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Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy Analysis: Public Opinion, Elections, Interest Groups, and the Media

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Summary and Keywords

Societal factors such as public opinion, interest groups, and the media can influence foreign policy choices and behavior. To date, the public opinion and foreign policy literature has focused largely on data derived from the US, although this trend has begun to change in recent years. However, while much of the scholarly work suggests that public attitudes on foreign policy are both reasonable and structured, significant controversies exist over the public's general influence on policy as well as the influence of elections on foreign policy. Meanwhile, the study of interest groups as a domestic source of foreign policy is dominated by two points of emphasis: ethnic groups acting as interest groups and the US case. These are most often considered together. This ethnic interest group literature stands largely apart from the literature on trade interest groups, which takes its inspiration from the economics literature. Finally, two aspects of media are specifically relevant to media and domestic sources of foreign policy. The first is the way the media serve as an arena of domestic political competition within democracies, and the second is the communicative role that media play in the formation of public opinions that are specific to and critical to foreign policy decision making.

Keywords: public opinion, elections, interest groups, media, foreign policy, public attitudes, ethnic interest groups, foreign policy decision making

Introduction

This review considers how societal factors influence foreign policy choices and behavior, with a central focus on public opinion, elections, interest groups, and the media. Across all these issues, it points to the need for better integration of this research into the core literatures in international politics as well as greater engagement with the American and comparative politics subfields. Consistent with other recent research that has recognized the centrality of the domestic and international relations link, it suggests that a full understanding of international political behavior requires the integration of concepts and

insights from this literature. While much of this literature has understandably focused on the American case given the rich data available, this limitation raises concerns regarding the generalizability of these findings beyond this one case. To rectify the situation, more research of a comparative nature has emerged to evaluate the validity of these central findings. Ironically enough, at the same time, even though much of this work has focused on the United States case, it has failed to integrate effectively much of the literature from the American politics subfield, which opens further avenues for greater insight. In the end, while exciting work continues down many avenues, the field would benefit from a greater integration and interaction with other substantive scholarly traditions in international, comparative, and American politics.

This review considers three central areas. First, in evaluating the public opinion literature, it suggests that while much of the scholarly work now suggests that public attitudes on foreign policy are both reasonable and structured, significant controversies still exist over the public's general influence on policy as well as the influence of elections on foreign policy. Second, the interest group literature has focused mostly on the American case, with an emphasis on ethnic interest groups. This ethnic interest group literature stands largely apart from the literature on trade interest groups, which takes its inspiration from the economics literature. Third, unlike these previous two areas, the domestic politics of the media appears to be better integrated into the broader international politics literature on communication.

Taken together, the massive literatures that are only briefly summarized here point in numerous directions for further conceptual formulation and greater cross-fertilization across traditional scholarly divides.

Public Opinion

Almond-Lippmann Consensus

The question of whether public opinion should guide policy making has engaged philosophers at least since the days of Plato's *Republic*. To date, the public opinion and foreign policy literature has focused largely on data derived from the US, although this trend has begun to change in recent years. Despite a large and burgeoning research agenda which can be structured topically (Holsti 2004), the overall scholarly literature has developed little in the way of a central conceptual focus (Holsti 2004; Baum and Potter 2008; Berinsky 2009), with scholars attending to different aspects of the public opinion questions and different topics as their interest dictates. Although notable attempts have been made to synthesize a comprehensive public opinion model or model of governance that integrates public opinion into foreign policy making (Rosenau 1961; Powlick and Katz 1998; Western 2005; Baum and Potter 2008), no one approach has emerged to dominate the field. Instead, the field is best characterized by a diverse group

of scholars focused mainly around a range of discrete issues which do not add up appreciably to a comprehensive intellectual model.

The main arguments within the field have progressed through two main phases, centered generally around what is now known as the Almond-Lippmann consensus: public opinion's rationality, structure, and policy influence (Holsti 2004). The Almond-Lippmann consensus, which portrays a negative view of public opinion, reigned in the field from the 1920s through the early 1970s, and held that on foreign policy matters a largely ignorant public opinion reacted in an emotional, rather than reasonable or rational manner, which in turn led to high volatility in its attitudes (e.g., Almond 1950; Lippmann 1955). Further, these attitudes remained unstructured and had little relationship with each other (Converse 1964). Many proponents of this view, who hailed largely from the realist perspective on foreign policy (Foyle 1999), worried little about these fundamental concerns since they concluded that public opinion did not influence foreign policy (Cohen 1973), though some realists feared public opinion would affect policy in a negative manner (Lippmann 1955).

The Almond-Lippmann Consensus Challenged

The disastrous American intervention in Vietnam and the expansion of data regarding public attitudes with the advancement of survey techniques led to a reevaluation of public opinion which turned the Almond-Lippmann consensus views on their head. An extensive literature developed in the 1970s through the mid-1990s focusing on the questions of the rationality and structure of public attitudes, and it is safe to say that these revisionist views now dominate the field. First, although few scholars would argue that public opinion is infused with knowledge on the foreign policy events of the day, the prevailing view now portrays public opinion as possessing relatively stable attitudes and responding reasonably to foreign affairs information from the environment (Page and Shapiro 1992; Jentleson 1992; Knopf 1998; Herrmann et al. 2001; Isernia et al. 2002).

