The Impact of Attitudes toward Foreign Policy Goals on Public Preferences among Presidential Candidates: A Study of Issue Publics and the Attentive Public in the 2000 U.S. Presidential Election

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Some scholars have argued that the American public is minimally engaged in foreign policy issues and rarely makes use of them when making vote choices in elections. This article takes a novel approach to revisiting this issue in the context of the 2000 presidential election: focusing on Americans' attitudes toward the goals of foreign policy (e.g., preventing other countries from polluting the environment, converting nondemocratic governments into democratic ones) rather than on the specific procedural means for achieving those goals. The authors find that citizens' evaluations of foreign policy goals appear to have had considerable impact on their candidate preferences, especially among members of a goal's "issue public" and among the segment of the public most generally attentive to public affairs, and when candidates took clear and distinct stands on the issues.

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At each moment in history, every democratic government finds itself facing many national problems in need of solution, and as a result, a primary mission of government is

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formulating, proposing, evaluating, ratifying, and implementing policies to address numerous issues. Throughout the history of the United States, much of government's attention has been devoted to such domestic issues as unemployment, crime, education, social welfare, health care, environmental pollution, energy provision, and more. Such problems pose immediate and obvious threats to American citizens, apparent in many people's daily lives. At the same time, however, the U.S. government has always spent a great deal of effort dealing with issues of international relations: managing cooperation with allies; providing financial aid to countries in need; managing trade relations; building, equipping, and maintaining the U.S. military; combating terrorism, and at times, going to war.

This process of formulating policies and implementing them is importantly shaped by a nation's populace, via many routes. Citizens can and do make their policy attitudes known to government officials via opinion polls, by giving money to lobbying organizations, and by attending rallies. Individuals can also communicate their views on policy issues directly to elected representatives by sending letters or making telephone calls. And citizens can use their policy attitudes when deciding which candidates for public office to support, thus enhancing the likelihood that the elected officials will share voters' own views.

In order for the members of the general public to take any of these steps, they must have formed attitudes on policy issues. They must think about and understand an issue enough to decide which policy approaches they wish to support and which they wish to oppose. Therefore, understanding when citizens form and express opinions on policy issues and when they do not has been a topic of study for political scientists for decades.

One particularly intriguing question in this arena has been the extent to which Americans form and express opinions on foreign policy issues. According to some scholars, most people are only engaged by policy matters that directly touch their own lives, such as taxes and health care (e.g., Almond 1950; Kagay and Caldeira 1980; Light and Lake 1985; Rosenau 1961). Foreign policy, by its very nature, involves matters that play out far away from most citizens. Certainly, the news media have brought vivid images of distant places into Americans' living rooms, and very recent history has made the everyday relevance of foreign peoples especially apparent to all Americans. But relations with African countries, economic aid to Mexico, and weapons agreements with Russia have implications for most people that are vague at best. Therefore, say some scholars, most issues of foreign affairs are unlikely to be of sufficient concern to most people most of the time for them to form opinions about desirable or undesirable courses of action (e.g., Almond 1950; Converse 1964; Hughes 1978; Rosenau 1961). As a result, vote choices and lobbying organization efforts will rarely reflect such opinions.

But who composes the minority contradicting this general rule? Who does, in fact, use international relations matters to decide which candidates to support and to give money to lobbying organizations with purely international foci? Two different and competing scholarly answers to these questions are evident in the literature. According to Almond (1950), this subgroup is the "attentive public," an elite group of citizens who are especially attentive to and informed about a wide range of public affairs issues. People for whom CNN and *The New York Times* are central components of everyday life cannot help but learn and ruminate about a wide range of foreign affairs issues, so they form and use attitudes on all of them. To

the extent that government's foreign policy actions are shaped by public opinion, it is these individuals' opinions that should be consequential because these are the people with such opinions (e.g., Almond 1950; Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996). And because this group is relatively small, the impact of international relations on election outcomes should be comparably small.

A different perspective on this issue has been offered by Krosnick (1990) in elaborating the notion of "issue publics." According to his view, it would be extremely difficult for any individual to think and learn about a wide array of policy issues, form attitudes on them all, and then use all of those attitudes to guide his or her political behavior. The information-gathering and information-processing challenges alone would be gargantuan, even for an individual with a great deal of cognitive skill and a great deal of free time. Of course, for some political scientists themselves, this is quite possible to achieve because foreign affairs are their lives–likewise for international investment bankers and intelligence officers working for the federal government at the CIA. But even these individuals tend to specialize–to know most about just a few regions of the world, rather than attending to affairs across the entire globe.

Furthermore, the emotional side of the experience Almond (1950) described would be debilitating as well. In the extreme, becoming opinionated and invested in any policy issue is much like a marriage–it requires a constant commitment of attention and a commitment to nurture and express one's opinions in a range of contexts. From policy engagement comes not merely cold, hard facts in memory but passion and conviction as well, a strong sense of what is right and a strong desire to express it. Just as marriage to more than one person is hard to imagine, so is true engagement in numerous foreign affairs issues. Therefore, people must be selective about engaging in policy issues. One person is likely to form and express real opinions on only a handful of issues at most, and any one issue will attract only a small, idiosyncratic group of citizens as its issue public, the people who care deeply about it and press government to do what they want on it. And issue public membership is driven not merely by exposure to news stories in the media but rather by a person's own unique fingerprint of material self-interests, identifications with reference groups and reference individuals, and cherished abstract values (see Boninger, Krosnick, and Berent 1995).

Taken together, the perspectives we have reviewed thus far share a core assumption: that international affairs will be on the cognitive "plates" of only a small subset of American citizens at any one time, due to the inherent remoteness of those issues. But these perspectives diverge when it comes to identifying which citizens will be engaged in which issues and why. Thus, there is an intriguing tension here worthy of careful investigation. But there is no necessity that only one of these perspectives is correct. Perhaps passion-driven issue public membership is one instigator of engagement in international affairs, and hobby-like regular consumption of political news is another, independent instigator. And the copresence of the two may be especially potent.

In this article, we explore these issues with a focus on the 2000 U.S. presidential election. In particular, we explore the role that foreign policy issues played in determining the outcome of that election and test whether their involvement resembles that anticipated by the attentive public perspective or that anticipated by the issue public perspective or both. In

doing so, we take as a touchstone an important article by Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida (1989), who explored the cognitive accessibility of international issues in the minds of American citizens and their abilities to see differences between presidential candidates' stances on these issues and their uses of these issues when forming vote choices in presidential elections. Analyzing data from the 1980 and 1984 National Election Study surveys and a 1984 Gallup survey, these investigators examined a range of foreign policy issues, including defense spending, the arms race, cooperation with the Soviet Union, and the Iran hostage crisis.

Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida (1989) found that in each survey, at least 80 percent of respondents reported their own positions on each issue, at least 70 percent were able to identify both their own positions and those of presidential candidates, and at least 60 percent were also able to differentiate between the candidates' positions on the issues. More than one-third of respondents mentioned international issues as the most important problem facing the country, and one-fifth mentioned such issues as the most important problem facing them personally. Foreign and domestic issues did not differ in terms of any of these criteria. Finally, when vote choice was regressed on an index of foreign policy attitudes, an index of domestic policy attitudes, party identification, and attitudes toward the candidates, foreign policy attitudes' effects were as strong or stronger than those of domestic issues. So the authors concluded that attitudes on foreign affairs are no less available or accessible to or used by Americans than are domestic issues (p. 135).

