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A New Perspective on the Foreign Policy Views of American Opinion Leaders in the Cold War and Post-Cold War Eras

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This article breaks new ground in the study of the foreign policy views of American opinion leaders by using a systematic content analysis of writings published in leading foreign policy journals. It is in such journals that the debate on the nature and direction of American foreign policy is often played out. Such an approach allows us to examine the level of diversity in the foreign policy thought of opinion leaders and to provide an initial assessment of the level of continuity and change in this thought since the end of the Cold War. The findings do not suggest the formation of a new consensus over the direction of American foreign policy anytime soon. Rather, between the Cold War eighties and the post-Cold War nineties foreign policy attitudes have been marked by both persistence and change, resulting in a greater diversity and complexity of thought, as well as greater optimism for the future of U.S. foreign policy. The study highlights the importance of developing alternative research strategies and data sources which both supplement and complement more traditional survey research approaches in order to more fully capture and understand the foreign policy thought of American opinion leaders.

In the wake of the Cold War there has been a renewed interest among scholars and analysts in examining the foreign policy beliefs of Americans. Just as the Vietnam War led to a splintering of a foreign policy consensus

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among the public in the seventies (see Destler, Gelb, and Lake 1984; Mann 1990; Rosati 1993), the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War are expected to have dramatic effects on the foreign policy debate in the United States for the foreseeable future. One key to understanding this debate lies in the writings and viewpoints of American opinion leaders. It was the split in beliefs among opinion leaders over the Vietnam War that was ultimately critical in generating the collapse of the Cold War consensus throughout American society (Mann 1990; Hallin 1986; Schneider 1984; Mueller 1973). Likewise, the viewpoints of such opinion leaders will probably serve as a guiding force in the search for a new foreign policy consensus as the United States enters the 21st century.

To date, however, studies of the foreign policy beliefs of Americans, including the elite public and opinion leaders, have been driven almost exclusively by survey research approaches. Kegley (1986: 467) recommends that "future research might consider severing its almost exclusive reliance on survey research methodologies and instead estimate the distribution of opinion by tapping other indicators." One alternative source for gauging the foreign policy debate is the writings regularly published in major foreign policy journals. It is in foreign policy journals, such as *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, and *The National Interest* where the debate on the nature and direction of American foreign policy by opinion leaders is often played out (see Kegley 1986).

Articles in such journals are excellent sources for tapping into the foreign policy views of American opinion leaders. First, foreign policy journals are major outlets that American opinion leaders—practitioners, policy analysts, journalists, scholars, intellectuals, and the like—rely on to communicate their point of view (see Rosenau 1961). Second, foreign policy journals span the political spectrum to reflect much of the foreign policy discourse that exists throughout the country (see Rosati 1993: 536). Third, foreign policy journals are common sources of foreign policy information and views beyond the popular media to which many politically attentive and active members of the elite public interested in foreign policy are likely to turn (see Weiss 1974; Zaller 1992). In sum, analyzing the content of foreign policy journals should prove a valuable complement to survey research, allowing us to build on previous works on foreign policy beliefs.

Presented here, therefore, is a somewhat different perspective on the foreign policy beliefs and attitudes of American elites. By using published writings as our basis for determining perceptions and attitudes, we are clearly tapping into a different strata of the elite public—that is, the small percentage of Americans who act as opinion leaders and the attentive public—than is usually the case with survey studies such as those based on data collected by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. The opinion leaders examined here

are vitally important, however, to understanding the foreign policy debate in the United States as well as the formation of new foreign policy attitudes. As Rosenau (1961) makes clear in his classic *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, these are the opinion-makers who put their thoughts to paper for the purpose of stimulating debate and moving foreign policy in a particular direction. Therefore, our focus is not on the elite public as a whole, but on this important substrata of American opinion leaders in the area of foreign policy (see also Almond 1960; Galtung 1965; Neuman 1986).

By systematically examining the writings of American opinion leaders, we meet three important ends. First, we examine the level of diversity of foreign policy thinking among American opinion leaders as expressed in the top policy-oriented journals in the field. Second, we provide an initial assessment of the level of continuity and change in this thought since the end of the Cold War. Finally, we discuss the implications of this study in light of previous opinion research, highlighting the importance of supplementing the traditional reliance on survey research with the analysis of different data as a means of better understanding elite foreign policy beliefs.

