

# Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: The Stages of Presidential Decision Making

T. KNECHT

*University of Denver*

M. S. WEATHERFORD

*University of California—Santa Barbara*

Do presidents incorporate the preferences of the public into their foreign policy decisions? Previous scholarship has begun to sketch out the sources of variation in the policy–public opinion linkage, but we still lack a clear understanding of the factors that increase or decrease presidential responsiveness. To better explore the relationship, we conceptualize presidential foreign policy making as a five-stage process—problem representation, option generation, policy selection, implementation, and policy review—arguing that the degree to which presidents are responsive to public opinion varies with fluctuations in public attentiveness. At stages in which public interest is high, presidents are more likely to incorporate mass preferences into their decision making than during stages of public quiescence. The key finding in our analysis of 34 foreign policy cases is that the public’s “issue-attention cycle” varies systematically across foreign policy crises and noncrises. Examining these cycles of attention allows us to make predictions about the conditions under which public opinion is most likely to influence decision making.

---

It has been frequently noted that the American public’s attention to foreign affairs is sporadic. The foreign policy literature depicts a public highly attentive to crisis situations that involve military force, but paying little mind to noncrisis issues like foreign trade or foreign aid. Moreover, because the public is unusually dependent on elites and the mass media for the information and interpretations on which to base opinions, the influence process is often portrayed as running from the top down, from the government to the public. Presidents and their policy teams are not viewed as having *carte blanche*, but unless popular attention to an issue is high, national leaders are predicted to be only weakly constrained by public opinion in their foreign policy choices. The salience of foreign policy issues to the public is central to this picture: electorally accountable leaders will give closer consideration to the potential electoral impact of their decisions the more attentive the public is. What are the conditions under which the public is more or less attuned to foreign policy?

This research seeks to map the pattern of the American public’s attentiveness to foreign policy questions. Our approach draws on three complementary kinds of

---

*Authors’ note:* We wish to extend a special note of gratitude to Jim Carr for his invaluable technical assistance. In addition, we are extremely grateful of the assistance of Josh Bernstein, Nyssa Dickman-Frank, Jason Everitt, Kelly Lack, Tyler Shaw, Jonathan Solorzano, and three anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments and suggestions. Data for this study can be found at <http://portfolio.du.edu/tknecht2>

literature. First, from the international relations literature, we draw the distinction between crisis and noncrisis foreign policies and predict characteristic patterns of public attentiveness across each category. Second, we draw on research on public opinion and representation to clarify what information about public opinion is most useful to policy makers, distinguishing between the salience and the popularity of policy proposals. Third, from the literature on the public policy process, we adapt the notion of an “issue-attention cycle,” operationalizing this idea by way of a model of the foreign policy decision process that allows quite precise tracking of public attentiveness. Specifically, we conceptualize the presidential decision-making process as a sequence of five stages: (1) agenda setting/problem representation, (2) option generation, (3) policy selection, (4) implementation, (5) policy review. Using this framework, we trace public attentiveness over successive stages of the foreign policy decision-making process.

Examining public attention cycles has the potential to illuminate several theoretical issues in the literature on foreign policy making. First, because greater public attentiveness is likely to constrain presidential decision making relative to periods of public quiescence, variations in salience will tend to be associated with periods of more or less presidential autonomy. The research thus addresses the debate between realists and liberals, over the extent to which the state is a unitary actor. For some, this distinction has an all or nothing quality in which the state is viewed as either unitary (realists) or plural (liberals), while others have proposed a continuum with the state more unitary in “high politics” issues involving national security and less unitary in “low politics” issues involving foreign economic policy or humanitarian aid. But these arguments seldom detail the process underlying variations in the public’s impact on decisions. By focusing on the sources of public knowledge about foreign policy issues—the coverage in national news media—and by disaggregating the stages of the foreign policy decision process, our research offers an approach to specifying the conditions in which the public’s influence might be larger or smaller, not only from one case to another but also within the same policy case.

Second, this research departs from most foreign policy studies by contrasting crisis decision making with less well-studied foreign policy issues such as humanitarian food aid and international trade. While the general assumption in the foreign policy literature is that the American public is uninterested in foreign affairs that do not involve the use of the United States military, we show that the public is, at times, highly attentive to noncrisis issues. In such cases, presidents are forced to balance domestic and strategic interests in much the same manner as they do in crisis decision making.

Finally, variation in degrees of presidential autonomy between decision stages ultimately affects the quality and character of U.S. foreign policy. In a crisis, for instance, public opinion may not influence a president’s decision to use force as a means of policy but might play a large role in how military force is implemented. Given the American public’s traditional concern with casualties and preference for multilateral intervention, presidents may opt for a military strategy that minimizes combat fatalities and integrates foreign troops even if these tactics come at the expense of strategic effectiveness. By contrast, the context of noncrisis decision making typically features a public that is attentive to the decision but not to its implementation. While presidents may be compelled to make “popular” decisions to please an attentive public, the inevitable decline in public awareness after the policy is announced affords considerable latitude in implementing the policy in a manner consistent with their conception of the national interest.

### **The Public and the Process of Foreign Policy Making**

Over the years there has been considerable debate about the role of public opinion in foreign policy. One school of thought, the elite-centric model, holds that the

general public is ill informed and ambivalent about foreign policy issues and that mass opinion is subject to wildly fluctuating “moods” (Lippmann 1955; Almond 1960; Converse 1964; Mearsheimer 1990). Realists view these traits as justification for authorities to base foreign policy solely on a conception of the “national interest,” rather than seeking to divine the preferences of the mass public (Kennan 1951; Morgenthau 1978).<sup>1</sup> According to Hans Morgenthau (1978:147), “the rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count on the support of a public opinion whose preferences are emotional rather than rational.” Likewise, George Kennan (1951:73) argued that public opinion “can be easily led astray into areas of emotionalism and subjectivity which make it a poor and inadequate guide for national action.” Seeming to confirm realist expectations, early empirical research found only a weak congruence between elites’ foreign policy decisions and public opinion (Almond 1960; Miller and Stokes 1963). Moreover, the elite-centric approach contends that if public opinion is related to foreign policy at all, it generally follows the leadership of the executive branch, as presidents have significant control over the dissemination of information and hence considerable latitude in policy selection (Gamson and Modigliani 1966; Cohen 1973; Schlesinger 1974; Ginsberg 1986; Herman and Chomsky 1988; Margolis and Mauser 1989).

Recently, scholars have begun to challenge the elite-centric model, arguing that public opinion responds rationally to international events and policies (Kusnitz 1984; Wittkopf 1990; Holsti 1992, 2004; Jentleson 1992; Mayer 1992; Page and Shapiro 1992). In contrast to much of the pioneering work on opinion and foreign policy, these studies demonstrate a strong correlation between public opinion and foreign policy choice, indeed sometimes a closer connection than in domestic issue areas (Page and Shapiro 1992; Monroe 1998). More importantly, the revisionist literature contends that public opinion can potentially influence foreign policy decisions. The public’s views may set a “region of acceptability” that bounds politically feasible options (Russett 1990: 110; cf. Powlick 1991; Sobel 2001) or even determines foreign policy decisions (Small 1988; Bartels 1991; Hartley and Russett 1992; Page and Shapiro 1992). This stronger view contends that as political elites are ultimately accountable to the public, rational politicians attempt to gain an advantage at the polls by enacting policies favored by the public.<sup>2</sup> We can sharpen the empirical implications of this debate by considering how elected officials estimate the potential political consequences of policies.

#### *How Do Policy Makers Estimate the Electoral Consequences of Policies?*

Presidents consider the potential reactions of the public when making foreign policy decisions for several reasons. The most prominent is that leaders in democracies are held accountable in regular elections. Research on elections and voting shows

<sup>1</sup> There are several different variants of realism, and it is undoubtedly misleading to speak of realism as a unified theory. However, realists do share the belief that states that fail to respond to the pressures of the international system (e.g., by following domestic public opinion) will be punished. Waltz (1979, 1997) recognizes, for instance, that states may deviate from a neorealist strategy: “because states coexist in a self-help system, they are free to do any fool thing they care to, but they are likely to be rewarded for behavior that is responsible to structural pressures and punished for behavior that is not” (1997:915). Classical realists such as Hans Morgenthau (1978), Reinhold Niebuhr (1959), and George Kennan (1951) have written extensively on how the influence of the public might lead states to adopt “irrational” foreign policies, while contemporary realists such as Jack Snyder (1991) and Stephen Van Evera (1984) have incorporated domestic-level variables into their historical analyses in order to show why states deviated from an optimal foreign policy strategy based solely on systemic imperatives. In sum, realists do not argue that public opinion is irrelevant in the construction of foreign policy. But they do hold that the intrusion of domestic political considerations in foreign policy making can lead to suboptimal policies.

<sup>2</sup> For a critical review of this literature, see Holsti (1992, 2004), Page (1994), and Powlick and Katz (1998). Recent research suggests that politicians acknowledge the power of public opinion not only by moving policy toward the public’s preferences but also by seeking to frame proposals so as to shape the electorate’s perception of congruence (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Kull and Ramsay 2002).

that a substantial portion of the public takes foreign policy issues and accomplishments into account in choosing between candidates, and the literature on audience costs integrates the idea into a larger theory of foreign policy making (Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida 1989; Ninic and Hinckley 1991; Fearon 1994; Smith 1998). The president's need to maintain or increase *political capital* can also influence foreign policy decisions (Neustadt 1960; Light 1982; Sullivan 1991; for an opposite view, see Edwards 1991). The key component in political capital is approval ratings, as presidents able to maintain high levels of approval are likely to be more influential in dealing with Congress. Unpopular foreign policies can quickly erode political capital and weaken the prospects for the administration's foreign and domestic agendas alike. Public opinion is also important to lame-duck presidents. A president worried about his place in history may use the last years of his tenure to enhance his public support or to set the electoral stage for his heir apparent by initiating popular foreign policies.