The results of Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida's (1989) study are certainly compelling and challenge the notion of a public uniquely disinterested in foreign affairs. However, the National Election Studies and the Gallup poll that these investigators analyzed have inherent limitations in this context because those surveys were not designed to provide broad and deep coverage of opinions on foreign policy issues. Indeed, issues addressed in the National Election Study questionnaires are carefully chosen to be those that have engaged widespread public discussion for sustained periods of time and are especially likely to be salient to people at the time of a particular election. In a sense, then, there is a potential sampling problem here, not of survey respondents but of survey questions. To make a statement about the cognitive availability or use of foreign affairs issues, one must presumably generate a broad and perhaps even "representative" sample of all such issues to address in a survey, to be sure that one's conclusions are not idiosyncratically tied to the particular issues chosen for inclusion in a particular survey.

This potential concern becomes more compelling when one takes note of the particular foreign affairs issues that Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida (1989) examined when assessing impact on vote choice. Across the three surveys, these investigators looked at only four issues: spending of U.S. tax dollars on the U.S. military, U.S. relations with the Soviet Union, U.S. involvement in Central American nations, and an issue identified as "strong and tough stance" in an appendix to the article. One might argue that defense spending in particular is not the quintessential sort of foreign affairs issue of interest to Almond (1950)—indeed, military spending might be viewed as having a heavy domestic/economic component because of its implications for Americans' jobs and American companies' revenues. And relations with the Soviet Union and Central American countries could not have been much more salient in the news media at the times of the 1980 and 1984 National Election Study surveys. Thus, the array of issues available to Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida in these

surveys might have been sufficiently limited to yield conclusions that would not be sustained by a study of broader scope.

We explored these theoretical questions anew using a broader gauge instrument, a survey tapping a wider array of foreign policy opinions and expressly designed to test the attentive public and issue public characterizations of engagement in foreign policy issues. In particular, we examined how attitudes on foreign policy issues influenced presidential candidate evaluations in 2002. We also examined whether these relations were stronger among members of the attentive public (as identified by widely used measures of general political knowledge) and among issue public members (as identified by widely used measures of the personal importance of issues).

Foreign Policy Goals

One important distinguishing feature of this investigation is our approach to measuring public attitudes on foreign policy issues. The serious study of public opinion on foreign policy issues through questionnaires dates back at least fifty years, and many different approaches to questioning have been employed across many investigations. But one thing that most past studies share is a focus on very specific aspects of policy implementation. For example, Hurwitz and Peffley (1987) noted that

> typical [National Election Study] questions . . . ask whether farmers and businessman "should be allowed to do business with Communist countries" (1968), whether China "should be admitted to the United Nations" (1972), and whether spending on defense or foreign aid is "too little," "too much," or "just about right?" (various years). (P. 242)

One popular National Election Study item asked respondents whether they think the United States should be actively involved in the affairs of other nations or whether the United States should stay at home and mind its own business (e.g., Miller and Shanks 1996). Holsti and Rosenau (1990) asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed that "there is nothing wrong with using the C.I.A. to try to undermine hostile governments," that "it is vital to enlist the cooperation of the U.N. in settling international disputes," or that "the United States should take whatever steps are necessary to sustain the present regime in Saudi Arabia" (p. 99).

Likewise, a recent in-depth survey investigation of public opinion on foreign policy by the Program on International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland asked questions such as,

> I am going to read you two statements. Please tell me which one comes closest to your point of view. Statement A: "Now that the cold war is over and communism has collapsed, it is no longer necessary to have such a large diplomatic establishment with embassies all over the world. Given the federal budget crunch it is better to spend these resources at home." Statement B: "The end of the cold war has unleashed new problems so that the world is still a dangerous place. Also, the U.S. economy has become more interdependent with the world economy. Thus it is important for the U.S. to maintain vigorous diplomatic efforts." [And] "Do you favor or oppose the U.S. paying its UN dues in full?" (Kull, Destler, and Ramsay 1997, 197)

The literature is filled with countless questions like these, items that require background knowledge to interpret terminology and understand the current context of an issue and that often require an understanding of the current government policy to judge whether change from it is desirable.

We suspect that Hurwitz and Peffley (1987) were right when they said that "such questions are quite specific–probably too specific. . . . Survey questions of such specificity are likely to miss the level at which most individuals' foreign policy cognition takes place" (p. 242). In particular, most survey questions we have seen tapping foreign policy attitudes have been focused on implementation strategies–methods by which government pursues some larger, more abstract goal. So in the case of U.N. dues payments, the question quoted above is not about whether a broader policy goal should be pursued (i.e., Should the United States bring pressure on the United Nations to change its procedures?). Rather, the question asks whether a particular tactic for pursuing that goal should be implemented (i.e., not paying dues).

Answers to this sort of question are in a sense straightforward because they reveal whether a respondent favors use of the tactic. But in another sense, such questions are ambiguous because a person may express opposition to a tactic for either of two different reasons: (1) because he or she opposes pursuing the larger goal of the tactic or (2) because he or she opposes the implementation strategy while endorsing the pursuit of the goal by other means. In the domain of racial attitudes, we have learned that people's endorsement of broad principles or abstract goals of policies can be very different from their endorsement of particular strategies for pursuing those goals (e.g., Schuman et al. 1998). So, too, it is probably worthwhile to measure people's endorsement of abstract goals in the foreign policy domain because these goals may be quite central in Americans' thinking about international affairs and may be handy tools that citizens use frequently to choose between presidential candidates.

Indeed, there is a real practicality to focusing on goals rather than implementation strategies when evaluating politicians and choosing elected representatives. The particular concrete crises that will face a country during any president's administration most likely cannot be anticipated in advance, and which particular implementation strategies will be viable at any given moment may be impossible to anticipate in advance as well. So trying to choose between candidates based on their attitudes toward particular implementation strategies being discussed at election time may be of limited value for ensuring that elected candidates once in office will do what a voter wants. But if a voter chooses to back a candidate who supports the broad, abstract goals that the voter favors, this may ensure greater and more fundamental agreement between voter and candidate when policy-making decisions are made down the road. This may give voters a particular incentive to form evaluations of general foreign policy goals and to use those evaluations to select among candidates competing for the presidency.

Some public opinion scholars have come close to exploring the nature and structure of citizens' endorsement of such goals. For example, Wittkopf (1981, 1986) analyzed surveys done by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations to identify principal dimensions underlying foreign policy attitudes and found two: support-oppose militant internationalism and support-oppose cooperative internationalism. But as broad and abstract as these might

seem, these dimensions are as much about implementation as they are about goals. Likewise, Hurwitz and Peffley (1987) sought to measure what they called attitudes toward "postures" that a government might adopt when dealing with other nations. People's preferred postures were measured by gauging their endorsement of government (1) being "strong and tough" in dealing with other nations (vs. "understanding and flexible"), (2) not getting involved militarily in other parts of the world except as a last resort (vs. using our military in other lands to help people who support our way of life), and (3) ensuring peace through military strength (vs. ensuring peace by sitting down with other nations and working out our disagreements). Yet again, these are clearly about implementation, not the larger goals being pursued.