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

In conducting the content analysis presented below, five of the most prominent foreign policy (quarterly) journals were selected that spanned the political spectrum from the right to the left: *Global Affairs*, *The National Interest*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, and *World Policy Journal*. The articles selected from these journals included all "America and the world"-type pieces by American authors, which dealt with general assessments of U.S. foreign policy. By using such articles as the basis of our data, we are able to analyze the foreign policy beliefs of American opinion leaders based on the subjects' own thoughts and themes as they tried to make sense of the world around them. This was accomplished by examining the range and nature of the views as they were expressed in the articles by individuals and identifying observable patterns in the beliefs expressed.

The vast literature on social cognition and schema theory indicates that the belief systems of individuals and publics, especially those most attentive and informed (in other words, those most "expert"), tend to be quite fragmented and complex (see Fiske and Taylor 1991; Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Kinder and Sears 1985; Milburn 1991; Rosati 1995).¹ And as Bardes and

¹ See Key (1961) for an overview of the early research on American public opinion before the profound impact of the work of Philip Converse (1964, 1970) and *The American Voter* (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960) on the study of political behavior

Oldendick (1990: 229) point out in their review of the literature on public opinion and foreign policy, "with no agreed-upon structure for foreign policy issues, researchers must decide what assumptions will guide their investigation of attitudes." In this respect, in order to determine the foreign policy views of American opinion leaders, it is necessary to know more about how they perceive the nature of the world in order to understand their prescriptions for how the United States should operate within the international system (see Conover and Feldman 1984; Holsti 1992; Jarvis 1976; Steinbruner 1974; Tetlock 1983).

The questions guiding the content analysis presented here are grounded in the theoretical and empirical literature, especially in the study of U.S. foreign policy and the beliefs of political leaders. For example, we included items on the significance of images of the structure of the international system, the position of the United States, and the relative importance of various foreign policy issues, all of which have been highlighted within the Brecher decision-making framework (Brecher, Steinberg, and Stein 1969), Keohane and Nye's (1977) and Mansbach and Vasquez's (1981) international systems approach, Rosati's (1987) political psychological study of the Carter Administration's worldview, and Yergin's (1978) historical analysis of the origins of the Cold War. Images of international threat perceptions and opportunities also have received prominent attention in such works as Holsti's (1967) study of John Foster Dulles's "inherent bad faith" image of the Soviet Union and Jarvis's (1976) study of perceptions and misperceptions. Finally, we include a focus on the strategy and goals of policy, which has received considerable attention in the vast literature on American diplomatic history (see, e.g., Combs 1983; Yergin 1978) as well as more systematic foreign policy studies (see, e.g., Herrmann 1985; Rosati 1987).

It is with this background in mind that we constructed six key questions about U.S. foreign policy to serve as the basis of the journal content analysis. Each represents a substantive aspect of foreign policy thought. The six questions include:

1. What is the author's depiction of the structure of the international system; that is, how does the author see the distribution of power in the international system assessed on a unipolar, bipolar, multipolar, complex-interdependence, and anarchic continuum?
2. What are the author's threat perceptions of the international environment; that is, in general, does the author tend to characterize the world as a caldron of threats or an arena of opportunities?

(see Pomper 1978-79). Kinder (1983), Kinder and Sears (1985), and particularly, Oskamp (1977: chapter 5) provide helpful background with respect to the debate about the structure of public opinion.

3. What is the author's depiction of the relative position of the United States; that is, in general, how does the author perceive the U.S. vis-à-vis the international system assessed in terms of ascendant, stable, or in decline?
4. What is the major foreign policy issue-area of concern for the author; that is, is the author most concerned about security issues, economic issues, human rights/democracy issues, or other types of issues?
5. What foreign policy strategy should the United States pursue; that is, in general, what is the author's basic strategic orientation assessed in terms of proaction, reaction, or disengagement? And, finally,
6. What goals should the United States pursue in the world; that is, in general, what is the author's goal in terms of the level of change posited for the world assessed in terms of transformation [extreme change], reform [moderate change], or status quo [little or no change]?