Second, an extensive literature developed regarding the question of whether a meaningful structure organized public attitudes. Although scholars disagree over the number of dimensions that characterize public attitudes, or how those attitudes arise or change, most agree that public attitudes do meet the criteria set by Converse (1964) of both stability and "some form of constraint or functional interdependence." The most prominent analysis, by Eugene Wittkopf (1990), describes two dimensions for public opinion (yielding four beliefs system types), with a dimension on cooperative internationalism referring to whether an individual favors or opposes working with other nations to solve global and national challenges, and a militant internationalism indicating whether the person favors forceful action, possibly unilateral in nature, to pursue American interests. These dimensions characterize the views of opinion leaders as well (Holsti and Rosenau 1988). Other scholars (Hinckley 1992; Chittick et al. 1995) point to a third dimension consisting of a unilateralism and multilateralism scale. Hurwitz and Peffley (1987) provide a distinct hierarchical model that suggests the public's attitudes descend from general core values eventually to more specific foreign policy attitudes.

Despite nuances among these scholars, the virtual consensus points to a convergence around the view of the public with stable and structured beliefs.

The third component of the Almond-Lippmann consensus has experienced the most research attention in recent years, although no consensus exists on whether and under what conditions public opinion influences policy. Although it appeared at first that research into this area would reverse the Almond-Lippmann consensus position again, public opinion's role in policy making remains the focus of intense controversy. First, some research continues to suggest that public opinion plays a limited role in foreign policy formulation. Most notably, in a statistically sophisticated examination evaluating public opinion's effect on policy relative to interest groups and policy experts, Jacobs and Page (2005) found that public opinion's influence paled in comparison to other policy actors and had little or no statistical influence. Interestingly, this finding is consistent with a growing trend (most notable in studies of US presidential politics) which suggests that presidents use the sophisticated polling techniques available to them to limit public influence. Presidents might use polls to build support for their chosen policies (Heith 2004), to construct policies which appear to reflect popular will (while being substantively incongruent with public attitudes), or enable leaders to ensure general popular support despite pursuing unpopular policies (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000).

The influence of elites on public opinion has also generated some controversy. For example, Edwards (2003) suggests presidential efforts at influencing opinion have largely failed despite extensive efforts. Others have suggested that public opinion tracks elite opinion rather than driving policy development (Witko 2003).

Second, a common finding in the literature suggests that public opinion constrains the policy options available to government leaders by limiting the range of choices they have available to them (e.g., Russett 1990; Hinckley 1992; Powlick and Katz 1998; Sobel 2001; Foyle 2004). While public opinion does not cause leaders to select particular policies, this research suggests that it has an important and strong influence on policy.

Third, some research employing statistical analyses finds that public opinion consistently influences policy. By tracking whether policy outputs were consistent with public attitudes (Monroe 1979) and whether shifts in opinion more often than not preceded changes in policy (Page and Shapiro 1992), some suggest an important relationship between public attitudes and foreign policy. Other scholars have followed up on this broad pattern of responsiveness with quantitative analyses suggesting a strong public role in defense spending (Hartley and Russett 1992), congressional voting (Meernik and Oldmixon 2008), presidential decisions on the use of force (Ostrom and Job 1986), and presidential rhetoric (Rottinghaus 2007).

Finally, some scholars have emphasized a range of conditional variables that influence public opinion's effect on foreign policy, including level of public support for the policy (Graham 1994), domestic structure (Risse-Kappen 1991), elections (Gaubatz 1999),

presidential attitudes toward public opinion (Foyle 1999), stage of decision making (Knecht 2006), and presidential popularity (Canes-Wrone 2006).

Elections

The role of elections runs throughout much of the public opinion literature and also has a heavy US focus. The first branch of this research addresses the issue of whether foreign policy affects vote choices during elections. The development of this literature tracks the broader trend in the public opinion and foreign policy literature, with earlier accounts suggesting that public opinion had only a limited influence, if any, on voting. Early analyses based on opinions and voting in the 1950s and 1960s suggested that foreign policy remained a secondary factor compared to other items in determining vote choice (Stokes 1966). As the bipartisan consensus over foreign policy broke up over Vietnam, foreign policy rose in prominence as a voting issue as partisan differences at the elite level emerged (Aldrich et al. 2006). In an article that provided the most important work in the area in the past two decades, Aldrich and his colleagues (1989) found that attitudes about foreign policy conditionally influenced vote choice. The strongest influence they found occurred when large differences between the candidates existed and the candidates emphasized the foreign policy issues during the campaign. The influence of foreign policy issues dropped to the extent that few differences existed between the candidates or the campaign did not feature foreign policy issues. Recent research employing a different dataset largely confirmed the core insights of this work (Anand and Krosnick 2003). Some recent work, emphasizing the effect of the Iraq War on voting, pointed to a continued influence of foreign policy attitudes on voting (Berinsky 2009; Gelpi et al. 2009).