In that spirit, then, we designed a series of new survey questions to tap people's endorsements of broad goals that foreign policy might be designed to pursue. The goals addressed were identified during a conference with foreign policy experts, including Philip Tetlock, Richard Herrmann, New Lebow, Andrew Katz, and other scholars on the Ohio State University faculty and from nearby universities. The goal of this conference was to identify as complete a list as possible of foreign policy goals, and the list finally settled on by the group was only slightly larger than the list pursued in the survey:

- helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people;
- preventing people in other countries from killing each other;
- preventing governments of other countries from hurting their own citizens;
- preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic;
- changing governments in other countries that are not democratic into governments that are democratic;
- stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans;
- helping resolve disputes between two other countries;
- preventing other countries from polluting the environment;
- helping American companies sell things to other countries;
- making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States;
- strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States;
- weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States; and
- making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States.

We sought to measure attitudes toward these goals, and we did so using psychology's most straightforward and face-valid approach: asking people whether they thought pursuing each of these goals was a good idea, a bad idea, or neither good nor bad, and then we followed up with additional questions to measure extremity of opinions and leaning. For comparison with past investigations, we also included a conventionally phrased question regarding desired levels of federal spending of tax dollars on the military, as well as a timely question about support for the "star wars" missile defense system that Mr. Bush advocated.

Identifying Issue Public Members

Although there are many different possible approaches one might take to identifying issue public members, we employed the method that has been used most often in the past: asking survey respondents how important each issue is to them personally (e.g., Krosnick

1988a, 1988b, 1990). From early on, researchers have distinguished between attitudes in terms of their importance (Festinger 1954, 1957; Newcomb 1956, 1961). Attitude importance is the degree to which a person is passionately concerned about and personally invested in an attitude (e.g., Converse 1970; Freedman 1964; Smith, Bruner, and White 1956). More important political attitudes tend to be bolstered by a great deal of accurate information on the issue, tend to be the topics of frequent thought, and tend to be expressed regularly via activist behaviors such as financial contributions to lobbying groups and letters and phone calls to elected officials (Krosnick 1988a, 1988b, 1990; Boninger et al. 1995). Thus, personal importance seems to be an effective indicator of cognitive, affective, and behavioral involvement in an issue, the hallmarks of membership in an issue public. Most important in this context, many studies have found that people's decisions on how to vote in elections are shaped by the policy issues that are most important to them personally (e.g., Aldrich and McKelvey 1977; Aldrich et al. 1979; Jackson 1973; Krosnick 1988b; Rabinowitz, Prothro, and Jacoby 1982; Schuman and Presser 1981; Shapiro 1969). We therefore used personal importance judgments to identify the members of issue publics for each of the foreign policy goals that our survey addressed and to get a better handle on the impact of endorsement of these goals on vote choices.

Identifying Attentive Public Members

Distinguishing attentive public members from nonmembers is also relatively straightforward in light of past empirical explorations. Almond (1950) argued that the attentive public consists largely of highly educated individuals who are very well informed about political affairs, both national and international. We used a general political knowledge quiz as an indicator of this construct, in line with many other investigations (e.g., Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996; Price and Zaller 1993; Zaller 1992).

Discerning Candidates' Positions regarding the Goals

The basic premise of this study is that people who are politically knowledgeable and who hold an issue to be personally important will prefer the presidential candidate whose policy attitude most closely corresponds to their own. But in order for a person to use a policy issue to choose between two candidates, the two candidates must take clear stands on the issue, and their stands must be clearly different from one another. Otherwise, no matter how much a voter may care about an issue, it will not be possible to use it to choose between two candidates whose positions are identical or unknown (see, e.g., Campbell et al. 1960). This means that issues on which the candidates did not take clear and different stands are unlikely to have influenced votes, even among voters who wanted to use the issue to make choices.

To identify the goals toward which the 2000 presidential candidates took clear and different stands, we examined the content of a sample of the text of candidates' public speeches and interviews done with the candidates prior to the 2000 election. We also content analyzed newspaper reports on the candidates' stump speeches and the official platforms adopted by the Democratic and Republican Parties. The materials used in this analysis were obtained

primarily from a CD prepared by Professor Shanto Iyengar of Stanford University, titled "In Their Own Words: Sourcebook for the 2000 Presidential Election," which contained transcripts of every public speech delivered by Al Gore and George W. Bush between June and October 2000. Additional material was obtained from the Web site www.issues2002.org/2000 (October 14, 2002); this site gathered material from leading American newspapers (such as *The New York Times* and *The Boston Globe*) and organized it to provide a list of quotations made by the presidential candidates on specific issues.

Two independent coders read the material and classified quotations and statements pertaining to each of the fifteen foreign policy goals listed earlier as being attributable to either Mr. Bush or Mr. Gore. Using these quotations, we identified the issues on which the candidates took clear and distinct positions and the issues on which this was not the case. We then used these insights as guides when interpreting the regression coefficients to be reported below.

The Candidates' Stands

Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people. In his speeches, Mr. Gore clearly advocated debt forgiveness for poor nations and economic engagement with such countries. He pledged to "give the poorest countries a hand up" by fostering economic engagement with Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas, as well as assisting them through debt relief. He said that the United States should do "our fair share to alleviate suffering in some of the most miserable corners of the globe" (www.issues2002.org/2000, October 14, 2002).

Mr. Bush acknowledged that poverty was an issue in Latin American and African countries and said he favored providing economic opportunities for these countries, saying that it was up to their governments to use these opportunities to alleviate poverty. His position is best exemplified by his statement that "we will apply the power of markets to the needs of the poor" (In their own words 2000, 583). Thus, Mr. Gore advocated more aggressive government help for poor countries to provide for their people and could be seen as more strongly supporting this goal.

Helping resolve disputes between two other countries, preventing governments of other countries from hurting their own citizens, and preventing people in other countries from killing each other. Mr. Gore stated that the United States, being a "natural leader of the world," must respond to violence in the rest of the world. Likewise, he said that he supported active U.S. intervention in places such as Kosovo, Bosnia, and Haiti on humanitarian grounds. In contrast, Mr. Bush said that the U.S. military should not be called on to be the peacemakers in other countries, and he was dismissive of Mr. Gore's "new security agenda," which he said added "all the world's ethnic or religious conflicts to an undiminished set of existing American responsibilities" (In their own words 2000, 601). Therefore, Mr. Gore was a stronger advocate of U.S. intervention to prevent violence in and between other countries.

Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States, weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States, building weapons to blow up missiles that have

been or might be fired at the United States, and increasing military spending. Mr. Bush was a strong advocate of maintaining peace by improving the technology level of existing weapons and other defense equipment; he said he supported increased defense spending because he felt that no price could be too high for freedom and security. He advocated spending on a massive and expensive missile defense system designed to defend against strikes by "rogue nations." In fact, he said that the United States should go ahead with its antiballistic missile deployment program even though it meant backing out of a treaty with Russia limiting such use. Mr. Bush argued that the antiballistic missile systems would not only protect America but also its allies from countries that "may try to hold us hostage or blackmail a friend." Stating that "the security of the United States is inseparable from the security of Europe," he pointed out the need for joint military planning by Europe and the United States and a mutual sharing of defense burdens.