These are among the most significant core questions that the foreign policy debate actually revolves around. The first four questions form the basis for discerning a person's "worldview"; the last two capture the individual's "policy orientation." In fact, to think of worldview and policy orientations in this way is quite consistent with the literature on operational code which treats foreign policy beliefs as a composite of "philosophical" and "instrumental" beliefs (see George 1969; Walker 1977).²

The coding and analysis of these data was accomplished in three steps. First, each of the journals was searched to identify relevant "America and the world"-type articles. We wanted to maintain a broad orientation and therefore did not include articles which focused on policies toward individual countries or particular regions of the world. Additionally, since we were trying to discern the views of individual authors we did not include articles with multiple authors in our analysis. In all, 205 articles were identified for analysis, representing the views of 87 authors during the 1980-1989 Cold War era and 79 authors from the 1990-1996 Post-Cold War era.³ There were 21 authors who were common to both the Cold War and Post-Cold War eras. Second,

² Most of the studies of public opinion in U.S. foreign policy have tended to revolve around the fifth and sixth questions concerning policy orientation. However, this is inconsistent with a growing public opinion literature that indicates that the structure of foreign policy beliefs, among the mass public no less, tends to be more complex as discussed above and based on multiple dimensions (see Bardes and Oldendick 1978; Chittick and Billingsley 1989; Hurwitz and Peffley 1987).

³ The distribution of the 205 articles is as follows: 74 *Foreign Affairs*, 56 *Foreign Policy*, 34 *World Policy Journal*, 27 *Global Affairs*, and 14 *National Interest*. It should be noted that *Global Affairs* ceased publication in 1994.

each of the relevant articles was read and coded in terms of the six questions discussed above. The focus was on the major themes communicated in each article by the author relative to the questions. Naturally, some of the articles were more comprehensive and explicit than others in providing answers to the six questions. In order to ensure the reliability of the content analysis, two coders initially coded 20 randomly selected articles from the foreign policy journals. Inter-coder agreement was 93.3 percent, indicating a high degree of reliability in the data collection process.⁴ In cases where a single author had published two or more articles within one of the time frames, we built a composite picture of the author's views based on the modal or most frequently expressed viewpoint in the articles. Finally, the data were analyzed to examine the patterns of foreign policy thought that prevailed in the minds of these opinion leaders during the eighties and after the collapse of the Cold War in the nineties.

FOREIGN POLICY THOUGHT IN THE COLD WAR EIGHTIES

Let's begin with how American opinion leaders who published their thoughts in the top foreign policy journals viewed the world throughout the eighties (1980-1989). First, most American opinion leaders shared a common perception about the structure of the international system (see Table 1). Over three-quarters (77 percent) of the articles characterized the structure as bipolar, with the United States and the Soviet Union considered the predominant powers. An additional 19.5 percent perceived the world as being complex and more interdependent. Only a handful of articles described the system as unipolar or multipolar, and none characterized the distribution of power as anarchic. Next, there was a significant level of disagreement as to the nature of the international system, that is, whether the world should be perceived as a caldron of threats or an arena of opportunities. A sizable majority (62.8 percent) were pessimistic in their outlook, viewing the world as a threatening place, while 37.2 percent were more optimistic, seeing opportunities arising.

⁴ In terms of the data collection process, the coders attended a training session with the authors to clarify terms and make sure coding took place in a consistent manner. A "pretest" was conducted to make sure that the coders were acting in tandem. The level of inter-coder reliability was calculated as the percentage agreement on 120 coded items (that is, six questions times twenty articles coded). The 93.3 percent agreement figure indicates that the coders were in agreement on 112 of 120 coded answers. The 8 responses on which the coders disagreed were spread across a number of items and were not the product of problems with any particular question. Coders were also debriefed after data collection to make sure that no irregularities occurred during data collection. Given this process, we have a high level of confidence in the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Finally, authors were also divided in terms of how they saw the United States vis-à-vis the international system. Over half (55.3 percent) of the authors perceived the United States to be in a position of relative stability, while 41.2 percent saw the United States as a nation in decline. Less than 4 percent felt that the United States was an ascendant power in the eighties.