Having good reasons to take the public's views into account does not yet clarify how presidents would go about estimating the electoral impacts of their foreign policy choices. It is, for instance, often the case that the general public has only vaguely formed preferences on the concrete aspects of overseas issues at the time the White House must select a policy course. Moreover, it is not the public's current views that are critical to politicians' calculations, but the potential that the public will respond negatively when the next election rolls around. Rather than assuming that the public's policy preferences are fixed, and asking what impact those preferences have on presidents' decisions, instead we might question how policy makers' anticipation of future preferences shape their decisions.<sup>3</sup> Arnold (1990:11; cf. Kingdon 1989:60–68) introduces the notion of “potential preferences” and emphasizes that politicians' skill at “estimating . . . potential policy preferences is more art than science. Although experts in public opinion can show how to use scientific methods to measure current preferences, legislators rarely employ such methods outside of electoral campaigns.”

In thinking about what sort of information is most needed in this situation, it is useful to distinguish between the *popularity* of a policy proposal and the *salience* of the issue (Jones 1994; Kollman 1998; Soroka 2003). Kollman (1998) points out that politicians generally have quite good information about the popularity of particular policies: the public's preference for one policy direction over another tends to be stable, and conventional public opinion polls provide reliable information about popularity (Jacobs 1992; Page and Shapiro 1992; Herbst 1993; Jacobs and Shapiro 1995).<sup>4</sup> Moreover, because such sentiments are relatively constant, politicians can learn from historical experience. Since Vietnam, for example, politicians understand that a drawn-out, costly war is likely to alienate the public. Elites frequently rely on a fairly accurate type of “folk-wisdom” when determining the prospective popularity of policies (Foyle 1999). However, the salience or relative importance of a policy issue is something about which politicians need information, but they generally cannot learn this from conventional opinion polls or experience. “Politicians want to know what proportion of constituents, when voting in the next election, will weigh the actions of their elected representatives on a particular policy issue. More salient policy issues will weigh more heavily on voting decisions than will less salient policy issues . . .” (Kollman 1998:9). Although, as Kollman notes,

<sup>3</sup> V.O. Key, in his classic treatise, poses the problem electorally accountable officials face: “If public opinion has a quality of latency, discussion of such opinions would appear to present a singularly slippery problem . . . . Yet in the practice of politics and government, latent opinion is really about the only type of opinion that generates much anxiety . . . . What opinions will be stirred by this legislative proposal? What questions, anxieties, and moods will be generated by this event or that action?” (Key 1961:263).

<sup>4</sup> More generally, Kingdon (1989) and Arnold (1991) argue that politicians anticipate constituents' electoral responses by taking into account the magnitude and distribution of the costs of a policy proposal, and the length of the causal chain linking the policy's adoption to outcomes.

public opinion polls do not regularly track the salience of policy issues, policy makers are attentive to the prominence of the issue in the public's informational environment, specifically its visibility in the media's coverage of public affairs. Our empirical analysis uses this indicator to gauge variations in the salience of foreign policy issues.

### *Crisis and Noncrisis Decisions*

The distinction between crisis and noncrisis situations is as essential to understanding the character of the external situation as it is to predicting how the president will mobilize the White House decision-making apparatus. Surprisingly enough, however, scholars of public opinion and foreign policy have made little use of this distinction. For crises, our analysis adopts the widely used definition of the International Crisis Behavior Project (ICBP): "a situation in which three conditions, deriving from a change in a state's external or internal environment, are perceived by the highest-level decision makers of the state: (a) a threat to basic values, (b) an awareness of finite time for response, and (c) a high probability of involvement in military hostilities" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1996). Examples of crisis situations include the Gulf War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Mayaguez incident. By contrast, noncrises are situations in which the option of using military force is extremely unlikely and/or the time horizon for both making a decision and implementing the policy is comparatively long. Relevant noncrises include international economic agreements, nuclear arms control, international environmental issues, and foreign aid.

From the perspective of public opinion, the principal distinction between crises and noncrises is the duration and intensity of the public's interest. Crises are generally brief and bounded, and the public tends to be highly attentive throughout: the elements of conflict and human drama naturally arouse interest, and they stimulate media coverage (Graber 1997).<sup>5</sup> By contrast, noncrisis issues seldom gain the public's attention immediately, nor do they hold it beyond the period of the government's most visible action.<sup>6</sup> There are several reasons why noncrises produce a selectively attentive public. First, noncrises tend to be longer in duration than crises and often have no definitive conclusion. Issues such as nuclear arms control, international trade and monetary policy, environmental protection, and foreign aid have been on the political agenda for decades and will likely remain there for the foreseeable future. While public awareness to these issues can be stimulated from time to time, the more protracted the issue, the more likely the media and the public will eventually lose interest.<sup>7</sup> Second, noncrises often involve matters that seem remote to most Americans (Almond 1960; Reilly 1995). Contentious elite debate or intense media coverage might briefly arouse mass interest, yet the public is often quick to return its attention to more immediately tangible

<sup>5</sup> Occasionally, an exceptional episode such as the Iranian Hostage Crisis (when Americans were held for 444 days) may extend for longer than a year, but in general it is rare that the duration of a crisis exceeds a year, and equally rare that noncrises are resolved within a year.

<sup>6</sup> This selective attention to noncrises is a function of media coverage, elite behavior, and episodic events. As Powlick and Katz (1998:40) note, "the media need a 'peg,' or discrete event, on which to 'hang' a story." These events, such as the 1999 WTO meeting in Seattle or the signing of the SALT II treaty at the Vienna Summit, generally coincide with a major policy decision. As such, the event and the decision combine to provide a "peg" by which to cover the non-crisis issues. In addition, contentious elite debate can serve as a "peg" in the absence of a salient event. For instance, elite debate over President Reagan's Star Wars missile defense program attracted significant media coverage even though debate was not accompanied by any significant external event.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that for virtually every issue, there is a subset of the population that is highly attentive. While these "issue publics" or "attentive publics" are consistently engaged and informed, the level of attention given to these issues by the majority of Americans tends to fluctuate over time (Converse 1964; Arnold 1990). Although issue publics may affect policy making, we assume that public opinion is a more significant decision premise for elites when the mass public is stimulated to pay close attention to policy.

domestic issues. Finally, noncrises often involve complex subjects such as international economic policy, where the public is likely to sense that a problem exists but lack the desire or capacity to develop an informed opinion (Graber 1984).

Much of the scholarly literature assumes that while crisis situations produce a highly attentive public, the public is ambivalent and ignorant of most noncrisis issues (Almond 1960; Powlick and Katz 1998; Foyle 1999). While this axiom is frequently correct, it is not universally true, and some of the conclusions drawn from it have been misleading. For instance, noncrisis issues in which the public has been highly attentive include the SALT talks, debates over NAFTA and the WTO, the 1980 Moscow Olympic Boycott, the Camp David Accords, apartheid in South Africa, the Ethiopian famine in the mid-1980s, the Kyoto Protocol, and the recent tsunami disaster in South Asia (Bosso 1989; Graham 1994; Powlick and Katz 1998). Furthermore, it is a mistake to suppose that only a public attentive at the moment of decision can influence foreign policy. Given that electoral accountability occurs in the future, it is rational for elites to go to some trouble to discern the salience of the issue and to anticipate the trajectory of opinion (Arnold 1991; Powlick and Katz 1998).<sup>8</sup>

While research on noncrisis cases is limited, we note that these issues share traits with typical domestic politics issues, and we hypothesize that the public's attentiveness to noncrisis foreign policy issues will trace an "issue attention cycle." Unlike crises that are high in human drama and capable of holding the public's attention, noncrisis issues develop over a long time, typically involve complex substantive trade offs, and entail lengthy coalition building before a solution is reached. Downs's (1972; cf. Vasquez and Mansbach 1983; Vasquez 1985; Bosso 1989) study of environmental politics shows that the pattern of attention to such issues follows a stylized cycle, in which the public exhibits "alarmed discovery" at the introduction of a new issue, resulting in a high level of attention and public demands for government to "do something" about the problem. Peak attentiveness is not sustained long, however, as the public becomes disillusioned or bored with the problem, and concern focuses elsewhere. As Downs writes,

American public attention rarely remains sharply focused upon any one domestic issue for very long—even if it involves a continuing problem of crucial importance to society. Instead, a systematic "issue-attention cycle" seems strongly to influence public attitudes and behavior concerning most key domestic problems. Each of these problems suddenly leaps into prominence, remains there for a short time, and then—though still largely unresolved—gradually fades from the center of public attention (Downs 1972:38).

The cyclical pattern of public attentiveness does not, of course, necessarily correspond to a comparable pattern in governmental attention. At any given moment, the foreign policy bureaucracy, the executive office of the president, and/or the president himself is likely to be working on problems related to noncrisis issues. For example, the public did not become aware of the devastating famine in Ethiopia until NBC ran a documentary on feeding stations on October 23, 1984. During the previous two years, however, the United States government was both aware of the famine and was making important policy decisions. Likewise, after public attention to problems in Africa died down in mid-1985, the United States government continued to make important policy decisions that affected the region. There is, in

<sup>8</sup> The Iran-Contra Affair is a good example of a previously inattentive public turning attentive. Subsequent presidents may have shied away from this type of covert behavior because they saw the damaging results to the Reagan presidency when it was revealed that the United States was trading arms for hostages. For a nuanced overview of different patterns of attentiveness consistent with democratic accountability and representation, see Mansbridge (2003).

short, considerably less variation in governmental attention to noncrisis issues over time than there is public attention to the same issue. As public attention ebbs and flows, it offers the president and his administration more or less decision-making autonomy.