Mr. Gore also said he favored increases in pay and other amenities for U.S. military personnel. However, he said he supported spending on a smaller, more limited, and less expensive missile defense system than the one proposed by Mr. Bush. Mr. Gore did not advocate violating the terms of the treaty with Russia to build such a system. Mr. Gore also did not strongly advocate the necessity of a system to protect the United States and its allies from missiles that might be fired at them. Therefore, Mr. Bush can be seen as a stronger advocate than Mr. Gore of the goals listed above.

Preventing other countries from polluting the environment. Mr. Gore had long championed the cause of the environment, and during the campaign, he did so by stating that new trade agreements entered into by the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, or the World Bank must negotiate and enforce environmental protection. Mr. Bush disagreed with Mr. Gore's position on this issue and said that labor and environmental issues must not be linked with trade agreements. Thus, Mr. Gore was a clearer advocate for preventing pollution by other nations.

Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States. Both candidates said they were in favor of making immigration easier, but there were fundamental differences between the ways they approached this issue. Mr. Gore stated that he was committed to improving Immigration and Naturalization Service so that it took less time to process immigration applications. He said that "with each wave of immigrants, we have become not only more diverse–but also more open and equal; . . . culturally richer" (www.issues2002.org/2000). One of Mr. Gore's initiatives as vice president involved clearing a three-year backlog of 1.2 million citizenship applications.

Mr. Bush also said he favored streamlining Immigration and Naturalization Service procedures to enable quicker processing of applications. He also said he supported increasing the quota of temporary guest worker visas, but at the same time, he advocated stricter enforcement to prevent illegal immigration from across the border, deportation of visa violators, and a longer waiting period prior to citizenship. Thus, Mr. Gore appeared to be more sympathetic to the needs of prospective immigrants.

Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans. Both candidates stated that they would take strong measures to defend America against terrorism. Thus, the candidates' statements offered no basis for preferring either candidate on this issue.

Helping American companies sell things to other countries and making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States. Mr. Bush and Mr. Gore both endorsed free trade. Mr. Bush said he supported free trade on "not just monetary but moral" grounds and stated that free trade is an issue that took priority (*The Economist*, September 30, 2000, in www.issues2002.org/2000). Mr. Gore was also an advocate of free trade, stating that he was in agreement with labor unions on the majority of issues but not on this one (*The New York Times*, March 11, 2000, in www.issues2002.org/2000). Thus, the two candidates did not take different positions on this issue.

Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic and changing governments in other countries that are not democratic into governments that are democratic. On the issue of American intervention to protect democracy, Mr. Gore stated that "American values and freedoms are a beacon unto nations, and we should use the power of our ideals to foster democracy . . . throughout the world" (In their own words 2000, 612). In addition, several of Mr. Gore's speeches proudly referred to American efforts to support democracy in Haiti, East Timor, and countries in Africa and in Asia. All of these comments indicated his support for pursuing the goal of promoting democracy abroad.

Mr. Bush's comments also indicated that he would work to promote democracy in other countries. For example, when speaking of Latin America, he avowed a "renewed commitment to democracy and freedom . . . because human freedom, in the long run, is our best weapon against poverty, disease and tyranny" (In their own words 2000, 582). In his speeches, he also alluded to his party's support of and celebration of the success of democracy in Mexico and the Philippines. Therefore, there is no reason to expect respondents who supported these goals to prefer one candidate to the other.

Survey Data Collection

Internet Sample Recruitment

The data collected for this study were collected via the Internet using approaches that are not especially widely understood yet, so we explain them in some detail. Many commercial firms are currently offering services involving Internet survey data collection, and the methodologies employed vary a great deal. Some surveys are conducted with any person who happens to be willing to answer the "question of the day," such as the CNN Quickvote and Today's Poll on Excite.com. Another type of Internet survey uses open invitations on popular sites to attract people interested in particular subjects (e.g., health and fitness, gardening, and consumer products) to complete lengthier questionnaires. None of these sur-

veys are based on probability samples, so their findings cannot be generalized to any population with confidence.

Among the firms interested in generating representative samples, two approaches stand out. One method, in keeping with long-standing traditions in market research, begins by recruiting potential respondents through invitations that are widely distributed in ways designed to yield participation by heterogeneous population subgroups. Then, panels of people are built from those who respond, so that the resulting panels resemble the nation as a whole in terms of particular demographics. Harris Interactive is one leading firm implementing this method. Knowledge Networks executes a very different approach: they implement representative sampling methods to recruit panels of respondents.

Harris Interactive method. Harris Interactive's data collection procedure begins by recruiting respondents from a number of sources, including the Harris Poll Online (HPOL) registration site, the Harris/Excite Poll registration links, HPOL banner advertisements, Epinion registrations, Excite product registrations, and Matchlogic sweepstakes. Less common routes of recruitment include links from popular sites such as NBC, WebMD, ZDNet, MTV, and a variety of Excite Web sites around the world (Excite Canada, Excite Italy, Excite Spain, Excite UK, etc.).

When respondents click on a link to register for HPOL, they are told that HPOL will allow them the opportunity to express their views, hopes, and opinions and that influential decision makers in government and business will be exposed to their responses. Then, respondents are asked for their e-mail addresses and some basic demographic information, such as gender, date of birth, occupation, education level, marital status, ethnicity, income, and primary language used in household. Requests for this information are accompanied by repeated assurances of confidentiality.

If they so desire, respondents can also click on a link to another Web page informing them of the benefits of being panel members for HPOL. On this page, participants are told they can potentially influence important decision makers in government, nonprofit organizations, and corporations and help to shape policies, products, and services. In addition, respondents have access to some of the key survey results, so they can see what others think and even get advance information before the results are published in national or international media. Tangible incentives, such as cash awards, free computer games, or discount coupons, were said to be provided to respondents who complete the surveys.

When a specific study is planned, panel members are selected based on specific demographic attributes (e.g., age, gender, region of residence), such that the distributions of these attributes match those in the general population. Each selected panel member is then sent an e-mail invitation that includes a brief description of the content of the survey, a hyperlink that directs the respondent to the Web address where the questionnaire is posted, and a unique password that allows the respondent to access the questionnaire. As respondents answer questions, they can track their progress via a status bar that shows what proportion of the questionnaire is completed. Respondents are permitted to stop before they complete a survey and return to it at a later time. Respondents who do not respond to the e-mail invitation or do not return to finish incomplete questionnaires are sent reminder e-mails.

Knowledge Networks method. Another approach to Internet data collection involves providing representative national samples with equipment to connect to the Internet, as Knowledge Networks has been doing since 1998. Justification for their approach begins with the notion that to produce nationally representative samples, a researcher can implement probability sampling procedures, wherein all units in the population have known, nonzero probabilities of selection. To this end, Knowledge Networks recruits panel members through random digit dialing (RDD) telephone interviewing techniques and provides them with WebTV equipment in exchange for completing a ten-minute questionnaire each week. Although this sampling technique entails the coverage error of excluding households without telephones (about 5 percent), it has significantly broader coverage than sampling techniques that draw only from computer users with Internet access. Nonetheless, potential respondents can drop out of the panel at several stages throughout the recruitment process: some cannot be contacted for the initial RDD telephone interview, others may be contacted but refuse to sign up for the panel, those who sign up for the panel may not eventually have the WebTV installed in their homes, and those initially in the panel may subsequently drop out of their own accord. If the people who drop out are different from those who have stayed in the Knowledge Networks panel, research findings based on the panel may not be generalizable without bias to the entire population in this country.

