expressing their opinions on policy preferences.

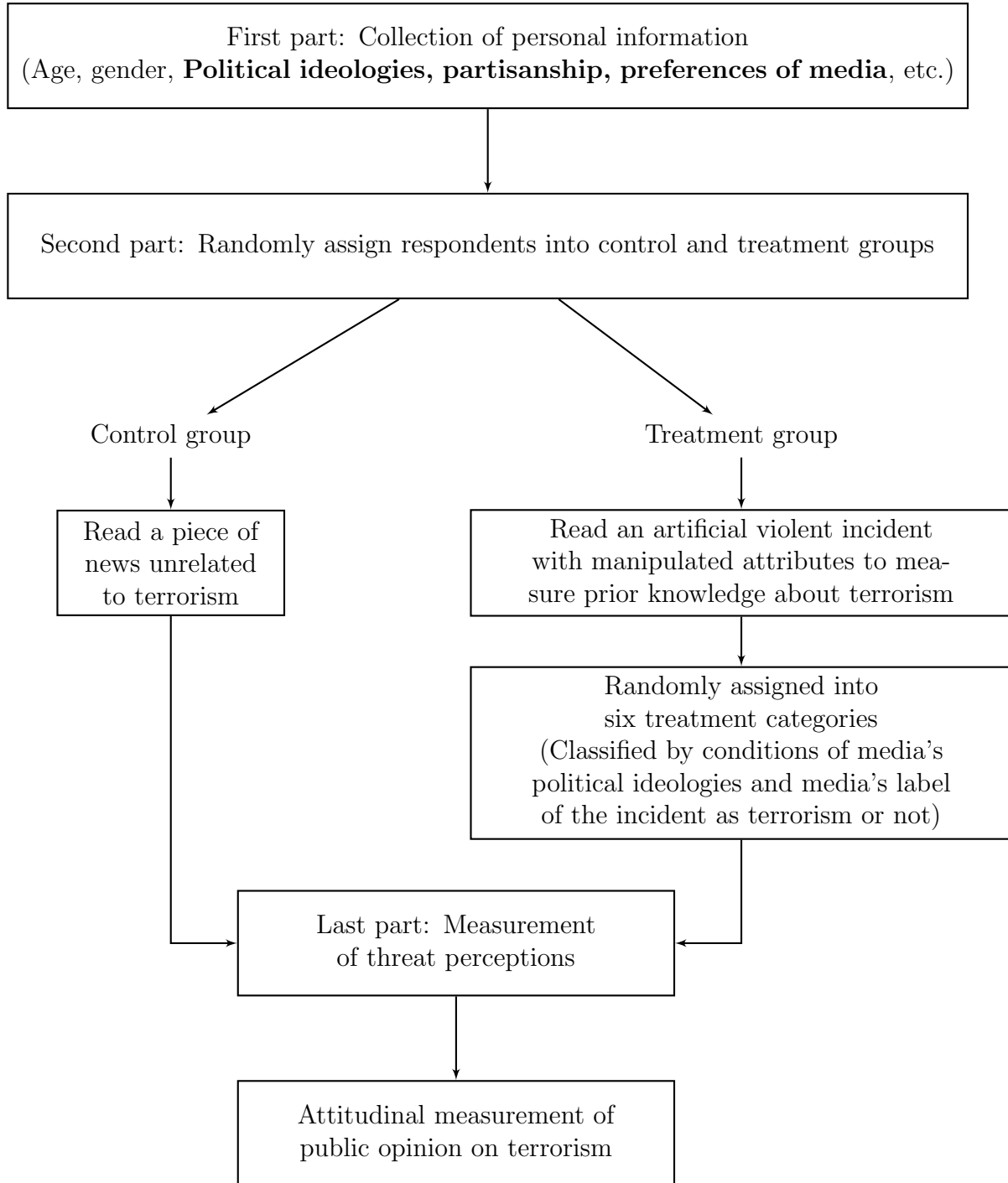The whole processes of the experiment are visualized in Figure 1.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                First part: Collection of personal information         │
│   (Age, gender, **Political ideologies, partisanship, preferences of  │
│                           media**, etc.)                              │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                    │
                                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Second part: Randomly assign respondents into control and treatment  │
│                              groups                                   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Control group   Treatment group

```
┌──────────────────┐            ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Read a piece of │            │    Read an artificial violent       │
│  news unrelated  │            │  incident with manipulated          │
│  to terrorism    │            │  attributes to mea-                 │
│                  │            │  sure prior knowledge about         │
│                  │            │  terrorism                          │
└──────────────────┘            └────────────────────────────────────┘
                                                   │
                                                   ▼
                                ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
                                │      Randomly assigned into          │
                                │      six treatment categories        │
                                │  (Classified by conditions of        │
                                │   media's political ideologies       │
                                │   and media's label of the           │
                                │   incident as terrorism or not)      │
                                └────────────────────────────────────┘

        ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
        │      Last part: Measurement           │
        │      of threat perceptions            │
        └──────────────────────────────────────┘
                         │
                         ▼
        ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
        │      Attitudinal measurement of       │
        │      public opinion on terrorism      │
        └──────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 1: The Flow of the Experiement

6 Bibliography

Abramowitz, Alan I., and Kyle L. Saunders. 2008. "Is polarization a myth?" *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 542–555.