The second strand examines the influence of elections on foreign policy choices. Unlike the first strand where the consensus suggests that foreign policy attitudes affect voting, a great deal of controversy exists over the influence of elections on foreign policy. Empirically, some scholars have found that approaching elections systematically push leaders to make more peaceful choices (Gaubatz 1999; Auerswald 2000). Second, others have argued that elections cause increased uses of force as leaders see foreign policy as a chance to either distract the public from unpopular domestic circumstances or artificially enhance public support (the bulk of this approach falls within the diversionary use of force literature discussed in the review entitled “Diversionary Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis” in this compendium). Thirdly, presidents might wish to avoid foreign policy choices of any kind during election years given the inherent risks involved in these decisions (Quandt 1986). Fourth, principal–agent models emphasize asymmetric information and potentially divergent goals between actors. Since the public cannot evaluate the quality of the leader’s decisions directly, it has to rely on another measure, such as policy success or failure, in determining whether the leader is “good” or “bad.” This situation then creates an incentive for leaders who are facing difficult elections to seek “successful” conflicts to mimic “good” leaders or to achieve a dramatic success in an ongoing conflict (Richards et al. 1993; Downs and Rocke 1994). Fifth, some scholars suggest that leaders become highly responsive during election years and pursue

whatever policy the public prefers (peaceful, aggressive, etc.) (Geer 1996; Manza et al. 2002, including especially Shapiro and Jacobs; Canes-Wrone 2006). Finally, disputing much of these claims are views that portray elections as having no influence on foreign policy decisions (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Hristoulas 1994; Meernik 1994; Gowa 1999; DeRouen 2001; Fordham 2002). To this point, this research focused narrowly on the effect of elections on foreign policy has not been well integrated into the larger literature on the democratic peace.

Comparative Public Opinion and the Comparative Politics Subfield

While research moves apace on each of these questions, a newly burgeoning area has been to examine the questions engaged by the American literature in a comparative context (Gerber and Mendelson 2008). These efforts follow earlier calls in the literature to consider the applicability of findings from the American case to other political contexts and to consider how varying institutional and social environments might affect public opinion on foreign policy and its influence (Isernia et al. 2002; Foyle 2003; Holsti 2004). Spurred in part by the explosion of available data on public opinion in non-American contexts, this work has targeted each component of the Almond-Lippmann consensus as well as pushing into new frontiers to consider the influence of institutional context. Given the diversity of political variation even in the advanced industrial world (where the data for all these questions remain most available), further exploration will likely prove to be a useful avenue for exploration.

Examinations of the reasonability and stability of public opinion on foreign policy in other nations suggests results largely consonant with the American case. Several studies have considered public opinion’s attitudes in a number of non-American countries (Nacos et al. 2000; Isernia et al. 2002; Furia and Lucas 2006; Foyle 2007; Holsti 2008), evaluated the origins and structure of public attitudes (Bjereld and Ekengren 1999; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2004), and the influence of public opinion (Nacos et al. 2000; Gerber and Mendelson 2008). Some have begun to consider how institutional and political structures influence the opinion–policy process and have suggested that, as one would expect, there are important differences in how opinion affects policy in non-American cases (e.g., Risse-Kappen 1991; Nacos et al. 2000; Pickering and Kisangani 2005; Chan and Safran 2006). Given the promising findings from these comparative examinations, greater extension into new countries should yield exciting insights. As this work moves into non-US contexts, a greater presence from scholars and concepts from the comparative politics subfield will be needed to understand the complexities of public opinion in varying institutional and social contexts.

American Politics Subfield

Just as the field could benefit from better engagement with the comparative politics field, a stronger connection between the International Relations (IR) and American politics subfields would provide a mutual benefit to scholars working in both subfields. Although much of the foundation of the public opinion and foreign policy field emerges from core

insights in the American politics subfield, too little cross-fertilization has occurred. Although there are notable exceptions, much of the literature cited in this review is written by scholars who would self-identify themselves as primarily within the IR subfield. In addition, much of the literature cited by these articles also refers predominantly to work written for an international politics audience, with much less engagement with the American politics subfield. Ironically, scholars in both international politics and American politics largely address the same questions, though they engage the topics through a different lens. For IR scholars, public opinion is viewed as a subset of how domestic factors (including, but not limited to, elections, interest groups, the media, governmental processes, and individual decision-making variables) influence a state's international choices and behavior. American politics scholars view foreign policy as a particular substantive policy area in a much broader literature on public opinion and/or presidency studies. Unfortunately, with rare exceptions, the opportunity for useful cross-fertilization between the international politics scholars focusing on domestic politics and American politics scholars considering public opinion and the presidency has been missed.