Before the initial recruiting telephone calls are made, households in the RDD sample with listed addresses are sent letters describing the proposed exchange relationship. During the initial telephone interview, respondents are told they have been selected to participate in an important national study and that they will be given a WebTV receiver (which would allow them free access to the Internet), as well as answer brief surveys on their television. It is emphasized that their participation in the surveys is very important and no other household can replace theirs. Then, respondents are asked for the extent to which members of their households are experienced with the Internet and proficient with computers. Finally, information is obtained on all members of that household in terms of names, age, gender, and relationship to the primary respondent.

Once the WebTV equipment is installed in their homes, respondents are asked to complete profile surveys that record the key attributes of all household members. For example, respondents are asked about their gender, dates of birth, ethnicity, whether they head their households, highest level of education attained, work status, primary language spoken in household, income, interest in politics, voter registration status, party identification, political self-designation (liberal, moderate, or conservative), and religious affiliation.

All adults (aged eighteen or older) of the selected household are asked to respond to surveys received via WebTV. Each panel member is sent one short survey per week, usually not exceeding fifteen minutes. In the rare instances when panel members are asked to respond to longer surveys, they are given a week off or some other form of incentive. Respondents can respond to the surveys at any time at their convenience and are permitted to stop before they complete a questionnaire and return to it at a later time. Respondents who fail to respond to eight consecutive surveys have the WebTV receiver removed from their homes.

Data Collection for This Study

In June 2000, 12,523 participants were pulled from the HPOL database using three demographic attributes: gender, age, and region of residence (Northeast, South, Midwest, West), and attempts were made to ensure the sample matched population estimates on these three attributes using population estimates from the Current Population Survey. Of the 12,523 participants who were sent invitations via e-mail to participate in the preelection survey, 2,306 completed the questionnaire, yielding a panel completion rate of 18 percent.

The Knowledge Networks survey was conducted in July 2000 with 4,935 respondents. The questionnaire was broken up into three modules, each of which was administered at a separate time. Each of the 7,054 people assigned to the first module received the second module on the following week and the third module one week after that. At the end of the four weeks, 4,935 respondents had completed all three modules, yielding a panel completion rate of 70 percent.

When we combined the two samples, their demographics were fairly representative of the nation as a whole (see Table 1), though more educated and with higher incomes.

Measures and Coding

Feeling thermometer ratings. Respondents were asked to report their attitudes toward Vice President Al Gore and Governor George W. Bush on a 101-point thermometer scale. Respondents were instructed that the larger the number they picked, the more they liked the person. They were told that ratings between 50 and 100 indicated favorable ratings of the person, ratings between 0 and 50 indicated unfavorable ratings of the person, and a rating of 50 indicated neither a favorable nor unfavorable rating of the person. The order of presentation of the names was rotated across participants. Responses were recoded to range from 0 (*most unfavorable rating*) to 1 (*most favorable rating*). An index of candidate preference was created by subtracting thermometer ratings of Mr. Bush from thermometer ratings for Mr. Gore, and then this index was coded to range from 0 (meaning the *strongest possible preference for Mr. Bush*) to 1 (meaning the *strongest possible preference for Mr. Gore*).

Attitudes toward foreign policy goals. Respondents were asked to rate their attitudes toward the foreign policy goals described earlier. These five goals were ones advocated most by Mr. Gore:

- helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people;
- helping resolve disputes between two other countries;
- preventing governments of other countries from hurting their own citizens;
- preventing people in other countries from killing each other; and
- preventing other countries from polluting the environment.

Therefore, responses were coded 0 (*very bad thing for the federal government to do*), 0.25 (*somewhat bad thing to do*), 0.50 (*neither good nor bad thing to do*), 0.75 (*somewhat good thing to do*), and 1 (*very good thing for the federal government to do*). Thus, larger numbers were associated with more pro-Gore positions.

TABLE 1
Demographic Composition of the Survey Sample versus the Current Population Survey (in percentages)

Demographic	*Survey Sample*	*2000 Current Population Survey March Supplement*
Education		
Some high school	5.2	16.9
High school graduate	20.4	32.8
Some college	33.7	19.8
College graduate	25.9	23.0
Postgraduate work	14.8	7.5
Total	100.0	100.0
n	7,231	
Income ($)		
Less than 25,000	13.8	30.5
25,000-50,000	32.5	28.3
50,000-75,000	27.0	18.2
75,000-100,000	14.1	10.1
100,000 or greater	12.7	12.5
Total	100.0	100.0
n	6,311	
Age		
18-24	7.8	13.2
25-34	19.8	18.7
35-44	24.4	22.1
45-54	24.5	18.3
55-64	13.4	11.6
65-74	6.8	8.7
75 or older	3.2	7.4
Total	100.0	100.0
n	7,229	
Race		
White	87.4	83.3
African American	5.8	11.9
Other	6.8	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0
n	6,904	
Gender		
Male	52.7	48.0
Female	47.3	52.0
Total	100.0	100.0
n	7,216	

These three goals were advocated most by Mr. Bush:

- strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States,
- weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States, and
- building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at the United States.

Therefore, responses were coded 0 (*very good thing for the federal government to do*), 0.25 (*somewhat good thing to do*), 0.50 (*neither good nor bad thing to do*), 0.75 (*somewhat bad thing to do*), and 1 (*very bad thing for the federal government to do*), so that larger numbers were associated with more pro-Gore attitudes.

Our content analysis provided no basis for concluding that one candidate was more supportive than the other of the two goals related to free trade:

- helping American companies sell things to other countries and
- making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States.

However, initial regressions indicated that more support for Mr. Gore was weakly associated with more support for helping American companies to sell things to other countries and with less support for making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States. Therefore, responses to the item about helping American companies were coded 0 (*very bad thing for the federal government to do*), 0.25 (*somewhat bad thing to do*), 0.50 (*neither good nor bad thing to do*), 0.75 (*somewhat good thing to do*), and 1 (*very good thing for the federal government to do*). Thus, larger numbers were associated with more pro-Gore positions. Ratings of making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States were coded 0 (*very good thing for the federal government to do*), 0.25 (*somewhat good thing to do*), 0.50 (*neither good nor bad thing to do*), 0.75 (*somewhat bad thing to do*), and 1 (*very bad thing for the federal government to do*), so that larger numbers were again associated with more pro-Gore attitudes.

Our content analysis also provided no basis for concluding that one candidate was more supportive than the other of the three remaining goals:

- stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans,
- preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic, and
- changing governments in other countries that are not democratic into governments that are democratic.

Therefore, we arbitrarily chose to code reports 0 (*very bad thing for the federal government to do*), 0.25 (*somewhat bad thing to do*), 0.50 (*neither good nor bad thing to do*), 0.75 (*somewhat good thing to do*), and 1 (*very good thing for the federal government to do*).

Respondents were also asked whether the federal government should make it easier or more difficult for people from other countries to move to the United States or keep these rules about the same as they are now. Because Mr. Gore was the stronger advocate for open immigration, responses were coded 0 (*much more difficult*), 0.25 (*a little more difficult*), 0.50 (*about the same*), 0.75 (*a little easier*), and 1 (*much easier*), so that larger numbers corresponded to more pro-Gore positions.

