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A Letter From the Editor

Dear readers,

     This past year has proven to be different than expected. The COVID-19 pandemic still looms in the background of a domestic inflation crisis and international peace conflicts throughout EUrope and Asia. Uncertainty is high and the view of what tomorrow will bring consistently shifts, but there are some things that remain constant. Our interactions with one another—whether digitally or in person—matter. Our ability to sympathize and to come together in troubled times is what makes us human.

     While searching for a theme in this edition of *Sigma*, we have settled on how policies affect specific groups of people: censorship of the internet in China, COVID-19 policies in Arab countries, tariffs on steel imports in the Trump era, voting acts on behalf of Native Americans in the United States, and many others. As new problems arise in the world, we must stand together to find the best course of action. Policy matters, no matter how big or small it may be, and we can never know who it will truly affect until we put it into action.

     I am grateful for the countless hours of dedication to this publication given by so many. To my other staff on the journal, Marissa Gerber Pinnock and Nicholas Riehle; the editing team; advising professors; and our faculty advisor, Scott Cooper, thank you for your hard work. I would also like to thank the authors for allowing us to take their research and share it with you, our readers. Most importantly, I would like to thank the Political Science Department, the Kennedy Center, and the university for giving us the ability to highlight diverse voices in ongoing undergraduate research. As you read, I hope you will learn something new or challenge your existing ideas.

     I am proud to present the 2021–22 edition of *Sigma*.

Zeke Peters
Editor-in-Chief

COVID-19 Isolation Mandates Decrease Out-Group Hostility in the MENA Region

Annie Gold

    The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the global economic landscape, leading to unprecedented unemployment spikes, supply chain standstills, and small business shutdowns. From a healthcare perspective, national governments have struggled to provide sufficient care and vaccination to citizens, often requiring strict curfews to remedy the lack of available healthcare provisions. The MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region has especially suffered during the pandemic. However, despite the challenging fiscal climate and underprovision of healthcare services, results from the 2021 Arab Barometer survey indicate that citizens' tolerance of different ethnic and religious groups has increased since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. While some ethnic and religiously-based conflicts have persisted, such as violent outbreaks between Hamas and the Israel Defense force, individual-level tolerance toward ethnic and religious minorities and immigrants has increased significantly. Such findings run contrary to existing theories tying economic difficulty to feelings of hostility towards other groups or government coercion to increased minority oppression. In short, amid circumstances that typically turn ethnic and religious groups against one another, tolerance levels between groups have *increased*, not decreased.

    One potential answer to this inconsistency lies in a unique but sometimes overlooked consequence of the pandemic: isolation. Mandated curfews, business shutdowns, and stay-home policies have impelled the global community indoors as never before. Between April and October of 2020, over seventy-five percent of nations required stay-at-home mandates, isolating over 6 billion individuals and families in their homes (Oxford Global Change Data Lab). In the MENA region, stay-home policies were enforced with threats of jail time. In Tunisia, the government established the National COVID-19 Monitoring Committee, commissioned to enforce curfews

and at-home mandates and regulate the supply of basic goods to families in need of assistance. Morocco and Jordan developed teleworking networks for public sector employees, providing further incentive to remain in isolation. Countries including Algeria, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen implemented full lockdowns for at least one month in 2020, while all others imposed mandatory night-time curfews and limits on social gatherings (OECD COVID-19 Crisis Response Report 2020). In sum, all citizens within the MENA region experienced startling and continued isolation for at least several months in 2020.

For decades, tolerance literature focused on the benefits of increased out-group (members of a different ethnic or religious community) interaction in order to reduce prejudice and hostility between groups. However, recent findings by Condra & Linardi (2019), Hangartner & Dinas (2019), Enos (2017), and Palluck & Green (2019) indicate that casual intergroup contact—including brief, repeated physical proximity—leads to outgroup hostility, not tolerance. In other words, reducing casual interactions between ethno-religious groups should decrease feelings of hostility in members of both groups, allowing for increased tolerance. The results of the 2021 Arab Barometer survey illuminate another natural occurrence opposing earlier research. The results show that during a period of significantly less casual contact, ethno-religious tolerance levels *increased*. Thus, I argue that forced isolation through stay-home mandates significantly decreased casual physical contact between ethno-religious groups in the MENA region, decreasing intergroup hostility across ethno-religious lines. To test this hypothesis, I compare data of tolerance question averages from five waves of the Arab Barometer survey, focusing on Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. Resulting analysis indicates that isolation from the COVID-19 pandemic led to a measurable increase in individual-level tolerance in the Middle East and North Africa.

The paper continues as follows: first, a discussion on the current literature and understanding of the relationship between shared experience, isolationism, and tolerance, as well as alternative theories and confounding factors; second, an explanation of the theoretical framework, hypotheses, and methods for qualitative and comparative analysis; finally, an analysis of cross-country and cross-wave results broken down by out-group type and potential topics for future discussion and examination.

Current Literature

To better understand patterns found in post-pandemic behavior, we must first examine relevant literature concerning intergroup relations and interactions, starting with Allport's contact hypothesis. Allport's thesis asserts that under certain conditions, interpersonal contact can reduce out-group bias (Allport 1954). Allport's conditions include equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support. In 2006, Pettigrew & Tropp performed a massive meta-analysis of Allport's theory using over 500 studies. Their work confirmed the correlation between contact and decreasing prejudice. In addition, they posited that, "Allport's conditions are not essential

for intergroup contact to achieve positive outcomes. In particular … samples with no claim to these key conditions still show significant relationships between contact and prejudice" (Pettigrew & Tropp 2006, 766).

More recent studies by social psychologists provided varied results and contradictions to past beliefs. In their own meta-analysis, Paluck & Green (2019) found that effects of contact vary significantly by the type of prejudice addressed. Thus, intergroup contact generated mixed results depending on the type or origin of the prejudice (ethnic, religious, etc.) at play. Through a randomized control trial simulating demographic changes, Enos (2017) concluded that people continually exposed to members of incoming out-groups underwent a strong exclusionary shift, relative to a control group, in their attitudes toward the out-group. Said simply, geographic proximity in the form of demographic changes increased hostility to outgroups. Similarly, Hangartner & Dinas studied Greek islanders' perception of refugee issues based on their geographic proximity to Turkey, which was receiving a massive influx of refugees at the time. Refugees passed through these islands on their way to Turkey. Hangartner & Dinas (2019, 2) concluded "direct exposure to refugee arrivals induces sizable and lasting increases in natives' hostility toward refugees, immigrants, and Muslim minorities; support for restrictive asylum and immigration policies; and political engagement to effect such exclusionary policies." Condra & Linardi (2019) found similar results studying casual interactions between day laborers in Afghanistan post-conflict. Essential to pandemic-relevant environmental factors, they posited that laborers were equally altruistic toward the ingroup and out-group when out-group members were not physically present. Again, physical proximity proved to be a detriment to intergroup relations, while a lack of casual interaction allowed for greater perception of tolerance at the individual level, especially in post-conflict regions.

While other recent studies have found success with contact theory, such studies focus on institutionalized integration or, as Condra (2019, 5) explains, settings where strong norms regarding cooperation can be maintained and relationships have time to form. Similar studies include ethnically integrated schools (Alexander & Christina 2011), military integration quotas in Burundi (Samii 2013), receiving medical care by Palestinian doctors in Israel (Weiss 2021), and Christian and Muslim combined soccer teams in post-ISIS Iraq (Mousa 2020). All such studies have found various degrees of successful integration and lowered levels of hostility towards out-group members after repeated interaction. However, these institutionalized or formal interactions differ from brief, proximal intergroup contact as they allow for a formal space to find commonality with out-group members, while casual brief interactions only enhance differences between groups.

Social psychologists explain the negative impact of casual contact and brief physical proximity through neural reactions and subconscious threat signals attributed to observable out-group differences during brief interactions or physical proximity. Sambanis and Shayo (2013) posit that out-group biases are motivated in part by psychological motivation: emotional attachment or hostility due to perceived similarities

to and differences from an out-group or ethnic group. This attachment leads individuals to care about the welfare of others perceived as similar or familiar (Tajfel & Turner 1986). In addition, Chandra and Horowitz (2006; 1985) conclude that sharing the same physical space with strangers that are non-coethnics exposes individuals to an array of descent-based attributes that differentiate groups from one another, including facial features, accents, scents, and gestures. Further, neurobiological studies show that these attributes are well-known sensory stimuli that activate the limbic system, the part of the brain responsible for the unconscious assessment of threat and familiarity (Brück, Kreifelts, and Wildgruber 2011; Leukel 1976; Shah et al. 2001). These stimuli and threat assessments generate unconscious unpleasant physical reactions and signals to the body, which are then cognitively translated into negative perceptions and associations with out-group members (Gubler 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Due to a general lack of healthcare resources and facilities, the COVID-19 pandemic impelled MENA countries to implement long-term stay-at-home mandates and/or nightly curfews. Such tactics forced all citizens and residents, regardless of ethno-religious identity or immigrant status, indoors and off the streets. Even after at-home mandates were lifted, restrictions on social gatherings and social distancing rules remained in force. First, I argue that prolonged and intensive isolation drastically decreased casual intergroup contact, such as physical proximity in grocery stores and restaurants, etc. Second, according to Condra & Linardi (2019), that individuals are equally altruistic toward the ingroup and out-group when out-group members are not physically present, but feelings of altruism towards the out-group decrease with brief proximal contact. Third, that the lack of casual contact would account for increased out-group tolerance levels in the 2021 Arab Barometer survey. In sum, residents of MENA countries become more altruistic towards out-groups when contact with out-group members is curbed, and COVID-19 isolation mandates mitigated both in-group and out-group physical proximity at a casual non-institutionalized level. To measure this correlation, I analyze trends from each scatter plot, looking for countries which experienced an increase in tolerance levels after the COVID-19 pandemic.

At an institutional level, I argue that various forms of intentional contact remained intact but did not increase. Interactions with ethno-religious others in the form of healthcare workers, policing forces, co-workers, etc. continued, despite much of the labor force and public services being moved to online and teleworking platforms. Virtual platforms facilitated and maintained professional relationships which predate the pandemic, rather than generating new relationships. Thus, without a region-wide increase in institutional integration and interaction, it is not possible for such interactions to lead to the aforementioned increase in ethno-religious tolerance.

The mechanism for increased tolerance from decreased casual contact lies in the neurological reaction to out-group attributes, enhanced by post-conflict regions. Sharing the same physical space with strangers that are non-coethnics exposes individuals

to an array of descent-based attributes that differentiate groups from one another (Chandra 2006; Horowitz 1985). These attributes are sensory stimuli that activate a part of the brain responsible for the unconscious assessment of threat and familiarity (Brück, Kreifelts, and Wildgruber 2011; Leukel 1976; Shah et al. 2001). According to Mousa (2020), these reactions are stronger in post-conflict regions, where threat signals are stronger and result in greater hostility toward the out-group. To account for this mechanism, I analyzed whether countries with significant conflict in the last two decades were more likely to experience an increase in tolerance levels post-COVID than those without recent conflict.

Hypotheses

The study contains three hypotheses, each relating to various elements of the theoretical framework. First, *H1* insists that countries will experience an increase in outgroup tolerance post-COVID, or at least a uniform break from previous trends. This does not mean that scores must be higher than previous years; rather, there must be a visible trend throughout all participating countries. To test this hypothesis, I used scatterplot visualizations to compare country-specific tolerance levels over various years pre- and post- COVID-19 pandemic. *H2* implies that variation among country-level data will occur due to the variation of country-level isolation policies and strength. To test this, I analyzed country-level differences in tolerance scores over time compared to the strength of COVID-19 isolation policies, using data from the OECD COVID-19 Regional Response Report. Finally, *H3* highlights the theoretical mechanism that post-conflict countries will have a stronger reaction to the lack of casual contact than those without recent conflict. This is measured by observing changes in tolerance levels via the scatter plots as well as identifying which observed countries experienced large scale conflict in the last two decades. The three hypotheses are:

H1: Countries will experience an increase in outgroup tolerance post-COVID, or a uniform break from previous trends

H2: Countries with higher isolation scores are more likely to experience an increase in tolerance scores than countries with lower isolation scores

H3: Countries with higher levels of conflict will experience more significant increases in tolerance scores

Methods & Data

To both visualize and compare tolerance scores across survey waves and countries, I compiled country-specific tolerance scores for each measured out-group (other religion, other race, immigrants, other Islamic sect) then visually plotted them across

waves. Tolerance questions Q602:1-4 and Q303:1-3 from the Arab Barometer Survey in waves I, II, IV, V, and VI were used to calculate scores and identify trends. Included questions asked subjects to score their willingness to live in proximity to each out-group. Waves IV, V, and VI included Q602:1-4, which used a Likert scale to measure tolerance, 1 being "strongly disliked" and 5 being "strongly like." Thus, average scores closer to 1 indicate lower levels of tolerance while scores closer to 5 indicate higher levels of tolerance for the provided out-group. Waves I and II used Q303:1-3, which provided a binary scale, 1 being "I do not wish" and 2 being "I do not mind" (Arab Barometer Survey 2020; 2007). For waves I and II, I rescaled values to 3 being "I do not wish" and 4 being "I do not mind" so average scores would align with scores from waves IV, V, and VI in terms of direction and mean. Wave III did not include any tolerance questions and was therefore excluded from analysis. Sample questions from survey waves I and VI are included below:

Figure 1.1. Sample Question Q602; AB Wave VI Part III (Apr–May 2021)

Q602 For each of the following types of people, please tell me whether you would like having people from this group as neighbors, dislike it, or not care.
1. Strongly dislike
2. Somewhat dislike
3. Would not care
4. Somewhat like
5. Strongly like
98. Don't know [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ]
99. Refused to answer [INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ]

[PROGRAMMER: RANDOMIZE]

1	People of a different religion	1	2	3	4	5	98	99	100
2	People of a different race or color	1	2	3	4	5	98	99	100
3	Immigrants or foreign workers	1	2	3	4	5	98	99	100
4A	**[PROGRAMMER: IF Q1012=1]** People of a different sect of Islam	1	2	3	4	5	98	99	100
4B	**[PROGRAMMER: IF Q1012=2]** People of a different sect of Christianity	1	2	3	4	5	98	99	100

Figure 1.2. Sample Question Q303: AB Wave I (2006–2009)

303q	Which of the following groups do you wish to have as neighbors?	
q3031	Followers of other religions	1 = I do not wish 2 = I do not mind 98 = Can't Choose/Don't know 99 = Decline to Answer 100 = Not provided/Not useable
q3032	People of different race or color	1 = I do not wish 2 = I do not mind 98 = Can't Choose/Don't know 99 = Decline to Answer 100 = Not provided/Not useable
q3033	Immigrants and guest workers	1 = I do not wish 2 = I do not mind 98 = Can't Choose/Don't know 99 = Decline to Answer 100 = Not provided/Not useable

All participating MENA countries included data sets from at least two survey waves, one of which being the final post-COVID wave (wave VI). These limitations allowed for a large variety of country analysis while assuring comparison between pre- and post-COVID waves. Based on the limitations, participant countries included Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. The seven included countries successfully represent the economic, political, and geographic variation in the region, accounting for both oil-rich (Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya) and oil-poor nations (Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia), geographic diversity (North Africa, Levant, Gulf regions), and variation in regime type (democracy, monarchy, emirate). This diversity acts as a natural control for country-level non-time dependent factors including GDP, regime type, geographic location, and oil wealth. However, the variety alone does not account for time-varying factors across countries, including internal conflict during the pandemic, government changes, or other country-specific events during this time frame. To assure demographic uniformity across the five waves, I compiled and compared religious demographics across each wave. The percentage of total Muslim, Christian, and Jewish participants was within 5 percentage points across all survey waves, indicating a sufficient uniformity cross-waves to allow for accurate comparison. In addition, all calculations used embedded survey weights and stratum, allowing for accurate cross-observation despite fluctuation in sample sizes and distribution.

To accurately compare ethno-religious tolerance scores, I calculated the average score per country per question (Q1: Other religion; Q2: Other race; Q3: Immigrants and foreign workers; Q4: Other sect of Islam) for each of the five included waves of the Arab Barometer Survey. Wave I did not include Q4 and was not included in those scores. Respondents who did not answer or indicated they did not want to answer were not included in the average score calculations. Using the average scores for

each question per country, I generated scatter plots for each question in Stata. The y-axis for each graph was the average score per country and the x-axis was the Arab Barometer wave, allowing for analysis of score change over time. The scatter plot graphs allow for qualitative visual comparison of average scores, which will be used to test the various hypotheses related to increased ethno-religious tolerance due to COVID-19 isolation.

Country-level isolation scores were calculated using information from the OECD COVID-19 Crisis Response Report, which provided five dimensions of isolation-related tactics used during the pandemic (lockdown, nightly curfew, social distancing, masking, and quarantine) (OECD COVID-19 Report 2020). Each of the five dimensions had a value of 1, with a total isolation score out of 5. Only one participant country had a score lower than 4 (Iraq: 3), while all other countries were between 4 and 5 (see Image 1.3). The isolation score did not control for efficacy of mandates, due to the recentness of events and limited information in this regard across available sources, most prominently the OECD Crisis Response Report and Oxford Stringency Index (Oxford COVID-19 Response Tracker 2020). However, as additional information on enforcement and adherence comes to light it should be included in future analysis.

Table 1.1. Country-level Isolation Scores

Country	Lockdown	Nightly Curfew	Social Distancing	Masking	Quarantine if (+) Test	Total Score
Algeria	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4/5
Iraq	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	3/5
Jordan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5/5
Kuwait	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4/5
Libya	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5/5
Morocco	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4/5
Tunisia	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4/5

*Data gathered from OECD COVID-19 Crisis Response Report 2020*

Limitations to analysis are plentiful. Qualitative analysis does not account fully for possible confounding variables at both the country and individual level, as well as the combination of levels. However, due to the large sample sizes (approx. 20,000 survey respondents per wave) and a variety of included MENA nations, the natural variety provides enough control of confounding factors to depict regional trends accurately. In addition, the survey data analysis was weighted with provided survey weights and stratum to account for other individual-level discrepancies across waves. In short, while there are limitations, the chosen methods illuminate existing regional trends accurately.

Results

After analyzing the datasets for Arab Barometer Waves I, II, IV, V, and VI, I calculated the average scores per country for each of the four tolerance questions and plotted them visually on four out-group based graphs. Each graph included average tolerance score per country on the y-axis and Arab Barometer wave on the x-axis, with dashed lines at Arab Barometer wave II and between waves V and VI to indicate the Arab Spring (2011) and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020). Higher y-axis scores indicate higher levels of tolerance while lower scores indicate lower levels of tolerance. The graphed trends indicate a universal increase in tolerance levels for almost all countries across all four groups (other religion, other race, immigrants, other Islamic sect) post-COVID. In addition, all countries with tolerance scores of four or five experienced an increase in tolerance levels from 2018 to 2021; however, Iraq, the only country with an isolation score of three, showed a decrease in tolerance between 2018 (wave V) and 2021 (wave VI). With regards to the third hypothesis, countries experiencing significant conflict in the last two decades were not more likely to have a net increase in tolerance levels than those without significant conflict. Thus, there is evidence supporting both H1 and H2, but little evidence for H3.

To better understand the results, the following section breaks down the findings per out-group type (other religion, race, immigrants, other sect) and includes a discussion of each of the three hypotheses. This allows for more detailed analysis differentiated by out-group type. The first survey question uses people of different religions as the out-group, and each survey wave included almost all of the included countries.

Graph 1.1. People of Different Religion
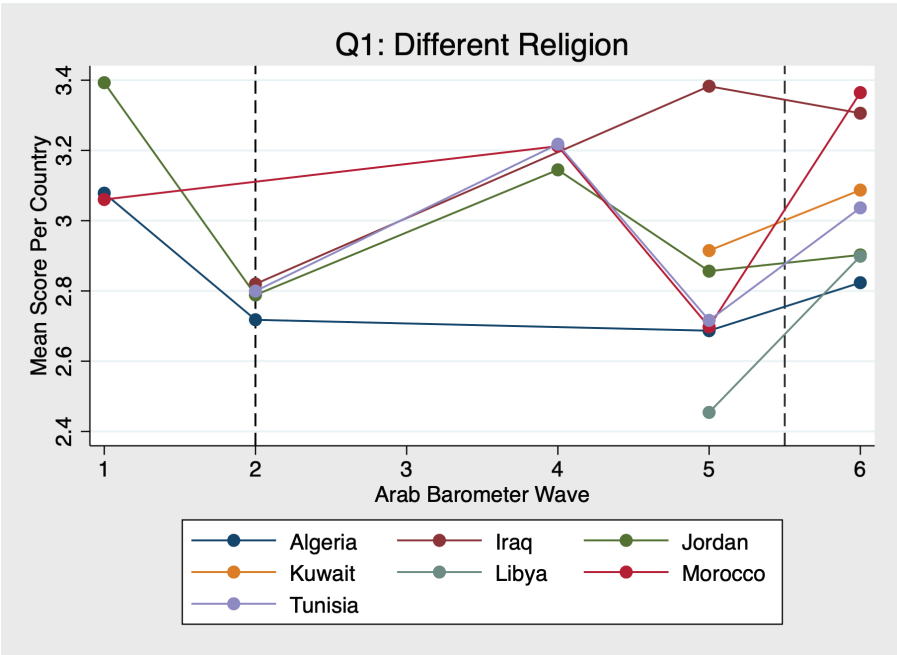
Graph 1.1 shows country-averaged individual-level willingness to live proximally to people of a different religion. As seen in Graph 1 below, tolerance levels varied significantly across waves, with waves II and V having lower average scores across countries and spikes in waves I, IV, and VI. Based on contact and conflict theory, the dip in scores during the Arab Spring (marked at wave II) is due to increased regional conflict without decreased casual contact. While there was no significant regional conflict during wave V (2018), further investigation of this dip is necessary. In addition, while most tolerance scores increased across countries between waves V and VI, some countries' peak scores were higher in other waves where isolation mandates were not at play (Jordan, Tunisia, Iraq).

These results from Graph 1.1 support H1, which states that countries will experience an increase in outgroup tolerance post-COVID, or a uniform break from previous trends. Here, all but one country experienced an increase in tolerance in wave VI, supporting H1. Second, H2 states that countries with higher isolation scores are more likely to experience an increase in tolerance scores than countries with lower isolation scores. The visual results of the religious out-group supported this hypothesis. Only Iraq, with the lowest isolation score broke from the pattern of tolerance increase post-COVID. While our knowledge of isolation efficacy is limited across countries, the given data shows a correlation between high isolation scores and tolerance score increase. Finally, with H3, the countries with the highest tolerance score post-pandemic

were Morocco and Iraq. Morocco has experienced limited conflict within the last two decades, while Iraq has experienced a significant amount of internal conflict. Further investigation is required to understand the H3 correlation, but the data provides very limited support for such correlation.

Overall, country scores across survey waves for people of other religions were lower than scores for other out-groups, except for immigrants and foreign workers. This is a logical observation in a region torn by sectarian and religious divides. And, as mentioned previously, the lowest scores were in wave II, during the Arab Spring. This makes sense due to the large amount of regional conflict and continued causal contact.

**Graph 1.2. People of Different Race/Color**
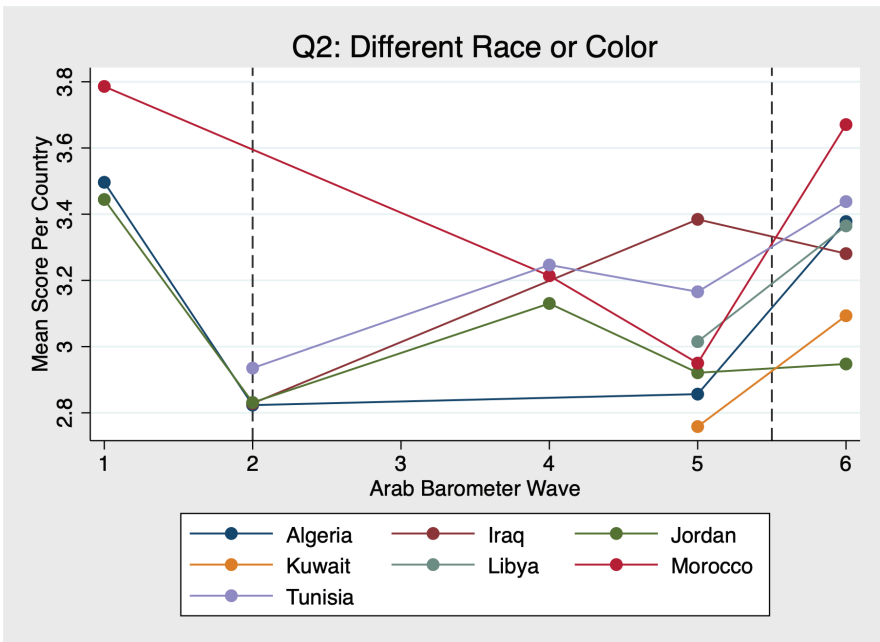
The second survey question identified tolerance of, or willingness to live by, people of a different race or color. Overall, tolerance scores across the country and survey wave were the highest for this outgroup (see Graph 1.2). External factors accounting for this might be the lack of racial diversity--as opposed to ethnic diversity--in the MENA region, primarily consisting of Turks, Arabs, Iranians, and Africans. According to the three hypotheses, this out-group shows a more general increase in tolerance levels overtime, with wave VI (post-COVID) averaging the highest tolerance scores per country. In support of H1, most countries experienced an increase in tolerance scores post-pandemic. Again, Iraq experienced a decrease in tolerance

average score from wave V to VI, while all other countries experienced an increase, consistent with H2. Countries with the highest tolerance scores were Morocco and Tunisia, not countries with significant levels of recent conflict, again opposing H3. In sum, all countries, other than Iraq, experienced increased average tolerance scores post-COVID in wave VI, supporting the notion that minimized casual contact due to lockdowns led to increased tolerance. The unusually high average scores in wave I could be caused by lower sample sizes, and the smaller scale level. Rather than a 5-point scale, the first wave included a 2-point scale, which I averaged together. Due to the lack of nuance, results could be skewed upwards.