Scholars working from the American politics subfield recognize the need for greater integration across these subfields with the recognition that foreign policy, rather than characterizing an exception to the "normal" policy process, progresses much like most domestic issues (Manza et al. 2002, including especially Shapiro and Jacobs; Druckman and Jacobs 2006; Berinsky 2009). For IR scholars, conceptions regarding the relationships among elections, agenda setting, legislative–executive relations, and public opinion could inform key questions in the domestic politics literature such as the diversionary use of force, audience costs, and casualty aversion (see Edwards and King 2007, especially chapters by Jacobson, Jacobs, and Blinder). On public opinion in particular, the edited volume by Manza et al. (2002) provides a broad range of insightful chapters engaging issues central to this field of study. In addition, a burgeoning literature exists on the origins of presidential polling and what it has to offer regarding leadership motivations to engage or deflect public opinion (Eisinger 2003; Heith 2004).

Although the IR literature tends to imply a uniform reaction to domestic concerns across leaders, a nuanced literature has developed in studying presidential responsiveness and suggests wide variation both individually and circumstantially. For example, Brandice Canes-Wrone (2006:6–11, 123–8) usefully summarizes the range of perspectives on presidential responsiveness and decision making from American politics, each with potentially useful contributions to existing IR debates, while presenting her theory of conditional presidential responsiveness. She points to several views: (1) dynamic representation (Geer 1996; Erikson et al. 2002), portraying government leaders as responsive; (2) the need-based popularity perspective, suggesting unpopular presidents seek to align their policies with public opinion when unpopular (Manza et al. 2002); (3) a lack of policy responsiveness combined with what might be called public relations efforts (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000); (4) systematic reactions to latent public opinion, caring primarily about policy results (Key 1961); and (5) the influence of election cycles (Quandt 1986). Rather than portraying leaders as uniformly responsive to the same conditions,

this research suggests a level of nuance which the existing IR literature would do well to integrate.

Additional Controversies

Several additional lines of research relate to public opinion and foreign policy but do not neatly fit into the central questions guiding this field. Given the diversity in research specialty of the scholars working on these concepts, the degree of integration of the central literature on public opinion and foreign policy into these debates varies considerably.

Rally Effects

The rally effect concept suggests that during times of international crisis or tension an upsurge in popular approval of a nation's leadership will emerge. Substantive findings on the size of the rally effect vary considerably, as do causal explanations. The literature on this question originates from John Mueller's definition of the rally as an event that is international, directly involves the president, and is "specific, dramatic, and sharply focused" (1973:209). Four broad explanations have been suggested. First, Mueller (1973) pointed to an upwelling of patriotism in times of national danger as the motivating factor. Second, in a view seeing the public as reactive to elite messages, some (Brody and Shapiro 1989) argue that the silence of opposition elites removes negative news messages regarding the president and causes a positive message bias which then leads to increased public support. Third, crises might create a more generalized positive assessment of all social institutions, including the president (Parker 1995). Finally, since rallies must come from opponents shifting to supporters of the president, still other scholars have emphasized the interaction between information and partisanship (Baum 2002). Although no consensus exists on the cause of rallies or even that they are real (Baker and Oneal 2001; Colaresi 2007), the subject continues to draw attention, especially since it relates to important controversies in the field such as the diversionary use of force.

Audience Costs

The audience cost (Fearon 1994) concept remains a prominent feature in the international politics literature, yet this literature has failed to engage the main public opinion and foreign policy scholarship (though see Baum 2004). The audience costs concept suggests that crises force leaders to take highly visible international positions. If the leader backs down from this position, the public would notice and disapprove of this action, potentially leading to the leader's removal from power. Given the costly nature domestically of making and then breaking public commitments in these circumstances, signaling by democratic leaders should become more clear and credible, which should allow democracies to achieve more favorable crisis outcomes. The initial insight created a large literature (e.g., Schultz 2001; Baum 2004; Slantchev 2006) and has been extended to non-democratic governments (Weeks 2008).

Public Support for the Use of Force and Casualty Aversion

Scholars have devoted considerable effort toward evaluating the factors that influence the public's approval of the use of force and support for wars (Klarevas 2002; Eichenberg 2005). How leaders might react to public opinion on the use of force is considered elsewhere in this compendium in the essay on the diversionary theory of war or force. As with previous work in this field, a large portion of this work has focused on the US. Several viewpoints exist. First, some scholars have pointed to whether vital national interests are engaged as an important factor (Kohut and Toth 1995). Second, other scholars have concluded that multilateral military operations receive more support than unilateral ones (Kull 2002).

Third, Bruce Jentleson (1992) argued that the military's mission drives public support, with humanitarian interventions and instances of "foreign policy restraint" (military action against an actor who acted aggressively against American interests) receiving greater public support than interventions in the internal affairs of other countries.

Fourth, still others have emphasized the existence (or lack) of consensus in elite political discourse as cuing public support (or opposition). When consensus reigns, the public supports the intervention. When disagreement emerges, the public divides behind the positions taken by leaders of the political party with which they identify (Larson 1995; Powlick and Katz 1998).

Fifth, an extensive casualty aversion literature has considered the effect that casualties have on the use of force, with the bulk of the literature suggesting that as casualties go up, support for wars decreases (Mueller 1973; Larson 1995; Boettcher and Cobb 2006) and votes for the leaders in power drop (Karol and Miguel 2007).