Finally, respondents were asked whether the federal government should spend more money on the military than it does now, less money on the military, or about the same amount as it spends now. Because Mr. Bush was a stronger advocate of increased military spending, responses to this item were coded 0 (*a lot more*), 0.25 (*somewhat more*), 0.50 (*about the same*), 0.75 (*somewhat less*), and 1 (*a lot less*), so that larger numbers corresponded to more pro-Gore positions.

Personal importance of policy goals. Respondents were asked to indicate how personally important each of the policy issues was to them. Responses were coded 0 (*not important at all*), 0.25 (*not too important*), 0.50 (*somewhat important*), 0.75 (*very important*), and 1 (*extremely important*).

Political knowledge. The five-item political knowledge quiz asked the following questions: (1) Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by Trent Lott? (2) Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not? (3) How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate and House to override a presidential veto? (4) Which political party currently has the most members in the House of Representatives at Washington? and (5) Would you say that one of the political parties is more conservative than the other? (If yes) Which party would you say is more conservative? A correct answer to each question was coded 1; incorrect answers were coded 0. An index of political knowledge was computed by summing the number of correct answers a person gave. Very few respondents gave incorrect answers to all five quiz questions ($n = 263$) or to four of them ($n = 598$), so respondents were coded as follows: 0 (zero to three correct answers), 0.50 (four correct answers), and 1 (all five correct answers).

Results

Frequency Distributions

Feeling thermometer ratings. Slightly more respondents gave higher feeling thermometer ratings to Mr. Bush than to Mr. Gore than did the reserve. Sixty-two percent of respondents rated Mr. Bush at the midpoint or higher on this scale, whereas 55 percent gave similar ratings to Mr. Gore. The mean rating for Mr. Gore was 45.3, whereas it was 51.9 for Mr. Bush.

Evaluations of foreign policy goals. As shown in Table 2, there was plenty of disagreement in our sample about the desirability of pursuing most of the foreign policy goals addressed in our questions. Shown in the upper portion of Table 2 are the issues on which the candidates took clear and distinct stands from one another during the campaign. And at the bottom of the table are the issues on which this was not the case. And across all of these issues, only one manifested near unanimity: 97.1 percent of respondents said that stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans would be a *very or somewhat good* thing for the federal government to do, with 86.3 percent saying it would be a *very good thing*. But this level of unanimity was not observed on any other issue.

A close second in terms of majority support was environmental protection: 56.8 percent felt that it would be *very good* for the federal government to prevent other countries from polluting the environment, and 32.7 percent felt that it would be *somewhat good*.

More disagreement was evident on several issues. Respondents were divided regarding the broader goal of playing "big brother" to other nations. Although more than 50 percent endorsed helping poor countries provide for their people, helping resolve disputes between two other countries, preventing governments of other countries from hurting their own citi-

TABLE 2
Distributions of Attitudes toward Foreign Policy Goals

	Response (%)							
Issue	*Very Bad Thing*	*Somewhat Bad Thing*	*Neither*	*Somewhat Good Thing*	*Very Good Thing*	*Total: Very Bad to Very Good*	*Total: Very Good + Somewhat Good*	n
"Big brother" to other countries								
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	5.2	9.7	13.8	43.5	27.8	100	71.3	7,228
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	4.7	9.0	15.7	42.9	27.7	100	70.6	7,221
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	7.3	10.4	15.6	40.4	26.2	100	66.6	7,209
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	10.3	12.0	22.8	34.9	20.0	100	54.9	7,205
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	5.3	15.3	24.8	42.8	11.8	100	54.6	7,214
Defending America								
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	3.1	4.0	5.3	24.0	63.5	100	87.5	7,212
Increasing military spending[a]	7.5	11.3	36.3	25.2	19.8	100	45.0	7,211
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	4.4	11.3	17.8	37.5	28.9	100	66.4	7,207
Protecting the environment								
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	1.8	2.2	6.5	32.7	56.8	100	89.5	7,214
Immigration								
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States[b]	34.0	26.7	29.0	7.7	2.5	100	10.2	7,221
No effects expected								
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	0.4	0.5	1.9	10.8	86.3	100	97.1	7,219
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	1.6	3.4	11.8	40.2	43.0	100	83.2	7,213
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	12.8	31.1	20.8	25.5	9.8	100	35.3	7,217
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	8.0	13.3	27.0	32.8	18.9	100	51.7	7,203
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	7.8	14.1	27.6	37.2	13.3	100	50.5	7,192

a. In order from left to right across this row, the response options for this item were *a lot less*, *somewhat less*, *about the same*, *somewhat more*, and *a lot more*.
b. In order from left to right across this row, the response options for this item were *a lot harder*, *somewhat harder*, *about the same*, *somewhat easier*, and *a lot easier*.

zens, preventing people in other countries from killing each other, and strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States, strong endorsement was evident only between about 12 percent and 28 percent of respondents.

Even regarding goals involving defending America from attack, there was some disagreement. Although 87.5 percent of respondents thought building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at the United States was a good idea, only 45.0 percent felt that military spending should be increased, and 66.4 percent thought it was a good idea to weaken the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States.

On issues on which the two presidential candidates did not adopt clearly different positions, respondents were not unanimous in their views, either. Only 51.7 percent of respondents thought preventing democratic governments from being turned into governments that are not democratic was a good idea, and the corresponding number for changing governments that are not democratic into governments that are democratic was 50.5 percent. A large majority of respondents, 83.2 percent, thought that helping American companies sell things to other countries was a good idea; only 35.3 percent of respondents said making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States was a good idea; 43.9 percent felt that this was a bad thing for the federal government to do.

In general, then, there was plenty of disagreement among Americans regarding the desirability of pursuing these various foreign policy goals. Without such disagreement, we could not assess the impact that people's attitudes on these issues had on their candidate preferences. Because this disagreement was generally substantial, we could proceed to assess whether that disagreement would allow us to explain variation across respondents in candidate evaluations.

Importance of foreign policy goals. Table 3 displays the distributions of personal importance ratings of the various goals, and these are quite typical distributions (see, e.g., Krosnick 1990). For most issues and most people, importance was relatively low, *somewhat important* or less. The most interesting group is the individuals for whom an issue is *extremely important*. These are the core members of an issue public. And for these issues, the issue publics ranged from a small size of 5.9 percent (for changing governments that are not democratic into governments that are democratic) to a high of 38.6 percent (for stopping terrorist groups from hurting or killing Americans). The other relatively large issue public involved building missiles to blow up missiles fired at the United States (33.5 percent), a goal championed by Mr. Bush, and preventing other countries from polluting the environment (26.8 percent), a goal championed by Mr. Gore. In comparison to issue publics on domestic issues (see Krosnick 1990), these issue publics are no smaller and suggest that public engagement in these foreign policy goals in this form is no less common.

These importance ratings were essentially uncorrelated with general political knowledge (see Table 4). Correlations ranged from a low of –.10 ($p < .01$, $n = 7{,}221$, for making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States) to a high of .15 ($p < .01$, $n = 7{,}193$, for preventing democratic governments from being turned into governments that are not democratic). Thus, issue public membership was essentially independent of attentive public membership (see also Krosnick 1990).