In other words, most opinion leaders saw the world during the eighties along traditional, realist Cold War lines, where bipolarity and threat defined the global system and stability or decline marked the position of the United States within that system. The major issues of concern to these authors were consistent with this. A large majority of opinion leaders (74.7 percent) perceived security issues to

≡ TABLE 1

WORLDVIEWS AND POLICY ORIENTATIONS OF AMERICAN OPINION LEADERS DURING THE
COLD WAR AND POST-COLD WAR ERAS

	% Cold War Era (1980-1989)	% Post-Cold War Era (1990-1996)	% Change
Structure of International System			
Unipolar	1.1	25.6	+24.5
Bipolar	77.0	10.3	-66.7
Multipolar	2.3	21.8	+19.5
Complex-Interdependent	19.5	37.2	+17.7
Anarchic	0.0	5.1	+5.1
(N)	(87)	(78)	
Perception of Threat			
Caldron of Threats	62.8	43.4	-19.4
Arena of Opportunities	37.2	56.6	+19.4
(N)	(86)	(76)	
Position of the United States in Global System			
Ascendant	3.5	2.6	-0.9
Stable	55.3	76.9	+21.6
Declining	41.2	20.5	-20.7
(N)	(85)	(78)	
Major Issues of Concern			
Security Issues	74.7	61.0	-13.7
Economic Issues	12.6	10.4	-2.2
Democracy/Human Rights	0.0	16.4	+16.4
Other Types of Issues	5.7	6.4	+0.7
Multiple Issues	6.9	5.2	-1.7
(N)	(87)	(79)	
Preferred Policy Orientation			
Proaction	57.6	72.7	+15.1
Reaction	38.8	22.1	-16.7
Disengagement	3.5	5.2	+1.7
(N)	(85)	(77)	
Orientation Toward Global Change			
Transformation (Radical Change)	2.3	2.6	+0.3
Reformation (Moderate Change)	50.6	75.3	+24.7
Status Quo (Little/No Change)	47.1	22.1	-25.0
(N)	(87)	(77)	

be of primary importance in world politics. A much smaller percentage (12.6 percent) saw economic issues as the most important, while just under 7 percent saw security and economics as equally compelling concerns. Interestingly, in keeping with the realist emphasis in the eighties, neither democracy nor human rights was considered a major focus for U.S. foreign policy.

Divisions among American opinion leaders were evident as well over the preferred foreign policy strategies and goals of the United States. Regarding foreign policy strategy, nearly 58 percent supported a proactive approach toward global problems, while just under 39 percent preferred having a more reactive foreign policy. Only 3 of the 87 authors presented arguments in favor of the United States strategically disengaging in some way from the international system. Similarly, roughly half preferred that the United States promote global reform (that is, moderate change), while the other half were more comfortable with maintaining the status quo. Just over 2 percent favored more radical change, involving transformation of the international system.

CONTINUITY OR CHANGE IN THE POST-COLD WAR NINETIES?

What impact has the collapse of Soviet communism had on the foreign policy thought of American opinion leaders in the 1990s? One of the valuable aspects of using data derived from foreign policy journals during this time period is the opportunity to begin watching those who write on this topic struggle to analyze and comprehend the whirlwind changes taking place in Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Third World. The momentous events surrounding the end of the Cold War, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union have raised expectations of the possibility of profound change in the beliefs of American opinion leaders and the future of U.S. foreign policy. As Norman Ornstein and Mark Schmitt (1990: 169) ask: "How will the U.S. political system operate without anti-communism as its central organizing principle?" Indeed, a "great debate" over the proper role of the United States in the world has been generated over the past several years in leading foreign policy journals.