Of course, the degree to which presidents enjoy decision-making autonomy is the product of many factors beyond public attentiveness. Other domestic political actors, such as Congress and political interest groups, can constrain presidential foreign policy making, especially during periods of public quiescence.<sup>9</sup> Congress, for example, often plays an important role in noncrisis issues like international trade (Pastor 1980; Destler 1995), where the public's general disinterest in technical economic matters poses a political context in which members of Congress can secure "rents" for constituent interest groups. This type of rent-seeking behavior can frustrate presidential policy making, as evidenced by the impediment U.S. agricultural subsidies pose in creating a Free Trade Area of the Americas.<sup>10</sup> In short, we do not suggest that presidential decision-making autonomy is solely contingent upon the degree of public attentiveness. Nevertheless, we do argue that, *ceteris paribus*, an inattentive public affords presidents greater leeway in conducting foreign policy.

#### *Mapping Public Attentiveness: The Stages of Decision*

With important exceptions, the literature on the role of public opinion in American foreign policy has paid only slight attention to the process of policy making. In answering the question "Does public opinion influence presidential decision making," scholars tend to rely on approaches that conceptualize both public opinion and foreign policy decisions only in relatively gross categories. For instance, it is common for studies to examine only one aspect of a foreign policy case (e.g., the decision to use military force) when assessing the role of public opinion. As with other policy issues, however, in practice foreign policy choices involve a series of interrelated decisions. At each stage, we must ask: How influential was public opinion on a president's decision? Our research question moves the focus away from a dichotomous conception of the opinion-policy link to an evaluation of the role of public opinion at each of several stages as the decision develops and is implemented.<sup>11</sup>

We distinguish five interrelated but analytically distinct decision-making stages. *Stage 1: Agenda Setting/Problem Representation.* Agenda setting refers to constructing the "list of subjects to which government officials and those around them are

<sup>9</sup> For literature on Congress and U.S. foreign policy making, see Carter (1986), Bartels (1991), Lindsay (1992–1993, 1994), Hinckley (1994), Peake (2002), and Destler (2001).

<sup>10</sup> Although the role of Congress can hardly be ignored, the literature is quite consensual regarding the predominance of the presidency in foreign policy: heading the list of reasons for this are the president's constitutional obligations, the need for centralized leadership, and the expectations of other institutional actors and the public.

<sup>11</sup> Wood and Peake (1998) present strong evidence that the government's public agenda of foreign policy issues is influenced by public opinion (via media attention), rather than the reverse. Their Granger test for causal effects shows, for instance, that media attention is exogenous to presidential attention, while presidential attention is affected by media attention consistently across all three of the issues in their study (Table 1, p. 178). By disaggregating the agenda-setting process, our research allows us to specify with greater precision the relative influence of public attentiveness at different points in the government's decision process.

Like Wood and Peake, however, we do not wish to deny that presidents may undertake foreign policy initiatives with the intention of influencing public opinion (e.g., Nixon's opening to China or Carter's emphasis on human rights), or that presidents undertake campaigns—in the foreign policy sphere just as they do in domestic policy—in an effort to build public support for their proposals (e.g., Gershkoff and Kushner 2005; Hacker and Pierson 2005). Although neither our research nor Wood and Peake's is designed to generate the sort of detailed case study evidence needed to trace the multiple flows of communications, the fact that our observations of media coverage and government decisions are closely spaced in time does allow us to track the succession of events. Here, the criterion of temporal priority suggests that the predominant causal influence on the government's public agenda is from events and public opinion to presidential attention.

paying serious attention" (Kingdon 1984:3); problem representation refers to "the manner in which decision makers define the stakes involved in a policy" (Foyle 1999:23). *Stage 2: Option Generation.* In this stage the menu of options from which the president chooses is developed and staffed out. *Stage 3: Policy Decision.* Policy decision is the key decision made in a given foreign policy case.<sup>12</sup> *Stage 4: Implementation.* Implementation refers to the strategy and tactics involved in carrying out a policy decision. *Stage 5: Policy Review.* Policy review refers to the choice of whether to continue, modify, or abandon a particular policy.

Our conceptualization builds on previous work by Douglas Foyle (1999) and Thomas Graham (1994). Foyle conceptualizes decision making as a four-stage process: problem representation, option generation, option selection, and policy implementation. In his analysis of 12 cases, Foyle found that public opinion had little effect on problem representation, where the administration's conception of the national interest, not public preference, prevailed; but public opinion did influence the generation of policy options. Graham also describes a four-stage policy process, with a slightly different characterization of stages: getting on the agenda; negotiation; ratification; and implementation. In his examination of nuclear arms control issues from 1945 to 1980, Graham finds that public opinion was most influential in getting an issue on the political agenda and during the ratification stage, a pattern that appears to be inconsistent with Foyle's findings. Our research advances this literature along three paths. We operationalize a more precise model of the stages of the foreign policy decision process; we extend the range of empirical cases by moving beyond the focus on security policy to examine the influence of public opinion on issues such as international trade and food aid; and, by tracing variation in public attentiveness across the stages of a more fine-grained specification of the decision process, we provide an explanation for the apparent discrepancy between Foyle's and Graham's findings.

The relative importance of public opinion will vary in distinctive and systematic ways across the stages of the foreign policy decision process, depending on whether the issue at hand is a crisis or a more slowly developing noncrisis. In crisis situations, we posit that the public's attention will build steadily. Strategic imperatives will generally overwhelm domestic political considerations in the early stages of decision making, but the relative importance of public opinion will be greater in later stages. This is most evident in the implementation stage of crisis policies, when presidents sometimes sacrifice strategic effectiveness to pacify a highly attentive domestic audience. Conversely, with respect to salient noncrisis foreign policy issues, we expect the path of public attentiveness to center on the president's selection of policy, but to display relatively low levels of awareness before the visible policy action and only modest attentiveness following the decision. Freed from the constraints of an attentive public, presidents are afforded considerable autonomy in implementing noncrisis policy in a manner consistent with their vision of the national interest, even if the general public does not share that same vision. Figure 1 illustrates these hypothesized patterns schematically.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that, in many foreign policy cases, there are several decisions that are made and implemented in the attempt to deal with some problem. We treat the policy decision as the stage at which the administration's final proposal results in the major decision to deal with the problem. All other decisions fall into the option generation category. For example, in the fall of 1990 the Bush administration decided upon economic sanctions and a defense of Saudi Arabia in the attempt to coerce Saddam Hussein into leaving Kuwait. The major decision, however, was made on October 30, 1990, when President Bush decided to use military force to liberate Kuwait if Iraq did not withdraw by January 15, 1991. In this case, the October 30th decision is treated as the policy decision and economic sanctions were treated as options.



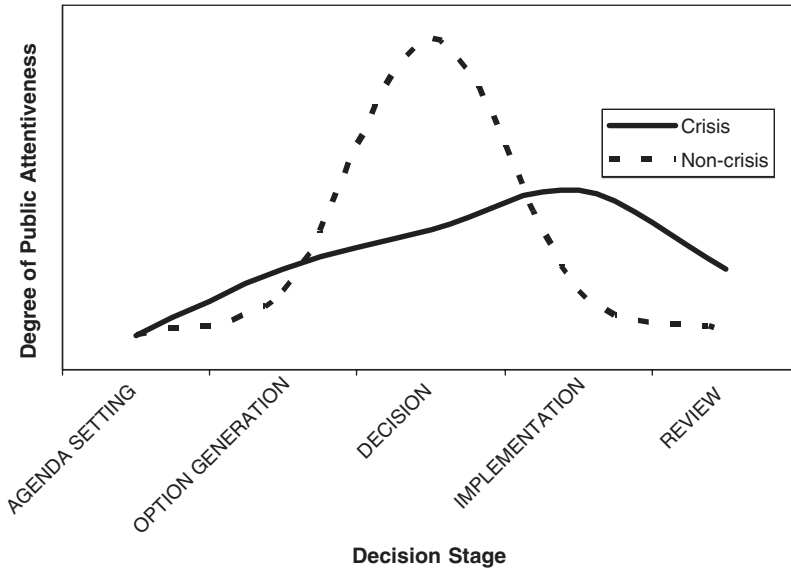


FIG. 1. Public Attentiveness to Foreign Policy across Stages of the Decision Process

### Data and Methods

To examine the interplay between public attentiveness and the stages of foreign policy decision making, researchers would ideally call on direct indicators of the public's salient issue concerns. Moreover, because the timing of decision stages is likely to be irregular, depending on changes in the external environment and the flow of advice and advocacy within the White House, the measure of public attentiveness would ideally consist of many observations, closely spaced in time. Unfortunately, major polling organizations ask questions concerning public attentiveness to foreign policy only occasionally. Even worse, from the perspective of systematically tracing the evolution of the public's views, national polls typically take the public's pulse only when a particular issue has already reached a peak of national salience and visibility—thus inadvertently contributing to the image of public inattentiveness at earlier stages. In this section, we briefly describe our measures of public attentiveness and decision stages, as well as our selection of crisis and noncrisis cases.