TABLE 3
Distributions of the Personal Importance of Foreign Policy Issues

	Response (%)							
Issue	*Not Important at All*	*Not Too Important*	*Somewhat Important*	*Very Important*	*Extremely Important*	*Total: Not at All Important to Extremely Important*	*Total: Very Important + Extremely Important*	n
"Big brother" to other countries								
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	3.4	20.8	47.0	21.0	7.8	100	28.8	7,210
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	3.1	16.9	48.0	22.3	9.6	100	31.9	7,203
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	4.6	19.1	47.2	20.4	8.7	100	29.1	7,199
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	6.0	21.7	43.8	20.1	8.4	100	28.5	7,194
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	2.9	21.0	50.1	18.6	7.3	100	25.9	7,200
Defending America								
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	1.3	7.0	26.4	31.7	33.5	100	65.2	7,186
Increasing military spending	3.2	15.9	44.2	27.8	9.0	100	36.8	7,214
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	2.3	16.4	44.8	23.9	12.6	100	36.5	7,188
Protecting the environment								
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	1.4	7.2	31.9	32.6	26.8	100	59.4	7,206
Immigration								
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	1.90	14.2	39.8	25.5	18.6	100	44.1	7,221
No effects expected								
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	0.7	3.8	20.0	37.0	38.6	100	75.6	7,198
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	1.9	13.3	44.3	27.7	12.7	100	40.4	7,199
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	1.9	14.4	49.1	24.9	9.7	100	34.6	7,195
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	5.5	21.7	45.7	19.6	7.5	100	27.1	7,193
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	5.9	26.6	46.6	15.0	5.9	100	20.9	7,185

TABLE 4
Correlations between the Personal Importance of Foreign Policy Issues and Political Knowledge

Issue	*Correlation of Importance with Political Knowledge*	n
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	.00	7,210
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.06***	7,203
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.04***	7,199
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	.05***	7,194
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	–.03**	7,200
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	–.01	7,186
Increasing military spending	.13***	7,214
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	–.02**	7,188
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	–.08***	7,206
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	–.10***	7,221
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.01	7,198
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.09***	7,199
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.05***	7,195
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	.15***	7,193
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	.11***	7,185

**$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

Correlations among Attitudes toward Foreign Policy Goals and the Importance of Those Attitudes

In 1964, Philip Converse noted in his landmark chapter that the positions ordinary Americans take on policy issues are most often correlated with one another very weakly, suggesting very little structuring of those opinions by broad, overarching ideological principles. As Table 5 illustrates, this was also true for attitudes toward the foreign policy goals we measured. The strongest correlation is .64, and three other correlations exceed .40, but in general, there is relatively little predictability among these opinions, so they offer many independent tests of the impact of such attitudes on candidate evaluations.

Table 6 displays correlations among the personal importance ratings of the various foreign policy issues. These correlations were generally stronger than the correlations among the attitudes, with the strongest two being .73 and .70. Five other correlations exceeded .50, and fourteen other correlations were .40 or stronger. So, there was more overlap among these ratings. But these correlations clearly did not support the notion of great redundancy among these ratings, leading us to reject the notion that attaching great personal importance to any one foreign affairs issue typically co-occurred with attaching great importance to all such issues.

TABLE 5
Correlations among Attitudes toward Foreign Policy Goals ($n = 7{,}075$)

Issue	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*
1. Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	1.00													
2. Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.36	1.00												
3. Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.41	.34	1.00											
4. Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	.47	.37	.64	1.00										
5. Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	–.13	–.18	–.15	–.17	1.00									
6. Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.06	.02	–.01	.02	.23	1.00								
7. Increasing military spending	.11	.00	.13	.13	.22	.33	1.00							
8. Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	–.02	–.09	–.13	–.12	.29	.26	.14	1.00						
9. Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	.28	.26	.35	.31	–.14	–.04	.13	–.18	1.00					
10. Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	.23	.17	.13	.16	.08	.21	.14	.16	–.04	1.00				
11. Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.13	.16	.20	.16	–.21	–.26	–.12	–.23	.28	–.07	1.00			
12. Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.14	.19	.15	.14	–.19	–.13	–.08	–.21	.22	–.04	.23	1.00		
13. Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.11	.11	.00	.01	.08	.15	.05	.16	–.09	.30	–.04	.03	1.00	
14. Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	.17	.22	.30	.27	–.24	–.11	–.09	–.22	.19	.02	.19	.18	–.03	1.00
15. Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	.16	.20	.30	.28	–.28	–.16	–.08	–.31	.24	–.05	.22	.20	–.10	.46

TABLE 6
Correlations among the Personal Importance of Foreign Policy Issues ($n = 7{,}006$)

Issue	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*
1. Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	1.00													
2. Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.38	1.00												
3. Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.51	.47	1.00											
4. Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	.52	.45	.70	1.00										
5. Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	.27	.39	.32	.31	1.00									
6. Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.18	.29	.24	.22	.42	1.00								
7. Increasing military spending	.18	.20	.22	.22	.33	.32	1.00							
8. Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	.25	.38	.31	.30	.59	.51	.30	1.00						
9. Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	.28	.39	.34	.29	.27	.28	.11	.30	1.00					
10. Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	.17	.18	.16	.16	.26	.27	.22	.28	.18	1.00				
11. Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.24	.38	.33	.30	.34	.48	.23	.45	.38	.24	1.00			
12. Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.21	.38	.27	.26	.40	.35	.22	.40	.29	.21	.37	1.00		
13. Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.25	.34	.28	.28	.38	.34	.24	.38	.28	.26	.31	.55	1.00	
14. Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	.30	.43	.46	.42	.38	.31	.28	.39	.27	.16	.34	.36	.33	1.00
15. Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	.33	.46	.47	.44	.40	.29	.26	.41	.27	.16	.32	.37	.36	.73

Bivariate Regressions Predicting Candidate Preferences

To assess whether respondents' endorsements of foreign policy goals were associated with their evaluations of candidates, the difference between thermometer ratings of Mr. Gore and thermometer ratings of Mr. Bush was regressed on respondents' ratings of the foreign policy goals, one at a time. Because fifteen goals were addressed in the questionnaire, fifteen ordinary least squares regression equations were estimated (see Table 7).

Respondents' attitudes toward foreign policy objectives did predict their candidate evaluations, largely as expected in the full sample. People who backed policies that involved the United States playing "big brother" to other countries gave higher ratings to the candidate who endorsed that same policy. Thus, respondents who believed that helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people was a good thing preferred Mr. Gore ($b = .20, p < .01$). Similarly, endorsement of the following foreign policy goals was associated with a greater preference for Mr. Gore: helping resolve disputes between two other countries ($b = .15$, $p < .01$), preventing people in other countries from killing each other ($b = .19$, $p < .01$), and preventing governments of other countries from hurting their own citizens ($b = .18$, $p < .01$). And respondents who felt that the United States should strengthen the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States preferred Mr. Bush ($b = .08$, $p < .01$).

Consistent with our predictions, respondents who supported aiming foreign policy at defending America preferred Mr. Bush. Advocacy of building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at the United States, increasing military spending, and weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States were associated with a greater preference for Mr. Bush ($b = .23$, $p < .01$; $b = .34$, $p < .01$; and $b = .05$, $p < .01$, respectively).

Protection of the environment and facilitating immigration were also reliably related to candidate preferences, as expected. People who felt that the government should prevent other countries from polluting the environment were more likely to prefer Mr. Gore ($b = .28$, $p < .01$). Similarly, endorsement of making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States was associated with a preference for Mr. Gore ($b = .12$, $p < .01$).