**Graph 1.3. Immigrants/Foreign Workers Scatter Plot**
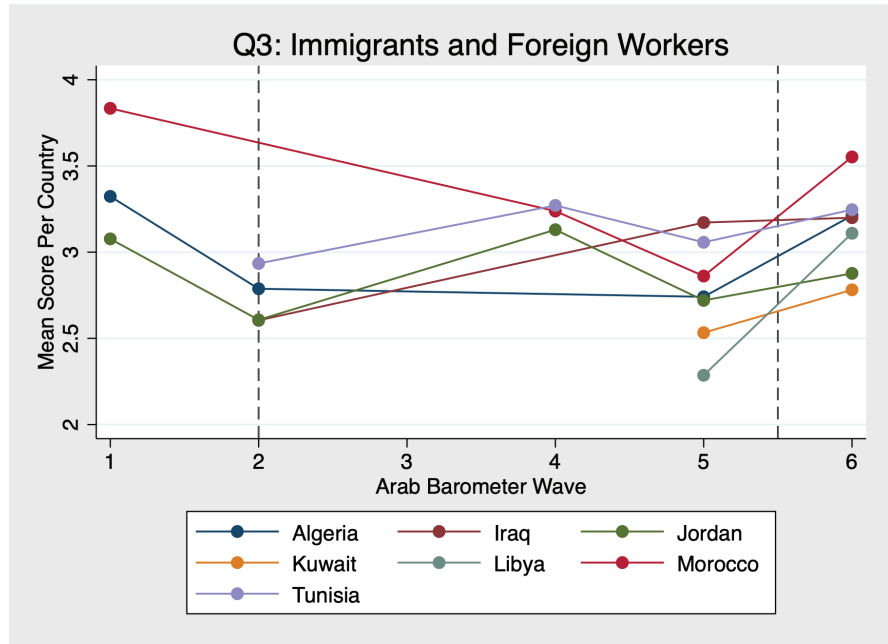
In regards to the immigrant and foreign worker out-group displayed in Graph 1.3 (see above), there are also clear trends of increased tolerance post-COVID. Overall scores are highest in wave VI, excluding wave I, except for Jordan, which had very similar scores in waves IV and VI. Despite the wave I results, more recent trends indicate that average tolerance scores pre COVID-19 were visibly lower than post, and all countries experienced an increase between waves V and VI, even Iraq slightly, supporting H1. Like Graph 1 and Graph 2, results show that Iraq, which lacked strong lockdown protocols, experienced the most minimal increase, again supporting H2. Countries that experienced significant conflict in the last two decades, including Libya and Iraq, were among the highest tolerance scores post-COVID, but Morocco

and Tunisia were the highest and experienced significantly lower levels of conflict in the recent past, contrary to H3. Again, while H1 and H2 appeared to be supported, H3 received contradictory results.

In addition, included countries with the highest percentage of foreign workers and immigrants, such as Kuwait and Jordan, had the lowest tolerance scores throughout and post-COVID. This aligns with the anti-immigrant and foreign worker campaigns present throughout each nation due to economic issues. Again, the unusually high average scores in wave I could be caused by lower sample sizes and the smaller sample scale. Rather than a 5-point scale, the first wave included a 2-point scale, which I averaged together. Thus, due to the lack of nuance, results could be skewed upwards.

**Graph 1.4. Different Islamic Sect Scatter Plot**
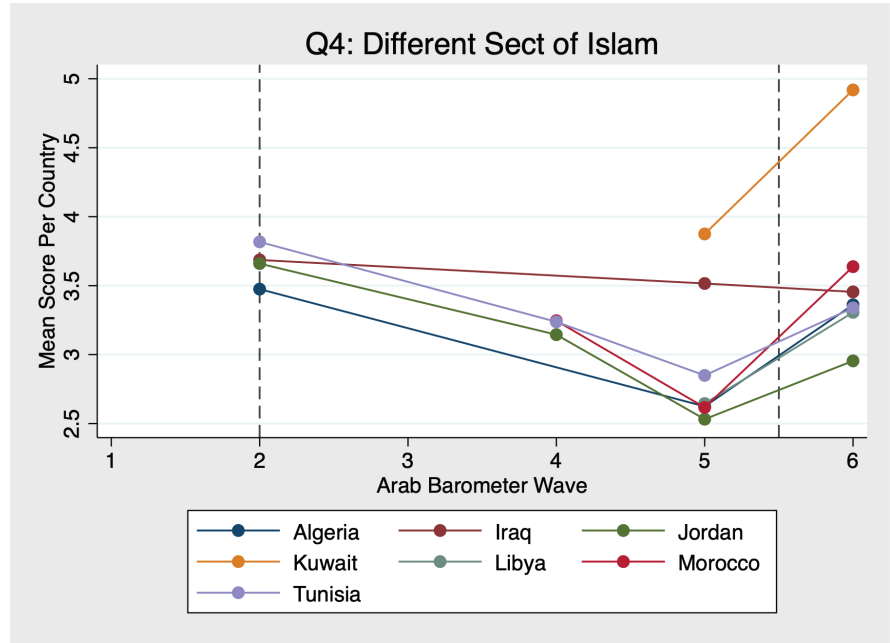
Graph 1.4 (see above) displays the fourth tolerance measure regarding willingness to live nearby members of a different sect of Islam. This question was only administered to participants who indicated that they were Muslim in the earlier demographics portion of the survey; thus, the sample size was smaller than the other out-groups from graphs 1.1–1.3. In addition, this question was not included in the first survey wave. This lack of data and smaller participant size can explain some of the inconsistencies in the results. The average scores are much less uniform throughout Graph 1.4 than other graphs, and trends are less significant. However, many

countries still experienced an increase in tolerance levels from waves IV and V to wave VI, consistent with H1. In addition, Iraq was the only country to experience a post-pandemic tolerance score decrease, again supporting H2. In regard to conflict, the results again did not support the theory that post-conflict regions should experience higher increases.

Additionally, countries with the greatest sectarian divides, such as Iraq, still had high scores throughout all accounted waves. The lowest overall scores came from Morocco and Jordan, which lack prominent sectarian issues. However, Jordan is geographically proximate to countries with sectarian issues such as Iraq. There was no data from wave I, so the patterns are more short term than other out-group measures.

Graph 1.5. All Out-Groups
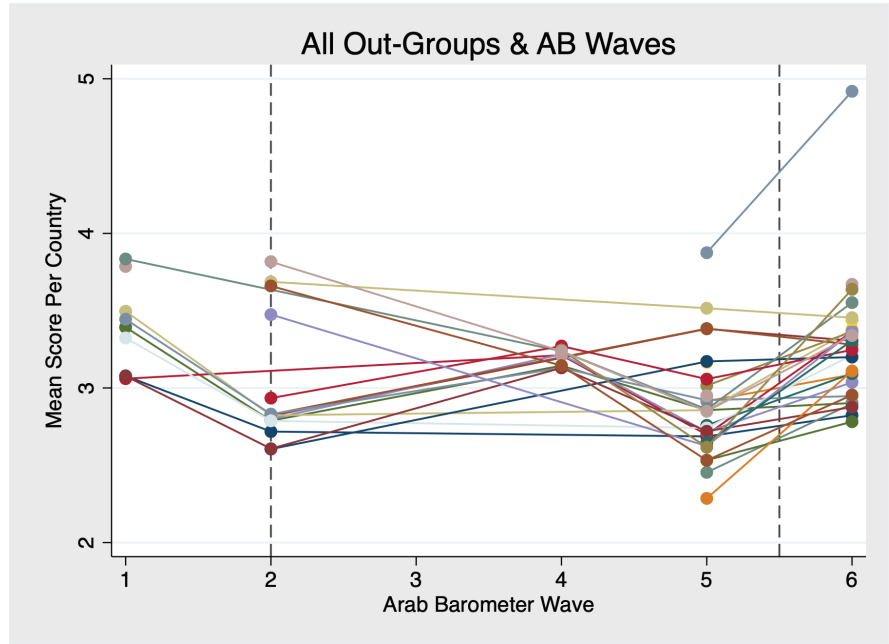
Finally, a graph of all scores (see above Graph 1.5) across each survey wave indicates a general increase in tolerance in wave VI comparative to previous waves, particularly the immediately preceding wave V. While wave I still contains most of the highest average scores, the smaller sample size for wave I calls into question the legitimacy of this trend. Again, while the observed data validated H1 and H2, scatterplot data ran contrary to H3. Based on contact and conflict theory, the dip in scores during the Arab Spring (marked at wave II) is due to increased regional conflict without decreased casual contact. While there was no significant regional conflict during

wave V (2018), further investigation of this dip is necessary. Further quantitative analysis is required to understand reasons for the increased tolerance.

Conclusions

In sum, the evidence shows a general increase in tolerance levels for all out-groups post-lockdown mandates and COVID-19 restrictions. The increases in tolerance levels are most significant between wave V and wave VI, yet generally the highest tolerance levels overall were found in wave VI. While such evidence supports the first hypothesis, the data ran somewhat contrary to H2 and H3. Countries with weaker isolation policies showed higher levels of tolerance; however, only countries with weak isolation mandates showed a decrease in tolerance levels from wave V to VI. Thus, I believe further investigation of the correlation is necessary. In regard to the post-conflict enhancement of negative casual contact, the data did not significantly support the relationship. Countries with the highest tolerance scores were not those with a strong post-conflict identity; however, all countries with a strong post-conflict identity experienced an increase in tolerance between waves V and VI in at least one of the out-group graphs.

Trends were clearest regarding immigrants and those of other races and colors, while those regarding religious out-groups showed less significant effects post-COVID. I recommend further study on these inconsistencies and on how a decrease in casual contact could enhance tolerance of ethnic outgroups but not religious outgroups. In addition, I recommend further exploration of potential pandemic related reasons for why tolerance levels are increased and study of the efficacy of state-mandated isolation policies.

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Censorship Sensing: The Capabilities and Implications of China's Great Firewall Under Xi Jinping

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Totaling over 989 million users at the end of 2020, Chinese Internet users interact with unprecedent amounts of data, communication, and media (Xu 2020). It is a far cry from 1987, when the first email was sent from China to the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. The message in the email, later popularized on QQ desktops, was this: "Across the Great Wall, we can reach every corner of the world" (越过长城，走向世界, *Yuèguò Chángchéng, Zǒuxiàng Shìjiè*) (Internet Archive 2013).

This prophecy has certainly come true as China approaches a billion domestic Internet users. However, it also speaks to a certain irony that stems from the Chinese government's extensive censorship across its networks: even as the Internet continues to function as a tool to connect individuals across the globe, how Chinese Internet access is partitioned off is creating an increasingly insular community within the country. This paper will begin with a brief history of the Internet in China and the corresponding evolution of Chinese technological censorship efforts. It will then discuss our current understanding of Chinese censorship systems as understood by outside network and censorship researchers and will explore the capabilities of its current implementation. It will then pivot to analyze what the implications of the censorship system's understood abilities mean for understanding Xi Jinping's leadership and examine economic and diplomatic consequences of Chinese censorship under Xi.

Although this paper necessarily focuses on the technical aspects of these networking systems in some areas, a computer networking or technical background is not necessary to understand the implications of the described capabilities. Focus on the technical implementation will only be described to outline basic abilities and limitations. Definitions will be provided to make important technical terms accessible to readers who do not stem from a technical background.

China's Internet and Censorship History

China's relationship with technology is all the more incredible when we consider its meteoritic rise over the past few decades. Although China has boasted significant scientific advances throughout history, it arrived relatively late to the game of modern science and technology. Its lack of modern military warfare in the 1800s directly contributed to the Century of Humiliation, during which foreign powers that took advantage of its resources and wealth (Joseph 2019, 52). Although the Republic of China began the advent of modern science in China as key Chinese figures received their education abroad and founded schools and universities in China, many of these institutions moved to Taiwan after the Communist Party gained power in 1949. Under Mao's rule, nuclear and satellite technology were the only regions that experienced significant scientific advancement (Joseph 2019, 91). The disastrous policies that resulted in the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution meant that China's populace was too consumed with fulfilling the Party quotas and dealing domestic shortages to make much progress in scientific advancements.

But if China has arrived relatively late in using technology to cement gains in international power, it has also excelled in catching up. Once it was ready to position itself for greater growth and economic development, it seized the opportunity to leverage science and technology as a vehicle for ascendancy. Science and technology were a pillar of the Four Modernizations announced by Deng Xiaoping for economic development in 1975, and in the period since then, it has positioned itself as one of the world's leading STEM leaders (Joseph 2019, 128). One measure that illustrates this is that, by some counts, China is the largest producer of scientific articles (Tollefson 2018).

China's relationship with the Internet has followed similar trends. Because the Internet began as an American government-related project, China did not play a significant part in the formation of key Internet infrastructure entities and services. However, in the ensuing years, China has seized the opportunity to both capitalize on providing services and amassing soft power. These efforts have included heavy investment in telecommunications infrastructure both domestically and in at least 16 countries as part of its Digital Silk Road (DSR) initiative, an extension of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative strategy (Kurlantzick 2021). Its efforts to place Chinese needs and users at the center of Internet operations have also resulted in the development of its censorship model.

Although the first email from China was sent in 1987, the Internet did not arrive in China until 1994 under the leadership of Jiang Zemin. In parallel with the Internet's release, the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) in China worked on a project known as the Golden Shield, which was released in 2000 during a trade show in Beijing (Torfox 2011). The project aim was to act as a comprehensive surveillance system that would link all citizens' records at various levels. However, as the technology continued to advance at a rapid pace, the system shifted from linking information to filtering specific content for individuals in an expansive surveillance system.

The Golden Shield project is colloquially referred to as the Great Firewall of China (GFW). Co-located within the GFW is a project known as the Great Cannon, which is an offensive Internet attack tool that has been used to launch distributed denial-of-service attacks against websites that cause severe political problems for China (Marczak et al. 2015). An example of this is when the Great Cannon was used to attack GitHub, a popular web-based code hosting service, in 2015, perhaps due to the fact that GitHub hosts resources that detail how to circumvent censorship (Marczak et al. 2015). The Great Cannon has not been deployed extensively and has generally been used in response to what it considers "foreign hostile actors."

Under current President Xi Jinping's leadership, censorship efforts have continued with the proliferation of the Internet. In 2013, his first year in office, it was reported that over two million people were used as "public opinion analysts" to manually censor posts and observe user activity (Hunt and Xu 2013). Other individuals were hired to make patriotic posts and comments, introducing a barrage of CCP-positive material into Chinese cyberspace. Continued Chinese propaganda and censorship efforts make use of both human operators and algorithms to promote Party lines and censor sensitive topics.

Under President Xi Jinping's leadership, China has seen an increase in censorship across all forms of media. One example is that Chinese internet companies are required to sign a document entitled "Public Pledge on Self-Regulation and Professional Ethics for the China Internet Industry" (Albert and Xu 2017). Previous workarounds for bypassing censorship technologies, such as the use of virtual private networks (VPNs), have been blocked. In February 2016, Xi also announced increased restrictions for state media to better adhere to Party doctrine. As China's censorship efforts continue to develop and expand, the government's central purpose is to safeguard the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) will, authority, and unity (Zhou 2020).

Research Objectives and Limitations

Although significant research on the technical capabilities and weaknesses of the GFW has taken place over recent years, much of this research has only been examined through a technical or computer networking basis. The purpose of this paper is to present a holistic picture of the extent to which the GFW filters information on a regional, platform-specific, and time-sensitive basis, and to contextualize it within past and current Chinese political events.

This section begins with a necessary disclaimer for understanding the limitations of research performed to understand the GFW. Researchers experience limitations regarding the GFW due to several reasons. Much of the research surrounding the GFW relies on testing its keyword filtering capabilities, which means that researchers test specific words within Chinese networks and record which entries experience censorship. The consequence of this method is that it primarily relies on guess-and-check. New discoveries in this area are generally made using suggestions from knowledgeable Chinese citizens or political scientists who study these areas or rely

on accidental discoveries based on sample search queries. For example, Rambert et al. discovered that including the English version of the word "search" in an HTTP query (the data sent to a server when a user navigates to different webpages) resulted in the query being subjected to an expanded blocklist of words (Rambert et al. 2021). However, this discovery was only made through empirical methods.

Another limitation is that many researchers lack the ability to establish network infrastructure in China to directly test queries and other statistics from Chinese Internet infrastructure. As research from Rambert et al. has also shown, routing locations do make a difference in the types of queries that are censored (Rambert et al. 2021). Additionally, queries that researchers use do not always mirror natural banter or entries that most users might enter, meaning that researchers' data results may ultimately be subject to more or less censorship than the average Chinese netizen. Although serious researchers in this area tend to use Chinese infrastructure to test their queries, there is not a definitive way to ensure that these servers are not experiencing disproportionately more or less censorship than the average Chinese Internet user (Christin 2021).

Timing also plays a factor into researchers' results; many of the censorship implementations used for the Great Firewall vary week to week and have been shown to have tighter or varied controls during significant Party events or sensitive breaking news topics, such as the disappearance of famed Chinese tennis player, Peng Shuai (Mozur, Xiao, Kao, and Beltran 2021). Based on this, some studies may be skewed in their results based on global occurrences that may result in greater censored material during certain points of time. It is also possible that research machines and/or IP addresses may experience disproportionate censorship due to the number of controversial topics they periodically send. However, this is generally addressed in research findings, and researchers have not reported inconsistencies that would suggest such directed interference (Rambert et al. 2021).

Great Firewall Implementation

Contrary to the monolithic approach that its name suggests, the GFW does not actually constitute a single firewall. Rather, Chinese censorship utilizes a wide variety of techniques and is implemented at different stages of data transfer. The techniques that the GFW uses include, but are not limited to: IP range bans, URL filtering, DNS tampering, deep packet filtering, man-in-the-middle attacks, and TCP reset attacks (Asim 2021). This section will focus on several key techniques used as part of deterrence implementations.

An important feature of Chinese Internet censorship relies on DNS (Domain Name Service) poisoning, which is used to unconditionally block websites listed on a blacklist. DNS poisoning, which is also referred to as DNS tampering, is carried out by storing incorrect or fake information in the storage of a server, causing users to be redirected to the wrong website. In the case of Chinese censorship, a DNS-poisoned website will appear to be blocked or seem as if it has difficulty loading.

The top three categories of blocked domains are "business," "pornography," and "information technology" (Hoang et al. 2021, 3385). Approximately 311k domains are blocked daily within China, although it is worth noting that only around 1.3% of these domains rank among the top 100k most popular websites. Within the sub-domain of "information technology" are many popular global websites such as Google, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, which have been effectively replaced in Chinese cyberspace with Chinese copycat equivalents, such as WeChat, Sina Weibo, and Tencent QQ.

The blacklist of domains is dynamic, which is supported by the fact that COVID-19 related domains have also been censored (Rambert et al. 2021). Changes to the list also rely on manual and automated additions. This is supported by the fact that several higher education domains were also included in the block list that are targeted specifically without justification. Although the inclusion of many of these institutions' domains make sense based on their research on Chinese censorship and the Chinese government, other very specific entries, such as the sub-domain cs.colorado.edu (which is not currently in use), point to the fact that the list relies on manual and automated additions.

Several studies have reported the use of a penalty box in Internet transactions that contain filtered keywords (Xu, Mao, and Halderman 2011). This is an effective deterrence mechanism: if a user submits a request that includes a filtered keyword, then there is a 50–75% chance that requests submitted in the next 90 seconds afterwards will also be blocked, even if the subsequent requests don't contain filtered keywords (Rambert et al. 2021). The GFW further strengthens its Web censorship via HTTP/HTTPS filtering by deploying two separate censorship systems (Bock, Naval, Reese, and Levin 2021). The second system has been deployed since at least September 2019, and functions as a "backup censorship" system that runs in parallel to the main system and often blocks Web traffic that remained undetected by the first.

In addition to Internet filtering and blocking, chat clients in popular applications and games are also subject to censorship. A key difference for censorship performed for chat clients and games is that the words and material blocked is often company dependent. An analysis of top-downloaded mobile games in China showed that there was no single list of filtered keywords; the three statistically significant factors between censored lists were approval date, publisher, and developer (Knockel, Ruan, and Crete-Nishihata 2017). This points to a more decentralized model of the GFW than generally imagined, though at the same time points to evidence that regulation of censorship for games is still enforced via centralized regulations (due to the correlation with publisher date).

The Nature of Censored Material

Researchers have generally relied on compiled word lists and websites that include entries that have been blocked in the past to conduct future network observation studies. Categories of observed blocked Wikipedia entries include: the topic of

censorship; censorship circumvention; sensitive events, such as Chinese protests; the Falun Gong (a religious movement that is regularly persecuted by the Chinese government), sensitive terms involving the government, such as the term "Princeling," which refers to the children of high-level government officials; various magazines, media, newspapers, and organizations; dissidents; certain political officials; regional issues that involve Hong Kong, Taiwan, Xinjiang, or Tibet; and Tiananmen ("Complete GFW Rulebook" 2021). Studies examining filtered keywords generally rely on word lists such as the Wikipedia 2014 and 2020 lists of censored words, which have similar categories with similarly sensitive people, organizations, or events that the Chinese government hopes to avoid.

There are various instances where users are subject to different filtered keyword lists. One is that users that submit search results inside of China are subject to different filtering restrictions than users outside of China. For example, foreign users have the terms "Coronavirus," "Remdesivir," and "Epidemic" filtered, whereas users located inside of China do not; this points to different objectives for filtering different audiences (Rambert et al. 2021).

Another instance is that users that have the English word "search" in HTTP requests are subject to an expanded keyword filtering list. For example, "法轮" (Falun Gong, a Chinese religious movement) is blocked when the English word "search" is included, but is not when the word is not present. Other variations of the word search, including words for "search" in Chinese, did not trigger the expanded blocklist (Rambert et al. 2021). Individuals who include the English word for "search" likely have more exposure to foreign information or influences, and also likely have enough fluency in English to understand articles stored on English webpages. Therefore, this discrepancy is likely indicative of the Chinese government's desire to detect and deter individuals from specific backgrounds from learning about sensitive topics.

Although the discussion of filtering up to this point has been focused on keyword filtering (blocking websites, requests, or content based on specific words or phrases), an analysis of filtering based on a user's location, profile, and/or other media used, such as pictures, has also been performed. Based on this analysis, the strongest predictor of censored posts on Weibo, a popular Chinese social media platform, was negative sentiment (Arefi 2020, 13).

Proactive and Reactive Filtering

GFW filtering has also been shown to be dynamic based on global and domestic events. Changes to filtered keywords, for example, are reflected in significant weekly changes that take into account recent events that censors hope to block. An interesting aspect of this is that keywords are also regularly removed from lists when they become irrelevant – showing that the government recognizes a need to provide Chinese netizens with a degree of Internet independence. The number of words that are changed on a regular basis are substantial: from a blocklist of about 1,400 words, some regions experienced hundreds of these words were removed or added based

on the week and the region of the country (Rambert et al. 2021). This indicates that some regions may be subject to more robust oversight on censorship filtering than others, which also points to either sensitivity in regional control or a decentralization of censorship oversight. For example, Guangzhou experienced only one or two keyword changes to a list of over 1000 blocked words over a week, whereas Shanghai had 600 changes to this list during the same week (Rambert et al. 2021).