#### *Public Attentiveness*

In order to assemble appropriate data on the public's attention to a number of specific foreign policy events, we turn to an indirect indicator, the coverage of relevant issues in major national news outlets. Although a proxy variable, our key indicator, minutes of nightly network news broadcasts devoted to each foreign policy issue, tracks the major source of Americans' news and the key determinant of citizens' images of the most important issues facing the government.<sup>13</sup> Using the

<sup>13</sup> We focused on the three major network news broadcasts—NBC, CBS, and ABC, excluding CNN and Fox, since these networks were either not in existence or had very small audiences for much of the relevant period. Each of the three major news networks nightly broadcasts carries approximately 22 minutes of coverage for a combined total of 66 minutes per day of potential coverage on an issue (Wood and Peake 1998). On average, about 10% is devoted to foreign policy issues (Kerbel 1994; Graber 1997). More Americans report getting their news from nightly news broadcasts (69%) than any other source (43% newspapers; 15% radio; 4% magazines) (Powlick and Katz 1998:39; Edwards and Wood 1999:330). Good reviews of the literature on the role of the media in setting the public's agenda appear in Iyengar and Kinder (1987) and Iyengar (1991).

Vanderbilt Television Archives, we searched for relevant news stories for each foreign policy case and read the abstract of the broadcasts to ensure that the story dealt with the case in question.<sup>14</sup> For each relevant story on each network's news broadcast, we recorded the exact time allotted to the coverage. This source provides a daily indicator of not only whether a given issue was of national importance but also its salience relative to other newsworthy issues. The number of news stories varies for each case, but it is typically several hundred (e.g., for the Gulf War the data set includes over 1900 stories; for the issue of normalizing trade relations with China, the number is over 1,700). These are aggregated across networks into a measure of total daily coverage. Network news coverage of these foreign policy cases averages about 5 minutes per day (higher for crises than for noncrises), although the amount varies greatly from one case to another.

While network news broadcasts constitute a serviceable proxy for public attentiveness, two possible disadvantages are worth considering. First, the public might get foreign policy information from other sources. The most likely would be national newspapers or local news outlets that take their cues for international news coverage primarily from the *New York Times*.<sup>15</sup> To test the congruence between our measures and the content of national print media, we examined in detail the coverage in the *New York Times* of two crisis cases (the Gulf War and Kosovo) and two noncrisis cases (Ethiopian famine and U.S.–Japanese economic relations). For each case, we searched the *New York Times* historical archive, identifying relevant stories and then calculating word counts per day of coverage. The coverage of these key foreign policy stories covaries quite strongly, ranging from 60% to above 90% of the maximum correlation.<sup>16</sup>

The indirectness of our indicator of public attentiveness is also a valid source of concern. Although it would be a mistake to assume that public attention always follows media attention in a deterministic fashion, there is solid research evidence showing that national news coverage heavily influences citizens' perceived salience of political issues.<sup>17</sup> As Cohen (1963:13) writes, the press may not tell the public what to think, "but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about." In addition, it is worth considering whether a more direct measure of public attentiveness—surveys addressing attention to foreign policy issues—would in fact provide a more valid measure. Response categories for questions on public attentiveness are especially susceptible to variation in respondent interpretation.<sup>18</sup> For example, respondent A may believe that glancing at a headline constitutes "closely following" U.S.–Japanese economic relations, while respondent B might believe that it requires a deeper understanding of the issue's details. Furthermore, questions addressing attentiveness may elicit "social desirability effects," as the respondent attempts to conceal ignorance in order to convey a favorable impression

<sup>14</sup> Wood and Peake (1998) and Edwards and Wood (1999) have made extensive use of the Vanderbilt Television Archives in their studies of agenda setting and foreign policy. This paper seeks to build on their foundation.

<sup>15</sup> See Cohen (1963) and Gans (1979).

<sup>16</sup> To establish a baseline for comparing day-to-day coverage between print and television outlets, we first calculated how closely the amount of a given medium's coverage of the story on day 0 correlated with its previous coverage of the same story, using lags of 1, 3, and 7 days. For television coverage of the Gulf War, for instance, the average correlation across these three lags is 0.567; for newspaper coverage, the average is 0.604. The correlation between television coverage and newspaper coverage of the Gulf War is 0.50, approximately 85% of the correlation of the media's coverage with its own earlier coverage. The corresponding percentage for the Ethiopian famine case is 62%, and above 95% for the Kosovo case and the Japan trade case.

<sup>17</sup> See Cohen (1963), McCombs and Shaw (1972), and Iyengar and Kinder (1987).

<sup>18</sup> Survey questions on attentiveness generally take the following form: "How closely have you followed news about . . .? Would you say you have followed it very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?" (Gallup, CBS); or "Overall, how closely have you followed the situation in . . .? Very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all?" (Gallup). For literature on "vague quantifiers," see Bradburn and Miles (1979), Bradburn and Sudman (1979), Moxey and Sanford (1993), and Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000).

to the interviewer.<sup>19</sup> The probability of this particular bias increases if the respondent has reason to expect the interview to entail no follow-up questions assessing factual knowledge. In sum, the important role that the media play in informing Americans about international affairs, coupled with valid concerns about unreliability and bias in surveys, suggest that media coverage is an appropriate indicator of public attentiveness.

Finally, it is worth considering this indicator not from the perspective of the researcher but through the eyes of the political actors who participate in the decision-making process. Presidents and their advisors likely know that in general media attention and public concern covary, and that intense media attention represents the potential for greatly increased public scrutiny (Cohen 1973; Powlick 1995; Kull and Ramsay 2002:215).<sup>20</sup> As a result, presidents are apt to use media coverage as a proxy for public attentiveness in just the way it is used in this study.

### *Decision Stages*

Identifying the stages of decision making is a similarly significant challenge. We began by undertaking in-depth studies of two of the cases included in the population—the Gulf War and the United States response to the Ethiopian famine in the mid-1980s—drawing on extensive research in secondary sources, contemporary news media and periodicals, archival research at Presidential Libraries, and elite interviews. This process is, of course, too expensive in time and resources to duplicate for a larger sample of cases. From the intensive case study research, however, we were able to refine coding instructions and focus on key secondary sources and newspaper accounts. This simplified but systematic rubric is the basis for determining stages of the foreign policy decision process for the balance of the cases. Determining the stages of decision making is an inherently subjective process, and reasonable people may disagree with the characterization of particular cases. This is especially true of the early stages of noncrises (agenda setting/problem representation, and option generation) as secondary source accounts of administration policy deliberations are often scarce. Clearly, moving the boundary between stages by a day or two earlier or later would not materially alter the findings. Indeed, given the sparse media coverage of the early stages of emerging foreign policy issues—particularly noncrisis cases—there is good reason to suppose that even relatively large revisions of the boundaries (say a month or so) would be unlikely to alter the gist of our argument, as few news broadcasts would actually shift categories.

### *Crisis and Noncrisis Cases*

Our population of cases includes 34 U.S. foreign policy events, equally divided between crises and noncrises, over the past 30 years. The International Crisis Behavior Project (ICBP) database provided the population of crisis cases.<sup>21</sup> We are unaware of a comparable data set for noncrises; therefore, we compiled a population of noncrises from Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf's (1996) chronology of foreign policy events. To extend the universe of cases from 1996 to 2002, we

<sup>19</sup> For a good review on response editing, see Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000). The 1999 U.S. intervention in Kosovo illustrates the potential for bias. A March 25th *Los Angeles Times* national poll reported that 79% of the public had read a "great deal or some" about the conflict in Kosovo. In a follow-up question, however, the *Times* found that only 40% of the public knew that the United States was opposing Serbia in the conflict. Because it is reasonable to expect attentiveness entails knowing what side the United States is on, the 39% disparity in knowledge and attention suggests that response biases are a legitimate concern.

<sup>20</sup> As Powlick and Katz (1998:45) state, "In essence, policymakers gauge the degree to which there is debate on their issues and assume (usually correctly) that the absence of debate means the absence of active public opinion."

<sup>21</sup> The International Crisis Behavior Project data can be accessed at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu>.

supplemented the population with a list of congressional hearings held on foreign policy issues taken from Frank Baumgartner and Bryan Jones' *Policy Agendas Project*.<sup>22</sup> These procedures assure that our population includes virtually all foreign policy cases in which public opinion could have been a plausible decision premise for presidents. In other words, we bracketed from consideration persistently low visibility cases in which presidents would have little cause to consider public opinion. This allows us to focus the differentiation between crisis and noncrisis cases on the duration and intensity of the public's attentiveness, and specifically on the pattern of public attentiveness over time, rather than on the overall visibility of the issue.

## Results

Overall, more television time was devoted to the 17 crises cases (22,292 total minutes of coverage) than the 17 noncrises cases (13,182 total minutes of coverage).<sup>23</sup> Given that most crises are sensational and well suited to a visual medium, it should be expected that crises would garner comparatively more network airtime. But noncrises were hardly neglected: they received almost 220 hours of television news coverage. We can clarify the pattern of variation in the American public's attention to foreign events by disaggregating each case into the separate component stages of the decision process. The length of the stages differ substantially, as might be expected, with the processes of option generation and implementation typically much longer and the decision stage much shorter than average. Total news coverage is naturally greater the longer the stage, so that a correction is needed for this effect. Moreover, the literature on media effects shows that public attention is more likely to be stimulated by concentrated media coverage over a brief period of time, rather than low-level coverage over a longer duration (Bosso 1989). The analysis thus focuses on a more direct measure of the intensity of media coverage. We operationalize the measure of intensity of media coverage in a simple two-step procedure. First, to adjust for the different lengths of the decision stages, we calculate the average minutes of coverage per day for each of the five stages.<sup>24</sup> Then, to adjust for differences in the length of the cases, we express per-stage coverage as a proportion of the total media coverage for that case. The resulting media coverage indicator is thus normalized for comparability across cases and decision stages.