The political psychological literature on cognition suggests two implications (see Herrmann 1985; Jervis 1976; Larson 1986; Oskamp 1977; Rosati 1987, 1995). First and foremost, individuals tend to avoid uncertainty and display continuity in their beliefs over time, thus resisting change. The stability of beliefs may especially be the case for opinion leaders, as opposed to the mass public, because they tend to have formed more expert and cognitively complex belief systems (see also Almond 1960; Fiske and Taylor 1991; Galtung 1965; Milburn 1991; Neuman 1986; Rosenau 1961). In fact, individual commitment to their political beliefs tends to be greatest among those who are among the most active in American politics (see also Conway 1991; Sears and Whitney 1973).

While individual belief systems tend to be resistant, new belief patterns can and do emerge, especially as a result of profound changes in the environment accompanied by spectacular events (see also Deutsch and Merritt 1965; Lebow 1981; Page and Shapiro 1992). As Robert Jervis (1976: 262) has pointed out: "since events with major consequences for a nation absorb so much of the citizen's time and attention, they both socialize the previously unconcerned and change the perceptual predispositions of many people with established views." Clearly, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has the potential to act as a catalyst for changes in the foreign policy beliefs of Americans. In sum, the political psychological literature indicates the likelihood of both continuity and change in the foreign policy beliefs of American opinion leaders.⁵

In this particular study, "change" can result not only from shifts in the content of foreign policy beliefs across the two time periods, but also from changes in the types of authors who were published in the foreign policy journals in both time periods. This could have an impact on our study as 73.4 percent (or 3 of 4) of the opinion leaders who were included in the Post-Cold War subset were not in the initial Cold War set of opinion leaders. As a means of testing whether individual attitudes actually did change, we replicated our analysis using only the 21 authors who published articles in both time periods. The types of changes seen in this subset mirrors those reported below for the full set of authors. The changes in attitudes noted below, therefore, do appear to reflect accurately changes in the views of American opinion leaders and not simply changes in publishing or editorial decisions. (Results of this analysis are available from the authors upon request.)

Examining attitudinal changes in the nineties, we analyzed "America and the world"-type articles for the same foreign policy journals from 1990 through 1996. We found evidence of considerable change in both world views and recommended strategies for foreign policy. Looking at Table 1 once again, we find that the largest change occurred in perceptions of the structure of the international system. While over three-quarters of the authors saw the world as bipolar in the eighties, only 10.3 percent continued to perceive such a world during the nineties after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Authors were

⁵ To provide some conceptual background, "where the theory of cognitive consistency assumes the existence of a belief system with a high degree of coherence and interdependence between beliefs that are extremely resistant to change [therefore, if change occurs it comes in large blocks], a social cognition perspective depicts individual belief systems as much more fragmented internally, with different beliefs or schema being invoked under different situations for making sense of the environment. This suggests a greater likelihood that some beliefs may change over time" (Rosati 1995: 54).

much more likely in the nineties to see the world as complex-interdependent (37.2 percent), unipolar (25.6 percent), or multipolar (21.8 percent), while 5 percent even viewed the world as anarchic. In other words, there was a substantial increase in the diversity of images concerning the structure of the international system in the Post-Cold War era, with no clear consensus emerging.

Notable shifts also took place in terms of the perceived nature of the international system. A majority (56.6 percent) saw the world as an arena of opportunity (up from 37.2 percent in the eighties), while 43.4 percent of the authors continued to characterize the world as a caldron of threats. Similarly, most (76.9 percent) of the authors saw the United States in a more favorable global position of relative stability (up from 55.3 percent), which was matched by a corresponding drop in the percentage of authors who viewed the United States as a nation in decline. Virtually nobody saw the United States as an ascendant power, however, reflecting no change in this particular orientation over time.

Taking a closer look at how worldviews changed between the Cold War and Post-Cold War eras, we turn to Table 2. If we consider "worldview" here to be the juxtaposition of perceptions of the structure and character of the international system along with the position of the United States in the global system, we find that a considerable shift in viewpoints took place in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Most notable is the sharp increase (from 3.4 percent to 25.7 percent) in those who see the United States as maintaining a stable position in a world characterized by a complex-interdependent structure and global opportunities. Similarly, the nineties saw the emergence of those who saw the U.S. as the sole, stable super-power in a world of opportunities. The rise of these world views was matched by the precipitous decline in those who saw the world as threatening in character and bipolar in structure and who perceived the United States as being either stable or in decline in this system. This general pattern is repeated for other "world views" as well with a general shift away from the traditional bipolar, realist perspective of the eighties toward more diverse perspectives in the nineties—perspectives that tend to depict a more complex structure for the international system, yet more stability and often greater opportunities for the U.S. in this system.