The time-sensitive filtering aspects of the GFW are most on display during two types of events: significant government events, which involve proactive filtering, and global or domestic events that spark outrage or dissent, which involve reactive filtering. An analysis of censored WeChat messages during China's 19th National Communist Party Congress in 2017 showed that even potentially neutral and positive messages that pertained to sensitive topics, such as Xi Jinping and the military, were blocked in the days leading up to and following the event. The top categories of blocked phrases and words were: Xi Jinping, references to a power transition, leadership, and Party policies and ideologies. Phrases blocked that revolved around Xi specifically included references to his desire to stay in power, critiques of his leadership, and his family (Ruan et al. 2020, 513). However, although many of the critical phrases remained blocked, around 50% of the tested phrases were unblocked a year after the Congress, which shows that censors recognize the importance of a certain degree of information flow is necessary to placate users.

Reactive censorship is more difficult to measure because such events occur without warning and the dynamics of netizen actions during/following an event are similarly volatile. However, events such as controversy over the recent disappearance of famous Chinese tennis star, Peng Shuai, show reactive censorship at work. After Peng's initial controversial post was deleted from Weibo, China's version of Twitter, censors quickly deleted other posts referring to her claims and banned a large scope of adjacent topics, including the topic of "tennis." Xiao Qiang, a researcher from UC Berkeley, noted that several hundred keywords were banned in relation to the incident (Mozur et al., n.d.). The aftermath of this event and the subsequent relaxation of censorship around Peng Shuai will remain to be seen, and will likely depend on future international engagement and events.

Focusing on Narrative Control

The government has realized that in its pursuit of a unified China, control over the narratives perpetuated over Chinese networks takes precedence over granular control of information. After the establishment of the People's Republic in China in 1949, information that entered and exited China was tightly controlled. It was not until the Reforms and Opening-up period under former President Deng Xiaoping that China became open to foreign exchanges, and even then, foreign nationals were still viewed with suspicion in context of the prior humiliations that China had endured at the hands of foreign powers (Sina News 2003). However, with the scope of the Internet, the Chinese government recognizes that even if it is able to deploy

advanced censorship mechanisms to monitor and scrub certain pieces of unwanted information, it is no longer able to vet every source of new information that enters its borders. It has therefore also opted for control over how information is perceived to accompany its technological censorship efforts.

If the government can control the narrative, then it can shape the lens through which people filter information, and which will determine how much information will spread. Both concepts work hand in hand. If the government narrative is repeated and rigorously taught from a young enough age, then the populace will not be interested in researching additional information, even if it is possible to obtain. On the other hand, if the information flow into China can be shaped in such a way that almost all data supports or does not heavily discount the official narrative, then it strengthens the official narrative because alternate viewpoints are not easily obtained. This point is supported by the alternative keyword list when the English word "search" is included in search requests (Rambert et al. 2021). This forms a key principle of success behind the Chinese Firewall: information does not have to be blocked absolutely. Making information harder to obtain or access can act as a sufficient deterrent for most people. This principle is clear when we consider the "penalty box" mentioned earlier, which blocks traffic after a user searches for a blocked keyword (Xu et al. 2011).

The reach with which the Chinese government has implemented censorship through the GFW is extensive for filtering traffic coming outside of China but is surprisingly dynamic within China. The difference in block lists for international vs. domestic traffic shows that China has different objectives in its censorship. Censorship of outside traffic controls China's image to the outside world, whereas domestic censorship is used to prevent undesirable information leaks.

Many of the studies that focused on variations in filtered keywords also found significant variations between the lists companies and service providers used. This suggests that censorship is generally decentralized between various entities. This decentralization extends to regional variations as well, as evidenced by the earlier example that shows censorship differences between Guangzhou and Shanghai. Although general guidance on what to block is likely issued from a centralized CCP authority, it has been noted that it is likely that much of the granular control of specific words being censored or not is most likely up to individual network administrators (Christin 2021). This explains the variability of some of the censorship observed throughout the research.

The implication of traffic through Internet Service Providers (ISPs) for major cities such as Beijing and Shanghai experiencing significantly less censorship is that the Chinese government understands that censorship within its intranet is more sensitive, and that it must be wary of allowing "maximal" search/message freedom to its citizens (so long as the data originates from a relatively safe source within the country, as opposed to traffic coming from abroad). Little to no censorship was observed for traffic between Hong Kong and international entities, which supports the idea that the government minimizes its use of censorship to placate its citizens.

This finding is especially interesting when we consider that the primary challenge of information control for the Chinese government may come from within its borders. Many Westerners incorrectly assume that the primary challenge of information control comes from the outside and assume that Chinese who are unaware of some of the more sensitive points of their country's history would immediately turn against their government if exposed to information about events such as Tiananmen. This is not necessarily the case. One author noted informal evidence against this in 2014 with students from prestigious Beijing universities such as Tsinghua and Peking University. When the author asked the students about their knowledge about the Tiananmen incident, many of the students were unaware of what had happened; in other cases, students defended the government's stance, even if they saw it as rather extreme. The reality is that "the propaganda apparatus has laid the groundwork so well that most students simply have no interest in questioning the government's version of events" (Lim 2015, 88).

The larger existential threat for the Chinese government may be that it is a victim of its own success. The exponential rise in standards of living across the board has set up high expectations for the future. At the turn of the century, China's roadways were dominated by bicycles; today, automobiles dominate the highways. Real weekly wages have increased 8-fold between 2000 and 2016, from 100 to 800 yuan (Zhang and Wu 2016). China's per capita GDP has more than doubled from 2010 to 2020, from $4,600 to $10,500 (Goldkorn 2021). President Xi has promised to eliminate inequality and continue China's prosperity, but many factors that remain out of his control may stand in the way of his delivery.

Against this backdrop, Chinese social media boards and blogposts are effective amplifiers for citizens to express discontent. The sheer amount of Internet users can be encapsulated in the popular term 人肉搜索 (*Rénròu Sōusuǒ*), which describes the powerful research capabilities Web bloggers and users to uncover and investigate information. Although the government is masterful at censoring data at will, it is also aware that heavy-handedness in censorship efforts decreases trust in citizen platforms, which it uses to measure public opinion. It understands that there is a delicate balance between deciding when to censor information and when to allow the public to blow off steam; too much, and leadership may lose control and credibility in the narrative.

Because the government walks a thin line between control and consent, Chinese netizens are able to successfully use the Web to advocate for issues that are important to them, such as environmental concerns and corruption. Outcry over unpopular decisions by local officials also results in greater scrutiny, allowing citizens to effectively hold many lower-level officials accountable even as top leadership remains taboo (Downey 2010). At the same time, the Chinese government is able to effectively channel the public outrage into channels that are not sensitive to the CCP's positions. For example, during the Diaoyu protests in 2012, the Chinese government said nothing while citizens gathered to protest against Japanese businesses (BBC

2012). As protestors united behind Chinese nationalism and railed against Japan in a cause that the Party supported, the government allowed the protests to continue.

Future Implications

As President Xi seeks to shape a "unified and resurgent China," he will continue to leverage technology to promote this narrative within the country (Economy 2022). Censorship is a crucial tool for ensuring that the conformity of opinion works towards, not against, the country's goals. As China continues to assume regional power over information access and dissemination, it is also hoping to shift the traditional way in which the Internet is regulated: as China's computer networks grow more insular, it is establishing its own form of Internet governance within its borders that trumps international norms.

Despite the fact that netizens are given some independence in the range of topics they can discuss, the extensive number of banned words and phrases that involve President Xi Jinping are in line with his current rise in power and authority. With the rise of Xi's cult of personality, which has been compared to a similar craze around Mao, the outsized sensitivity in censorship around his policies and power reflects either a fragility in his grip on power or a consolidation of authority—and it is possible that the answer is a mixture of both.

In parallel with how Mao effectively "Sinicized" Marxist-Leninist principles for application for China, Xi has also declared a similar vision for China's cyber future. The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), the country's regulator and censor, announced the government's intentions to ideologically censor and verify that algorithms adhere to Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, specifically regarding "internet information service algorithms at consumer-facing internet companies" (Goldkorn 2021). Through this announcement, Chinese leadership is signaling its intentions to further ensure that the Internet serves to further the CCP's purposes—not the other way around.

As Xi continues to promote domestic businesses as part of China's rise, Chinese censorship of the Internet has provided a significant opportunity for Chinese companies to fill in a vast consumer niche in technological services. The fact that many popular Western websites are blocked is not a loss that is largely felt within the country because there are thriving Chinese equivalents for users. This may serve as a successful precedent for Chinese companies to capture markets in other sectors. Many Western companies that once operated in China have recently withdrawn from the market, citing difficulties imposed by the government. If the Chinese government recognizes that Chinese companies are able to replace other markets successfully, then they may continue to push for regulation that favors Chinese leadership and corporations. A smaller-scale example of this is Manner Coffee, a coffee shop brand that could be positioned to rival and eventually replace Starbucks as the provider in the market. As Xi Jinping continues to advance his Common Prosperity policies and

favors domestic consumption, the success of Internet companies in satisfying their markets may serve as an encouraging precedent for his strategy (Che 2021).

The implications of Xi's vision extend well beyond China. In its dealings with other countries regarding the Digital Silk Road, a technological branch of China's Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing has provided training on how to censor Internet efforts (Kurlantzick 2021). This points to the larger issue of how China is exporting digital authoritarianism, and how its censorship efforts may not remain isolated to its own citizens. Additionally, as China becomes more confident as a leader on the world stage, it may have less reservations about displays of offensive cyber capabilities. The Great Cannon, an attack system co-located with the GFW, may be viewed as an increasingly attractive option for Chinese leaders wishing to push back on corporations or governments who fail to cooperate.

China may not be content to showcase its might through soft power as it takes an expanded leadership role on the global stage. It may see fit to make use of its offensive Great Cannon capabilities as those whom it deems "hostile foreign powers" continue to threaten China's harmonizing model. For example, increasing tensions over Taiwan between China and America and its allies may result in unprecedented cyber campaigns as a prelude to other military escalations. Such a possibility is not remote: Taiwan is already reporting around five million cyberattacks and probes daily, the overwhelming majority of which originate from the mainland (AFP 2021). As China seeks reunification, it could see the use of the Great Cannon against the Taiwanese government as an excellent symbolic move to neutralize some of its Internet capabilities. The last significant usage of the Great Cannon against GitHub was a significant message to the world: by targeting one of the world's largest codebases, China directly signaled to the West that any of its technology that stands in the way of the CCP is fair game.

The continued decoupling of Chinese Internet users from the rest of the world through censorship exacerbates a significant rift between China and its counterparts. Complete control comes at a cost for China: the more that Chinese censorship is actively deployed, the more it advertises its insecurities to the outside world and risks stoking the outrage of its own netizens. However, it is a cost that it is increasingly eager to pay. Subsequently, outsiders will need to pay careful attention to changes in Chinese censorship models as its model is successfully exported to other authoritarian regimes to silence dissent and perform surveillance. As the CCP grows more insular in its dealings with the outside world, understanding the topics that are important to them through empirical observation will become critical to understanding its domestic and international aims—seeing both the image it wishes to present and the image it seeks to hide.

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A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Christian Nationalist Belief and Behavior in the United States

Tommy Nanto

Introduction

Christian nationalism is a buzzword in American politics, but insufficiently researched in the intersection of politics, religion, and psychology. In a country where individual Christian practice is declining, why is this strand of nationalism seemingly on the rise? Through an original study, I establish an empirical link between Christian nationalism and racial resentment, finding that racial resentment is the single greatest predictor of Christian nationalist beliefs. I frame Christian nationalist beliefs separately from behavior. I find initial empirical evidence that racial resentment and Republican partisanship predict both belief and behavior, but religiosity does not predict Christian nationalist behavior.

The distinction between Christian nationalist beliefs and behavior is not systematically addressed in political science literature. In addition, research in politics and religion indicates personal religious beliefs and outward religious behavior predict political opinion in different ways, yet this differentiation is missing from research on Christian nationalism. My findings explain discrepancies between Christian nationalist belief and behavior by treating them as separate independent variables. I present evidence that racial resentment and political partisanship, not religious behavior or belief, drive individuals to act on their Christian nationalist beliefs and exhibit Christian nationalist behavior.

Racial Resentment, Religion, and Politics

Christian nationalist beliefs generally include a distinctly Christian view of American history and policy preferences that reflect the desire to restore America to

a perceived rightful Christian origin. The most definitive research on the causes of Christian nationalism in the United States focuses primarily on Christian nationalist *beliefs*. Sociologists Whitehead and Perry argue Christian nationalism is a political ideology, motivated by racial resentment and partisanship that "co-opts Christian language and iconography in order to cloak particular political or social ends" (2020). Other research finds priming on Christian nationalism increases racial resentment (Johnson et al. 2010). Christian nationalist belief, as measured by Whitehead and Perry, is a measure of public opinion and should be treated as such. I argue Christian nationalist belief is incorrectly conflated with Christian nationalist behavior.

Support for Donald Trump and his brand of the Republican Party is the current embodiment of Christian nationalist behavior in the United States. Lajevardi and Abrajano find that negative sentiment towards Muslims (racial resentment) was a strong and significant predictor of support for Trump in 2016 (2019). Whitehead et al. find significance for Trump support in other measures of racial resentment, as well as a distinct measure of Christian nationalist belief (2018 pg. 150). Hooghe and Dassonneville find the two strongest predictors for Trump support in 2016 were anti-immigrant sentiment and racial resentment (2018). With evidence that racial resentment is a strong predictor of Trump support and core attribute of Christian nationalist belief, we can hypothesize that Trump support is a form of Christian nationalist behavior.

Current research provides two key findings. First, Christian nationalist belief is not a religious worldview, but a political ideology that relies on a narrow belief of a deeply Christian American history. This belief is rooted in racial resentment and annexes power to white, Protestant men. Second, Trump support in 2016 and 2020 is the current embodiment of Christian nationalist behavior. These findings, while extremely important, assume the predicting factors of belief and behavior are the same. I argue otherwise.

Since Christian nationalism is a political ideology veiled by religious symbolism and language, we must address the relationship between religion and politics in the United States. How does religion inform political opinion and vice versa? Djupe et al. establish a difference between religious identification and affiliation (2017). They find that politics on the Christian Right have threatened organized religion in the United States by alienating liberals and moderates—but only in the context of *congregational affiliation*. Congregational affiliation refers to an attachment to a specific, local, religious organization and day-to-day social religious practice. Thus, social religious behavior matters for politics more than general religious identification. Wald et al. find that churches play a distinct role as political communities, and "contribute strongly to the members' political conservatism over and above the personal commitment of respondents to traditional Christian values and a variety of social and attitudinal variables" (1988). However, "religion" is not a catch-all factor for political behavior. Recent literature in the psychology of religion corroborates the theory that religious *belief* and *behavior* should be distinguished. Graham and Haidt show religious behavior creates social unity by promoting interaction with innate moral foundations, specifically through in-group loyalty and respect for authority (2010). This level of

distinction between religious belief and behavior has yet to be applied to Christian nationalism in the United States, specifically concerning the different motivations behind Christian nationalist belief and behavior.

Outside the United States, there is a global precedent for distinguishing *religious* belief and behavior and how the two interact with *political* belief and behavior. Ginges et al. explore how personal religious belief (measured by prayer) and social religious behavior (measured by religious service attendance) independently predict support for suicide attacks in the Middle East (2009). They theorize religion's role in support for suicide attacks is to provide a community and environment that builds "coalitional identities" (Ginges et al., 2009). Through three experiments, Ginges et al. find that increased religious service attendance predicts support for suicide attacks more than prayer—for both Palestinian Muslims and Jewish Israelis (2009).

Suicide bombing is a form of radical political ideology that crosses the threshold from belief to behavior. While there are obvious differences between Trump support and support for suicide bombing, both are political *behaviors*. The same distinction between belief and behavior should be applied to the context of Christian nationalism in the United States.

Theory

I propose the two following hypotheses to examine the relationship between religion, racial resentment and Christian nationalism. My hypotheses also distinguish between Christian nationalist belief and behavior, as well as religious belief and behavior.

> *H1: Christian nationalist belief should be predicted by social*
> *religious behavior, Republicanism, and racial resentment.*

On the surface, Christian nationalist belief and behavior seem religious in nature. However, I assume Christian nationalism is not a form of religious extremism, but rather a nationalist political ideology that has hijacked religious symbolism and language to further its agenda. Racial resentment is at the core of Christian nationalist belief at both the group and individual level.

At the group level, Christian nationalist "in-group" identity and belief has formed throughout the history of the United States. Historically, racial resentment is inseparable from much of white Christian identity in America, especially Protestant America. As David French writes, "for more than two centuries, the United States of America was quite likely the best place in the world to live if you were a white theologically conservative Protestant" (2021). The comfort of religious freedom and majority status are woven into the comfort of systemic white privilege.

If Christian nationalist belief is triggered by social religious behavior and partisanship, why has Christian nationalist belief become increasingly "loud" despite decreased religious behavior in the United States? Christian nationalists are losing the social power, political power, and majority status the white Christian in-group

has experienced for generations. Perry and Whitehead (2020) address the connection between racial hierarchies and religion:

> Appeals to Christianity were merely cynical and transparent attempts to sanction the racial hierarchy. Frederick Douglass, for example, famously described the Christianity of the South as, 'the justifier of the most appalling barbarity, — a sanctifier of the most hateful frauds, — and a dark shelter under, which the darkest, foulest, grossest, and most infernal deeds of slaveholders find the strongest protection.' As Douglass points out, white Americans' claims to be preserving Christian order, America's Christian heritage, or even "religious freedom" have long served as coverings for what has amounted to the exclusion of nonwhite and especially black Americans… In fact, historians like Randall Balmer trace the birth of the Religious Right and its brand of Christian nationalism to a reaction to federal efforts to restrict the ability of conservative Christian schools to racially discriminate (p. 99).

Groups hijacking Christianity to justify political ends is not a new phenomenon in America. Myths are created to justify racist, nationalist ideologies. At the individual level, what contributes to a person's belief in these myths?

At the individual level, no person is likely to admit, or necessarily perceive, that their Christian nationalist attitudes are rooted in racial resentment, political ideology, or anything other than religious devotion. A consistent phenomenon researched in cognitive psychology is "substituting questions" (Kahneman 2011). When faced with a mentally taxing question, people are inclined to give an answer to a simpler question (De Neys et al., 2013, p. 269). In the case of Christian nationalism, religious belief is that "easier" justification for politically nationalist ideals, even if racial resentment is the true motivator. This and other cognitive mechanisms may explain how and why individuals throughout American history have tried to veil political ends with their claims of religious conviction. Still, religion must play some role in Christian nationalist behavior. My second hypothesis addresses this role.

> *H2: Christian nationalist behavior is predicted by social religious behavior,*
> *Republicanism, and racial resentment, but not inward religious belief.*

H2 reinforces and expands the theory that Christian nationalist behavior is inherently political and ideological, but not religious. While religious symbols and language are inseparable from Christian nationalist belief, increased religious behavior would, ideally, decrease such nationalist ideologies. This hypothesis builds on H1 and distinguishes religious belief and behavior. As discussed, researchers have found a clear distinction between inward religious belief and outward religious behavior, especially regarding how religion informs politics. I hypothesize that this distinction applies to Christian nationalist belief and behavior, since Christian nationalism is inherently political.

Social religious behavior, such as church attendance, provides individuals with a community that forms an in-group identity and homogenous political views. This

social and political community is distinct from personal religious belief or practice. Combined with Republicanism and racial resentment, social religious behavior introduces the religious context that allows individuals and groups to become Christian nationalist actors in the name of religion. I hypothesize that personal religious devotion and habits do not introduce the same religious context as social religious practice one may use to justify nationalist ideals.

Research in the psychology of religion has repeatedly found a connection that links religious behavior, such as prayer, with prosocial outcomes (Campbell et al., 2018). Furthermore, most Christian teachings include service, love for others, and inclusion as central beliefs. These principles do not need to be internalized for one to participate in social religious activity. However, these religious convictions would ideally clash with nationalist ideals and prevent a Christian nationalist "believer" from becoming a Christian nationalist "actor."

Methods

To determine the relationship between religion, Christian nationalism, and racial resentment, I fielded a survey of 800 US adults in March 2021, using Amazon M-Turk respondents. The survey consisted of four question blocks:

1. Demographics
2. Racial resentment
3. Christian nationalism
4. Religiosity

The demographic block included age, income, race, religious affiliation, political ideology, party identification, gender, education, and 2020 presidential vote. These questions provide necessary control variables, and the key measure of Christian nationalist behavior (i.e. Trump support).

The racial resentment block included questions by Kinder and Sanders, widely accepted as the dominant measure of racial resentment among Americans (Carmines et al., 2011). These questions directly measure the degree to which a respondent believes in systemic racism in the United States, and indirectly measure racial resentment toward black Americans. The response options were on a 4-point Likert scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. As is common in survey methodology, I did not include an option for a neutral response in order to decrease non-response error, especially given the social sensitivity of these questions (Fowler 2014).

Racial resentment block:

1. Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.
2. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class (reverse coded).

3. Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve (reverse coded).
4. It's really a matter of some people just not trying hard enough: if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.

I conducted factor loading analysis and a Chronbach's alpha test to measure the internal strength and consistency of these questions. This survey question block is widely used in social science research, so as expected, the racial resentment block showed high reliability. The responses were then combined into an average "racial resentment" score, on a 0–1 scale.

Table 1. Racial resentment, Chronbach's alpha and factor analysis

Chronbach's alpha	0.73
Factor loading Q1	0.59
Factor loading Q2	0.69
Factor loading Q3	0.53
Factor loading Q4	0.73

As discussed earlier, Christian nationalist behavior is measured by a vote for Donald Trump in the 2020 election. To measure Christian nationalist belief, I adapted the scale created and recommended by sociologists Whitehead and Perry (2020).

Christian nationalist belief block:

1. The federal government should declare the United States a Christian nation.
2. The federal government should advocate Christian values.
3. The federal government should allow the display of religious symbols in public places.
4. The success of the United States is part of God's plan.
5. The federal government should enforce separation of church and state.

The original scale included a sixth question which I did not include in my adaption: "The federal government should allow prayer in public schools." I omitted this question due to the strong similarity to Q5. I conducted factor analysis and a Chronbach's alpha test to measure the strength of the Christian nationalist belief block. Q5 ("The federal government should enforce separation of church and state") was a strong outlier in the factor analysis, and the overall Chronbach's alpha value was 0.50. This outlier is contrary to the original scale of Whitehead and Perry, and may be due to MTurk sampling (which may produce a younger and more liberal sample than a more representative sample). I omitted Q5, which increased the Chronbach's alpha to 0.77. I hypothesize that Q6, not included, would similarly be an outlier. I kept the four remaining questions and averaged them into a single "Christian nationalist belief" score on a 0–1 scale to match the racial resentment block.

Table 2. Christian nationalist belief, Chronbach's alpha and factor analysis

Chronbach's alpha (Q5 included)	0.50
Factor loading Q1	0.82
Factor loading Q2	0.84
Factor loading Q3	0.62
Factor loading Q4	0.80
Factor loading Q5	0.11
Chronbach's alpha (Q5 omitted)	**0.77**

Finally, the religiosity block was replicated from the Duke University Religion Index, a strong measure of religious behavior and belief (Koenig and Büssing 2010). This index was created to measure religious behavior (both organizational and non-organizational) and personal religiosity in longitudinal studies.

Religion index block:

1. How often do you attend church or other religious meetings?
2. How often do you spend time in private religious activities, such as prayer, meditation, or Bible study?
3. My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my approach to life.
4. In my life, I experience the presence of the Divine.
5. I try hard to carry my religion over into all other dealings in life.

This block measures both self-reported personal religious conviction (Q3, Q4, Q5) and religious behavior (Q1, Q2), which is a key differentiation in my theory. These questions were standardized on a 0–1 scale. While I did not combine these questions into a single measure of religion (in order to preserve the distinction between belief and behavior), I also conducted factor analysis and a Chronbach's alpha test to measure the strength and internal consistency of the question block. The two questions that measured religious behavior (Q1, Q2) scored slightly lower in the factor analysis compared to the questions that measured belief. This provides some evidence that the latent construct between the two categories is different.

Table 3. Religious belief and behavior, Chronbach's alpha and factor analysis

Chronbach's alpha	0.88
Factor loading Q1	0.70
Factor loading Q2	0.72
Factor loading Q3	0.83
Factor loading Q4	0.81
Factor loading Q5	0.82

With the survey data collected, I conducted two separate regression analyses to test my hypotheses.