Do the distinctions we have introduced contribute to understanding the relationship of public opinion and foreign policy? In response to a literature largely framed around the question of whether public opinion does or does not influence foreign policy, we have suggested that the impact of public opinion will vary depending on two conditions: the nature of the foreign policy event and the stage of the government's decision. On the first dimension, we employ the International Crisis Behavior Project's distinction between crisis and noncrisis issues; on the second, we draw on the public policy literature to disaggregate the foreign policy decision process into five stages. Figure 1 shows the hypothesized interaction between these two dimensions in the degree to which they foster or inhibit public attentiveness. To test whether the trajectories of popular salience during crisis and noncrisis foreign events generally match the expected configurations, we aggregate our indicator of the intensity of media coverage separately over crisis and noncrisis cases. Figure 2 summarizes the data over all the cases. For instance, the curve for "noncrisis cases" shows the proportionate intensity of news coverage within each decision stage averaged over all the noncrisis cases, and vice versa for the curve tracing the salience of crisis cases.

<sup>22</sup> Baumgartner and Jones provide a wealth of valuable data at <http://www.policyagendas.org>.

<sup>23</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>24</sup> This is simply total coverage in a decision stage, divided by the length of the stage.

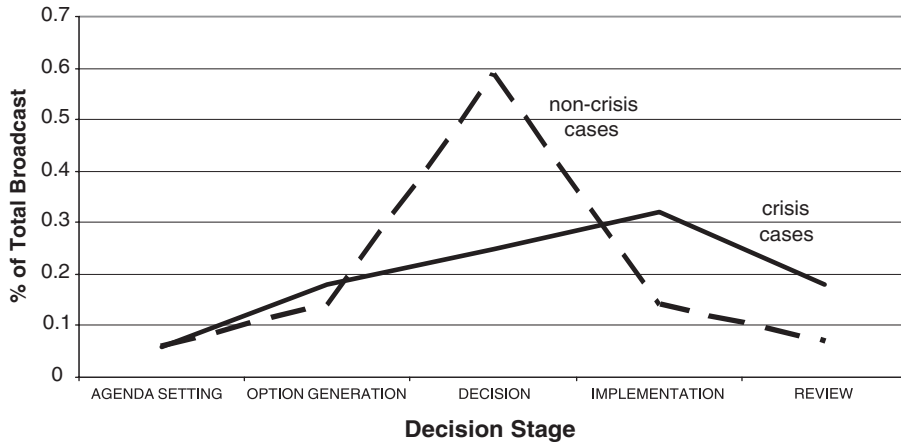


FIG. 2. Salience of Foreign Policy Issues (Intensity of Coverage in the National Media), Comparing Crisis and Noncrisis cases, by Decision Stage

For noncrises, there is significantly more media coverage per day during the decision stage than in the pre- and postdecision stages. By contrast, news coverage of crises tends to rise steadily, with the peak of media attention occurring during the implementation of policy. Figure 2 bears a gratifyingly close resemblance to our theoretical expectations: the flow of news about foreign affairs does differ systematically across the stages of the government's decision-making process, between crises and noncrises. The time path of public attentiveness during crises takes a smooth, upward increase with the cumulation of perceived danger and importance that characterizes such events. The salience of noncrises in the public mind, on the other hand, more closely resembles Downs's issue-attention cycle, rising sharply as the issue comes onto the president's decision agenda and then fading quickly. These findings are a significant payoff from the conceptual distinctions we have proposed, and they clearly illuminate an important difference between crisis and noncrisis cases over the potential for governments to take foreign policy action that is more or less independent of the concern for electoral accountability.

We are aware, however, that even these patterns, although more nuanced than many conventional formulations, may yet excessively simplify the path of public attentiveness across the stages of the foreign policy decision process. As with any classification, one wishes that the cases grouped into each category are roughly homogeneous. In the balance of this paper, we take a closer look behind these averages, beginning with noncrisis foreign policy cases.

To what extent have particular cases deviated from the general pattern we observe when we summarize the average path of public attentiveness over the noncrisis cases? Appendix B maps national media coverage across the five stages of the foreign policy decision process for each of the cases in this category. Significantly enough, the pattern in virtually all the cases shows a distinct peak of attentiveness around the time that the White House decides on a policy response to the external stimulus, along with minimal attention during the pre- and postdecision stages. The exceptions to the general pattern for noncrisis cases are few and appear to be quite idiosyncratic.<sup>25</sup> Thus, we feel confident that the pattern of media attention

<sup>25</sup> The only exceptions are the Elian Gonzales case and the strategic defense initiative, or Star Wars. The case of Elian Gonzales is unique among noncrises in that the implementation of policy—the actual taking of the boy by INS agents from his relatives in Miami—was the salient event. The picture of a frightened Elian screaming as agents seized him at gunpoint is likely to be remembered as one of the defining images of 2000. Star Wars was also unusual in that more media coverage occurred during implementation of the program than in any other stage. This postdecision attention is largely a function of two factors. First, the United States and the U.S.S.R. held several arms

described in Figure 2 can be comfortably generalized to other members of the category of noncrisis cases. The situation with crisis cases, however, appears to be more complex.

Appendix C provides the corresponding detail for our sample of foreign crisis cases, showing for each case the pattern of rising and falling levels of popular salience across the five stages of the policy decision process. Here we see a good deal more variation in attention patterns across individual cases. Although it is clearly evident that media coverage of postdecision stages is greater in crises than noncrises, the diversity of attention patterns within this category counsels caution in formulating a general statement about public attention. Perhaps the most productive further distinction would differentiate between cases involving significant military conflict versus cases in which military force either was not used or was used in a limited manner (e.g., covert CIA activities or narrowly targeted aerial strikes). Examining the cases in which large and sustained military action occurred—Grenada, Afghanistan II, the Gulf War, Panama, and Kosovo—it is immediately apparent that media attention was greatest during implementation for four of the five cases.<sup>26</sup> This is to be expected given the dramatic nature of war and the revolution in information technology that has provided Americans with unprecedented access to the battlefield. For cases in which military force was not used or used sparingly, however, media attention remains largely unsystematic. The generally rising arc of public attention through the course of crisis development, as the issue comes on the agenda and pressure mounts on the administration to formulate and act on an effective—and publicly acceptable—response, reminds us once again of the importance of military involvement as a trigger for public accountability. The more finely disaggregated model of the foreign policy decision process permits us to see the way in which these cases trace a pattern that is distinct not only from noncrises, but also from other crises that did not elicit significant use of military force.

Finally, our disaggregation of the decision-making process provides a newly polished lens for observing a phenomenon often noted only in a general way in the literature on public opinion and foreign policy. Virtually all commentators agree that foreign policy differs from domestic policy in the degree to which the flow of information to the public is dependent on the very government whose actions the electorate seeks to monitor. Although this asymmetry should not be overestimated in a world in which the government no longer has a monopoly over relevant information, to the extent that the president's agenda cues media coverage, national leaders have—within limits—both the means and the incentive to manipulate public opinion. Our empirical approach helps to focus attention on the potential for the government to alter the visibility or transparency of elite decisions. Presidents often seek to obscure decision making and to mask policy commitments. Sometimes the reason for this is to preserve the element of surprise and hence to enhance the effectiveness of actions in the overseas. At other times, however, the intention is precisely to avoid public scrutiny: covert action, for instance, is often a valuable resource for presidents in that it provides a means of accomplishing foreign policy goals outside the strictures of legislative review and electoral accountability.

---

control negotiations that coincided with the implementation of Star Wars. Ostensibly, the purpose of negotiations was arms reduction. Nevertheless, the summits provided the Soviets an opportunity to link nuclear disarmament with the ABM Treaty and to criticize Reagan's Star Wars program as a threat to world peace. As a result, Star Wars became a recurring theme each time arms control issues were discussed. Second, domestic political opponents seized the Star Wars program as emblematic of President Reagan's misplaced political priorities. Because Star Wars was so controversial both domestically and internationally, the program never experienced the type of media decay typical of most noncrises.

<sup>26</sup> The exception is the United States military operation in Afghanistan after the terror attacks on 9/11, which has only a 1% difference in media attention between the policy decision and implementation stage.

The 1975 civil war in Angola offers an especially clear example of how such dissimulation impacts on the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy. By combining historical information derived from secondary and archival sources with our tracking of daily media coverage, it is possible to identify points at which the flow of news has been shifted out of synch with the flow of events. During the crisis, the media characterized events in Angola as an internal struggle for power that, while of interest to the United States, featured no direct American involvement. Only after the fact was it revealed that the United States was providing covert aid to the rebel groups F.N.L.A. and Unita. This fait accompli attracted significant media coverage and generated a notable spike in public attentiveness, but the dramatic rise in the popular salience of the issue coincided with the Ford administration's review and evaluation of its Angola policy. Far from connoting a previously unrecognized fascination on the part of the mass public with the details of policy evaluation, attention focused retrospectively on the policy decision (i.e., the decision months earlier to support covert activities in Angola).