Interestingly (returning to Table 1), while we see greater diversification of world views in the nineties, in terms of major issues a majority (61 percent) of foreign policy writers continued to see security issues as the dominant global concern (reflecting a 10 percent decline from the eighties). Economic issues, surprisingly, did not dramatically increase in importance (such issues actually decreased in mention somewhat, but remained important for those who emphasized multiple issues). Yet, human rights and democracy emerged as im-

TABLE 2

CHANGES IN WORLDVIEWS FROM THE COLD WAR TO POST-COLD WAR ERAS

Worldviews	% Cold War Era	% Post-Cold War Era	% Change
CI*/Opportunity/Stable	3.4	25.7	+22.3
Unipolar/Opportunity/Stable	0.0	10.8	+10.8
Unipolar/Threat/Stable	1.1	9.5	+8.4
Multipolar/Threat/Stable	0.0	8.1	+8.1
Multipolar/Opportunity/Stable	1.1	6.8	+5.7
CI*/Threat/Stable	1.1	6.8	+5.7
Unipolar/Threat/Declining	0.0	4.1	+4.1
Multipolar/Threat/Declining	0.0	4.1	+4.1
Multipolar/Opportunity/Declining	1.1	4.1	+3.0
Unipolar/Opportunity/Ascending	0.0	1.3	+1.3
Anarchic/Threat/Declining	0.0	1.3	+1.3
Anarchic/Threat/Ascending	0.0	1.3	+1.3
Anarchic/Threat/Stable	0.0	1.3	+1.3
CI*/Threat/Declining	4.6	1.3	-3.3
Bipolar/Threat/Ascending	3.4	0.0	-3.4
Bipolar/Opportunity/Declining	8.0	1.3	-6.7
Bipolar/Opportunity/Stable	12.6	5.4	-7.2
CI*/Opportunity Declining	10.3	2.7	-7.6
Bipolar/Threat/Declining	14.9	0.0	-14.9
Bipolar/Threat/Stable	37.9	4.1	-33.8
(N)	(85)	(74)	

*CI = Complex-Interdependent

portant issues (from 0 to 16.4 percent) as did the importance of “other” issues, such as the global environment. This seems to suggest that while the worldviews of the authors have become more diverse and more optimistic about the United States and the future of the international system, traditional foreign policy concerns continue to prevail—although not as powerfully as during the Cold War eighties.

Modest changes in the preferred foreign policy goals and strategy of the United States are in keeping with this (see Table 1). A larger majority (72.7 percent) of authors were interested in promoting a generally proactive U.S. foreign policy (up from 57.6 percent), while 22.1 percent continued to prefer a broadly reactive policy. Interestingly, despite the academic and media attention focused on rising sentiment in favor of a disengagement approach to U.S. foreign policy, we find very little evidence of growth for this perspective among opinion leaders in the Post-Cold War era (rising less than 2 percent)—which seems to indicate that concerns over the popularity of “American isolationism”

among opinion leaders may be overstated. Finally, there was an increase among those supporting global reform (up from 50.6 percent to 75.3 percent), although 22.1 percent continued to prefer maintenance of the status quo. Once again, support for radical transformation of the international system remained negligible, reflecting the avocation of modest and more incremental goals for changing the global system.

THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORLDVIEW AND POLICY ORIENTATIONS

It is generally accepted that policy recommendations flow from, and are usually consistent with, how the world is viewed (especially in terms of structure, threats or opportunities, and the position of the United States in the world). As stated by Alexander George and Robert Keohane (1980: 231-32), "beliefs about the opponent and the nature of the international setting often assume the role of axioms which guide and constrain policy-making." Our data indicate, however, that this relationship may not be so simple.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the policy orientations cited most often—proaction and reaction—by perceptions of the international system.⁶ During the Cold War era we find that those who saw the world in bipolar terms were evenly divided as to their prescriptions for foreign policy strategy: 50.8 percent advocated a proactive strategy, while 49.2 percent supported a more reactive approach to global events. There was, however, a much stronger correlation between world view and policy orientation among those who saw the world in complex-interdependent terms, with 94.1 percent advocating a proactive foreign policy. In the nineties, we find more overlap concerning foreign policy strategy despite different outlooks on global structure. Significant majorities of those with viewpoints running from unipolar to anarchic—but especially those who see a multipolar and complex-interdependent world—supported a more proactive role for the United States over strategies based on reaction.

A similar trend is found among those with different perceptions of the level of threat in the international system and those with differing views of the United States' position in the global system. In the eighties, a majority (62 percent) of those who saw the world as a caldron of threats favored a more reactive foreign policy, while a vast majority (93.5 percent) of those who saw opportunities for the U.S. voiced support for a proactive foreign policy. In the Post-Cold War era, proaction was advocated by a majority of those who saw

⁶ Given the small number of cases in the "disengagement" category, we have not included this recommendation in the analysis presented in this section. The same is true for the "global transformation" category for Table 4.

≡ TABLE 3
FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY BY WORLDVIEW

	Cold War Era			Post-Cold War Era		
	Proactive	Reactive	(N)	Proactive	Reactive	(N)
<i>Structure of International System</i>						
Unipolar	0.0	100.0	(1)	65.0	35.0	(20)
Bipolar	50.8	49.2	(63)	62.5	37.5	(8)
Multipolar	100.0	0.0	(1)	86.7	13.3	(15)
Complex-Interdependent	94.1	5.9	(17)	84.6	15.4	(26)
Anarchic	0.0	0.0	(0)	66.7	33.3	(3)
<i>Nature of International System</i>						
Caldron of Threats	38.0	62.0	(50)	56.7	43.3	(30)
Arena of Opportunities	93.5	6.5	(31)	92.9	7.1	(42)
<i>Position of United States in System</i>						
Ascendant	33.3	66.6	(3)	100.0	0.0	(2)
Stable	45.7	54.3	(46)	73.2	26.8	(56)
Declining	81.3	18.8	(32)	85.7	14.3	(14)

opportunities (92.9 percent) and, although to a much lesser extent, threats (56.7 percent). Similarly, in the Cold War era, those who viewed the U.S. as either an ascendant or a stable power tended to prescribe a reactive policy strategy, while 81.3 percent of those who felt the U.S. was a declining power advocated a proactive stance. In the nineties, proaction has become the dominant viewpoint recommended by most foreign policy authors, regardless of how they viewed the position of the U.S. vis-à-vis the international system.

A similar picture emerges in terms of the level of change the United States should seek throughout the global system (see Table 4). During the eighties, those who increasingly saw a multipolar or more complex global structure tended to advocate moderate levels of change as the goal of U.S. foreign policy, while those who saw a bipolar world were split in terms of the promotion of the status quo or pursuing reform abroad. In the nineties, most authors tend to prefer global reform over maintenance of the status quo no matter what their view of the structure of the international system, although this was less the case for those with a bipolar, multipolar, or anarchic view. The same can be said for those with varying perceptions of the position of the U.S. in the global system—large majorities in each category support moderate reformation of the global system. In fact, in the nineties, only those who still perceive the world to be a threatening place rather than an arena of opportunities were divided evenly over whether to pursue global reforms or simply maintain the status quo.

Clearly, for both the Cold War and Post-Cold War eras, the perception of threat versus opportunity has strong implications for the foreign policy