Model 1

H1: Christian nationalist belief is predicted by social religious behavior, Republicanism, and racial resentment.

To test H1, I regressed the Christian nationalist belief score on Trump vote, religious affiliation, religious belief, religious behavior, party identification, the racial resentment score, as well as age, gender, race, and income. As described earlier, each variable was combined on a 0–1 scale or as a binary indicator for ease of interpretation. The model included robust standard errors. Each control variable was included to decrease omitted variable bias, as age, gender, race, and income may correlate with political belief, racial resentment, or Christian nationalist belief.

Model 2

H2: Trump support (Christian nationalist behavior) is predicted by racial resentment, Republicanism, and social religious behavior, but not inward religious belief.

To test H2, I regressed Christian nationalist behavior (via 2020 Trump vote) on Christian nationalist belief score, religious affiliation, religious belief, religious behavior, party identification, the racial resentment score, as well as age, gender, race, and income. Model 2 also included robust standard errors.

There are some limitations to my methods. First, the M-Turk survey was not a representative sample of American adults—the proportions for gender, race, political party, and religion were not matched by overall demographics in the United States. I was unable to weigh the survey data to account for this demographic variation. The sensitive and personal content of religion and racial resentment may have also triggered social desirability bias and lead to dishonest answers. Priming from one block could also influence the answers in another block, though I attempted to control for this by randomizing the order of the blocks.

Another key limitation is that the survey did not distinguish between Christian denominations beyond Catholic, Latter-day Saint (Mormon), and Protestant. Research has shown that Evangelical Protestants behave differently than mainline Protestants, especially regarding Christian nationalist beliefs (Whitehead et al., 2018). Christian nationalism has historically been focused on Evangelical Protestants, but my methods cannot explore differences between Evangelicals and other Christians. However, my methods compared Christians as a whole group to all other religious identities. Furthermore, my theory does not consider specific religious affiliation, but rather personal religious belief and social religious behavior.

Findings

Figure 1. Coefficient Plot for Model 1
Dependent variable: Christian nationalist belief
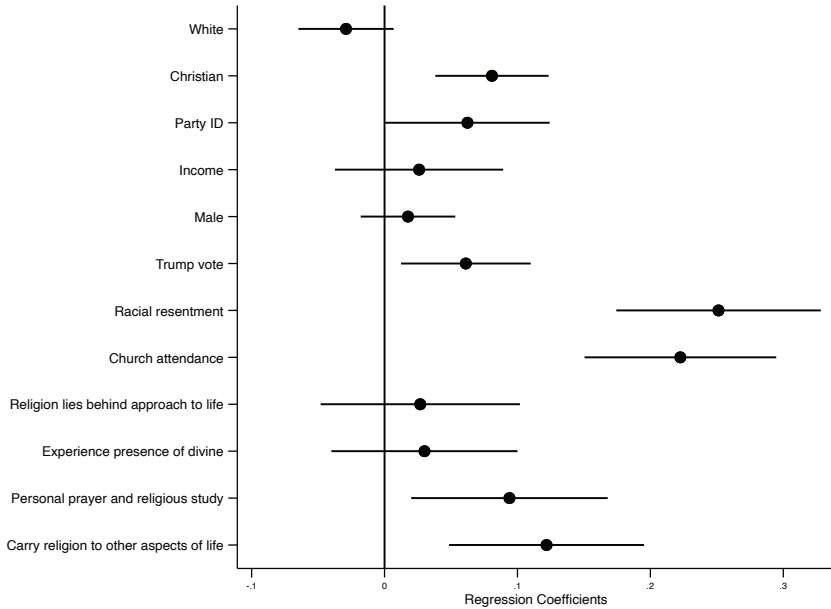
This coefficient plot shows the relative significance of each variable from Model 1. Regression coefficients are shown with 95% confidence intervals. A VIF test confirmed that Model 1 does not have a large level of multicollinearity, at a mean VIF of 4.89. See appendix for regression table.

As illustrated in Figure 1, Christian identity, party ID, Trump vote, racial resentment, church attendance, personal prayer, and carrying religion to other aspects of life were the significant variables. This model partially confirms H1—Republicanism, racial resentment, and social religious behavior (measured by church attendance) significantly predict Christian nationalist belief. Racial resentment is the strongest predictor, followed by church attendance. Based on my theory, I do not consider church attendance as a measure of personal religious conviction, but rather a measure of social community that can influence political belief. Furthermore, the two most personal religious variables are insignificant in predicting Christian nationalist belief. Model 1 illustrates that a certain level of religiosity is necessary for Christian nationalist belief, notably a Christian affiliation and high church attendance. However, Christian nationalist belief cannot be explained without racial resentment and Party ID.

Interestingly, race is insignificant in Model 1. Summary statistics indicate, among Christians, whites do not have the highest levels of Christian nationalist belief.

Table 4. Average Christian nationalist belief score among Christians, by race

Race (N)	Average	95% CI
White (315)	0.57	[0.54,0.60]
Black (50)	0.67	[0.61,0.73]
Asian (67)	0.60	[0.53,0.67]

While the sample size of non-Whites is considerably smaller, on average, Black and Asian Christians score higher on Christian nationalist belief. Confidence intervals indicate there is no significant difference in Christian nationalist belief between White and Asian Christians, but Black Christians have significantly higher Christian nationalist belief scores. If Christian nationalist belief and behavior were indistinguishable, these findings would be curious. However, Model 2 tests H2 and is based on the theory that Christian nationalist belief and behavior are separate. I find that the factors that predict Christian nationalist belief are not the same factors that predict behavior.

Figure 2. Coefficient plot for Model 2
Dependent variable: Trump vote (theorized Christian nationalist behavior)
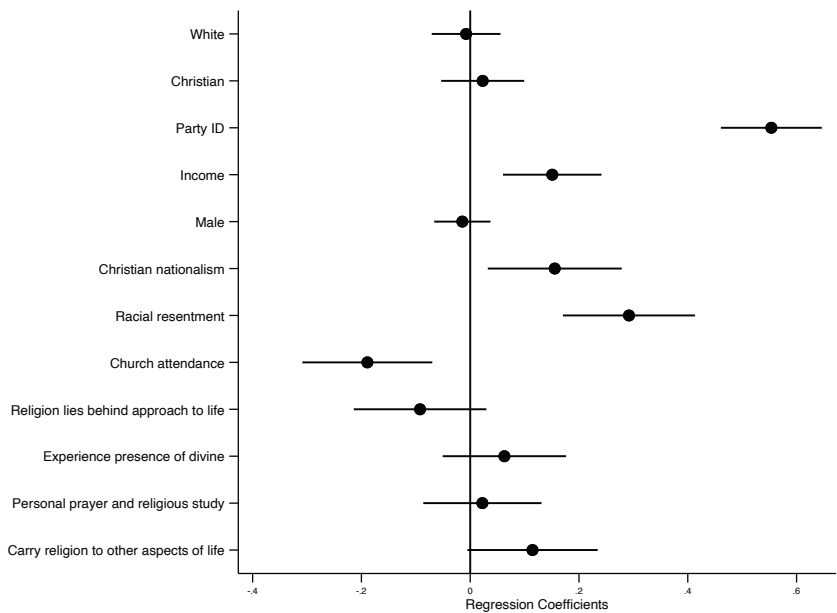
I conducted a VIF test for multicollinearity (mean VIF 4.91)   and used robust standard errors. See appendix for regression table.

As Figure 2 indicates, party ID is the single highest predictor of Trump support, followed by racial resentment and Christian nationalist belief. Christian identity becomes insignificant compared to Model 1. I hypothesized (H2) social religious behavior would predict Trump vote (representing Christian nationalist behavior), but not inward religious conviction. Model 2 confirms my hypothesis that inward religious conviction, or religious belief, does not predict Christian nationalist behavior. However, Model 2 illustrates how religious behavior *also* does not predict Christian nationalist behavior. Church attendance is the only significant religious variable in Model 2, with a negative coefficient.
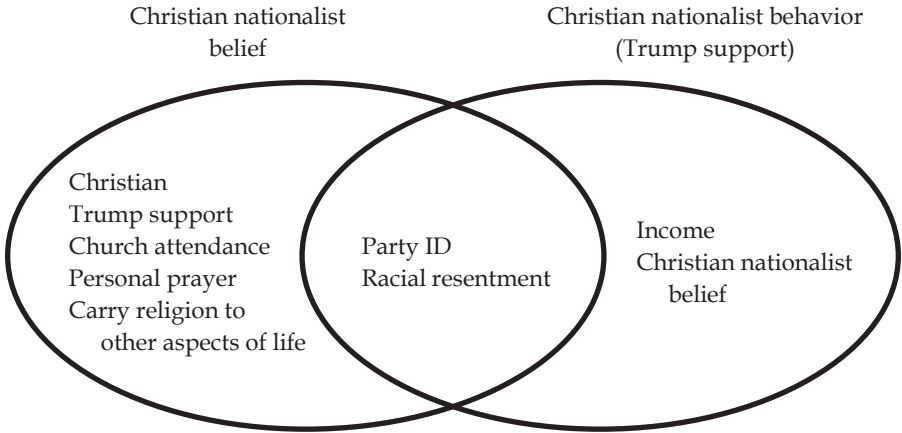
The two most striking findings from Models 1 and 2 are a) Party ID and racial resentment predict both Christian nationalist belief and behavior and b) church attendance positively predicts Christian nationalist belief but negatively predicts Christian nationalist behavior. Models 1 and 2 thus provide evidence that Christian nationalist belief and behavior should be treated as separate phenomena and, similarly, religious belief and behavior predict political outcomes differently. Perhaps church attendance is only correlated with Trump support through its correlation with Christian nationalism. If so, this would indicate that religious behavior itself does not predict Trump support without Christian nationalism, though a two-stage model with an instrumental variable would provide clearer insight.

The finding that party ID and Christian nationalist belief are the strongest predictors of Trump support is not surprising. As discussed, Perry and Whitehead find that Christian nationalist belief was a robust predictor of Trump vote in 2016, even controlling for religion and ideology (2020). Likewise, I find evidence that Christian nationalist behavior is not a proxy for Christian identity, religious behavior or belief, or white identity.

Models 1 and 2 show a strong relationship between Christian nationalist belief and behavior and racial resentment. As discussed earlier, one of my key assumptions is that White identity, White privilege, and Christian identity have been almost inseparable throughout American history. Therefore, determining whether racial resentment predicts Christian nationalist behavior, or vice versa is difficult. This uncertainty provides further evidence for the theory that the two are indistinguishable. Some religious behavior predicts Christian nationalist belief, but no religious behavior significantly predicts Christian nationalist behavior.

Christian nationalism is a more dynamic issue than initially expected. Racial resentment is a common theme yet race itself does not predict Christian nationalism. The factors that predict Trump support (Christian nationalist behavior) and Christian nationalist belief are nearly identical, yet religious activity only predicts the former. I propose an alternate view of Christian nationalism that distinguishes between belief and behavior. I measured Christian nationalist belief through the 4-question block adopted from Perry and Whitehead, but Christian nationalist behavior is a different phenomenon.

Figure 3. The predictors of Christian nationalist belief and behavior

Christian nationalist belief   Christian nationalist behavior (Trump support)

Christian
Trump support
Church attendance
Personal prayer
Carry religion to
     other aspects of life

Party ID
Racial resentment

Income
Christian nationalist
belief

Religious behavior, especially church attendance, clearly predicts Christian nationalist belief. However, religious behavior does not predict Christian nationalist behavior as measured by Trump support. If Christian nationalist behavior is a "mobilized" version of Christian nationalist belief, these results show that religious behavior *decreases* the chance of Christian nationalist belief crossing the threshold to Christian nationalist behavior. It is not necessarily surprising that church attendance or Christian identity is a predictive variable for Christian nationalist attitudes, but it is fascinating that these religious behaviors decrease when Christian nationalism crosses the threshold of Trump support.

Even when predicting Christian nationalist belief (Model 1), two religious behavior variables are insignificant: "I experience the presence of the divine" and "Religion is what really lies behind my approach to life." Church attendance, prayer, and carrying religious beliefs to other aspects of life, on the other hand, are significant. There is a categorical difference between these behaviors. Church attendance is the most social and outward of the religious questions, and the most significant to predict Christian nationalist belief. As theorized by Ginges et al., church attendance creates a social community where in-group behavior is reinforced, and political views are built (2009). However, the more personal religious factors are not significant for Christian nationalist belief or behavior. To experience the presence of the divine and hold religion as a core approach to life are strong indicators of personal religiosity. As shown in Table 5, Christian respondents did not answer these two questions at proportionally lower rates than the others—each of the religious questions were relatively similar. The variation between the "inward" and "outward" religious questions can therefore be attributed to Christian nationalist belief, not Christian identity.
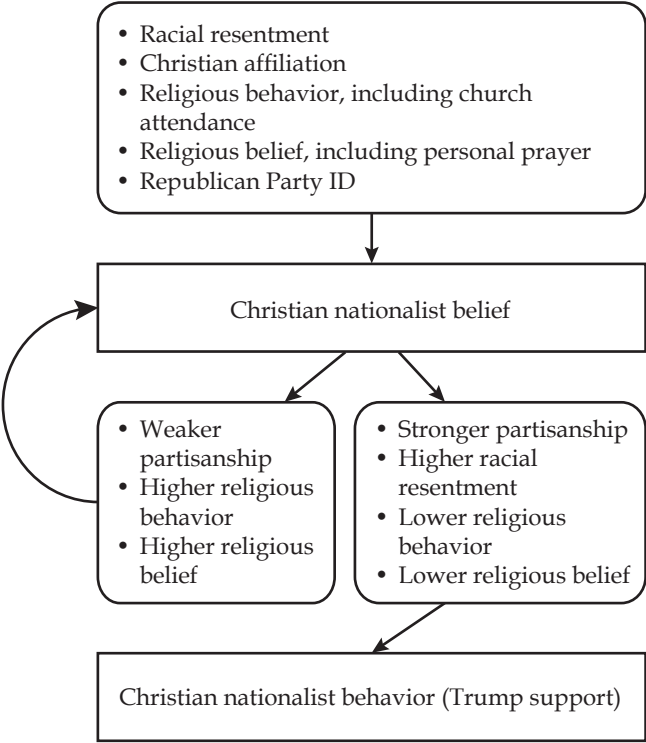
Table 5. Average scores of religious questions among Christians

Church attendance	0.57	6-point scale
Personal prayer	0.49	
Religion lies behind approach to life	0.64	4-point scale
Experience presence of divine	0.65	
Carry religion to other aspects of life	0.63	

There is no significant variation in the way respondents answered the religion block questions, but there is variation in how each question predicts Christian nationalist belief and behavior. Personal religious conviction could be associated with lower Christian nationalist belief, and therefore lower racial resentment. More social behaviors or behaviors tied to political views are more likely to plant the dangerous combination of racial resentment and Christian nationalism. These findings are integral to how we approach the issues of Christian nationalist belief and behavior and their relationship to religious belief and behavior. While attempting to untie the deeply woven relationship between racism and religion in the United States is necessary, religion itself, or religious activity, is not entirely to blame for the rise of Christian nationalism.

Figure 4. Flowchart of Christian nationalist belief and behavior

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  • Racial resentment                          │
│  • Christian affiliation                      │
│  • Religious behavior, including church       │
│    attendance                                 │
│  • Religious belief, including personal prayer│
│  • Republican Party ID                        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                      │
                      ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│           Christian nationalist belief        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
        │                        │
        ▼                        ▼
┌──────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────┐
│ • Weaker          │    │ • Stronger partisanship│
│   partisanship    │    │ • Higher racial        │
│ • Higher religious│    │   resentment           │
│   behavior        │    │ • Lower religious      │
│ • Higher religious│    │   behavior             │
│   belief          │    │ • Lower religious belief│
└──────────────────┘    └──────────────────────┘
                                 │
                                 ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Christian nationalist behavior (Trump support)│
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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The paradox of these findings is that a certain amount of religious belief, behavior and Christian identity is necessary for initial levels of Christian nationalist belief, but increased religious behavior can prevent Christian nationalist belief from expanding. By contrast, increased partisanship and racial resentment drastically increase Christian nationalist belief, along with the likelihood to mobilize as a Christian nationalist in the form of Trump support. In this sense, religion is both a contributing factor and antidote to Christian nationalist behavior.

Discussion

In sum, I provide initial evidence that Christian nationalist belief and behavior are separate phenomena predicted by separate factors, albeit with some overlap. Racial resentment and Republican partisanship are the only overlapping predictors of both Christian nationalist belief and behavior. Interestingly, religious behavior predicts Christian nationalist belief, while both religious behavior and belief prevent Christian nationalist behavior. I find that Christian nationalist "believers" are not necessarily the same people as Christian nationalist "actors." These findings provide

a nuanced outline of Christian nationalism that may begin to explain why research consistently finds demographic variance (race, for example) between individuals with Christian nationalist beliefs and individuals who behave as Christian nationalists. However, my findings leave many unanswered questions about the relationship between racial resentment, religion, and nationalism.

Once an individual has reached an initial level of Christian nationalist belief, what would motivate them to increase in partisanship and racial resentment and shift over to Christian nationalist behavior? What would motivate them to increase (or decrease) in religious behavior and belief, shifting them towards or away from nationalist behavior? Further research in psychology, politics, and religion could address these questions. Future research should not conflate Christian nationalist belief and behavior but examine them separately. Established theories in world politics and religion on extremism and mobilization should be applied to Christian nationalism in the United States. Further empirical evidence would stem from a mediation statistical model that follows the sequence of Figure 4.

While increased religious belief and behavior does not predict Christian nationalist behavior, both still significantly predict Christian nationalist belief, alongside partisanship and racial resentment. Religious behavior's ability to prevent nationalist behavior is promising. Yet religion's role in influencing/causing/shaping Christian nationalist belief is concerning. Further research could explore how to prevent Christian nationalist belief, as well as isolate the cognitive mechanisms that cause Christian nationalist belief, given racial resentment and religion. Christian nationalism is an especially deceitful form of nationalism; it hijacks religious language, symbols, and teachings to justify a narrow view of American history and exclusionary policy preferences. We must take a comprehensive approach to exploring Christian nationalism, separating belief and behavior, addressing racial resentment, and exploring the relationship between religion and politics. In an era of increased polarization, a comprehensive understanding of Christian nationalism could begin to depoliticize religion in the United States and decrease dangerous nationalist ideologies.

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APPENDIX

Model 1 Table

Dependent Variable:	Christian Nationalist belief
White	-0.029 (0.018)
Christian	0.081** (0.022)
Party ID	0.062* (0.031)
Income	0.026 (0.032)
25-34 age	-0.041 (0.025)
35-44 age	-0.096** (0.028)
45-54 age	-0.126** (0.037)
55-64 age	-0.143** (0.051)
65-74 age	-0.054 (0.063)
75-84 age	-0.015 (0.040)
Male	0.018 (0.018)
Trump vote	0.061* (0.025)
Racial resentment	0.251** (0.039)
Church attendance	0.223** (0.037)
Religious approach to life	0.027 (0.038)
Presence of divine	0.030 (0.036)
Prayer	0.094* (0.038)
Carry religion	0.122** (0.037)
Constant	0.145 (0.124)

Observations	734
R-squared	0.532

Notes: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, robust standard errors in parentheses, education omitted from table due to insignificance, but included in model as individual indicators for each level of education. VIF test for multicollinearity: mean VIF 4.89

Model 2 table

Dependent Variable:	Christian Nationalist belief
25-34	0.011 (0.040)
34-44	0.043 (0.046)
45-54	0.110 (0.060)
55-64	0.014 (0.067)
65-74	0.073 (0.077)
75-84	0.240 (0.206)
White	-0.008 (0.032)
Christian	0.023 (0.039)
Party ID	0.554** (0.047)
Income	0.151** (0.046)
Male	-0.014 (0.026)
Christian nationalism	0.155* (0.063)
Racial resentment	0.292** (0.062)
Church attendance	-0.189** (0.061)
Religious approach to life	-0.092 (0.062)
Presence of divine	0.063 (0.058)

Prayer	0.022
	(0.055)
Carry religion	0.115
	(0.061)
Constant	-0.084
	(0.216)
Observations	734
R-squared	0.352

Notes: ** p<0.01, * p<0.05, robust standard errors in parentheses, education omitted from table due to insignificance, but included in model as individual indicators for each level of education. VIF test for multicollinearity: mean VIF 4.89

Beyond Diversion: Regime Security and the 1990–91 Gulf War

Drew Horne

Introduction

Whether and to what degree internal threats could indeed lead to external conflict has been the focus of great swaths of International Relations scholarship. In their seminal work on International Relations, Haas and Whiting (1956) argue that state leaders "may be driven to a policy of foreign conflict — if not open war — to defend themselves against the onslaught of domestic enemies" (62). The default explanation for this connection, it seems, has been the widely touted diversionary war hypothesis, which supposes that domestically embattled leaders will seek to divert the public's ire from their failures by provoking foreign conflicts (see Levy 1989; Oakes 2006; Haynes 2017; Theiler 2018). Such explanations have been used to explain many historical cases despite little consensus on even the most straightforward of these (Fravel 2010). This hypothesis has been perhaps most recently applied to explain Russia's aggressive foreign policy, including the 2021 military buildup on the Ukrainian border (Theiler 2018; Beliakova 2019; Haass 2021). However, this deeply divided literature fails to provide a cogent examination of the mechanisms behind a supposed diversionary war. Is it the case that citizens will be inclined to support a failing leader whenever she provokes a war when war itself tends to be so profoundly unpopular? (See Myrick 2021)

Promising literature on the unique security challenges developing states face provides a potential alternative to the problematic diversionary hypothesis. Foundational works starting in the late 1980s explored how socio-politically weak states — or Third World states — face different security environments and outcomes than a traditionally conceived international actor with robust domestic institutions (e.g. Thomas 1987; Migdal 1988; Job 1992; Ayoob 1995). These works identify how certain forms

of domestic institutional weakness—power struggles between civilian and military leaders, non-state sanctioned uses of coercive force, disputed borders and ethnonational violence, etc.—make the regime just as, if not more, susceptible to internal political threats than to external military ones. In a dynamic that Job (1992) and others label the "insecurity dilemma," ruling elites in weak states are threatened primarily by domestic challenges, including the armed forces, strongmen, warlords, and sometimes popular uprisings of social, religious, or ethnic groups (see Jackson 2010; Hong 2000; Edney 2015). Traditional external military threats are therefore secondary in their effect on regime security. These external threats may become more salient when they exacerbate a preexisting internal crisis. Under these conditions regime security, as opposed to state security, becomes a leader's overriding concern, creating an environment where internal and external threats interact to produce foreign policy outcomes that diverge from structural realist expectations.

In this study, I operationalize and build on the so-called "insecurity dilemma" faced by weak states to develop a novel "regime security" explanation for the 1990–91 Gulf War. In so doing, I make two significant contributions to the literature. First, my theory sheds new light on the well-worn evidence surrounding the causes of the Gulf War, rejecting explanations that rely solely on traditional military threats, economic constraints, or leaders' personalities. Second, I develop a compelling second-image framework for analyzing the causes of war among institutionally weak states that does not rely on the diversionary hypothesis.

The paper is organized as follows. First, I present my model of regime security and show how pre-war Iraq fits the definition of a weak state facing a regime security crisis. I then apply this theory to Saddam's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and subsequent rejection of the U.N. deadline demanding his withdrawal, finding that the domestic vulnerabilities of the regime better explain the conflict than do countervailing neorealist theories. Specifically, I show that Saddam's lingering fears of subversion, domestic upheaval, and crumbling legitimacy ultimately drove him to invade and then persist in occupying Kuwait. Finally, I contrast the domestic causes of Iraq's conflict initiation with the actions taken by a state with robust domestic institutions for which the regime security model should not apply, namely the United States. Instead, I find that the U.S. response to Saddam's aggression can be well explained by structural realism. This provides essential insight into how strong and weak powers may experience divergent causal drivers toward conflict but arrive at the same outcome: war.

Regime Insecurity and Prewar Iraq

To develop my regime security theory of war, I first define regime security and state strength. As in the Third World Security school tradition, I define regime security broadly as those conditions that promote stability, longevity, and survival of the incumbent ruling body. Although this broad definition encompasses many domestic factors, it will be helpful to think of regime security primarily as the political and physical survival of rulers. When defining stateness (state strength), much of

the literature indicates at least two essential qualities to consider: the integrity of the state's monopoly on the use of coercive force and the legitimacy of the regime's rule. For instance, Jackson (2010) defines weak regimes by examining three dimensions: state political infrastructural capacity, coercive capacity, and social cohesion through a shared sense of national identity (164). Another term for coercive capacity is extractive capacity, referring to the regime's ability to extract resources from the population to enrich itself. This capability, in general, requires a monopoly on military power (see Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Migdal 1988; Oakes 2006; Feraru 2018).