Finally, still others have suggested that perceptions of whether the use of force is likely to succeed or not has the strongest effect on public support for war (Gelpi et al. 2009).

Some have now begun to push beyond the US context and suggest that institutional variation has an important effect on the role that casualties have in affecting public support (Koch and Gartner 2005; Gerber and Mendelson 2008). Although most scholars in this debate acknowledge that multiple factors determine public support, the most active point of controversy lies between scholars supporting the casualty aversion hypothesis and proponents supporting the success hypothesis.

Demographic Variation

Despite the progress in this field, the influence of demographic characteristics remains an understudied area and has led to calls for greater attention (Berinsky 2009). When demographic characteristics have been considered in the past, the research typically concludes that foreign policy attitudes derive from an individual's ideological and partisan predispositions (Holsti 2004). This emphasis has consigned other demographic characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, occupation, economic background, religious beliefs, region, and gender, to a residual category which has received little direct

attention. While this inattention is surprising given the emphasis that sociological characteristics have in the American politics subfield on public opinion, political behavior, and voting, nearly every demographic subcategory could use additional attention. Several recent works have provided general demographic analysis regarding foreign policy attitudes (Gartner and Segura 2000; Eichenberg 2003; Holsti 2004; Berinsky 2009; Gelpi et al. 2009).

Interest Groups and Foreign Policy

The study of interest groups as a domestic source of foreign policy is dominated by two points of emphasis: ethnic groups acting as interest groups and the US case, most often considered together. There are, of course, numerous exceptions to this generalization, but this is one of those instances in which a simple characterization provides a fairly robust foundation for an initial approach to the field of study. Keyword and subject searches of conference paper archives or academic research databases inevitably produce results that are consistent with this generalization. That said, there is at least one significant and substantial area of research – interest groups influencing trade and economic policy – that is clearly relevant to any discussion of interest groups and foreign policy but appears to be largely estranged from most discussions of this topic.

This line of research has a very clear point of origin in Milbrath's (1967) "Interest Groups and Foreign Policy" chapter in Rosenau's edited volume on domestic sources of foreign policy (Rosenau 1967). Like most of the other chapters in the Rosenau book, the interest groups chapter is almost entirely devoted to building a foundation for future research by introducing ideas, theories and concepts from other areas of research and discussing how they might be fruitfully applied to the analysis of foreign policy. IR or foreign policy analysis references are almost completely absent from the bibliography of the chapter, but references to the study of communication, Congress, lobbying, and other areas are common.

US Foreign Policy and Ethnic Political Lobbies

While it would be difficult to assert that any study should be considered an iconic or seminal work on the ethnic political lobbies in the US, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Smith 2000) and *Ethnic Identity Groups and US Foreign Policy* (Ambrosio 2002B) provide useful entry points, with *Ethnic Groups and US Foreign Policy* (Ahrari 1987) offering a valuable historical window on the earlier research. A comprehensive summary of ethnic political lobbying is provided in a separate compendium essay, "Ethnic Lobbying in Foreign Policy," but two aspects of the subject need to be noted here as a way of explaining why ethnic lobbies are so prominent in the broader literature on interest groups and foreign policy. The first is the salience of ethnic lobbies in the news media and in the political discourse in the US. The second is the curious puzzle presented by the Cuban lobby's success in influencing US foreign policy.

Israel and the Jewish lobby (i.e. Mearsheimer and Walt 2007) and Cuban American lobby groups (i.e. Haney and Vanderbush 2005) are both prominent in the literature. Given the historical importance of these two countries in US foreign affairs, this appears to be wholly unsurprising. However, Cuba presents a puzzle because the lobby group's rise to prominence and much of its success in influencing US foreign policy is recent. The Cuba lobby group really didn't come into existence until 1980 (Haney and Vanderbush 2005) and explaining how this ethnic group has continued to succeed in not just sustaining, but in many ways strengthening the US embargo in spite of the near disappearance of Cuba as a focus of US foreign policy, offers an opportunity to analytically and conceptually separate the mechanisms of domestic political influence from other influences on foreign policy. The success and ongoing effectiveness of the Cuba lobby cannot be explained in terms of high politics or external dynamics such as systemic, strategic, or economic imperatives. It can only be explained in terms of the efforts of the ethnic lobby and domestic political sources of foreign policy. Thus US policy toward Cuba presents a critical case. The isolation of the domestic factors in the case means that any theory, model, or explanation for the dynamics of interest group influence upon foreign policy must be able to account for the Cuba case and any argument against domestic influences upon foreign policy must offer a plausible alternative explanation for this case.