≡ TABLE 4
FOREIGN POLICY GOAL BY WORLD VIEW

	Cold War Era			Post-Cold War Era		
	Reform	Status Quo	(N)	Reform	Status Quo	(N)
<i>Structure of International System</i>						
Unipolar	0.0	100.0	(1)	83.3	16.7	(18)
Bipolar	40.0	60.0	(65)	62.5	37.5	(8)
Multipolar	100.0	0.0	(2)	58.8	41.2	(17)
Complex-Interdependent	94.1	5.9	(17)	92.6	7.4	(27)
Anarchic	0.0	0.0	(0)	50.0	50.0	(4)
<i>Nature of International System</i>						
Caldron of Threats	26.4	73.6	(53)	50.0	50.0	(32)
Arena of Opportunities	93.5	6.5	(31)	97.6	2.4	(42)
<i>Position of United States in System</i>						
Ascendant	0.0	100.0	(3)	100.0	0.0	(2)
Stable	42.6	57.4	(47)	76.8	23.2	(56)
Declining	69.7	30.3	(33)	75.0	25.0	(16)

orientation recommended. Those who saw the world more in terms of opportunity overwhelmingly were more likely to be in favor of a more proactive U.S. foreign policy and global reform in both eras. Those who saw the world more in terms of threats were more likely to favor a more reactive foreign policy in support of the status quo, although this relationship was not nearly as strong in the 1990s, probably due to the profound changes in the structure of the international system and the position of the United States with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Cold War. The net result is foreign policy views which are both more complex and contradictory.⁷

In sum, there is no simple pattern of continuity or change in the foreign policy thought of American opinion leaders as a group between the Cold War eighties and Post-Cold War nineties. At the aggregate level, beliefs do not simply remain the same or change dramatically as predicted by cognitive consistency theory. Instead, patterns of continuity and changes tend to be complex, messy, and sometimes contradictory as one would expect from the literature on social cognition and schemata. There is no doubt that with changes in certain aspects of worldview and foreign policy orientations, the overall level of diversity of foreign policy thought has increased. But while the foreign

⁷ The post-Cold War era may be analogous to the immediate post-World War II era, where American opinion leaders faced a very different environment and much uncertainty.

policy thought of American opinion leaders has become more diverse and complex following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, it is also important to recognize that other aspects—such as the continued importance of the perception of threat and the focus on security issues— have not experienced that much profound change at all.

CONCLUSION

This study provides some interesting and important insights into our understanding of the foreign policy beliefs of American opinion leaders. It confirms that the breakdown of the foreign policy consensus has resulted in greater diversity of foreign policy thought in the post-Vietnam and post-Cold war political environments (Chittick and Billingsley 1989; Chittick, Billingsley, and Travis 1995; Crabb 1976; Holsti 1992; Holsti and Rosenau 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1993; Rosenau and Holsti 1983; Wittkopf 1987, 1990). But it does so from a new perspective.

The research presented here highlights the importance of developing alternative research strategies and data sources which both supplement and complement more traditional survey research approaches in order to capture and understand the diversity and complexity of the foreign policy thought of Americans. As Kegley (1986: 467) has argued, “We need to look at opinion wherever it is exhibited.” This requires that we be open to new sources of data for political inquiry. Our content analysis of foreign policy journals represents an initial step along these lines, contributing to the understanding of the foreign policy thought of an important subgroup of American elites—those opinion leaders and opinion-makers who communicate their thoughts to a policy-oriented audience with the goal of stimulating debate and affecting the direction of U.S. foreign policy (Rosenau 1961). It did so in terms of six key questions around which the foreign policy debate tends to revolve for better understanding how the world is seen and its implications for the future orientation of U.S. foreign policy as found in the major foreign policy journals.

This study also examined the impact of the end of the Cold War on foreign policy thinking. It found that between the Cold War eighties and the Post-Cold War nineties foreign policy attitudes were marked by both change and persistence, resulting in an even greater complexity of outlook and greater optimism for the future of U.S. foreign policy (see Rosati and Creed 1997, for a more in-depth breakdown of the foreign policy orientations of American opinion leaders during the Cold War eighties and Post-Cold War nineties).

These findings do not suggest the formation of a new consensus anytime soon, for the battle among American opinion leaders over the direction of U.S. foreign policy involves foreign policy attitudes of great diversity and complexity. This is what one would expect of a society made up of over 250

million people with an increasingly pluralistic political environment that has arisen since the Vietnam War and the end of the Cold War. Our research suggests that the diversity of thought that prevails today among American opinion leaders is likely to persist and grow more complex in the future politics of U.S. foreign policy.

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