### Conclusion

Scholars of international relations and democratic theorists alike emphasize that the institutions of public accountability alter the process of policy making. Foreign policy is in some respects the most complex and fascinating arena in which the dynamics of this relationship play out, for the distance of foreign issues from citizens' everyday experience and the asymmetry between what leaders know and what the public knows significantly modify the simple conceit that democratic representation consists of enacting the public's preferences. In this context, we expect leaders to advance their own conception of the national interest, and we anticipate that the mass public's ideas about foreign events will be simpler and more emotional than reasoned choice should be. Democratic leaders are expected, however, to engage the electorate in a dialogue that not only elicits their preferences but educates or enlightens the public's conception of the national interest. From the perspective of a politician intent on making a mark on history, however, orchestrating an authentic dialogue is a troublesome, time consuming, and ultimately risky process—risky because it is fraught with the potential that the leader who has raised challenging questions will not be lauded for stimulating enlightened interests but blamed for the difficulty of resolving the questions. In the context of real-world politics, then, it is little wonder that politicians usually need the threat of electoral punishment as a motivation to engage the public. The effectiveness of that motivation depends, in turn, on whether political leaders perceive that an issue is salient enough to influence candidate choice in the next election.

This paper has focused on tracing the salience of foreign issues to the public, joining that with a sharpened conceptualization of the elite decision process, so as to yield a clearer map of the way variations in public attentiveness increase or diminish popular pressure on the president to engage the public in the process of making foreign policy. Our research shows that both the immediacy of the international challenge and the visibility of the White House decision process influence public attentiveness. Crises garner more attention, and the public's attentiveness builds steadily toward the resolution of the issue, in a pattern whose overall trajectory is consistent with a process of learning the facts and considering alternative policy arguments. These appear to be situations in which the public is primed for engagement, and in which presidents have the potential to help enlighten the public's conception of the national interest. The popular salience of noncrises is lower overall and more episodic, with the president's own action to resolve the issue generally the main stimulus to public attentiveness. In such situations, presidents

are usually safe in predicting that their range of policy maneuver is wide, and that any but the most egregiously errant policy will make a sufficiently small impression on voters that it is not likely to figure as an issue in the next election. The relatively high degree of autonomy comports well with the view that elites know more and think more rationally than the public; these cases lie close to the normative ideal for an elite-centric theory of foreign policy making. But from a normative perspective that sees democracy as an on-going process of mutual consultation and learning between leaders and the public, such cases offer presidents an opportunity for initiating useful democratic deliberation. By tracing public attentiveness across the stages of the foreign policy decision process, our research offers a means of gauging the success with which presidents take up this opportunity.

## Appendix A

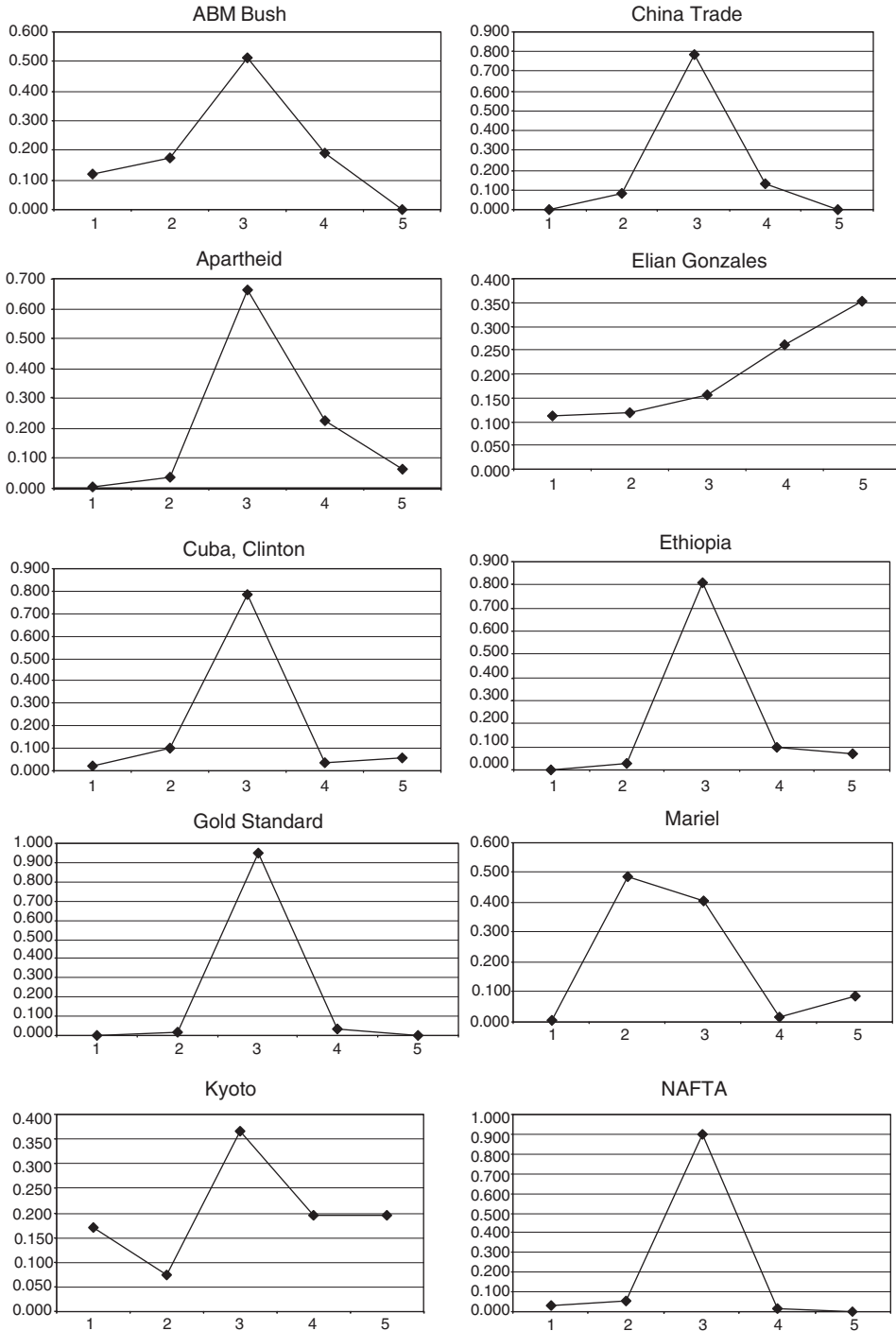
TABLE A1. TV News Coverage of Crisis and Noncrisis Foreign Policy Cases

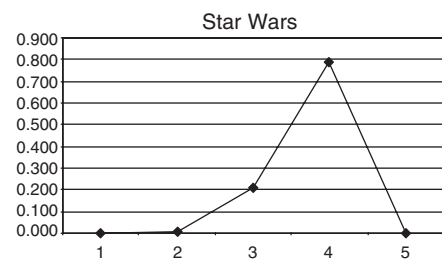
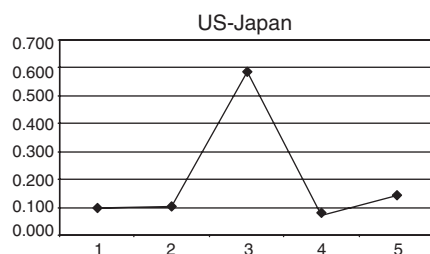
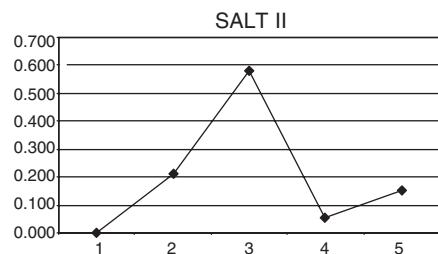
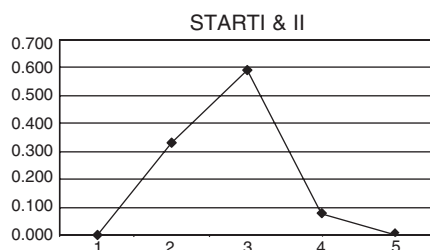
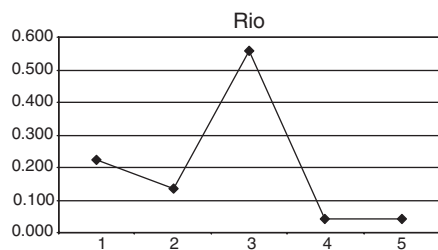
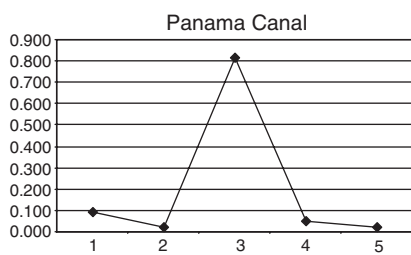
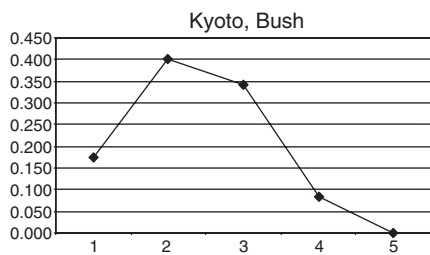
	<i>Total Days</i>	<i>Total Minutes</i>	<i>Average Minutes per Day</i>
<i>Crises</i>			
Gulf War	281	6,721.67	23.91
Kosovo	469	2,517.67	5.08
Afghan I	88	999.00	11.35
Afghan II	138	2,020.32	14.64
Angola	214	260.67	1.22
Desert Strike	25	208.83	8.35
Grenada	45	485.00	10.78
Haiti	167	866.17	29.87
Iran hostage	509	4,692.00	9.22
Mayaguez	11	171.83	21.48
N. Korean nukes	682	435.17	0.64
Poplar tree	21	56.00	2.67
UNSCOM II	108	531.50	4.92
UNSCOM I	180	947.67	5.26
Shaba II	52	311.00	5.98
U.S. Embassy	43	355.50	8.27
Panama	50	517.17	10.34
Total	3,083	22,097.17	10.23
<i>Noncrises</i>			
Ethiopia	2,148	523.67	0.02
U.S.-Japan	1,905	550.83	0.29
Star wars	3,653	1,950.33	0.53
ABM Bush	852	187.83	0.22
Apartheid	2,246	1,076.00	0.48
China trade	1,736	157.33	0.09
Elan Gonz.	219	659.17	3.01
Kyoto	2,134	303.83	0.14
Rio	2,679	393.83	0.15
Kyoto, Bush	1,163	174.50	0.19
Gold Standard	1,841	676.83	0.37
Mariel	1,811	599.83	0.33
NAFTA	3,859	694.17	0.18
Panama Canal	1,768	593.00	0.34
SALT II	5,158	3,052.83	0.59
START I & II	6,972	371.83	0.05
Cuba, Clinton	2,480	918.50	0.37
Total	42,624	12,884.31	0.43