Avdan, Nazli, and Clayton Webb. 2018. "The big, the bad, and the dangerous: public perceptions and terrorism." *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict: Pathways toward Terrorism and Genocide* 11(1): 3–25.

Berrebi, Claude, and Esteban F. Klor. 2008. "Are voters sensitive to terrorism? Direct evidence from the israeli electorate." *American Political Science Review* 102(3): 279–301.

Böhmelt, Tobias, Vincenzo Bove, and Enzo Nussio. 2020. "Can Terrorism Abroad Influence Migration Attitudes at Home?" *American Journal of Political Science* 64(3): 437–451.

Bonanno, George A., and John T. Jost. 2006. "Conservative shift among high-exposure survivors of the september 11th terrorist attacks." *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 28(4): 311–323.

Bove, Vincenzo, and Tobias Böhmelt. 2016. "Does immigration induce terrorism?" *Journal of Politics* 78(2): 572–588.

Bozzoli, Carlos, and Cathérine Müller. 2011. "Perceptions and attitudes following a terrorist shock: Evidence from the UK." *European Journal of Political Economy* 27(SUPPL. 1).

Brouard, Sylvain, Pavlos Vasilopoulos, and Martial Foucault. 2018. "How terrorism affects political attitudes: France in the aftermath of the 2015–2016 attacks." *West European Politics* 41(5): 1073–1099.

Das, Enny, Brad J. Bushman, Marieke D. Bezemer, Peter Kerkhof, and Ivar E. Vermeulen. 2009. "How terrorism news reports increase prejudice against outgroups: A terror management account." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45(3): 453–459.

Davis, Darren W., and Brian D. Silver. 2004. "Civil Liberties vs. Security: Public Opinion in the Context of the Terrorist Attacks on America." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(1): 28–46.

Dolan, Thomas M., and Nathan Ilderton. 2017. "Scared into demanding action: The effects of the perceived threat from terrorism on policy salience." *Polity* 49(2): 245–269.

Dolliver, Matthew J., and Erin M. Kearns. 2019. "Is It Terrorism?: Public Perceptions, Media, and Labeling the Las Vegas Shooting." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*: Forthcoming.

D'Orazio, Vito, and Idean Salehyan. 2018. "Who is a Terrorist? Ethnicity, Group Affiliation, and Understandings of Political Violence." *International Interactions* 44(6): 1017–1039.

Druckman, James N., and Rose McDermott. 2008. "Emotion and the framing of risky choice." *Political Behavior* 30(3): 297–321.

Druckman, James N., Erik Peterson, and Rune Slothuus. 2013. "How elite partisan polarization affects public opinion formation." *American Political Science Review* 107(1): 57–79.

Enders, Walter, Todd Sandler, and Khusrav Gaibulloev. 2011. "Domestic versus transnational terrorism: Data, decomposition, and dynamics." *Journal of Peace Research* 48(3): 319–337.

Feldman, Stanley. 2003. "Enforcing social conformity: A theory of authoritarianism." *Political Psychology* 24(1): 41–74.

Feldman, Stanley, and Karen Stenner. 1997. "Perceived threat and authoritarianism." *Political Psychology* 18(4): 741–770.

Festinger, Leon. 1957. *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance.* Palo, Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Fiorina, Morris P., Abrams J. Samuel, and Pope C. Jeremy. 2006. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America.* 2nd ed. New York: Pearson Longman.