Similarly, a broad literature on authoritarian regimes identifies three pillars upon which such regimes rely for survival: co-optation of key interest groups (namely the manipulation of potential opponents to join the ruling faction), repression, and legitimation, with public perceptions of legitimacy often the first pillar to crumble and lead to regime collapse (Gerschewski 2013; Gandhi and Przezorski 2006; Hess and Martin 2006). Although the concept of legitimacy is complicated to measure, I follow Gerschewski (2013) in defining legitimation as efforts by the regime to ensure "active consent, compliance with the rules, passive obedience, or mere toleration within the population" (18). In sum, weak regimes lack some combination of: popular legitimacy, the support of factions of the "selectorate" (see Bueno De Mesquita et al. 2005), social cohesion, and reliable political institutions to ensure fair transfers of power.

A feature of weak states is their propensity for facing internal threats to regime survival, distinct from external threats to state security. Often, a weak regime's actions to improve its security come at the expense of state or social well-being, such as when autocratic leaders in Northern Africa and the Middle East incited civil wars to avoid forceful removal from office during the Arab Spring (Feraru 104). I hypothesize that leaders in weak states will prioritize regime security. Their primary incentive is to stay in power and take actions to improve regime security even at the detriment of social well-being. This focus on regime security will have spillover effects on foreign policy up to and including the initiation of interstate conflict whenever: external powers directly incite or exacerbate internal unrest within the weak state, an international dispute has deeply symbolic implications, thus threatening a weak state leader's legitimacy, and when the cause of intra-party conflict is traced to an outside source. Note that none of these conditions rely on a leader diverting the public's attention or anger from domestic failings or political weakness; instead, when a regime security threat originates from a primarily external source, leaders will take external actions to address that threat directly.

With these definitions and the regime security model, we have the criteria to judge the strength of the Ba'athist regime and the framework to evaluate whether Saddam's decisions were in line with the regime security model's predictions. First, it is essential to review the pressures presented by various domestic factors and the accompanying threats to Saddam's Ba'athist regime. Following Iraq's 1932 independence from Britain and the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958, the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party attempted a coup in 1963 and again in 1968, the second time successfully winning control of the divided country. The Iraqi Ba'ath Party became highly

centralized under the authoritarian rule of Saddam Hussein, emphasizing pan-Arab nationalism and advocating for a unified socialist Arab state. However, the Ba'athists competed with other Iraqi groups espousing different and often incompatible ideologies, including communism, Ba'athism, and Nasserism, and with adversarial national and religious groups including the Kurds, Turkmens, and Sunni and Shia Muslims. Notably, the Ba'ath Party represented the minority, a secular Sunni party in a country of some 60% Shia Muslims.

This fragmented demographic presented various challenges to the Ba'ath Party, with one of the most significant during the 1980–1988 Iran-Iraq War. After the 1979 revolution in Iran, the Iraqi government initially welcomed the new Islamic republic. Still, relations soured as Ayatollah Khomeini (the leader of Iran following the 1979 Iranian Revolution) began openly supporting and encouraging revolutionary Shiites in Iraq. A group of Iranian-backed Shiites even attempted to assassinate Tariq Aziz, the then-deputy premier, in April 1980. Baghdad cracked down on Shiite dissidents (an instance of regime stability through repression) and then, as we will see again in the run-up to the invasion of Kuwait, embarked on ambitious programs to improve living conditions among Shiites (stability through legitimacy and co-optation) (Walt 1966, 238–39). While historians often explain the war as an opportunistic power grab over valuable territory, the best explanation for Saddam's decision to invade Iran was to defend against the effects of the Islamic revolution and face the threat at its source (Nelson 2018). The similarities ten years later would be striking, but with a threat that was both economic and ideological.

The economic situation in Iraq following the Iran-Iraq war was dire. The war itself had been highly costly; in 1980–1985, when annual GDP averaged around $34 billion, some estimates put the cost of the war in direct expenditures plus forfeited oil revenue and economic growth at nearly $176 billion (Alnasrawi 1986, 885). Most of this had been financed by government borrowing, and by 1989 Iraq was paying at least $5 billion annually just to service its debt, constituting some 20% of its annual GDP. As Kuwait and the UAE continued producing over their OPEC production quotas after the war, the oil price dropped, leading to a significant decline in revenue for Baghdad. Combined with massive spending on military and related industries, these factors sparked a cash shortage that nearly forced the regime to default. This, in turn, led to a crisis of regime legitimacy amidst a tightening of foreign lending, severe inflation, and continual goods shortages (Freedman and Karsh 1995, 39–42; Meierding 2020, 146; Chaudhry 1991, 14–23). The economic crisis also brought unacceptably high levels of unemployment and economic stagnation. For comparison, in 1989, Iraq had a national income (GDP per capita) of under $4,000, while its neighbor Kuwait was at almost $12,000, or three times that of Iraq (according to data from the World Bank).

Trying to address the destabilizing effects of the economic situation, the government attempted broad economic privatization and liberalization initiatives. However, the regime instead exacerbated the economic issues, succeeding only in alienating labor interests that had traditionally been supporters of the government (Chaudhry

1991, 17). Civil society was stretched to the breaking point, especially as hundreds of thousands of soldiers began to be released into a high-inflation and low-employment environment in the two years following the end of the war (20). Economic distress only heightened the regime's sensitivity to ideological threats, which had been the critical cause of war less than a decade before.

Saddam was obsessed with how he was perceived domestically and internationally, as the regime security model predicts for leaders who rely on legitimation efforts for political survival. His keen awareness of his domestic and international image is well documented. For instance, according to a journalist present at a 1974 government-sponsored seminar where he was present, Saddam expelled a top official for the transgression of not calling him "Your Excellency, Sir" each time he spoke (Pulcrano 2003). On another occasion just before the U.S. military response in 1991, Saddam beamed when Palestine's Yassar Arafat called him the "Arab Knight" and the "Saladin of our time," praise that reflected widespread Arab admiration for his fiercely anti-Israel rhetoric (Baram 1993, 13). Ultimately, despite Saddam's best efforts at cultivating a royalty-like public image, this Arab admiration would not last.

Saddam saw international efforts to subvert his regime everywhere he looked following the Iran-Iraq War. With the refusal of Gulf states to lower oil production following that war, a war in which he saw himself as protecting the Arab world from Persian expansionism, he felt that Kuwait and others had betrayed him and tarnished his status as a defender of pan-Arab solidarity. In a high-level meeting of the Revolutionary Command Council two weeks before the invasion of Kuwait, Saddam discussed a draft letter to the Arab League that asserted Kuwait had created an "intentional scheme" to undermine Iraqi sovereignty by depressing oil prices and seizing Iraqi territory (Markwica 2018, 186). With an Israeli military buildup and American policy moves he saw as hostile, such as the continued naval presence in the Gulf and hesitancy surrounding agricultural credit guarantees, Saddam repeatedly said he saw a "conspiracy" out to get him (Gause 2002, 53–56; Haass 2009, 50–53). As predicted by the regime security model, Saddam began to distrust the military and constantly worried about a coup, leading him to purge hundreds of officers. Some sources documented failed coup attempts (Gause 2002, 56). The set of crises faced by the Ba'athist government created the "perfect storm" for a radical move in Baghdad: lingering fears over Islamist revolutionary ideology, extreme domestic economic and political distress, international slights to the regime's legitimacy, perceived Western attempts at subversion, and indications of factionalism or even coup attempts within the party.

Saddam's Invasion of Kuwait

The domestic pressures on Baghdad combined to create a regime security crisis. Crumbling legitimacy, intra-party dissatisfaction, and a bloated and unwieldy military with dubious utility as a tool for repression all spelled disaster for Saddam if he could not stem the tide of domestic decay. Before I show how these factors were

the main impetus behind Saddam's invasion, I address the key theories that oppose this explanation. Then, after presenting my theory of Saddam's motives, I move on to why the regime security model accurately explains Saddam's rejection of the U.N. deadline and the timing, and rhetoric surrounding, the eventual end of the war.

Why Traditional Theories Fail to Explain Saddam's Invasion

Scholars often interpret Saddam's invasion through the lens of offensive realism, which predicts that a state seeking security will try to increase its power relative to other states by building up its military capabilities and taking offensive steps to grow its influence. This school of thought enjoys excellent support from many Gulf War historians who assert that Kuwait, with its strategically significant oil reserves and long coastline, which guaranteed access to naval and shipping routes, was merely a pawn in Saddam's bid for regional hegemony (Baram 1993, 76–77; Yetiv 2008, 76–77). Factors that increased the exigency of invasion were the ending of Cold War bipolarity and its constraints on Saddam's behavior (Ali Musallam 1996, 97–101), long-standing border disputes with Kuwait (Freedman and Karsh 1995, 42-43; Khadduri and Ghareeb 1997, 95; Yetiv 2008, 77; Baram 1993, 5–6), and economic pressures from the high debt incurred by the Iran-Iraq War and falling oil prices. However, few of these developments can explain the timing of the invasion. Saddam would have known, for instance, that the change in Cold War bipolarity would allow the United States more room to maneuver in the Middle East just as the removal of Soviet constraints would free him to pursue his strategic agenda. With military superiority over and strategic interest in Kuwait being constant, a purely structural explanation must then rely on the claim that the trigger for the war was the U.S. "green light." Realists must depend on the assumption that Saddam rationally miscalculated the United States' interests, capabilities, and intent to defend Kuwait, thus totally failing to anticipate a U.S. response (see Mearsheimer 2003, 29–39).

The realist camp over-emphasizes and takes out of context the July 25 meeting with Ambassador Glaspie and incorrectly supposes that Saddam over-estimated U.S. support for his regime and misjudged the international constraints on his and U.S. behavior (see Duelfer and Dyson 2011; Baram 1993, 19–22; Haass 2009, 56–58; Bush and Scowcroft 1998, 310–312). Saddam would not have taken such assurances at face value, given his deep distrust of the United States following such events as the Iran-Contra revelations and the Voice of America editorial, both of which cemented his views about an American conspiracy (Palkki 2013; Brands and Palkki 2012). Saddam described the United States in 1979 as the "imperialist American enemy" ("Revolutionary Command Council" 1979, 3) and the Iran scandal another "stab in the back" (Palkki 2013, 50), after which he stated that he believed "Washington could not be trusted and that it was out to get him personally" (Comprehensive Report 2005, 31). Indeed, the fact that Baghdad was not surprised by the U.S. response was admitted by Foreign Minister Aziz when he told Secretary of State Baker, "We have been expecting U.S. military action against Iraq. […] This conduct on our part wasn't the result of ignorance" (Meierding 2020, 154). Saddam's deep distrust of the United States

after the Iran-Iraq War and the many declarations he received regarding U.S. interests in the Gulf region suggests that the invasion of Kuwait cannot be explained by realist ambitions which were kept at bay by the U.S. until deterrence somehow failed in the summer of 1990.

Leaving behind strictly geopolitical explanations for the invasion, we turn now to those theories that rely solely on Iraq's economics. While economics-based explanations appropriately identify some domestic drivers for Saddam's actions, they often fail to justify why Saddam would have invaded if he knew that the United States would retaliate and deny him those oil resources. Even some realist explanations rely on Iraq's economic situation as the needed catalyst to explain the timing of Saddam's invasion, given the invariable nature of his interests in Kuwait. Careful consideration of the mechanisms behind an economics-driven invasion is needed; I find two such hypotheses in the literature. One focuses on Saddam's unbridled ambitions and his need for Kuwait's oil resources to fund those ambitions—the oil temptation model (Haass 2009, 75; Yetiv 2008, 81; Meierding 2020). The other approach, which is more compatible with the regime security model I present, is that economic concerns were primary to the regime because of the potential for a devastating recession to foment domestic unrest and lead to a loss of political power—the oil desperation model (Meierding 2020, 144-225). However, scholars defending either iteration of the economics argument do not present a suitable argument for why Saddam would rationally choose defeat, since defeat in war could hardly help an economy on the brink. A reader of geopolitics as savvy as Saddam Hussein would not have expected the United States to stand idly by his invasion of Kuwait, and he would have been keenly aware of U.S. military superiority. Furthermore, these economic explanations fail to put forth a logical catalyst for war; if Saddam was singularly focused on raising funds for his regime he should have accepted Kuwaiti concessions on the eve of war to return to its OPEC oil production quota (Gause 2002, 53; Markwica 2018, 187). Instead, he blew past what would have been the resolution to his economic woes in favor of armed invasion. A regime security model, however, can explain how invasion emerged as a viable strategy from Saddam's multi-faceted incentives to stave off domestic upheaval and increase his party's legitimacy.

Still others have argued that this deterrence failure was not an issue of signaling or misperception but a more fundamental problem of Saddam's motives, falsely blaming Saddam's unique personality. These theories point out that Saddam considered himself challenged by an international conspiracy and internal dissent, both of which required an invasion of Kuwait no matter the U.S. response (Stein 1992, 147–79; Gause 2002, 47–70; Markwica 2018). Others say it was Saddam's unbridled ambition that led him to invade (Haass 2009, 54). However, insofar as these theories rely on individual-level factors, such as Saddam's conspiratorial temperament or unrestrained ambition, they fail to acknowledge the validity of the "insecurity crisis" faced by the regime. Theories focused on Saddam must assert that Iraq would not have gone to war in the absence of the leader's aggressive personality. By contrast, my theory must show that any leader facing the same conditions and constraints as

Saddam would have made the same decisions. I show in the next section that, despite pushback from some cabinet members, Saddam's isolated Ba'ath party, at least his loyal coalition, faced threats that did indeed undermine regime security.

Regime Security and the Invasion of Kuwait

Saddam's invasion of Kuwait was not an act of calculated aggression driven by his ambition for regional dominance. It was an act of desperation from a weak regime trying to stave off internal crises aggravated by external factors. Unlike the theories explored above, my regime security model predicts that the leader of an institutionally weak regime will act first to preserve regime security even at the expense of longer-term state survival. When synonymous with regime threats, state security threats will also prompt leaders to respond outside their borders. If Saddam's invasion was indeed driven by a regime security crisis, we should see evidence that Sadaam was concerned about preventing domestic unrest, that he took rhetorical and policy steps to increase his legitimacy in the eyes of the people (including by increasing his regional standing), and that he made efforts to prevent international subversion or invasion of his regime .

Iraq's justification for war was defensive, a claim that is perhaps too readily dismissed by many scholars. In an interview with PBS aired in 1996, Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz claimed that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was "a defensive decision. Iraq did not need Kuwait. If we had Kuwait in our mind for takeover, we could have done that in the '70s" (Tariq Aziz 1996). Indeed, this statement highlights the critical question that realism fails to explain: why Iraq did not move to invade Kuwait earlier. As reviewed above, the economic situation in Iraq was deteriorating to the point where the regime was worried about potential coups. Given U.S. policy regarding Iraq, Saddam was also convinced that Bush would take advantage of the end of Cold War constraints to topple the Ba'athist regime (Gause 2009, 92–95; Brands and Palkki 2012). Both Saddam and Aziz reflected this kind of thinking after the war. Asked why they would attack Kuwait if they knew the United States would retaliate, Aziz replied in his PBS interview that "you will either be hit inside your house and destroyed, economically and militarily. Or you go outside and attack the enemy in one of his bases" (Tariq Aziz 1996). In other words, they believed that the United States was planning a strike, so they had to take the first shot. Saddam's justifications to FBI interrogators were similar; he said that the United States was determined to see him overthrown and conspired with Israel to damage his regime ("Interview Session 5" 2009). While these justifications point to an expected military attack, which was certainly not being planned or signaled by the United States (Palkki 2013; Haass 2009), the U.S. threat to the regime was a reality. As detailed above, warming military and economic relations between Gulf states and the United States threatened Saddam's status as the "Arab Knight" and defender of Islam in the Middle East. This position was the main component of Saddam's legitimation efforts.

The question arises of whether this view—that the United States was primed and preparing to take some military action against him—was unique to Saddam's

psychology and experience. To some degree, this is a counterfactual line of questioning that cannot be satisfactorily answered (see Jervis 2013). Some would point to disagreements among his closest advisors as proof that the country might not have gone to war if another leader had been in power (Wafic Al Samarri 1996). However, scholarship has consistently shown that the role of president is unique (see Jervis 2013). Saddam, as president, would have been more accountable to anger arising from the selectorate—the group of influential individuals upon whom he depended for his political survival—than an advisor in any other position, thus he would have been more likely to take risks to save the regime than other senior leaders (see Bueno De Mesquita 2005). Thus, we cannot adequately judge whether his decisions were due to his personal temperament or whether the unique pressures associated with the office of chief executive would have forced any to do the same. Indeed, Jackson (2015) finds that any leader of a weak state will work to co-opt key constituencies and pit factions against each other to preempt coups, just as Saddam did in his treatment of his military and intelligence officers (see Baram 1993, 8).

The precarious position of the domestic economy weighed heavily on policymakers' minds. At the January 1991 Revolutionary Command Council, deputy prime minister Taha Yasin Ramadan explained the logic of invasion with a domestic focus: "Yes, the battle is inevitable…How were we going to maintain the loyalty of the people and their support for the leader if they saw the inability of the leadership to provide a minimal standard of living in this rich country?" (Wafic Al Samarri 1996). With an eye toward domestic audiences, the regime targeted Kuwait as an external enemy responsible for the people's suffering, explaining that they needed a war to retain Iraqi honor and standard of living. Thus, the decision to invade was not to fund Saddam's ambitions, as Haass (2009) asserts (25). It was an act of economic desperation to stave off a domestic uprising (see Meierding 2020, 160). Note how this differs from the classical conception of a diversionary war; Saddam was not trying to distract his people with foreign adventures. He turned Kuwait into a scapegoat for Iraqis' economic hardships, which forced him to take an ever more aggressive actions against the country.

What finally caused Saddam to pull the trigger? Aziz explains that the pride and stubbornness of the Kuwaiti delegation on August 1 eventually led Saddam to order the invasion (Tariq Aziz 1996). Markwica (2018) points to the hasty war plans and emotional rhetoric of the moment to argue that ultimately it was Saddam's pride and angry temperament that caused him to invade Kuwait after being humiliated by Crown Prince Sa'd (195–97). However, we would expect any leader facing a regime security crisis to take strong measures against threats to honor and legitimacy, regardless of that leader's personality. Additionally, while one may argue that Saddam's reaction moved the invasion up a matter of days, the truth is that an invasion of Kuwait by that time was already determined. Indeed, Gause (2002) cites several meetings and reports that show that the actual decision to attack was likely made in June or even as early as March (53–55). Saddam had already placed his stake in the ground with a statement to the nation at the apex of the crisis. In a July 17 Baghdad

Radio broadcast, he blamed Gulf states' oil policy on the United States, threatening military action if they did not end the hostile policy ("Iraqi President Lashes Out" 1990). Rather than a case of rhetoric forcing his hand, this was a deliberate maneuver to solve his internal problems by gaining legitimacy, preempting and ending foreign plots against him, and putting his restless army to work.

Saddam's uncharacteristically Islamist language leading up to the invasion also suggests his focus on domestic and international legitimation . In December 1989, to further promote the regime's image as an Arab defender with sufficient religious tendencies, Saddam spoke out for liberating Palestine, saying, "I swear to God that we shall burn half of Israel if it tries to wage anything against Iraq" (Baram 1993, 11–12). Hoping that Arab admiration would give him legitimacy at home, he increased the intensity of anti-Israeli rhetoric through the spring (13–14). Finally, on the eve of the war, he told his senior commanders that "it is the Lord who wanted what has happened to happen. Our role in this decision is almost zero" (Piscatori 1991, 17). Following the announcement of Operation Desert Storm, which would base U.S. troops on Saudi Arabian soil, Saddam again relied on Islamic symbolism to stir up domestic and regional anti-U.S. sentiment. He said, "Until the voice of right rises in the Arab world, hit their interests wherever they are and rescue holy Mecca and rescue the grave of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina " (22). These explicit appeals to a broad Arab audience, despite the secular (and anti-Shia) stance of the Ba'ath party, suggest deliberate attempts to grow regional and domestic legitimacy and support, a classic case of regime security concerns dictating foreign actions.

Rejecting the U.N. Withdrawal Deadline

While the above discussion details Saddam's motives in invading Kuwait and rejects the deterrence failure argument, the question remains of why Saddam did not give in to the U.N. withdrawal deadline. Were Saddam's goals not met by invading Kuwait and proving that the U.S. was supporting, and thereby corrupting, Gulf states? What did he stand to gain by choosing to lose a bruising war against the U.S. coalition forces? The regime security model again explains this seemingly irrational behavior.

As Stein (1992) details in his work, Saddam was bent on getting his way in Kuwait because this would solve the growing problems he faced domestically (173–76). Even if he suffered a military defeat, which he thought likely but not entirely sure given U.S. distaste for foreign ground wars and unclear effectiveness of airpower, Saddam believed that he could win politically. For one, Saddam thought that Arab support for the U.S. coalition would fracture in the face of actual fighting. While they ostensibly claimed that Israel was a part of the conspiracy against them, as Aziz reported (Tariq Aziz 1996), it is more likely that Saddam sought to reignite the surge of Arab support he received when he had harshly decried Israel just months earlier. Despite Israel's distance from the heat of battle, the Iraqi military fired some forty rocket missiles into Israel (and some aimed directly at U.S. coalition forces based in Saudi Arabia). Wafic Al Samarrai, the Head of Iraqi Military Intelligence during

the war, explicitly stated during a PBS interview that the scud missiles had "a moral political objective" to implicate Israel and "embarrass the Arab States that colluded with the West."

Furthermore, Saddam could not submit to the deadline because admitting failure would have exacerbated the domestic legitimacy crisis. As Al-Marashi (2009) puts it, "Such an admission would demonstrate the leader's weakness to the Iraqi public, the military, and most importantly his Tikriti inner core, leading to a possible coup" (460). Thus, compellence failed because Saddam's goals were not intrinsic to Kuwaiti territory and military victory; his wins were about symbolic victories, the ending of international efforts to subvert his regime by fomenting Arab support, and increased domestic legitimacy as a strongman for Iraq. His same intentions for invading Kuwait precluded him from giving up in the face of U.S. threats because, in the end, his goal was to fight the foreign conspirators who so threatened his regime.

What seems illogical when viewed through a neorealist lens becomes understandable—perhaps even predictable—when seen through a regime security lens. As predicted by the model of regime security, Saddam was facing an internal crisis that demanded drastic measures. Sensing that the source of the insecurity lay outside his borders, Saddam attempted to solve the problem at its source by invading and refusing to retreat from Kuwait. However, this model does not apply to states with robust political institutions for which regime security does not differ fundamentally from state security. To show the limitations of the regime security model, I turn to the case of the United States in response to Saddam.

Strong States and the Regime Security Model: The U.S. Response

While the behavior of the United States in response to the invasion and annexation of Kuwait is not particularly surprising, it is also not accurate to say that its response was "overdetermined" (Gause 2009, 103). Indeed, the historical record seems to indicate that the Bush administration itself was at first unsure how, or whether, to respond militarily to Saddam. In contrast to the institutionally weak Iraqi regime, which acted per the theory of regime security threat, the United States presents a case of a powerful hegemon working in line with the balance of power predictions. Thus, Operation Desert Storm presents an interesting case of an essentially realist outcome that was achieved through mechanisms that remain under debate.

The most compelling question regarding the U.S. response is whether the administration ever intended to use military force to stand up to Saddam. Many point out, for instance, that the administration was surprised and unprepared for the crisis and was unsure how or whether to respond (Yetiv 2003; Yetiv 2008; Engel 2017; Bush and Scowcroft 1998; Haass 2009). Engel (2017) points out that while some in the administration in the first days thought the invasion would have a positive impact on world oil prices and that Saddam was unlikely to achieve regional hegemony, it was clear that protecting Saudi Arabia was a line in the sand (385–87). These arguments also reinforce the notion that, given internal disagreement over the issue, it is very likely

that the administration did give mixed signals to Saddam regarding American interests and intents in the region (see Stein 1992, 149–55; Duelfer and Dyson 2011; Engel 2017). However, as noted previously, it was clear that Baghdad expected, or was at least not surprised by, U.S. retaliation. If Baghdad was so sure of a strong American response—even counted on it—why was Washington so unsure?