Congress and US Foreign Policy

Unsurprisingly, with ethnic lobbies of the US government as the most common subject of analysis in the study of interest groups and foreign policy, the literature on US congressional politics is usually the predominant theoretical foundation for analysis. Many of the recent studies engage the concept of entrepreneurship (i.e. Carter and Scott 2004) and use ethnic foreign policy lobbies to examine the ability or the mechanisms that Congress can utilize to drive the foreign policy agenda independent of, or contrary to, the leadership of the executive branch. This is a point that is particularly salient in the recent examinations of Cuba, but more generally, the dynamic of congressional entrepreneurship increases the "permeability" (Rubenzer 2008) of US foreign policy to interest groups. In terms of domestic sources of foreign policy, the US Congress is clearly more than simply a conduit for interest group access. In fact, in many ways it should be considered independently as a domestic source of foreign policy (see the overview offered by Ripley and Lindsay 1993). For the most part, examinations of theory, practice, process, and outcome of congressional involvement in US foreign policy, including the ethnic lobby literature, share a largely uncontested theoretical and conceptual core defined by the constitutional legacy of a division of powers between the executive and legislative branches of the US government. For a researcher unfamiliar with this area, a well balanced description of this conceptual core is provided by Carter and Scott (2004).

The recent research on congressional involvement in US foreign policy can be characterized as a debate over different aspects of the relative balance between the presidency and the legislative branch (Warburg 1989; Hersman 2000; Scott and Carter 2002). Consistent across nearly all of the research is the agreement that an era of presidential dominance in US foreign policy that could be largely attributed to the

international political necessities of World War II and the Cold War was brought to an end by the Vietnam War. In the wake of Vietnam, the White House was subject to increasing congressional scrutiny, significant challenges to executive leadership in foreign policy, and far greater congressional assertiveness (Carter and Scott 2004). The resulting balance between Congress and the President, the trends in that balance, and questions of which branch does or should lead foreign policy are points that remain contested.

Interest Groups and Trade Policy

One of the more unusual aspects of the domestic sources of foreign policy literature has to be the estrangement of the study of interest groups as a domestic source of foreign policy from the literature on interest groups and trade policy formation. The division between these literatures is most obvious in the bibliographies of the works, where there is little if any overlap of references between the two avenues of research. However, it doesn't take much of an examination of one of the more recent and more prominent works on interest groups and trade policy (Grossman and Helpman 2002) to understand why. Unlike the process and structural focus of the interest groups and foreign policy literature, the core of the trade policy research is built upon an economics and econometric approach to theory and research. Grossman and Helpman (2002) provide a key text for engaging this field, but even for a scholar with a reasonably extensive background in formal models and econometric analyses this literature presents a challenge.

The theoretical concepts in this economics-based literature on interest groups and trade policy are similar to the game theoretic, spatial approach to international negotiations which, ironically enough for the points made above, originates in the study of Congress (Weingast 1979) and is refined or adapted for the study of foreign policy and international negotiations by Hinich and Munger (1997), Bueno de Mesquita (1997), Kugler and Feng (1997), and several others. At the risk of grossly oversimplifying, the general idea pursued by both is to identify "win-sets" or ranges of possible equilibriums defined by overlapping, usually curvilinear, indifference curves. Both involve formal representations of the utilities derived from multilevel games, and actors are usually engaged in multiple, simultaneous interactions. Communication flows, particularly in terms of informational asymmetries, are theoretically significant in both. However, unlike international negotiations where "win sets" need to include all of a small number of actors, the "win sets" in the interest groups and trade studies involve a large number of actors and must be directly integrated with formal models for building winning legislative coalitions.

Media as a Domestic Source of Foreign Policy

As a preface to this brief discussion of media as a domestic source of foreign policy, it is critical to emphasize the word "domestic." The role of media and communication in international relations figures large in this compendium, and there is an entire essay dedicated to "Foreign Policy and Communication." This is a brief summary of the

elements of that literature that are particularly relevant to a domestic sources of foreign policy perspective.

The Rosenau edited volume on domestic sources of foreign policy (1967) includes a chapter on mass communication (Cohen 1967), but very idea of a point of origin for media as a domestic source of foreign policy is probably inappropriate. Instead a planetary nebula image, or some other analogy that captures the idea of disparate elements coalescing into something almost definable is probably a better way to approach the subject. The process of coalescing into something coherent began somewhere in the mid-1980s, but most of what is now referenced as the more relevant research was included as part of broader works on media's role in politics, such as Bennett's News: The Politics of Illusion (1983). There were several studies specific to foreign policy, such as Cutler's "Foreign Policy on Deadline" (1984) and Hallin's The "Uncensored War" (1986). It is difficult to say when exactly these elements began to coalesce, but Serfaty (1991) published an edited volume on the news media in foreign policy in 1991. In 1993, what was probably the first, media-centered generalized model of foreign policy decision making was published (Van Belle 1993) and by the time the Bennett and Paletz edited volume Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and US Foreign Policy in the Gulf War was published (1994), media as part of the domestic side of the foreign policy decision-making process had clearly become something identifiable in the broader literature.

Part of the timing of this coalescence can be attributed to the methodological challenge of engaging the content of the media. When Cohen contributed his chapter to Rosenau's 1967 edited volume, the content analysis tools to integrate media coverage into the study of foreign policy decision making simply did not exist. It wasn't until the early 1990s that advances in coding methodologies could be combined with technological advances that made the computing resources for data management and analysis capable of dealing with the huge volumes of media content necessary for empirical study. However, the role of the media in Vietnam, the Sahal drought and the Somalia famine also could be cited as an influence pushing media into the forefront of public debates on world politics and foreign policy, and as such these events are probably just as relevant to the timing of the coalescence.