Gadarian, Shana Kushner. 2010. "The politics of threat: How terrorism news shapes foreign policy attitudes." *Journal of Politics* 72(2): 469–483.

Gordon, Carol, and Asher Arian. 2001. "Threat and decision making." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(2): 196–215.

Hetherington, Marc J., and Elizabeth Suhay. 2011. "Authoritarianism, threat, and Americans' support for the war on terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3): 546–560.

Hetherington, Marc J., Jonathan D. Weiler, Marc J. Hetherington, and Jonathan D. Weiler. 2012. "Putting Polarization in Perspective." In *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics.* , 15–32.

Hitlan, Robert T., Kimberly Carillo, Michael A. Zárate, and Shelley N. Aikman. 2007. "Attitudes toward immigrant groups and the September 11 terrorist attacks." *Peace and Conflict* 13(2): 135–152.

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav. 2005. "Threat, anxiety, and support of antiterrorism policies." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 593–608.

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Theresa Capelos, and Colin Provost. 2002. "The consequences of terrorism: Disentangling the effects of personal and national threat." *Political Psychology* 23(3): 485–509.

Huff, Connor, and Joshua D. Kertzer. 2018. "How the Public Defines Terrorism." *American Journal of Political Science* 62(1): 55–71.

Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. 2012. "Affect, not ideology: A social identity perspective on polarization." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(3): 405–431.

Jost, John T., Jack Glaser, Arie W. Kruglanski, and Frank J. Sulloway. 2003. "Political Conservatism as Motivated Social Cognition." *Psychological Bulletin* 129(3): 339–375.

Kuklinski, James H., Paul J. Quirk, Jennifer Jerit, David Schwieder, and Robert F. Rich. 2000. "Misinformation and the currency of democratic citizenship." *Journal of Politics* 62(3): 790–816.

Landau, Mark J., Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg, Florette Cohen, Tom Pyszczynski, Jamie Arndt, Claude H. Miller, Daniel M. Ogilvie, and Alison Cook. 2004. "Deliver us from evil: The effects of mortality salience and reminders of 9/11 on support for President George W. Bush." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 30(9): 1136–1150.

Lemyre, Louise, Michelle C. Turner, Jennifer E.C. Lee, and Daniel Krewski. 2006. "Public perception of terrorism threats and related information sources in Canada: Implications for the management of terrorism risks." *Journal of Risk Research* 9(7): 755–774.

Lerner, Jennifer S., Roxana M. Gonzalez, Deborah A. Small, and Baruch Fischhoff. 2003. "Effects of fear and anger on perceived risks of terrorism: A national field experiment." *Psychological Science* 14(2): 144–150.

Merolla, Jennifer L., and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2009. *Democracy at risk: How terrorist threats affect the public.* University of Chicago Press.

Mueller, John. 2005*a*. "Simplicity and spook: Terrorism and the dynamics of threat exaggeration." *International Studies Perspectives* 6(2): 208–234.

Mueller, John. 2005*b*. "Six rather unusual propositions about terrorism." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 17(4): 487–505.

Norris, Pippa, Montague Kern, and Marion Just. 2003. *Framing terrorism: The news media, the government and the public.* Routledge.

Savun, Burcu, and Brian J. Phillips. 2009. "Democracy, foreign policy, and terrorism." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53(6): 878–904.

Shambaugh, George, Richard Matthew, Roxane Cohen Silver, Bryan McDonald, Michael Poulin, and Scott Blum. 2010. "Public perceptions of traumatic events and policy preferences during the George W. Bush administration: A portrait of America in Turbulent times." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33(1): 55–91.

Sjöberg, Lennart. 2005. "The Perceived Risk of Terrorism." *Risk Management* 7(1): 43–61.

Van de Vyver, Julie, Diane M. Houston, Dominic Abrams, and Milica Vasiljevic. 2016. "Boosting Belligerence: How the July 7, 2005, London Bombings Affected Liberals' Moral Foundations and Prejudice." *Psychological Science* 27(2): 169–177.

Wilson, Matthew C., and James A. Piazza. 2013. "Autocracies and Terrorism: Conditioning Effects of Authoritarian Regime Type on Terrorist Attacks." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(4): 941–955.