If U.S. interests in Kuwait were apparent, and Baghdad expected some degree of U.S. military response, then perhaps the administration was less confused and unsure than many assume. Some point to George Bush's seemingly quick decision after the first National Security Council (NSC) decision and a firm declaration that "this will not stand" as proof that George Bush's own historical experience and personality led to the relatively quick consolidation of the U.S. position (see Yetiv 2003; Haas 2009, 67–70; Wayne 1993). Specifically, some assert that a sense of similarity between Saddam's actions and those of Hitler encouraged Bush (and Thatcher) to take such a firm stance (MacDonald 2002). However, just as in Baghdad, the presence of some initial disagreement within the cabinet does not indicate that George Bush himself was critical. The U.S. reaction should be seen as the expected course of action by an unconstrained global hegemony wishing to preserve its interests in the Middle East.

Some of the previously mentioned theories do, in fact, correctly point to such structural factors. Engel's (2017) thesis focuses on the warming U.S.-Soviet relationship at the end of the Cold War, which permitted Bush to create a strong international coalition to counter Iraq. The desire to work with the Soviets prompted the administration to gather international support that later turned into a military coalition. Furthermore, efforts to counter Saddam were in part due to the United States' desire to spread its wings for the first time as a global hegemon capable of shaping the world without Cold War constraints (Engel 2017). U.S. interests in preserving a status quo in the Middle East were already evident during the Iran-Iraq War when America variously supported both Baghdad and Tehran to keep one from greatly triumphing over the other (Bush and Scowcroft 1998, 310).

Some of the U.S. interest in this region has been ascribed to oil, but this too should be seen as a part of hegemonic strategic behavior and not some sinister gambit for wealth. While U.S. oil consumption is enormous, Haass (2009) explains that U.S. policy in the Middle East cannot be "reduced to oil" (75). As Saddam's economic motives for invading Kuwait were strategic and desperate, not based on oil lust, so too were America's intentions broadly strategic. As Haass puts it, the distinction is that the United States wanted to guarantee an adequate supply of oil, not gain any financial advantage. Indeed, without the constraints of Cold War bipolarity, the United States was free to engage in a more outspoken defense of such strategic goals. Beyond just oil, Iraq's actions threatened American interests in democracy, norms of sovereignty, and general regional influence.

Despite some initial uncertainty from the first NSC meeting, numerous policymakers, including the President himself, understood from the beginning the "ramifications of the aggression on the emerging post-Cold War world" (75). Although only tacitly acknowledged, this viewpoint was indicative of a broad view of American

interests and the realization that the United States had the power to enforce them in the Middle East. Some of the concerns cited variously by policymakers and scholars are preventing Hussein from monopolizing oil supplies, retaining U.S. influence over Gulf states, preventing WMD proliferation, and preserving sovereignty. From the classic balance of power predictions, it is only expected that a hegemon will intervene to impose its will where it is expedient to do so. Thus, it does not take an argument of sinister oil greed or George Bush's psychology to explain predictable hegemonic behavior.

Conclusion

States with weak institutions, such as the embattled autocratic Ba'athist regime in Iraq, conduct foreign policy with domestic pressures at the forefront of every decision. Just as in the Iran-Iraq War a decade earlier, Saddam's decision to invade Kuwait was motivated by a desperate need to put a stop to external manipulation of the domestic unrest already threatening to boil over. He sought to establish his legitimacy by gaining Arab support against a corrupt Western enemy through the war with Kuwait, a looming challenger both economically and symbolically in its dismissal of Iraqi protection against non-Arab threats. The regime struggled to address the economic concerns on its own and turned to external actions as a solution to the problem, not merely a distraction from it. These motives explain why Iraq invaded Kuwait and why it did not withdraw when military destruction became apparent, why it attempted to shift Arab attention onto Israel throughout the crisis, and why, even in defeat, Saddam claimed he had been victorious. Theories of realist ambition, an oil gambit, or Saddam's unique temperament fail to explain each of these steps as well as the regime security model does. By contrast, despite some debate, the United States' response was relatively in line with the expectations for a newly minted hegemonic power wishing to impose its will on the world.

These results do more than shed new light on the well-trodden evidence of the causes of the Gulf War. Beyond dismissing many theories for Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, including purely geostrategic, economic, or personality-based explanations, the regime security model of war developed in this paper has implications for other conflicts including weak states. When it seems that domestic concerns were at play in a leader's decision to go to war, scholars and analysts should be wary of falling back on the diversionary theory of war. Especially in the case of autocratic states like Iraq, the idea of transforming public anger into public support by sparking a war stretches plausibility. Instead, analysts and scholars may better predict and explain the initiation of war among weak states by closely examining the threats faced by the regime (as opposed to the state), including the internal jockeying for power, domestic economic and political pressures, and any external sources seeking to manipulate those vulnerabilities. Future research should apply such an approach to other cases of interstate conflict and should seek to establish systematic indicators of regime security crises that may have universal applicability.

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President Trump's 2018 Tariffs on Steel

Davis Forster

In the aftermath of the Great Recession, much of the United States working and middle class found themselves struggling. The factory, manufacturing, and metalworking jobs they had been doing for decades continued to move overseas, where others could do it cheaper and faster. The US steel industry, in particular, had been contracting steadily since the 1990s with no signs of stopping, despite several previous government revitalization efforts, such as Bush's steel tariffs in 2002 (York 2018). As the 2016 election approached, America's middle and working classes were looking for someone who would bring their jobs back.

President Donald Trump's election in 2016 signaled a resurgence of right-wing populism. Still, in contrast to many of his Republican predecessors, President Trump's foreign policy was staunchly protectionist and anti-free trade. Throughout his entire campaign, he proudly proclaimed his intentions to "use every lawful presidential power to remedy trade disputes, including the application of tariffs" (Trump 2018), especially when protecting the American manufacturing sector and its steel.

Only three short months after Trump's inauguration, the Department of Commerce under Secretary Ross began their investigation to ascertain foreign steel's threat to national security (Lawder 2017) under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. Section 232 allows the Department of Commerce to investigate how imports of particular products affect national security and recommend counteractions to the president if they deem a product vital to national security (Bureau of Industry and Security 2020). Under this section, the president can take actions he usually would not have the authority to impose tariffs or restrict imports (Bureau of Industry and Security 2020). This power has been primarily used to investigate materials like uranium and crude oil in the past. Both materials play a significant role in the US's military power and could cause problems if they were to fall into the wrong hands

(Bureau of Industry and Security 2020). Under the Bush administration in 2001, the most recent investigations also investigated the effects of imported semi-finished steel on national security, much like the investigation under Trump. The Bush Department of Commerce's found that imported steel posed no threat to US national security and recommended no action to President Bush (US Dept of Commerce 2001).

On the other hand, Trump's Department of Commerce came to a different conclusion. According to their investigation, if the US were ever in dire need of steel, international suppliers could withhold it, crippling the US's defense and manufacturing capabilities. They presented these findings to President Trump, who took decisive action (Kim 2020). Making good on his campaign promise, President Trump signed an executive order to enforce a flat 25% tariff on imported steel on March 8, 2018. Usually, Congress has the authority to levy taxes and impose duties, but in this case, as is increasingly becoming the norm, the president acted independently of Congress. Citing Section 232, Trump imposed these tariffs through the Department of Commerce based on a national security emergency (Executive Order 2018). No President has ever invoked this section to institute a tariff, let alone a tariff on something as vital to the American consumer industry as steel (Kim 2020). Opponents saw this legal justification as an underhanded loophole that Trump used to circumvent Congressional opposition, both Republican and Democrat.

This initial executive order featured temporary exclusions for key trade allies Mexico, Canada, the EU, Brazil, South Korea, Argentina, and Australia. However, only a few short months after this first executive order, President Trump signed a secondary order that removed this exemption for Canada, Mexico, and the EU. It took until May 2019 for Canada and Mexico to renegotiate their exclusions. In December 2019, President Trump accused Brazil and Argentina of purposely devaluing their currencies to cheapen their exports and pursued punitive measures against them, rescinding their exclusions from the tariff. He later regranted Brazil's exclusion (Griswold 2019). Trump's administration also granted exceptions to hundreds of companies on a case-by-case basis (Lardner and Fenn 2019).

Within a year of this tariff, steel prices shot up 38% domestically (Amiti 2019). Abroad, Trump's steel tariff inspired retaliatory tariffs from nearly every major power affected, including China, the EU, India, Mexico, and Canada (Griswold 2019). China filed an official complaint with the WTO in 2018, citing Trump's steel tariff alongside others as violations of the GATT's rules against discriminatory tariffs (World Trade Organization 2018a). The European Union and Canada filed similar claims later that year (World Trade Organization 2018b). The steel tariff also devastated the manufacturing industry and most other industries that use steel as an input, such as the construction industry and even the agricultural industry (Polansek 2018).

Overall, Trump's steel tariff contributed to a deterioration of economic relations with some of our most significant allies. Although the steel industry reaped marginal benefits, prices for manufactured goods within the US soared, pushing jobs in those industries out of the country (Heather 2018; Amiti 2019). I believe these tariffs were passed primarily due to the president's willingness to exploit his legal powers,

coupled with lobbying from particular steel and labor groups. State structures hindered Congress's ability to take any action against these tariffs and concentrated decision-making power in a president who was heavily susceptible to the steel industry's lobbying.

Why Free Trade?

Before delving deeper into President Trump, his tariffs, and other influencing factors, it is important to dispel some myths about tariffs and free trade. On the surface, tariffs may seem like an attractive option to bolster the US's economy. By discouraging the influx of foreign products, one might assume that more people would purchase US-made products instead. Many see the money spent on imports as wasted money that the US should spend on bolstering domestic industry instead of paid out to foreign firms and governments. And while tariffs can be used to "help" domestic firms by blocking foreign competition, they always produce an inefficient outcome (Boudreaux and Ghei 2018). Tariffs may be suitable for the domestic firms they are protecting, but for consumers, tariffs almost always mean a higher price for goods. If a protected good (i.e., steel) is used as an input in other goods, the price-raising effect of a tariff can spread to other industries and products.

Furthermore, tariffs prevent a country from producing the thing they are best at (or least bad at). In classical economics, this idea is known as comparative advantage. If countries specialize in the goods they are most efficient at producing, and trade for the goods they are not, they can operate at a much higher efficiency than if they tried to produce everything themselves. So even by buying goods from a small country with a small economy, the US still benefits because it frees up its economy to focus on the things it does best.

Free trade can also promote domestic growth while keeping economies efficient. For example, over half of US imports are NOT finished consumer goods but inputs for other goods (Boudreaux and Ghei 2018). By buying these inputs at a lower price from other countries, domestic firms enjoy lower input costs and can operate at higher levels. Why, then, are some modern politicians drawn so strongly towards tariffs? Firstly, tariffs have very strong short-term effects, while the benefits of free trade are more spread out and harder to identify. Tariffs are also easy to implement: a definite tax on an import is easier than reforming or expanding America's international trade policies. Politicians are also responsible to their constituents, which may skew towards workers in comparatively inefficient domestic industries depending on geographic area. While this explains why many surrounding politicians and actors supported Trump's tariffs, Trump himself had more personal motives in pushing for these tariffs.

President Trump, *homo Protectus*

Donald Trump, in his heart of hearts, is a businessman. Much of his view on trade can be explained by his background in the vicious world of New York real estate. Smith and Ricardo are nowhere to be found in his world,, and all deals produce a winner and a loser. "Mutually beneficial trade" simply is not in Trump's lexicon, and for him, making a bad deal or getting cheated is the "ultimate failure" (Schleisinger 2018). I believe this philosophy is also a primary reason that Trump has been consistently protectionist since as far back as the 1980s. Trump's statements back then read almost exactly like his campaign slogans today; "A lot of people are tired of watching other countries ripping off the United States," he said in 1987. "They laugh at us behind our backs. They laugh at us because of our own stupidity." (Fisher 2018). Many see Trump's protectionism as China-oriented and that our allies just ended up caught in the crossfire. Still, Trump has clarified that he sees any particularly powerful country as a threat to the US, calling Japan "interchangeable with China, interchangeable with other countries. But it's all the same thing" (Trump 2018). When Japan held a majority stake in the US deficit, he wanted to tax Japanese imports heavily, and now that China holds that stake, his sights have shifted to them (Schleisinger 2018).

The fact that his steel tariffs hit our allies aligns with his protectionist agenda as well. Trump sees EVERY country as a trade threat, not just the more traditionally adversarial ones like China. In attacking NAFTA, a trade deal that linked the US, Mexico, and Canada, he called it "the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere, but certainly ever signed in this country" (Trump 2016). So in trade, Trump has always seen the US as "the company" and every other country as a competitor instead of a partner.

Trump is, and always has been, a protectionist because he sees trade as a fundamentally zero-sum game, where if you are not winning, you are losing. In the world of international trade, he has always viewed tariffs as the cure-all for trade imbalances and "bad deals" and advocated for harsh tariffs for nearly his entire public lifetime (Schlesinger 2018). When Trump finally had his hands on the controls as president, he did exactly what he said he would do decades prior, instituting tariffs like this steel one.

Congress

These controversial tariffs divided Congress, but not on party lines as one might expect. Instead, Congress split on regional lines, with Democrats and Republicans from states with strong steel industries supporting the tariffs (The Associated Press 2018). Most notably, both Nancy Pelosi (Democratic House Minority Leader) and Paul Ryan (Republican Speaker of the House) released public statements publicly denouncing the tariffs (Breuninger 2018; Pelosi 2018). Some Democratic senators like Bob Casey (D-PA), who had called for President Trump's resignation, applauded the tariffs. Many Republicans, on the other hand, believing in free trade and open

markets, vehemently opposed the tariffs. Prior to Trump's first executive order enacting the tariffs, 107 Republican members of Congress (nearly half of the party's representation) wrote a letter to Trump, strongly urging him to reconsider (Breuninger 2018).

With Congress so divided, it seemed like Trump's steel tariffs would not survive, yet Trump was able to get his steel tariffs and more. How could Trump circumvent Congress so easily? The answer lies in the state structure of the executive branch and the office of the president. Trump was able to make shrewd use of an old rule that had not been invoked since the organizing of the WTO in 1990, Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 (Executive Order 2018). Even in the 26 times it had been invoked earlier, only two of those instances resulted in legal presidential action (Kim 2020). Where other politicians might have shied away from using such legal loopholes, Trump immediately took advantage of the situation and declared a national emergency over the US's steel imports (Kim 2020). In short, Congress underestimated how far Trump was willing to push the political envelope for these tariffs and found themselves unable to disarm the president when he used this obscure rule against them.

So why was Congress unable to fight back effectively? They certainly tried to, attempting many strategies to remove the president's authority under Section 232 in the first few months after the tariff's enactment. Republicans especially, including senators like Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and Bob Corker (R-TN), touted the idea of introducing legislation to limit and amend section 232 (Breuninger 2018). One such bill is the Bicameral Congressional Trade Authority Act of 2019, introduced by Senator Pat Toomy (R-PA), which would limit the president's power under Sec. 232 (US Congress 2019). After its introduction in January of 2019, the bill was sent to committee, where it has not been heard from in more than two years (US Congress 2019). Similar bills have suffered the same fate, such as the Trade Security Act of 2019, the Reclaiming Congressional Trade Authority Act 2019, and the Trade Certainty Act of 2019 (Sandler 2021). All these bills were introduced to curtail the president's authority under Sec 232, and all have stagnated in committee for years since their inception (US Congress 2019; Sandler 2021).

These bills' failures illustrate the prominent weakness that prevented Congress from taking effective action against the president: its inability to mobilize and mobilize quickly. Firstly, the partisan nature of Congress makes it difficult to get enough votes for bills to even get off the ground in the first place. In this case, Republicans who opposed Trump's steel tariff struggled to get any support from Democrats, who did not care much for free trade in the first place (Schor 2018). The Republican Party also was not united in its opposition to the president's protectionism. Certain Republicans, especially those from states specializing in steel, had no qualms with Trump's policy (Schor 2018). Congress itself also suffers from collective action problems when compared to the president. It is much easier and quicker for the president to sign an executive order or institute a new foreign policy than it is for Congress to write a bill, send it to the committee, vote again, ad nauseam. This mobilization problem

ultimately prevented Congress from taking any meaningful counteraction against President Trump's steel tariff. One could strongly argue that this is a feature of Congress and not a bug, but when Congress was caught by surprise with Trump's steel tariff, their slow speed and bureaucratic nature stopped them dead in their tracks.

Legal Challenges

Several third-party groups also challenged section 232 as a legal basis, most prominently the American Institute for International Steel (AIIS), a coalition of manufacturers reliant on imported steel (Palmer 2020). This legal battle concluded only recently in June 2020, more than two years after the tariffs' original enactment. The Supreme Court refused to hear the AIIS's case after several other federal courts found Trump's steel tariff legal (Palmer 2020). So, according to the Supreme Court, the legal justification for Trump's steel tariff is perfectly valid. Underhanded and unorthodox? Probably. But not *technically* illegal.

Within the Trump Administration

Although legal challenges against Trump's emergency declaration failed, the economic validity of Trump's actions was challenged by many, including some of Trump's economic advisors and cabinet members (Kim 2020). This criticism, especially since it came straight from the Department of Defense, illustrates how illegitimate Trump's "national security emergency" truly was related to steel. The Department of Defense even released a statement saying that their steel needs would not be threatened by any international withholding of steel (Kim 2020). According to their report, the Department of Defense only needs about 325,000 tons of steel and steel products a year, which comes out to a whopping .3% of the US's DOMESTIC steel output (Packard 2018).

Opposition was strong even within Trump's cabinet and administration. Gary Cohn, the chief White House economic advisor at the time, had organized meetings with industry leaders that relied heavily on steel to dissuade Trump from enacting his tariff. Still, Trump refused to show up, canceling the meetings outright (Mangan and Pramuk 2018). After Trump officially enacted the steel tariff, Cohn resigned from his position. Cohn was a free-trade advocate and successful executive at Goldman Sachs, and his departure cast a grim shadow over Trump's impending protectionist policy (Mangan and Pramuk 2018). Secretary of Defense James Mattis also opposed the tariffs, arguing that the "use of unfair trade practices to intentionally erode our innovation and manufacturing" (Mattis 2017) is a greater threat to our national security than foreign steel. Mattis would eventually resign from his position later in 2018 over President Trump's military policy in Syria (Goldberg 2020).

Most of the remaining secretaries shared similar sentiments. One unnamed official reported the divide as 22 against the tariff versus 3 for, "but since one of the three is named Donald Trump, it was case closed" (Allen and Swan 2017). Commerce

Secretary Ross, National Trade Council Director Peter Navarro, and Chief White House Strategist Stephen Bannon were some of the few people other than the president in favor of the tariffs (Allen and Swan 2017).

As illustrated in this segment, opposition towards Trump's steel tariff within the government was strong and bipartisan before and after the tariff's enactment. Yet, Trump leveraged his presidential power in unconventional/unpopular ways to get what he wanted, members of Congress and cabinet members be damned. President Trump was the singular core political actor that drove this decision. The power that his use of Section 232 granted him allowed him to act independently of anyone who disagreed with him.

Interest Groups

While Trump's motives in pushing his steel tariff might have been more ideological than directly related to the steel industry, the interest groups and other third parties that worked tirelessly to sway him had only their economic interests at heart. First and foremost in these tariff-supporting groups are numerous domestic steel companies and groups, such as the American Institute for Iron and Steel, and Nucor Corporation. These groups invested heavily in lobbying as soon as Trump became president, increasing their spending from 8.25 million dollars in 2016 to 12.18 million in late 2017 (Mauldin 2019). The Nucor Corporation, the largest domestic producer of steel in the US, contributed 2.7 million to that lobbying total and have gone on public record directly lobbying for the nomination of Commerce Undersecretary Gilbert Kaplan and Jeffrey Gerrish (Nucor 2018). Also, Nucor contributed to President Trump's 2016 campaign (Mauldin 2019). The steel industry's interests in protective tariffs originate from the increasing competitiveness of foreign steel firms in the last 20 years. America's top steel producer, Nucor, is now number 14 on the list of the world's top steel producers (World Steel Association 2019). Other countries produce more steel and sell it at lower prices thanks to their lower wages (World Steel Association 2019). By gaining protection, domestic steel companies would be able to reclaim sections of the US steel market lost to foreign steel firms.

The steel industry's lobbying efforts were largely successful because they directly accessed President Trump from within his administration. Key members of Trump's cabinet and advisors, such as Secretary Ross, Representative Navarro, and other close associates, had deep ties to the American steel industry (Timiraos and Ballhaus 2018). Secretary Ross, who initiated the Department of Commerce's investigation, served as co-founder and CEO of the International Steel Group and served on the board of ArcelorMittal (the largest supplier of steel worldwide) directly before becoming Secretary of Commerce (Timiraos and Ballhaus 2018). Peter Navarro had tight connections to the steel industry, working closely with the Nucor Corporation to produce a pro-American steel documentary, "Death By China" (Timiraos and Ballhaus 2018). Pro-US steel pressure combined with Trump's pre-existing fixation on

China made it easy for his advisors to convince the President that China's burgeoning steel industry was a threat to US interests.

The steel industry's influence in this steel tariff is also evident in the amount of power domestic steel companies held in deciding which companies were granted exemptions. Individual companies could apply for exemptions from the tariff on a case-by-case basis, and they had to be approved by the Department of Commerce (Lardner and Fenn 2019). However, the Commerce Department makes these requests public and allows any third party (often domestic steel companies) to make objections to any request (Lardner and Fenn 2019). The Commerce Department found itself unprepared for the huge volume of requests they would receive and struggled to give each one sufficient time. Bernd Janzen, a partner in Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, a group that worked closely with both the Department of Commerce and companies seeking exemptions, described the Department of Commerce as "hard-pressed to spend more than a few minutes reviewing each application" (Janzen 2018). The Department of Commerce would often deny companies' exemption if there were any objections without investigating it fully (Hampton 2018). By taking advantage of this chaos, domestic steel companies often got their competitors' exemption requests denied, crippling their competition. In contrast, domestic companies and their friends enjoyed duty-free imports (Hampton 2018).

Additionally, labor unions like the AFL-CIO voiced their support for this steel tariff, with the AFL's president Trumka calling the tariff "critical to leveling the playing field" (Trumka 2018). However, the AFL qualified their support, clarifying that while they approved of punitive measures against China and other countries who had "broken the rules" (Trumka 2018), they did not approve of Trump's tariffs against our allies like Canada and the EU. "I don't think that Canada has violated the rules," said AFL president Trumka (Trumka 2018).

On the other hand, nearly every industry that involves steel as an input strongly opposed this tariff: Light and heavy manufacturing, automakers, defense contractors, construction companies, you name it (American Retailer's Association 2019). Even farming groups got involved. Steel is an important component in most modern farming equipment, and as such, Trump's tariff hit farmers (Polansek 2018). Both grain and meat farmers were negatively hit, and their respective associations voiced their displeasure. Groups like the National Association of Egg Farmers, the US Apple Association, and the National Renderer's Association all lobbied Congress members from areas where farming was prominent to try and alleviate soaring steel prices (Polansek 2018). Farming groups were also concerned about the possibility of retaliatory tariffs targeting agriculture (Polansek 2018). Three of the countries targeted by the steel tariff, Canada, Mexico, and the EU, were vital markets for US grain and agriculture, and by attacking them with tariffs, Trump invited them to retaliate against US agriculture, which they did (Polansek 2018). US Grain Council President Tom Sleight lamented this situation, "These countries are among our closest neighbors and friends. We have spent years building markets in these countries based on a mutual belief that increasing trade benefits all parties" (Sleight 2018). With this tariff,

Sleight and others saw years of international cooperation undone before their eyes and felt powerless as their efforts to sway Trump were largely fruitless (Polansek 2018). These farming and manufacturing groups primarily influenced members of Congress, such as the Senate Agriculture Chairman, Pat Roberts (R-KS) (Schor 2018).

Another prominent US manufacturing sector, the auto industry, was strongly affected by steel tariffs. Steel and other metals are vital components in nearly every aspect of automobiles, and US automakers suddenly found their inputs shooting up in price. These automakers faced a choice: raise their prices to compensate for the tariffs or eat the increased costs themselves. In many cases, smaller automakers that couldn't effectively absorb price increases had to shut down entirely (Carey 2019). By enacting tariffs to support one struggling US industry (steel), Trump harmed many other already struggling industries like the auto industry, pushing many firms to either move offshore or close entirely (Carey 2019).

A year after the tariff's initial passage, 49 industry groups wrote Secretary of Commerce Ross and Trade Representative Lighthizer begging them to do what they could to get the tariff lifted. Some of these groups included the Agricultural Retailers Association, the North America Meat Institute, the National Tooling and Machining Association, and many other groups adversely affected by steel's increase in price due to the tariff (American Retailer's Association 2019). Although this letter was written after the tariff's initial passage, we can infer these groups also opposed the tariff before its implementation.