**Appendix B: Noncrisis Cases**

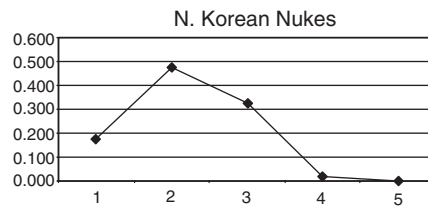
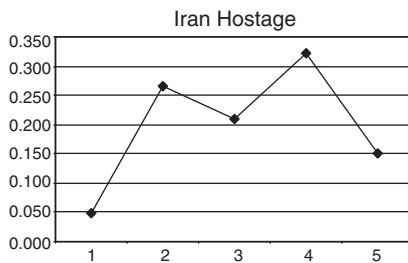
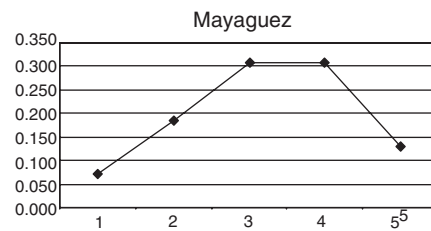
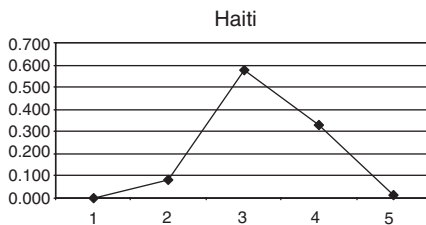
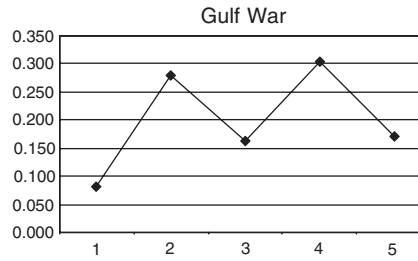
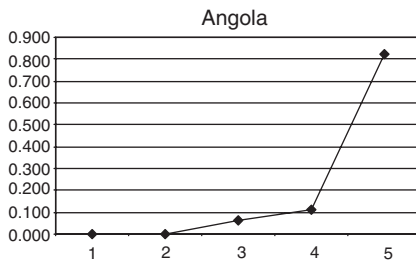
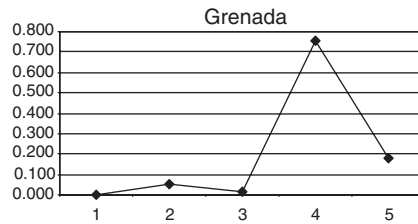
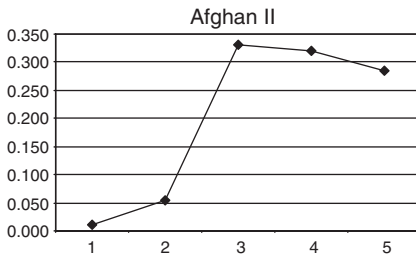
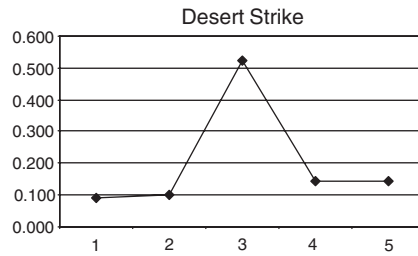
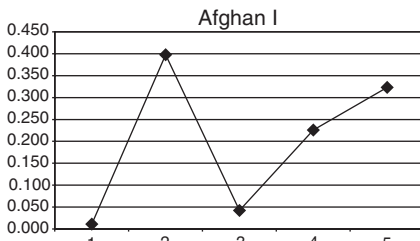
Proportionate share of total TV news coverage in each decision stage.

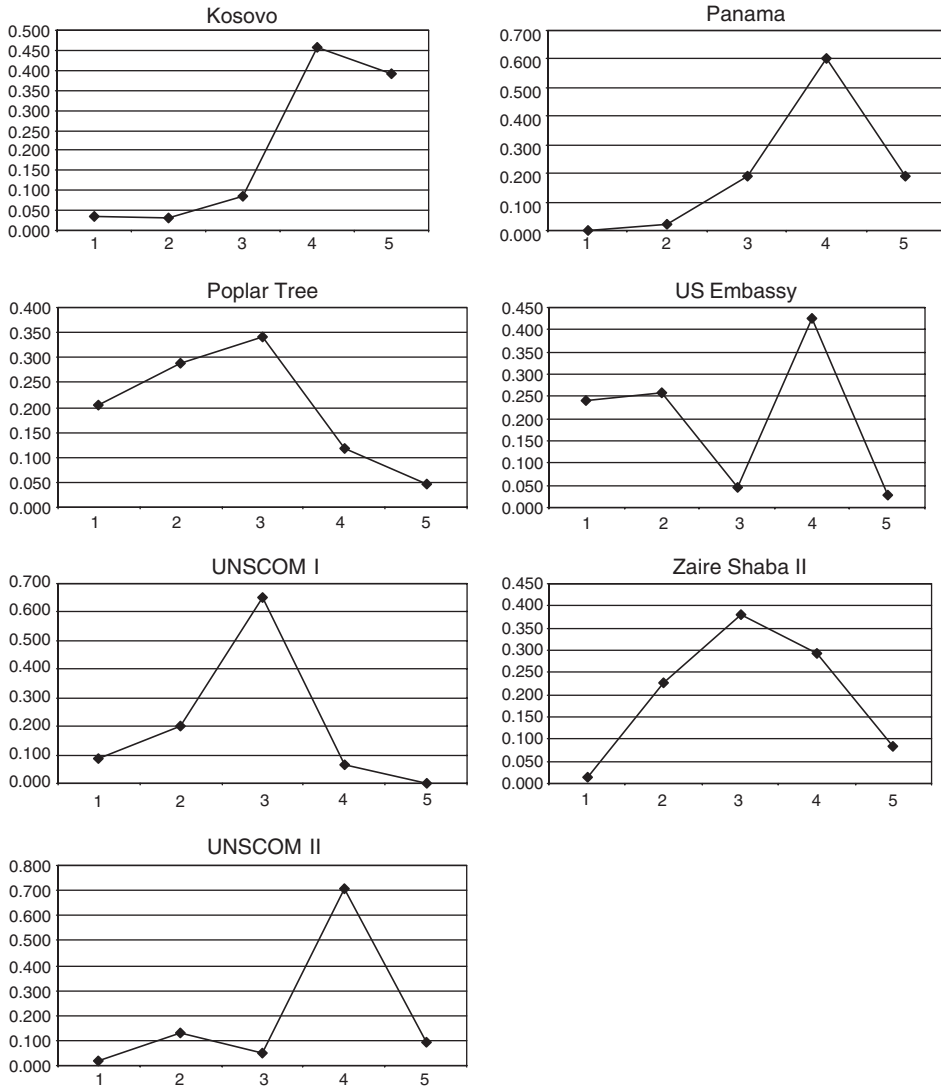




### Appendix C: Crisis Cases

Proportionate share of total TV news coverage in each decision stage.





## References

- ALDRICH, JOHN, JOHN L. SULLIVAN, AND EUGENE BORGIDA. (1989) Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting: Do Presidential Candidates "Waltz Before a Blind Audience?" *American Political Science Review* 83:123-142.
- ALMOND, GABRIEL A. (1960) *The American People and Foreign Policy*. New York: Praeger.
- ARNOLD, R. DOUGLAS. (1990) *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- BARTELS, LARRY M. (1991) Constituency Opinion and Congressional Policy Making: The Reagan Defense Buildup. *American Political Science Review* 85:457-474.
- BOSSO, CHRISTOPHER J. (1989) Setting the Agenda: Mass Media and the Discovery of Famine in Ethiopia. In *Manipulating Public Opinion: Essays on Public Opinion as a Dependent Variable*, edited by M. Margolis and G. Mauser. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- BRADBURN, NORMAN M., AND CARRIE MILES. (1979) Vague Quantifiers. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 43:92-101.
- BRADBURN, NORMAN M., AND SEYMOUR SUDMAN. (1979) *Improving Interview Method and Questionnaire Design*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- BRECHER, MICHAEL, AND JONATHAN WILKENFELD. (1996) *International Crisis Behavior Project, 1918-1994 [Computer file]. 3rd ICPSR version*. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research.