As should be obvious by the number of essays in the compendium devoted to international communication, media influence IR and foreign policy in a wide variety of ways, culture, surveillance, privacy, commerce, and diplomacy, it can be difficult to find an aspect of international politics where media are not considered a part of modern international politics. Out of all this, two aspects of media are specifically relevant to media and domestic sources of foreign policy. The first is the way the media serve as an arena of domestic political competition within democracies, and the second is the communicative role that media play in the formation of public opinions that are specific to and critical to foreign policy decision making. These two elements do not seem to be

separable as all models appear to represent or assume an interactive relationship between democratic political competition and public opinion.

Media as an Arena of Domestic Political Competition

The domestic political imperatives mode of foreign policy decision making (Van Belle 1993) explicitly represents the domestic news media as an arena of domestic political competition and argues that they are the defining element of modern democratic foreign policy. It attempts to integrate concepts such as the rally-round-the-flag effect, media, and salience as an indicator of domestic political risks, costs and benefits into a stepwise mode of an iterated foreign policy decision process. The key argument is that the costs, risks and rewards for the foreign policy decision maker arise primarily out of the media-dominated domestic political arena, and the potential outcome of the policy is only relevant in the way it influences the domestic support for the leadership. This provides an explanation for why policies with almost no chance of resolving an international conflict, such as economic sanctions, are so often chosen. Those hopeless actions provide a beneficial image of action on a salient issue but their failure poses little if any risk to the leader’s domestic political support (Van Belle 1993).

Two notable lines of research have followed directly from this model. One adds an agency theory perspective to extend the media and domestic imperatives model to bureaucratic foreign policy (described below); the other has used the model to explore the role of the media in dehumanization as a key element in the foreign policy decision making related to violent international conflict.

Press Freedom, Dehumanization, and Getting to War

Ben Hunt (1997) argued that dehumanization of the enemy in the eyes of the domestic populace is a necessary condition that must be established before a leader can choose to go to war, and he also argued that the mass media was the primary means by which this dehumanization is accomplished. A parallel argument was developed from the domestic imperatives model but with a focus on the democratic peace (Van Belle 1997), arguing that press freedom, when it exists in two opposing countries, plays a key role in preventing the use of the mass media to dehumanize an opponent. As a result, shared press freedom prevents either leader from inflicting casualties upon an opponent. Hunt’s analysis examines the content of domestic media in the lead-up to wars and finds clear evidence of dehumanization, and Van Belle’s analysis clearly demonstrates the precise pattern of behavior expected if the dehumanization as a necessary condition argument is correct and if the interdomestic communication enabled by shared press freedom prevents dehumanization. The series of studies that follow from the Van Belle (1997) study integrates these two lines of thought and shows that beyond just preventing war between liberal polities, shared press freedom is associated with a complete absence of lethal conflicts (Van Belle 2000).

A second wave of studies are just now appearing as variations on the dehumanization arguments and the role of media across the domestic/international divide, and are being applied to other issue areas, such as human rights (Whitten-Woodring 2009), but perhaps more interesting in terms of a summary of the broader field of media as a domestic source of foreign policy is the way this line of studies fits as one of many approaches to the concept of transparency in foreign policy decision making.

Transparency

In terms of media as a domestic aspect of foreign policy decision making, the concept of transparency is applied in two ways. First, there is a permeability of the state to external sources of information, which is how the press freedom arguments utilize the concept. The second is about internal transparency, which refers to the openness of a state's government to media scrutiny. An edited volume on the subject (Lord and Finel 2000) provides a valuable entry point into this eclectic literature. In the years since 2000, technology has grown to become an even more prominent issue.

The CNN Effect

Some readers might be surprised that the CNN effect is not the most prominent aspect of a summary of the news media as a domestic influence upon foreign policy decision making. However, most scholars studying media and foreign policy approach the CNN effect with extreme caution and discussing the reasons for that caution is probably the best way to present it here. Several comprehensive summaries of the literature are available (see Gilboa 2005) and need not be replicated here.

From the moment the term was coined, the CNN effect was immediately presumed to have suddenly altered the very nature of foreign policy (Kennan 1993; Mathews 1994) and global politics. From that starting point, the scientific and academic study of the possibility of a CNN effect was put in an unusual position. Instead of beginning with an idea and slowly building the evidence needed to convince skeptics, academic researchers were presented with the equivalent of a scientific fait accompli and the result was a debate that skipped right past any concerted effort to rigorously explore a proposed relationship and launched directly into debates about how the new media-driven foreign policy environment might usurp democracy, or prevent carefully considered policy choice.

However, even in the cases that might be offered as the most obvious examples, such as Somalia, the claim that leaders had lost control of policy to the whims of media coverage was immediately shown to be dubious (e.g., Livingston and Eachus 1995). More generally, even when the narrowest definition of the CNN effect was employed, the degree to which news coverage actually drove Western states to intervene in complex humanitarian emergencies was unclear, and almost certainly overstated (Jakobsen 1996; 2000; Natsios 1996; Strobel 1997). At the extreme, the CNN effect has been argued to be limited to the period of policy uncertainty between the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks

(Robinson 2005), or even an illusion created by a few high-profile cases (Natsios 1996; Van Belle 2009).