These oppositional efforts were largely ineffective because they lacked the same direct connection to the president that steel groups could achieve. Instead of convincing Trump, the main political actor who mattered in the decision, these oppositional groups instead lobbied their congressmen and congresswomen. While that has certainly been effective in the past, Congress's collective action problems and bureaucratic red tape rendered any lobbying within Congress to be mostly impotent. The letter previously mentioned was written directly to Secretary of Commerce Ross and Trade Representative Lighthizer, two of the tariffs' biggest proponents (American Retailer's Association 2019). Considering these two men's position on the tariff, it is no wonder that these grievances fell on deaf ears.

In summary, the climate surrounding societal groups was much like that in the government, with only the parties that would directly benefit from steel tariffs being for Trump's tariff, while every industry reliant on steel (most of manufacturing, machinery, automaking, etc.) coming out strongly against them. So why was the steel industry's lobbying so effective, as opposed to other industries' efforts? This can be explained by, again, President Trump and his protectionist proclivities. Back in the days of the Smoot-Hawley tariff, industries would have to band together to secure votes in Congress, forming unlikely coalitions such as northern agriculture and light manufacturing (Eichengreen 1989). In the 2018 scenario, however, the only person that needed convincing was Donald Trump. This concentration of power explains how the steel industry's pointed lobbying was so successful, while the agriculture and manufacturing sectors' broad and Congress-oriented lobbying was not.

Conclusion

As I have argued throughout this paper, Trump was the primary causal and ideological actor in the establishment and execution of the 2018 steel tariffs. Having been a protectionist for nearly his entire life, he had no qualms taxing steel imports, even if there would be negative consequences both domestically and internationally (Schleisinger 2018). However, his tariff would not have been possible without state structures allowing the president to take executive action without Congressional approval under Section 232. State structures also kept other branches of government like Congress from effectively mobilizing against what they saw as a vast overreach of power, as Congress struggled and failed to overcome its own contentious and inefficient nature. Lobbying and other societal groups in favor of steel tariffs effectively persuaded the president by taking advantage of close personal ties with many of Trump's aides and advisors, encouraging Trump's protectionist philosophies. Other societal groups that were negatively affected by the tariff, like manufacturing and agriculture, struggled to effectively impact the president as their Congress-based influence was rendered impotent by bureaucracy. Overall, while President Trump was the ideological driving force and political actor behind this tariff, state structures played a key role by providing him both the means to implement his tariff and by bogging down Congressional opposition in committee meetings and other inefficient ways of effecting change.

So what should the lesson be from this whole debacle? First and foremost, this should reaffirm what every classical economist already knows: tariffs are inherently inefficient, and by enacting them, we accept lower efficiency and general welfare as a consequence. These tariffs also serve as an indictment of the recent neo-isolationist movements gaining popularity in the US. Trading with other countries doesn't mean we are nott "putting the US first": in fact, trading with other countries puts us closer to that goal than using tariffs does. By openly trading with other countries, the US ensures the lowest prices and the greatest benefits for its citizens. What better way is there to "Make America Great Again" than to lower consumer prices, increase GDP through cheaper input costs, and bolster our relationships with allies? By re-learning the benefits of free trade, modern Republicans on Trump's side of trade issues could overcome the short-term allure of tariffs and move towards free-trade policies that used to be one of the Republican party's defining ideological tenets.

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Party Institutionalization and Public Confidence

Blake West

Confidence in America's government institutions has continually decreased over the past decade. In the year 2020, this growing lack of public confidence in government became apparent as the government failed, in the public's eye, to solve numerous problems over the course of the year. The 2020 election showcased suspicions and fears directed at the American electoral system and the validity of America's constitutional institutions. In recent polling data by the Hill, it was revealed that 33% of United States citizens believed that the Presidential Election in 2020 was unfair (*The Hill* 2021). Within the Republican Party alone, Forbes magazine found that 68% of Republicans believed that the elections were rigged, with 52% outright denying the legitimacy of Joe Biden's victory (*Forbes* 2020). This growing lack of confidence in government institutions in the United States is not just a trend at the national level, nor is it just a trend within the Republican Party. Recent media reports regarding police shootings involving African-Americans have caused the public's confidence in the police to drop to a 22-year low of 52% (Gallup 2015). At the same time, public trust in other institutions has also decreased. For instance, according to a survey done by the Associated Press in October 2020, the government response to COVID-19 has caused the number of Americans who expressed confidence in state or local governments to drop from 63% in April to 26% and has caused only 36% of Americans to have confidence in federal health institutions (Netburn 2020).

What is causing this lack of confidence in government institutions, and how can it be remedied? In popular discourse, many people claim that increasing the number of institutionalized and viable political parties would benefit the American political system (Reinhart 2018). This opinion is supported by researchers who have also suggested that the two-party system is at fault for the increasing distrust that we see directed at government institutions today. They believe that a multi-party system

may be able to promote more public confidence in government institutions (Miller and Ola 1990; Drutman 2019). In this paper, I will analyze this claim to see if different party systems influence public confidence in government institutions and whether or not a multi-party system inspires greater public confidence in government institutions compared to a two-party system.

Public Trust and Confidence within a Democracy

Scholars have reached a broad consensus that democracy relies on trust in order to receive legitimacy from the electorate (Abramson 2017; Newton 2001). A government may find it difficult to make and enforce laws on behalf of its citizens, or enact viable policies that are viewed with legitimacy, without the general public's confidence (Dodsworth and Cheeseman 2020; Marine and Hooghie 2011). Many researchers fear that the institution of representative democracy itself may come under scrutiny in times where there is a deep distrust in government institutions. This has been seen with the recent rise of left-wing and right-wing populist movements, causing a disinterest and distrust in traditional democratic governments.

Despite this fear in the deep distrust of government, there is a role that distrust plays within a democratic government by encouraging critical thinking in regards to actions undertaken by the government. Too little distrust in government institutions can be damaging to the health of democratic institutions. A healthy level of skepticism and critical approaches to government institutions by the public is necessary to prevent corruption and hold the government accountable when it fails to provide for the citizens (Abramson 2017; Dodsworth and Cheeseman 2020). In fact, many political theorists recognize this need for a level of mistrust and believe that "disaggregating power" within a democracy is a vital part of maintaining the correct balance of public trust in the democratic system. The American founding father James Madison said, "If institutions were properly designed to disaggregate power and to check the power of some with the power of others, the worst human ambitions could be curbed without men becoming angels" (Abramson 2017). For those who agree with Madison's statement, the establishment of decentralized and competitive government institutions is critical in maintaining a properly functioning democratic government (Abramson 2017).

There is research that shows that the decentralization of democratic institutions does help increase public confidence in government. A study by Slomczynski and Janicka found that the more competitive and decentralized democratic institutions were within a country, the higher the rates of political trust there were, specifically when talking about confidence in the national legislature, political parties, and the judicial system (Slomczynski and Janicka 2014). Other researchers dispute this idea. In his work on Eastern European nations, Besir Ceka discovered that many Eastern Europeans were highly dissatisfied and mistrustful of their country's democratic institutions (Ceka 2012). Further research by Ceka confirmed that Eastern European nations with highly democratic contested elections ended up being more distrustful

of their political system despite having strong and competitive democratic institutions (Ceka 2012).

It is possible that this discrepancy between the results could be because Eastern European nations have weaker economic systems and a lower quality of life than other democratic nations with higher rates of public confidence (Slomczynski and Janicka 2014). The concept that government satisfaction and confidence are based on the standard of living instead of how democratic the institutions are is not unique. Many other researchers of democratic confidence have studied the effects of economic development and quality of life on the public's perception of democracy. These researchers note that notions of democracy have changed from an original view of judging the health of a nation's democracy based on its ability to establish free and fair elections to an approach focused on how capable modern democracies are at establishing higher standards of living for their citizens (Kim 2007). This research implies that the level of decentralization in a government may not affect public confidence in government at all.

Political Parties as a Democratic Institution

Whether or not confidence in the democratic system and in government institutions is increased by having more competitive elections and decentralized democratic systems will be addressed by our main question on party systems. Because of this, it is important to establish a basis of research on how political parties fit into the democratic system. For the purposes of this paper, the term *political party* will refer to "any group of politically active persons outside a government who organize to capture government by nominating and electing officials who thereby control the operations of government and determine its position" (Dode 2010).

Past literature mentions many ways in which political parties help establish, sustain, and direct a democratic government. Political parties make it easier to hold the government accountable, prevent the rise of authoritarian individuals, and help new republics adapt to democratic principles by nominating political leadership and helping with political education (Ezrow 2011). Parties also play a role in interest aggregation, political research, organizing government agendas, training new leaders, and sustaining democratic institutions (Ezrow 2011; Dode 2010; Kiiza 2005). The fulfillment of these responsibilities is especially important within new democratic systems. Those who research the role of political parties in newer democracies state that political parties are the primary safeguard against reactionary elements and corruption within governments (Ezrow 2011). This is confirmed by research focused on new democracies in Eastern Europe which found that political parties played an essential role in "identifying, politicizing, and representing social issues" (McAllister and White 2009). It has also been found that the effectiveness and success of new democratic governments depend on the role that political parties play in placing social and political conflicts within a democratic framework (McAllister and White 2009).

With the growing role of political parties in established democracies, as well as their importance to the health of democratic institutions, political researchers have begun to find that political parties themselves are now often perceived as being part of the institution of government itself. Ingrid van Biezen notes that in many established democracies, the state offers public funding to political parties and in doing so has become increasingly involved in regulations of internal party affairs (2004). She believes that these changes to the state's influence on political parties are part of a trend whereby political parties are becoming legitimized and considered necessary institutions for a functioning democracy (van Biezen 2004).

Party Systems and Democracy

The literature on party systems is more focused than the literature on political parties as a whole. A party system is a relationship between a country's constitution, the electoral laws, and the number of political parties that may exist in that nation (Dode 2010). A party system can also be described as the structure of political competition and cooperation within a nation (Croissant and Volkel 2012). The most common forms of party systems are one-party, two-party, and multi-party systems, which are defined by having a specific number of major political parties as denoted by the name of the party system. Just as political parties play an essential role in establishing and sustaining democracies, the system of parties within a nation itself also plays a role.

In a study on Nigerian democracy, Dode finds that Nigeria's democracy suffers from a lack of competitive democratic institutions, especially the lack of institutionalized political parties (2010). Dode suggests that this lack of democratic competitiveness contributes to Nigeria's struggle to develop its democratic institutions and in turn suggests that Nigeria needs more political competition, including a larger number of institutionalized parties, before better democratic institutions can be developed (Dode 2010). This research on the effect of party systems on the development of democratic institutions is further discussed by Croissant and Völkel, who also study the notion that the type of party system can affect the development of democracy within a nation (2012). They observed multiple newer democracies in East Asia to see the level of democratic development in those nations, and determined that East Asian politics often had inchoate party systems or weak multi-party systems.

An inchoate party system is a party system where there is little party institutionalization and greater levels of factionalism. Sometimes weak multi-party systems are referred to as inchoate party systems; in other cases, inchoate systems can refer to systems where independent politicians make up the majority of government. These systems are often attributed with high turnover rates in political offices and were found to be a liability to the development of democratic systems (Croissant and Völkel 2012).

Public Trust, Political Parties, and Party Systems

Though there is consensus in the literature on the importance of political parties and party systems within a democracy the research is divided as to whether greater numbers of institutionalized parties result in an increase of the public's confidence in government. A survey focused on public confidence in Alberta, Canada, for instance, found that the general confidence in Alberta's government institutions was not wholly dependent on electoral or party systems; rather, it was primarily dependent on provincial government transparency and the centralization of power within the provincial governments (Johnston, Krahn, Harrison 2006). The survey proposed the idea of establishing a proportional election system that would increase the number of institutionalized parties. However, very few individuals who participated in the survey believed that the reform would affect their trust in the government (Johnston, Krahn, Harrison 2006). This idea that party systems do not influence the public's confidence in the government is backed by other literature, such as a study on the levels of public contentment towards democracy in Norway, Sweden, and America. The researchers performing the study found that the American two-party system generated more discontent than the Norwegian multi-party system, but had similar levels of discontent as Sweden, despite Sweden having a competitive party system (Miller and Ola 1990).

Other researchers have performed studies which do suggest that the type of party system a nation has impacts the citizens' confidence in the government. Christopher J. Anderson and Christine A. Guillory conducted a study in which they separated countries into two groups. The first group being countries which have majoritarian democratic systems where power was centralized in the political parties which receive the majority support, while the second group is countries which have a consensual democratic system where political parties who receive less support also have sway in government politics (Anderson and Guillory 2008). They based these classifications off the Lijpharts index which observes various aspects of government institutions to determine whether a democracy is more majoritarian or consensual in nature including the effective number of political parties (Anderson and Guillory 2008).

Anderson and Guillory found that individuals whose political party was not the ruling party or in a coalition with the ruling party within majoritarian systems developed more distrust in government than those whose political party was not the ruling party or in a coalition with the ruling party within consensual systems (Anderson and Guillory 2008). Other studies on party systems support this study by suggesting that proportional electoral systems, or systems in which government parties are more representative of the general public, do tend to affect the satisfaction that people have in government (Anderson 1998). One such study on the relationship between electoral systems and public satisfaction with democratic institutions found that the electoral systems within a nation were a greater indicator of the public's satisfaction in democratic institutions than the performance of the current government

(Anderson 1998). This finding is important to the research on party systems because proportional electoral systems are directly correlated with higher levels of party fragmentation, or the number of effective parties.

Public Confidence in Multi-Party and Two-Party Systems

Current literature indicates that trust and distrust are essential within the democratic system to legitimize the government and promote critical thinking in regards to its actions. The literature also suggests that political parties and party systems play an important role within these democratic systems. This paper is meant to add to this existing literature by determining whether or not the number of effective political parties within a country affects the levels of public confidence in government institutions. In doing so, we seek to focus on two questions: whether party systems affect trust and whether the American two-party system is detrimental to public confidence in government institutions compared to a party system with higher levels of party fragmentation.

In forming a theory on why having a multi-party system may result in more confidence in America's government, it is important to understand the goals of the founding fathers and whether the two-party system achieves these goals. To create a balance between trust and distrust in the government, the founders of the United States sought to create a system where the institutions of government prevented distrust in the political system and instead directed mistrust towards individual politicians (Abramson 2017). In other words, the founders' goal was to create a system with government institutions that were implemented to decentralize power from any specific group or person. This led to certain American institutions like the separation of powers, checks and balances, and state's rights. The founders hoped that establishing these institutions would promote trust and confidence in the system even if individuals mistrusted the politicians running it (Abramson 2017).

When it comes to political parties, decentralization of political power amongst greater numbers of parties is referred to as party system fragmentation. Single party states would have low levels of party system fragmentation, while multi-party states would have higher levels of party system fragmentation. The two-party system that has prevailed in American politics fails to achieve high levels of party fragmentation; in fact, rather than decentralizing power, our two-party system allows two organizations to concentrate political power between the political elites of those two organizations. Not only does the two-party system allow political power to become concentrated in the hands of the few, the concentration of power in two primary sources results in partisanship and polarization. As Americans are forced into one camp or the other in order to see policies they support enacted, they gradually lose faith in the opposing party meaning that Americans will be more likely to distrust government institutions when their party is out of power (Hetherington and Rudolph 2018).

Another folly of a two-party system is that when people distrust politicians, it is difficult to elect new leaders because there are only two viable candidates in either

election. Candidates running in elections within a two-party system typically occupy opposing ideological spaces, which could prevent an individual from voting for the candidate they trust more to protect their ideological interests. In terms of the general public trust, two-party systems merely swap one distrustful party in the public's eye out for the other party, thereby causing a cycle of distrust (Miller and Ola 1990).

Is it possible that instituting a multi-party system can fix this? Three main arguments suggest it could. First, multi-party systems allow for greater fragmentation of power. Unlike the two-party systems that cause political power to be centralized in two large coalitions, a multi-party system allows power to be distributed to three or more parties which generally results in those parties being pushed to work together and find compromises in order to govern efficiently. Given the theory that democratization fosters public confidence in government, a party system where power is extensively distributed amongst multiple groups could lead to more public confidence in government (Abramson 2017).

Second, a multi-party system increases the number of choices and options that citizens of the country have. While a two-party system creates a minimal number of choices and often forces people towards two politically acceptable ideological options and results in citizens being unable to remove corrupt politicians, a multi-party system does not have this downside (Drutman 2020). Alternatively, a multi-party system allows people of various opinions and interests across the political spectrum to have representation in the government (Drutman 2020). This increased number and diversity of choice for political officers also grants voters an easier time removing corrupt politicians from power during elections because they have more candidates and candidates closer to their ideological beliefs to choose from. This competitiveness may cause public confidence in government to increase (Slomczynski and Janicka 2014).

Lastly, a multi-party system is theorized to end the distrust of government caused by political polarization. As mentioned above, two-party systems cause political partisanship and polarization due to the binary nature of said systems. In most multi-party systems, governments are formed through coalitions since no one party has enough power to run the government alone. As multi-party systems encourage cooperation between parties in order for parties to achieve their goals and form viable working governments, many theorize that multi-party systems reasonably generate less political partisanship and polarization.

Can Voter Trust Influence Party Systems

It is important to note that some suggest that the relationship should be inverted, where public trust influences the specific type of party system a nation has rather than the other way around. We can reject this idea on the basis that the institutionalization of parties within a government is not due to voter behavior but rather is caused by institutional factors such as electoral rules. It is typically the electoral rules that determine the type of party system within a country because electoral rules delineate

the probability that particular parties gain representation and influence the electoral strategies of political parties and voters. The establishment of electoral procedures and institutions precedes the confidence citizens of a nation have in the system (Anderson 1998).

Less fragmented party systems use first-past-the-post election rules where one candidate is selected to represent a particular district and needs only 50% of the vote, or closed-list proportional voting where people vote for parties as a whole without knowing the candidate tend to have less institutionalized parties and party fragmentation. Systems where people vote for parties and can see the candidates within that, or systems in which people can rank their preferred candidates and vote for multiple typically have more political parties represented in government and thus more fragmentation (ACE Project 1998). In addition to the effect of the electoral system on party systems, the institutionalized basis by which parties receive money can also affect what parties become institutionalized in society (ACE Project 1998). The party system is affected by numerous laws and legal circumstances, which in turn also affect the political parties themselves. Because of these circumstances, we can determine that party and party systems affect voter trust in government and not the reverse (Anderson 1998).

Methodology for Data Analysis

In order confirm or reject this theory, I have outlined two hypothesis which we can test:

Hypothesis 1: Party systems have a significant effect
on public trust in government institutions.

Hypothesis 2: A nation with a multi-party system will have greater amounts
of public confidence in government institutions than a two-party system.

To measure public confidence in the government, I gathered data from the World Values Survey Time Series, a collection of all of the data collected by the World Values Survey. This Time Series contains interview data from nearly half a million respondents in more than a hundred countries over a forty-year time span, making it the optimal source for data collection. I used the data from six questions about the individual respondent's confidence in various government institutions. These institutions are the police, civil service, parliament, political parties, elections, and government as a whole. For each of these institutions, respondents were asked to rank their overall confidence in the institution on a scale of one to four.

To obtain my data for party systems, I observed past legislative and executive elections using the Inter-Parliamentary Union Parling Database and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. I did this in order to determine what party system a given surveyed nation had during the time when the nation was part of the World Values Survey. This allowed me to account for the effects of changes in party systems

within various nations over a period of time. With this data, I categorized each nation into five significant types of party systems: inchoate party systems, one party, dominant party, two-party, and multi-party systems.

To ensure I kept my approach to determining party systems objective, I used standardized measures for each party system. Inchoate party systems were defined as systems wherein established political parties had weak representation in government and the majority of government was made up of independent politicians or loose coalitions of independents that did not contest multiple elections. One-party systems were defined as systems wherein only one party and its satellite parties were allowed to hold government positions. Dominant party systems were defined as any system where one party and its satellite parties consistently controlled at least 50% of the legislature and controlled the executive branch. Two-party systems were defined as any system where two political parties consistently controlled the executive branch and consistently held at least 90% of the legislature. Finally, multi-party systems were defined as any system wherein more than two political parties have the ability to participate in the government or opposition at a viable level. These were determined by the two largest parties constantly holding less than 90% of the legislature when added together, regardless of their control of the executive branch. I then created a binary variable for each of the party systems so they could be compared against each other.

Using the data gathered from the sources mentioned above, I ran six regression models, one for each of the government institutions that I was measuring to determine the relationship between the party system and confidence in government institutions. In each regression, the confidence in each specific government institution was the dependent variable, and the party systems were included as independent variables. I omitted the two-party system variable from the regressions so that each of the other party systems' effect on public confidence in each government institution could be compared with the two-party systems' effect on public confidence.

When running these regressions, I made sure to control for individual-level variables of income, social class, education level, and employment status that could affect the individual's confidence in government institutions using other data from the World Values Survey. To control for national economic factors, I collected the data for national GDP per Capita from Macrotrends. At the systemic level, I also included time-fixed effects and national fixed effects. These fixed effects will allow me to account for constants within global trends for a particular year and constant variables within each nation.

To test our hypothesis, we must establish objective criteria to confirm or deny the two hypotheses that build it. The first hypothesis will be confirmed individually for each regression if the p-value of the test confirms a statistically significant relationship between the types of party systems and the amount of public confidence for that regression's government institution. The second hypothesis will be confirmed individually for each government institution if the regression coefficient for the multi-party system is positive as this will show that there is a greater public confidence towards the institution within a multi-party system compared to a two-party system.

These coefficients must be statistically significant in order to be accepted. The original hypotheses will be rejected if they do not meet the required standards or the results are not statistically significant.

Data Analysis

For the convenience of the reader I have included a chart with my collected data below that can be used to follow along with the analysis of the data:

	Confidence in Police	Confidence in Civil Services	Confidence in Political Parties	Confidence in Elections	Confidence in Legislature	Confidence in Government
Inchoate Party System	-.368706** (.0374216)	-.5376879** (.0376289)	-.4109875** (.0376682)	-1.132653** (.0638746)	-.5624598** (.0396047)	-0.403908** (.0374673)
One-Party System	.591726** (.0439095)	1.043568** (.0420006)	1.289746** .0401882	1.036064** (.0633248)	1.039788** (.042339)	1.11325** (.0437179)
Dominant Party System	-.162225** (.0347039)	-.1249888** (.0324003)	.0381486 (.0318633)	.9301176** (.0551608)	.0629252 (.0335845)	0.129063** (.0344372)
Multi-Party System	-.126745** (.0341636)	-.2208628** (.0317848)	-.23929** (.0312628)	.3069301** (.046655)	-.3108823** (.0329431)	-0.186566** (.033923)
Education Level	-.027619** (.000913)	-.0086915** (.0008832)	-.0150708** (.000871)	-.0305872** (.0019286)	-.0133014** (.000913)	-.0250634** (.0009399)
Income Level	.0037961 (.000923)	.0002213 (.0008861)	.0036885** (.000876)	.0123062** (.0018754)	-.000057 (.0009157)	-.0027816** (.00095)
Social Class	.0354125 (.0021754)	.036206** (.0020941)	.0310162** (.0020594)	.0208438** (.0041023)	.0358139** (.0021587)	.0385822** (.0022336)
GDP per Capita	.0000114 (.0000004)	.0000064** (.0000004)	.0000022** (.00000039)	.0000127** (.00000098)	0.00000674 (.00000041)	0.000007** (.00000042)
Constant	2.135764 (.0413601)	-2.491407 (.0396461)	-2.568077 (.0379014)	1.195427 (.0639331)	-2.016631** (.0400335)	-2.069085 (.0413547)
System Level Controls: Fixed Effects for Year and Fixed Effects for Country were not included in the regression analysis due to the amount of variables, but they were included in the regression itself to control for system level differences in year and country						
** Statistically Significant with P-value<.05 Standard Error Included in Parenthesis						

Using this data, we can confirm that the first hypothesis, "Party systems have a significant effect on public trust in government institutions," is valid for the majority of relationships. Every relationship between confidence in government institutions and two-party, multi-party, inchoate, and single-party systems is statistically significant. Only dominant party systems seem to not be statistically significant in every case with them having no statistically significant relationship between the dominant

party system and confidence in parties and elections. We can confirm in nearly all of the relationships that the party system does have a significant effect on the individual's confidence in the specified institution. In order to confirm the second hypothesis, "a nation with a multi-party system will have greater amounts of public trust than a two-party system," we must look at the regression coefficient of the multi-party system while the two-party system has been omitted on each government institution.