- CARTER, RALPH G. (1986) Congressional Foreign Policy Behavior: Persistent Patterns in the Postwar Period. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 16:329–359.
- COHEN, BERNARD C. (1963) *The Press and Foreign Policy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- COHEN, BERNARD C. (1973) *The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- CONVERSE, PHILIP E. (1964) The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics. In *Ideology and Discontent*, edited by D. Apter. New York: Free Press.
- DESTLER, I. M. (1995) *American Trade Politics*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Washington: Institute for International Economics.
- DESTLER, I. M. (2001) Congress and Foreign Policy at Century's End. In *Congress Reconsidered*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, edited by L. Dodd and B. Oppenheimer. Washington: CQ Press.
- DOWNS, ANTHONY. (1972) Up and Down with Ecology: The Issue-Attention Cycle. *Public Interest* 28: 38–50.
- EDWARDS, GEORGE C. III. (1991) Response to Sullivan's "The Bank Account Presidency: A New Measure and Evidence on the Temporal Path of Presidential Influence": Presidential Influence in Congress: If We Ask the Wrong Questions, We Get the Wrong Answers. *American Journal of Political Science* 35:724–729.
- EDWARDS, GEORGE C. III, AND B. DAN WOOD. (1999) Who Influences Whom? The President, Congress, and the Media. *The American Political Science Review* 93:327–344.
- FEARON, JAMES D. (1994) Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes. *American Political Science Review* 88:577–592.
- FOYLE, DOUGLAS C. (1999) *Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- GAMSON, WILLIAM A., AND ANDRE MODIGLIANI. (1966) Knowledge and Foreign Policy Opinions: Some Models for Consideration. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 30:187–199.
- GANS, HERBERT J. (1979) *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- GERSHKOFF, AMY, AND SHANA KUSHNER. (2005) Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11 Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric. *Perspectives on Politics* 3:525–538.
- GINSBERG, BENJAMIN. (1986) *The Captive Public: How Mass Opinion Promotes State Power*. New York: Basic Books.
- GRABER, DORIS. (1984) *Processing the News: How People Tame the Information Tide*. New York: Longman.
- GRABER, DORIS A. (1997) *Mass Media and American Politics*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- GRAHAM, THOMAS W. (1994) Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy Decision Making. In *The New Politics of American Foreign Policy*, edited by D. Deese. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- HACKER, JACOB S., AND PAUL PIERSON. (2005) Abandoning the Middle: The Bush Tax Cuts and the Limits of Democratic Control. *Perspectives on Politics* 3:33–53.
- HARTLEY, THOMAS, AND BRUCE RUSSETT. (1992) Public Opinion and the Common Defense: Who Governs Military Spending in the United States? *American Political Science Review* 86: 905–915.
- HERBST, SUSAN. (1993) *Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- HERMAN, EDWARD, AND NOAM CHOMSKY. (1988) *Manufacturing Consent*. New York: Pantheon.
- HINCKLEY, BARBARA. (1994) *Less than Meets the Eye: Foreign Policy Making and the Myth of the Assertive Congress*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- HOLSTI, OLE R. (1992) Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus. Mershon Series: Research Programs and Debates. *International Studies Quarterly* 36:439–466.
- HOLSTI, OLE R. (2004) *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- IYENGAR, SHANTO. (1991) *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- IYENGAR, SHANTO, AND DONALD R. KINDER. (1987) *News that Matters: Television and American Opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- JACOBS, LAWRENCE R. (1992) Public Opinion and Policymaking in the U.S. and Britain. *Comparative Politics* 23:199–217.
- JACOBS, LAWRENCE R., AND ROBERT Y. SHAPIRO. (1995) The Rise of Presidential Polling: The Nixon White House in Historical Perspective. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 59:163–195.
- JACOBS, LAWRENCE R., AND ROBERT Y. SHAPIRO. (2000) *Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- JENTLESON, BRUCE W. (1992) The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion and the Use of Military Force. *International Studies Quarterly* 36:49–74.
- JONES, BRYAN D. (1994) *Reconceiving Decision-Making in Democratic Politics: Attention, Choice, and Public Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- KEGLEY, CHARLES W., AND EUGENE R. WITTKOPE. (1996) *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- KENNAN, GEORGE. (1951) *American Diplomacy, 1900–1950*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- KERBEL, MATTHEW R. (1994) *Edited for Television: CNN, ABC, and the 1992 Presidential Campaign*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- KEY, V. O. JR. (1961) *Public Opinion and American Democracy*. New York: Knopf.
- KINGDON, JOHN W. (1984) *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- KINGDON, JOHN. (1989) *Congressmen's Voting Decisions*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- KOLLMAN, KEN. (1998) *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- KULL, STEVEN, AND CLAY RAMSAY. (2002) How Policymakers Misperceive U.S. Public Opinion on Foreign Policy. In *Navigating Public Opinion: Polls, Policy, and the Future of American Democracy*, edited by J. Manza, F. Cook and B. Page. New York: Oxford University Press.
- KUSNITZ, LEONARD A. (1984) *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: America's China Policy*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- LIGHT, PAUL C. (1982) *The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Carter*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- LINDSAY, JAMES M. (1992–1993) Congress and Foreign Policy: Why the Hill Matters. *Political Science Quarterly* 107:607–628.
- LINDSAY, JAMES M. (1994) *The Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- LIPPMANN, WALTER. (1955) *Essays in the Public Philosophy*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- MANSBRIDGE, JANE. (2003) Rethinking Representation. *American Political Science Review* 97:515–528.
- MARGOLIS, MICHAEL, AND GARY MAUSER, EDS (1989) *Manipulating Public Opinion: Essays on Public Opinion as a Dependent Variable*. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- MAYER, WILLIAM G. (1992) *The Changing American Mind: How and Why American Public Opinion Changed between 1960 and 1988*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- MC COMBS, MAXWELL E., AND DONALD L. SHAW. (1972) The Agenda-Setting Function of the Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36:176–187.
- MEARSHEIMER, JOHN J. (1990) Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War. *International Security* 15:5–56.
- MILLER, WARREN, AND DONALD STOKES. (1963) Constituency Influence in Congress. *American Political Science Review* 57:45–56.
- MONROE, ALAN D. (1998) Public Opinion and Public Policy, 1980–1993. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 62: 6–28.
- MORGENTHAU, HANS J. (1978) *Politics Among Nations*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Knopf.
- MOXEY, LINDA M., AND ANTHONY J. SANFORD. (1993) *Communicating Quantities*. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- NEUSTADT, RICHARD. (1960) *Presidential Power*. New York: Wiley.
- NIEBUHR, REINHOLD. (1959) *The Structure of Nations and Empires*. New York: Scribner.
- NINCIC, MIROSLAV, AND BARBARA HINCKLEY. (1991) Foreign Policy and the Evaluation of Presidential Candidates. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35:333–356.
- PAGE, BENJAMIN I. (1994) Democratic Responsiveness? Untangling the Links between Public Opinion and Policy. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 27:25–29.
- PAGE, BENJAMIN I., AND ROBERT Y. SHAPIRO. (1992) *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- PASTOR, ROBERT A. (1980) *Congress and the Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy, 1929–1976*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- PEAKE, JEFFREY S. (2002) Coalition Building and Overcoming Legislative Gridlock in Foreign Policy. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 32:67–83.
- POWLICK, PHILIP J. (1991) The Attitudinal Bases for Responsiveness to Public Opinion among American Foreign Policy Officials. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35:611–641.
- POWLICK, PHILIP J. (1995) The Sources of Public Opinion for American Foreign Policy Officials. *International Studies Quarterly* 39:427–451.
- POWLICK, PHILIP J., AND ANDREW Z. KATZ. (1998) Defining the American Public Opinion/Foreign Policy Nexus. *Mershon International Studies Review* 42:29–61.

- REILLY, JOHN E. (1995) *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1995*. Chicago: Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.
- RUSSETT, BRUCE. (1990) *Controlling the Sword*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- SCHLESINGER, ARTHUR M. JR. (1974) *The Imperial Presidency*. New York: Popular Library.
- SMALL, MELVIN. (1988) *Johnson, Nixon, and the Doves*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- SMITH, ALASTAIR. (1998) International Crises and Domestic Politics. *American Political Science Review* 92:623–638.
- SNYDER, JACK L. (1991) *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- SOBEL, RICHARD. (2001) *The Impact of Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy Since Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- SOROKA, STUART. (2003) Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy. *Press/Politics* 8:27–48.
- SULLIVAN, TERRY. (1991) The Bank Account Presidency: A New Measure and Evidence on the Temporal Path of Presidential Influence. *American Journal of Political Science* 35:686–723.
- TOURANGEAU, ROGER, LANCE J. RIPS, AND KENNETH RASINSKI. (2000) *The Psychology of Survey Response*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- VAN EVERA, STEPHEN. (1984) The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War. *International Security* 9:58–107.
- VASQUEZ, JOHN A. (1985) Domestic Contention on Critical Foreign-Policy Issues: The Case of the United States. *International Organization* 39(4):643–666.
- VASQUEZ, JOHN A., AND RICHARD W. MANSBACH. (1983) The Issue Cycle: Conceptualizing Long-Term Global Political Change. *International Organization* 37:257–279.
- WALTZ, KENNETH N. (1979) *Theory of International Politics*. Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.
- WALTZ, KENNETH N. (1997) Evaluating Theories. *The American Political Science Review* 91:913–917.
- WITTKOPF, EUGENE. (1990) *Faces of Internationalism: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- WOOD, B. DAN, AND JEFFREY S. PEAKE. (1998) The Dynamics of Foreign Policy Agenda Setting. *The American Political Science Review* 92:173–184.

Copyright of International Studies Quarterly is the property of Blackwell Publishing Limited and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.