Bureaucratic Responsiveness to the Media

News media coverage and the international response to disasters is an area related to the CNN effect that is likely to expand in both scope and attention in the near future. While the salience of recent disasters such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina are part of the reason for a spike in scholarly attention, the fact that disaster assistance provides a window into the theoretical foundations of the bureaucratic aspects of foreign policy decision making is probably more important than the specific subject of study. This collection of studies combines an agency theory approach to understanding democratic bureaucracies (e.g., Wood and Waterman 1991) with the media's role in domestically driven foreign policy (Van Belle 1993). The result is a model that expects foreign policy bureaucracies to try to avoid political punishment by staying in step with public demands for their actions or services. Taking their cues from elected officials, the bureaucrats use domestic news media salience to monitor public demand and respond to it accordingly. The effect is particularly clear in the bureaucratically dominated foreign aid decision (Van Belle et al. 2004).

Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is largely an applied field, and it largely studies the practice of intentionally using media to influence the domestic public opinion of other nations. From an academic perspective it is particularly interesting in the way it turns the question of media as a domestic source of foreign policy upon its head. Instead of media acting as a connection between the public and the government, or as a proxy measure for domestic public opinion, the media are treated as a tool for influencing publics. This can range from marketing style media and advertising campaigns to alter one public's image of another country, to the propaganda of the Nazis.

For academics, the prominence of government public diplomacy programs can make it difficult to sort through to the underlying ideas, and the best resource for engaging or exploring the academic side of this literature is probably the University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy. It maintains a substantial collection of web-based resources for engaging the extensive literature, including an archive of book reviews. A few of the most recent books that are particularly relevant to the academic include Cull's (2008) book on the US Information Agency, Seib's (2008) book on Al Jazeera, and the book by Bennett et al. (2007) on when the media fails to move governments and leaders. However, like the other works mentioned above, these are just entry points for a vast body of research.

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Links to Digital Materials

Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. At **http://people-press.org/**, accessed Jul. 2009. An independent, nonpartisan public opinion research organization, based in Washington, DC. Among its other activities in the US, the Center periodically fields major surveys on the news media, social issues, and international affairs.

German Marshall Fund of the United States. At **www.gmfus.org/template/index.cfm**, accessed Jul. 2009. A nonpartisan American public policy and grant-making institution which supports individuals and institutions working on transatlantic issues, convening leaders to discuss the most pressing transatlantic themes, and examining ways in which transatlantic cooperation can address a variety of global policy challenges. It mounts an extensive annual survey regarding foreign policy attitudes in Europe and the United States.

Program on International Policy Attitudes. At **http://pipa.org/**, accessed Jul. 2009. Established in 1992 at the University of Maryland, PIPA publishes a wide range of surveys regarding foreign policy attitides from around the world in both developed and developing countries.

Roper Center Public Opinion Archives. At **www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/**, accessed Jul. 2009. The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut holds a major archive of surveys of public opinion. The collection includes over 17,000 datasets and ranges from the 1930s to the present. Most of the data are from the US, but over 50 nations are represented.

Chicago Council on Global Affairs. At **www.ccfr.org/**, accessed Jul. 2009. Founded in 1922 as the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, the Council acts as a forum for the discussion of world affairs and US foreign policy. Every 2 years it undertakes a large-scale public opinion study that compares American public opinion with elite opinion across a range of foreign policy issues.

Eurobarometer. At **http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm**, accessed Jul. 2009. The website of the Public Opinion Analysis sector of the European Commission gives access to Eurobarometer surveys on a great variety of Europe-wide issues, including climate change, the economy, and defense.

Afrobarometer. At **www.afrobarometer.org/index.html**, accessed Jul. 2009. An independent, nonpartisan research project that measures the social, political, and economic atmosphere in Africa. Afrobarometer surveys are conducted in more than a dozen African countries and are repeated on a regular cycle. They ask a standard set of questions so that countries can be systematically compared.

Americasbarometer. At **http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/lapop**, accessed Jul. 2009. The AmericasBarometer is one of the activities of the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) hosted at Vanderbilt University. It measures democratic values and behaviors in the Americas using national probability samples of voting-age adults. The latest round of surveys, in 2008, included 23 countries throughout the Americas.

Asia Barometer. At **www.asianbarometer.org/**, accessed Jul. 2009. This regional survey network encompasses research teams from 13 East Asian political systems (Japan, Mongolia, South Koreas, Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia) and five South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal). The teams share a common framework and methodology to ensure that the data are reliable and comparable on the issues of citizens' attitudes and values toward politics, power, reform, and democracy in Asia.

Note

Douglas Foyle composed the section on public opinion and foreign policy; Douglas Van Belle composed the section on interest groups and foreign policy and the section on the media as a domestic source of foreign policy.

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