The data shows that multi-party systems promote a 0.127 decrease in confidence in the police, a 0.221 decrease in confidence in civil services, a 0.239 decrease in confidence in parties, a 0.311 decrease in confidence in the legislature, and a 0.187 decrease in confidence in the government as a whole in comparison with a two-party system. Two-party systems inspire more public confidence in government institutions than multi-party systems in nearly every case. Multi-party systems only promote greater confidence in a nation's electoral institutions, promoting a 0.307 increase in electoral confidence. Using this data, we can reject the hypothesis that a nation with a multi-party system would have higher public confidence in government and reject the theory that they result in greater levels of public confidence in government institutions than two-party systems. Instead, multi-party systems only seem to inspire higher public confidence in government institutions regarding elections.

Discussion

When looking at the rest of the data, we can see there is a trend where the party systems with less institutionalized parties and less party competition seem to promote more confidence in government institutions at an individual level than those with more institutionalized parties or more political competition. We can see that individuals in multi-party systems have more confidence in government than those in inchoate party systems where political power is the most fragmented, people in two-party systems have more confidence in government institutions than those in multi-party systems, and people living in one-party systems have more confidence in government than those in two-party systems. These results suggest that the theory and hypothesis on multi-parties promoting greater public confidence should be reversed. Instead of higher party system fragmentation resulting in higher rates of confidence, it seems that less party system fragmentation does. The only party system in which this trend is not seen is the dominant party system, likely because dominant party systems are less defined and have institutions similar to other party systems allowing them to be formed out of or into other systems without major institutional change. Knowing that systems with less fragmented party systems generated more public confidence, the question is prompted of why respondents living in countries with less fragmented party systems report more confidence in government institutions than those in more fragmented party systems.

There are multiple possible explanations for this phenomenon. The first explanation behind why countries with less fragmented party systems correlate with higher public confidence is that those systems are inherently more authoritarian. Individuals

have a fear of responding negatively to questions about their confidence in government. There is also the possibility that systems with less competitive party systems have more political apathy due to the lack of competition. So long as the needs guaranteed by the government are met, apathetic people would not display distrust based on party systems. Though these theories make sense on the surface and can explain this phenomenon in one-party states, they fail to explain our main concern: why do two-party systems end up promoting higher levels of public confidence in government institutions than multi-party systems?

When trying to determine reasons that the two-party systems generate more public confidence than multi-party systems, it is most worthwhile to examine the original arguments given supporting the theory that a multi-party system would produce more public confidence in government than a two-party system. Those who supported this theory focused most of their arguments on three points:

- The decentralization of political power through party fragmentation
- The need in multi-party systems to form coalition governments encouraging political cooperation and discouraging political polarization
- The increased amount of representation in a multi-party system

Though these points seem like they would promote public confidence in government, we can use these points to see why a multi-party system would actually generate less public confidence in government.

The first strength of a multi-party system, mentioned by advocates of the multi-party system, is that multi-party systems fragment political power between a greater number of organizations. This prevents the monopolization of power by a few dominant parties. There is the potential for this party fragmentation to create problems such as inefficient and instability. Within a two-party system, passing bills would generally require only one political party to support it, within a multi-party system, however, in order to pass bills, it is often necessary for a broad coalition of parties to support the bill, meaning that in order for a bill to pass it must appeal to multiple parties. This can make it difficult for multi-party systems to respond to crises. Not only does this affect bills, but it also causes problems in forming governments.

Within multi-party systems, coalitions are commonly required in order to form a stable government. The more parties in a government, the harder it is to form a coalition, as governing parties must compromise with each other when agreeing to a governing agenda. Generally, this makes multi-party systems more unstable. Fluctuations in the success of parties and the governing coalitions can cause uncertainty in government, given it is common for coalitions to break apart when the parties within the coalition disagree. Frequently, these disagreements send coalition governments into early and frequent election cycles (Midlarsky 2016). Within a two-party system governing parties do not have to form coalitions. This allows for greater stability in government as they do not need to call early elections frequently, nor do the parties break apart as easily as a coalition (Midlarsky 2016).

Coalition governments can also undo the improvement of electoral representation that advocates of the multi-party system suggest would occur upon its

implementation. In forming coalition governments, parties must cooperate and find compromises to their agendas to form a stable government. Though this cooperation is mentioned as a strength, it can cause parties to fail to fully represent the voters, especially when the parties form coalition governments that the people do not want or expect (Karp and Bowler 2001). While people have more choices and are better represented in whom they vote for in a multi-party system, coalition building politics mean that there is no guarantee that the policies the voter supported would be enacted, even if the political party they voted for won more seats than the other parties. This failure of parties to recognize their voters' interests can increase voters' mistrust (Karp and Bowler 2001).

Though coalition-building seems to be the primary cause of concern with multi-party systems, advocates still argue that coalitions found in multi-party systems are beneficial because they help reduce polarization. The research on this topic contradicts this aspect of the theory, however. Research in the comparative study between the American two-party system and European multi-party systems has yielded the opinion that there is no significant difference in the amount of polarization in America compared to European nations (Knudsen 2020). Given that the polarization seen in the systems does not wildly differ, multi-party systems cannot be attributed to a decrease in polarization.

Finally, another possibility is that the very idea that a multi-party system leads to greater democratization was incorrect. Anastasija Malachova suggests that multi-party systems do not automatically lead to a more "democratic" sense of government (Malachova 2012). She recognizes that, in theory, greater competition and viable political parties should lead to greater democratization. However, in reality, multi-party systems do not universally lead to more democratization within a country (Malachova 2012).

These ideas, while plausible, are still only theories on why multi-party systems are unable to generate the levels of public confidence in the government that two-party systems do. Other factors that were not measured could be determinants of the difference in public confidence between multi-party systems and two-party systems, such as the number of effective political parties, the type of electoral system, or even the types of political parties. In order to fully determine the causes behind this relationship, more research must be done on the origination of public confidence in various multi-party and two-party systems.

Conclusion and Implications

The two-party system in America has been blamed for many of the problems we face in the political arena, including the lack of public confidence. Those who make this claim cite the multi-party system as a better substitute for it, given the competitive and democratic nature of the multi-party system. Multi-party systems allow for greater representation, less partisanship, more political cooperation, and the distribution of power amongst more political groups. However, these strengths

may be weaknesses when it comes to the field of public confidence in government institutions. Using the data on public confidence in various government institutions from the World Values Survey and categorizing the nations into five different party systems using the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Election data and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, I discovered that this perceived connection between a competitive multi-party system and greater public confidence in government does not exist.

Instead, the data showed that multi-party systems weaken public confidence in government rather than strengthen it. The data also revealed that party systems with less fragmentation of political parties had more public confidence in government institutions than those with more fragmented systems of parties. Within one party systems, this may be explained by tendencies in authoritarian systems such as fear to report and apathy. However, these explanations fail to explain the central area of our concern, which is why two-party systems have an overall higher public confidence in government. The factors within multi-party systems that cause mistrust in the system may be explained by the very things that its advocates suggest would promote confidence in government.

While advocates suggest that multi-party systems will improve public confidence in government institutions through reduced polarization, more representation, and reduced concentration of power within a nation, instead, it is the case that fundamental aspects of a multi-party system negate these or twist these to produce an overall lower rate of public confidence. One may claim that a fragmented party system and coalition government multi-party systems will reduce partisanship and polarization, but there is no actual evidence for that argument to be. Instead, the fragmented party system and coalition governments lead to instability, a lack of representation, and inefficiency.

Overall the data shows that introducing a multi-party system in the United States would fail to increase the amount of public confidence but would likely, according to the data, cause public confidence to decrease. With this in mind, we confirm that the problem of public confidence in America's public institutions does not arise from a two-party system. Instead, we should look into other possible causes of our confidence problem in order to find ways by which we can increase the public's confidence in America's government institutions.

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Poll Booth Proximity, Tribal ID, and Bilingual Accessibility: Three Provisions to Increase Native American Turnout in the Native American Voting Rights Act Of 2019

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On March 12, 2019, Senator Udall (D-NM) and Representative Lujan (D-NM-3) introduced the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 (S.739; HR 1694) to both chambers of the United States Congress as a proposed solution to problems concerning low voter turnout among Native Americans and Alaska Natives. (While I recognize there are notable differences between Native American groups and Alaska Native groups, for the remainder of this analysis I use the terms Native, Native American, American Indian, and Alaska Native interchangeably.) If enacted, the bill would provide voting assistance to Native communities by bringing poll booth and voter registration locations closer to Native Americans, ensuring that tribal identification cards qualify as valid forms of ID for voter registration, and expanding bilingual voting accessibility to Native languages. Shortly after the bill's introduction, it was referred to the Senate's Judiciary Committee and the House's Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties and has not made any progress since.

In this paper, I evaluate the validity of the claims made by the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 and anticipate what the consequences of enacting this policy would bring. First, I examine to what extent Native disenfranchisement exists and the recent political behaviors of Native Americans as a group. Then, I scrutinize the bill's policy logic by exploring the potential of its proposed measures—proximate polling booths, tribal identification voter ID, and expanding bilingual voting accessibility—to work toward solving the problem of low Native turnout. Considering the gathered evidence, I find that Native Americans continue to suffer explicit and inconspicuous state-sanctioned disenfranchisement in the United States. And while the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 may not completely solve the current problem of low Native American turnout throughout the US, it will work toward

removing thick barriers that currently prevent or hinder Native Americans' ability to participate in the voting process.

Native American Disenfranchisement & Political Behavior

Although they are the ancient inhabitants of the continent, Native Americans were the last racial/ethnic group born in the United States to gain citizenship and the ability to vote (Schroedel & Hart 2015). Congress did not unilaterally grant citizenship to Native Americans without the requirement to abandon tribal allegiances until they passed the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924. However, this policy victory ended up hollow because while the Act granted citizenship, it left the rights that came alongside Native citizenship—most notably, the franchise—either vague or undefined.

Because of the autonomy of the individual states within the federal system, it did not take long for disapproving whites living in states with significant Native populations to use the ambiguous nature of the Native citizenship to their advantage. Immediately following the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, state legislatures enacted various policies that worked toward disenfranchising their new Native American citizens. In particular, Idaho, New Mexico, and Washington state constitutions added provisions that denied voting rights to untaxed Indians regardless of citizenship status (Schroedel & Hart 2015). Arizona applied the guardianship clause of its constitution—a provision that prevented the "mentally incompetent" from casting ballots— to Native American citizens based on explicitly anti-native sentiments. In addition to these more extreme examples, states across the nation claimed that Native Americans living on reservations were not *actually* residents of the state and thus barred them from participating in state and local elections.

Today, citizens and scholars have a common conception that the explicit state-sanctioned legislation that prevented minority groups' access to the ballot box had been done away with in the fallout of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Currently, scholars have come to a general agreement that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was successful in its efforts to mediate "first-generation" voting rights issues—instances in which written policy and government action explicitly prevent minority groups from voting (Davidson & Grofman 1994). However, most of the scholarship on the effects of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 focuses on either African American or Latinx groups' voting ability. As a result, scholars often ignore the Act's impact on Native population's "first-generation" issues (Schroedel & Hart 2015). In fact, in many states across the country, outdated policies that restrict Native Americans' access to voting still stand. Further, there are many policies in the states that do not explicitly claim to disenfranchise Native voters. However, in practice, they often place barriers in the way of Native ballots being cast (Ferguson-Bohnee 2020).

Despite these obstacles, the Native American vote first garnered national attention in the 2000 elections. Notably, presidential candidate Al Gore attributed his victory in New Mexico to Native American voters (McCool, Olson & Robinson 2007). Native groups in Washington state also mobilized in 2000 to ensure the labeled

"anti-Indian" Senator Slade lost his reelection campaign. Generally, when Native American voters play pivotal roles in elections, they favor Democratic candidates and generally follow cues from tribal leaders in making their vote choice.

In general, political scientists have understudied the voting patterns and political behavior of Native Americans. The little available research reveals that when Natives express interest in participating in politics, they are much more interested in local politics (Huyser, Sanchez & Vargas 2017). Native advocacy groups realize that, for the most part, tribal nations interact more with the state governments than the federal government. When they participate in national politics, their focus is on electing officials that will reflect their tribal interests (Huyser, Sanchez & Vargas 2017). American Indian scholar Eileen Luna (2000) postulates that American Indians may not be as motivated to mobilize politically as other minority groups because of their diversity of tribal identities and geographic dispersion across the American West. A single politically mobilized tribe would not have enough sway to usher in any sweeping change, and the differences between tribes often prevent political unification toward a common good.

The low trends in voter turnout and political participation among Native Americans compared to other groups might have less to do with Native American attitudes and instead could be attributed to difficulties in registering and casting their votes. As of 2012, 34% of American Indians and Alaska Natives (about 1.2 million people) reported they were not registered to vote—compared to the 26.5% of non-Hispanic Whites that are not registered (Wang 2012). Survey data suggests that the most significant barriers to Native Americans registering to vote are the difficulty of traveling to registration locations and not knowing where or how to register (NAVRC 2018). Further, the most common reason that Native American survey respondents gave for not voting in 2012 was that barriers prevented them from registering in the first place (NAVRC 2018). Depending on the state, the turnout rate among Native Americans is one to ten percentage points lower than that of Black or Hispanic minority groups (Wang 2012). These data suggest an observable connection between the inability to register to vote and the lack of turnout on election day.

Policy Logic

To what extent will the proposed legislation in question work toward solving the problem of low Native turnout? The Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 aims to simplify each step of the voting process for Native Americans, from initial registration to the casting of ballots on election day. The Act would require the federal government (Department of Justice) to ensure that the states (1) bring polling sites closer to rural Native voters, (2) accept tribal identification as valid under their voter ID laws, and (3) expand access to bilingual and language minority Native voters.

Polling Booth Proximity

First, the Act proposes that the Department of Justice ensure that states place polling booths in locations convenient for their rural Native populations to cast their ballots. Most academic research has reached a consensus that increased travel requirements to polling locations result in lower turnout levels (Cantoni 2020). The problem of precinct geography is much more prevalent for Natives in rural communities or living on reservations than those living in metropolitan areas (NAVRC 2018). Native communities are often dispersed across vast areas with low population densities, especially in Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada. In these sparsely populated areas, states may often require voters to make journeys up to or longer than an hour by car to cast their vote at their designated polling place. In Nevada, 30% of Native American survey respondents indicated that they were not aware of the location where they could register and vote. And, nearly one-quarter of respondents recorded their need to travel more than twenty miles round trip to vote (NAVRC 2018). Along those lines, voting-by-mail is not a reliable alternative for Native Americans, as residencies on reservations often are not labeled by traditional addresses and do not receive deliveries from the postal service (NARF n.d.). On the Navajo Nation, residents must travel 140 miles round trip to obtain postal services. Unfortunately, traveling many miles only to vote can be burdensome on Native Americans who are typically of a lower socioeconomic status.

The issue is further complicated once the politics involved in deciding where polling booths will be located is considered. In most states, determining the number of precincts within a county and their locations is delegated to each county clerk. And, because the county clerk is often a partisan elected official, electoral incentives can motivate their decisions concerning polling place locations. In fact, for most precincts and voters in the United States, voters belonging to the county's dominant political party (typically also the county clerk's party) travel significantly shorter distances to cast their votes than voters of the minority parties (Joslyn et al. 2020). The politics of polling location placement works against rural Native American voters due to their general association with the Democratic party—the typical minority party in rural areas. Thus, elected county clerks may find placing polling locations far from Native populations electorally advantageous.

Federal oversight in the placement of polling locations relative to rural Native American populations would indeed boost Natives' access to the voting process. Under the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019, the Department of Justice would require states and counties that wish to move their polling places in areas with higher Native American populations to seek approval prior to doing so (S. 739; HR 1694). This requirement removes the responsibility of relocating precincts from organizations that may be politically motivated to discourage Native turnout. The Department of Justice can thus act as an impartial actor in ensuring the relocation of precincts would not harm Native American voters or benefit any one political party. Further, the Act would expand what facilities qualify as voter registration agencies— which facilities are currently limited to those determined by the states and often

inconveniently distant from Native populations. In practice, this would allow Native tribes to request that voter registration materials be available at federal offices already located on reservations (S. 739; HR 1694). If voter registration were available within the reservations themselves, this would work to remove both the knowledge and distance barriers that prevent Natives from currently registering.

Tribal ID as Voter ID

Scholars and political leaders alike have long argued over the merits of requiring identification from voters during registration and polling. While proponents of such policies argue that voter ID laws protect elections from fraud, opponents contend that voter ID laws ultimately result in the disenfranchisement of poor and minority voters. Native Americans, in particular, are discouraged by voter ID laws due to their on-average lower socioeconomic status. Poorer individuals are prevented from voting in constituencies with voter ID laws because they often do not have a car or never travel by plane and thus do not need a government-issued ID for their day-to-day transportation (Sobel & Smith 2009). Along the same lines, poorer individuals without permanent residences or official addresses are ineligible for government-issued identification (Sobel & Smith 2009). Natives face several unique obstacles in the path to obtaining a government-issued ID for voting. For one, Natives often live far from state government identification issuing offices. Further, those living on reservations do not have specific addresses, and their identity documents may not be in English, both standard requirements to receive government-issued ID across the states (Ferguson-Bohnee 2020). Because numerous obstacles already prevent Natives from obtaining the proper identification to register to vote, it is no surprise that the lack of voter registration translates into a lack of votes cast.

The Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 intends to mitigate some of the harm done by voter ID laws on Native American voters by requiring states to accept tribal identification as a valid form of identification under their voter ID laws. Despite the obstacles Native Americans must undergo to obtain official government identification, individual tribes provide tribal ID cards for their members. Extending the definition of valid identification to tribal IDs for voter registration would naturally remove a significant barrier that currently inhibits Native Americans from political participation. The hindrances that prevent Natives from obtaining a government-issued ID would no longer demotivate political behavior. While critics of voter ID laws may prefer voter ID requirements disappear entirely, the Act's provision to extend valid ID to tribal identification would be a step in the right direction to provide increased access to the political process.

Bilanguage Voter Accessibility

Lastly, the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 hopes to overcome the language barriers placed in the way of potential Native minority language voters. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 includes provisions that ensure states provide adequate materials to voters that do not speak English or have limited English

proficiency. However, in practice, the quality and availability of translated materials are not consistent across the United States' various jurisdictions (Reilly 2015). States face unique challenges in providing election resources in native languages because these languages are not as widely spoken as other minority languages. For instance, Spanish and Chinese speakers commonly receive adequate election materials within states where a significant proportion of the population speaks those languages. Some Native languages are not written languages which further complicates this issue. Additionally, the resources available to election agencies for translation are limited, so bureaucrats will choose to focus on benefiting the most significant number of people, often leaving smaller language minorities such as the Native Americans out of the picture (Reilly 2015).

Minority language Native voters have received moderate success from the courts in ensuring their access to election materials. In 2014's *Toyukak v. Treadwell*, the Alaska Native petitioners argued that the state failed to provide adequate election materials to Yup'ik and Gwich'in speaking voters. The state's defense claimed that translated materials were unnecessary because the state provided programs that taught Yup'ik and Gwich'in speakers English skills instead (Reilly 2015). The Court ruled in favor of the Alaska Native petitioners and ordered that the state provide written, pre-election materials to the Yup'ik and Gwich'in populations. This case offers key precedent moving forward concerning what bilingual voter materials need to be provided, who needs to provide them, and who they need to be provided to.

If enacted, the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 would follow after the Court's decision in *Toyukak*. Specifically, the Act proposes to amend the bilingual election requirements under the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The amendment would ensure that all voting materials, from registration to ballot provisions, would be provided to American Indians and Alaska Natives of minority languages and limited English proficiency (S. 739; HR 1694). Access to election materials in these minority languages will encourage the Native vote and allow Natives with limited skills in English to make informed decisions while participating in the political process. Additionally, unless a tribe specifies that it needs orally provided language materials, the states must provide written materials both before and during the process of casting a ballot. If necessary, the state may rely on local volunteers to provide oral translations of the election materials.

Opposition and Limitations

Opposition to the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 in Congress is part of a broader Republican political strategy to restrict voting nationwide (Wines 2021). Republican elites have been hesitant to enact policy that would simplify the voting process or remove barriers to specific groups' participation out of fear of compromising the sanctity and security of elections. Nationwide, more than half of Republican-leaning independents (51%) and conservative Republicans (61%) believe that citizens should prove their desire to vote by registering beforehand and paying any of the associated costs involved with registration—traveling the required distance, obtaining

government-issued ID (Laloggia 2018). Bearing in mind the attitudes of core Republican voters, the Republican delegation in Congress—especially the Republican majority in the Senate at the time of this bill's introduction—has been hesitant to move forward on voting legislation that removes barriers or simplifies access to the political process.

At the same time, however, Republicans may also be inclined to push back against this legislation not because they wish to protect the security of election administration but because they fear the potential electoral consequences. Social science research suggests that, especially in sparsely populated states such as Montana and North Dakota, increasing Native American voter turnout could substantially affect the party preferences of the states' electorate (Peterson 1997). Typically, Native American voters favor Democratic candidates and liberal policies (Schroedel & Hart 2015). Indeed, in North Dakota's 2012 Senate race, Democratic candidate Heidi Heitkamp won her election by a 1% margin and claimed that "her only road to Washington, DC was through Indian Country" (NCAI n.d.). Democrats also saw a victory in Montana's 2018 Senate race. Increased turnout among the state's Native women population allowed Democratic candidate John Tester to secure his Senate seat by less than 20,000 votes (NCAI n.d.). (It is also important to consider that Native Americans do not exclusively support Democratic candidates. For example, Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski from Alaska successfully won her Senate write-in campaign due to the significant power of votes from Alaska Natives (NCAI n.d.).) Considering these narrow Democratic victories in states that may otherwise be safe seats for Republicans in Congress, the Republican delegation in Congress has strong electoral incentives to limit the turnout of Native American voters to secure legislative majorities moving forward.

Beyond political opposition, the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 fails to provide adequate aid and support to Native American voters in one key area. While the Act moves in the right direction by ensuring language access to registration and pre-election materials, it does not explicitly address the variance in consistency and quality of translations across jurisdictions. Under the Act, tribes that feel the provided translated materials are inadequate may challenge their state's election administrators using the courts. However, relying on the courts to redress these inadequacies takes a significant amount of time. Often, as was the case with *Toyukak v. Treadwell*, the courts' decisions—even if they favor Native petitioners—do not come until months or years after the administration of an election (Reilly 2015; Schroedel & Hart 2015). I fear that due to the Act's lack of specificity on any standard of quality for the provided translated materials, it may take years for tribes to use the courts to ensure each minority language has equal access to voting material.

Additionally, the Act's intended effects on increased access to the political process for Native Americans will only occur if the delegated arms of the federal government properly enforce the Act's provisions. No matter how well-intended Congress may be in passing this legislation, they are reliant on executive bureaucracies to carry out these changes—and on the states to be compliant in following the orders of

these agencies. Federal enforcement of voting rights legislation has been somewhat unequal in the past. Certain jurisdictions and minority groups have benefited from federal intervention in election processes. Still, scholarship on the subject suggests that some groups and jurisdictions lack proper attention from federal voting rights enforcement (Montjoy 2008). This policy's success, in particular, will depend on the extent to which the Department of Justice appropriately enforces it.

Findings and Conclusion

For the political process to be genuinely democratic, every individual that wishes to voice their opinion should have that ability. Unsuitably, descendants of this continent's ancient inhabitants, and a sizable proportion of the voting-eligible population, continue to be discouraged from participating in the political process even after the gains made by the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Compared to other racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States, Native American and Alaska Native voter registration and voter turnout levels are significantly lower (Wang 2012). The examined evidence suggests that Native Americans' political participation is inhibited by a lack of trust in government and a lack of required resources and knowledge in the political process (NAVRC 2018). The proposed Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 aims to use the federal government's power to break down the hefty resource and knowledge stumbling blocks that currently repress Native American's ability to participate in the political process.

Despite its inability to escape its assigned congressional committees, the Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019 has received high praise. Civil and voting rights organizations such as the National Council of American Indians, American Civil Liberties Union, American Bar Association, and Brennan Center of Justice all endorse the legislation as the proper route of action to tackle the issue of low Native turnout. Likewise, the proposed legislation aligns with a substantial majority (67%) of Americans that believe the government should do everything possible to make it easy for every citizen to vote (Laloggia 2018).

The Native American Voting Rights Act of 2019, although not perfect, is a significant step in the right direction toward expanding and simplifying Native American access to political participation. The current bill's three most prominent provisions—bringing voter registration and polling places closer to Native populations, validating tribal identification under voter ID requirements, and ensuring election material accessibility to minority language voters—each work toward removing legitimate hindrances that currently stand in the way of Native American political participation. The Act may not completely solve problems of low Native turnout across the United States, but it would at least begin to break down these barriers.

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