As expected, the five issues on which the candidates did not take clear and distinct stands had much weaker associations with candidate preferences. In fact, endorsement of stopping terrorist groups from hurting or killing Americans and endorsement of preventing governments that are democratic from being turned into governments that are not democratic did not significantly predict candidate preferences at all ($b = .00$, $p = .94$, and $b = .01$, $p = .60$, respectively). Surprisingly, we saw significant or marginally significant but very weak effects of the other three goals. Respondents who endorsed changing nondemocratic governments to democratic ones were marginally significantly more likely to prefer Mr. Gore ($b = .02$, $p = .06$). Respondents who endorsed helping American companies sell things to other countries were significantly more likely to prefer Mr. Gore ($b = .03$, $p = .02$). And advocates of making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States were marginally significantly more likely to prefer Mr. Bush ($b = .02$, $p = .07$).

In sum, most foreign policy attitudes were reliable predictors of candidate preferences. The majority of these relations were in line with the predictions, in that respondents' ratings

TABLE 7
Regressions Estimating the Effects of Policy Attitudes on Candidate Evaluations

Issue	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	*Standard Error*	n
"Big brother" to other countries			
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	.20***	.01	6,994
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.15***	.01	6,992
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.18***	.01	6,979
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	.19***	.01	6,976
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	.08***	.01	6,987
Defending America			
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.23***	.01	6,985
Increasing military spending[a]	.34***	.01	6,987
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	.05***	.01	6,982
Protecting the environment			
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	.28***	.01	6,985
Immigration			
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	.12***	.01	6,989
No effects expected			
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.00	.02	6,991
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.03**	.01	6,986
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.02*	.01	6,990
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	.01	.01	6,981
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	.02*	.01	6,972

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

of a candidate were more positive when the candidate's position on an issue was more in line with the respondent's own position. But when the candidates did not take clear and distinct positions on an issue, that issue was less likely to be associated with candidate preferences.

The Effects of Issue Public Membership

To test the prediction that the personal importance attached to attitudes toward foreign policy goals would moderate the relation between those attitudes and candidate preferences, we included personal importance and its interaction with policy attitudes as predictors of candidate preferences. The results of these regression analyses are reported in Table 8.

TABLE 8
Regressions Estimating the Effects of Policy Attitudes and Personal Importance on Candidate Preferences

	Policy Attitude		*Personal Importance*		*Attitude × Importance*			
Issue	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	R^2	n
"Big brother" to other countries								
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	.12***	.03	.00	.03	.11***	.04	.05	6,977
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.03	.03	−.08***	.03	.19***	.04	.03	6,973
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.07**	.03	−.11***	.03	.19***	.04	.05	6,964
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	.05*	.02	−.15***	.02	.23***	.04	.06	6,954
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	.15***	.03	−.05*	.02	−.11**	.05	.02	6,973
Defending America								
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.12***	.04	−.09***	.02	.12**	.05	.05	6,953
Increasing military spending	.13***	.03	−.21***	.02	.31***	.04	.16	6,972
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	.06**	.03	−.06***	.02	−.05	.04	.01	6,957
Protecting the environment								
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	.11***	.04	−.02	.05	.17***	.05	.07	6,970
Immigration								
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	.10***	.03	−.04**	.02	.02	.05	.02	6,981

No effects expected								
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.10	.06	.00	.09	−.08	.10	.01	6,968
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.00	.04	−.17***	.05	.11**	.05	.01	6,967
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.05	.03	−.03	.03	−.05	.04	.01	6,972
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	−.04	.03	−.08***	.03	.07*	.04	.01	6,964
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	−.05	.03	−.10***	.03	.11***	.04	.01	6,954

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

For ten of the fifteen policy goals, the effect of personal importance appeared with an expected pattern: a significant or marginally significant positive interaction, coupled with a main effect of foreign policy attitudes that was either positive or zero. These coefficients mean that policy attitudes had little or no effect among people who attached no significance to the issue and had an increasingly powerful effect as importance increased, with the most pronounced effect on candidate preferences appearing among people who attached the greatest importance to the issue involved. Also as expected, two of the instances in which the importance interaction was not significant (as was the policy attitude main effect) involved issues on which we expected to see no effects: stopping terrorist groups from hurting or killing Americans and making it difficult for foreign companies to sell in the United States.

Two sorts of surprises appeared in Table 8. First, for three issues that we expected would not have influenced policy attitudes, a positive and significant or marginally significant interaction nonetheless appeared: helping American companies to sell things to other countries, preventing democratic governments from being turned into nondemocratic ones, and changing nondemocratic governments into democratic ones. In each of these cases, the main effect of policy attitudes was essentially zero, and the interaction indicated that the issue shaped policy evaluations in a sensible direction among people who attached great importance to it.

Three more troubling surprises appeared in Table 8. Regarding weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States and making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States, we saw significant positive main effects of policy evaluations but nonsignificant interactions. This is consistent with the notion that these issues did shape candidate preferences but that impact was uniform across people who differed in the amount of importance they attached to those issues. Lastly, strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States manifested a particularly surprising effect: a positive and significant main effect and a significant negative interaction. Underlying this pattern was no effect of the issue among people at the highest level of personal importance ($b = .00$, *ns*, $n = 503$) and positive effects for people at lower levels of importance ($b = .09$, $p < .01$, $n = 1{,}298$; $b = .10$, $p < .01$, $n = 3{,}499$; $b = .07$, $p < .05$, $n = 1{,}478$; and $b = .10$, *ns*, $n = 195$, for people who said the issue was *very important*, *somewhat important*, *not very important*, and *not at all important*, respectively). This suggests that more endorsement of this goal was associated with more support for Mr. Bush but only among people who attached less than maximum importance to the issue.

Overall, then, we see plenty of evidence that personal importance moderated the relation between policy evaluations and candidate preferences consistent with the issue public perspective.

The Effects of Attentive Public Membership

To assess the influence of political knowledge on issue attitude use, the difference between the candidate feeling thermometer ratings was regressed on foreign policy attitude, political knowledge, and the interaction between them (see Table 9). For the issues that we expected to influence candidate preferences, the effects of knowledge were consistently as

expected: significant, sizable, and positive. This means that issue impact increased as knowledge increased. For the first ten rows in Table 9, the policy attitude main effect was either zero or positive, and the interaction was significant and positive. Although we expected helping American companies sell things to other countries and preventing democratic governments from being turned into nondemocratic ones to have no effects, these issues had significant positive impact on candidate preferences among people high in knowledge and decreasing impact as knowledge fell, with no reliable effect appearing among people at the lowest point on the knowledge continuum. Thus, knowledge enhanced issue attitude impact for these issues.

Two issues manifested surprising patterns. Endorsing stopping terrorist groups enhanced support for Mr. Bush marginally significantly among people coded zero on knowledge and had significantly less impact on candidate preferences as knowledge increased. This may indicate that lower levels of knowledge were associated with the presumption of a difference between the candidates in their pursuit of this goal, whereas more knowledgeable citizens may have been more likely to realize the candidates and parties had not taken different positions on this issue. Finally, making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States had a significant positive effect among people at the lowest end of the knowledge continuum in this regression, and this effect did not vary significantly with knowledge.

In sum, then, all issues that we expected would influence candidate preferences did in fact manifest the expected pattern, whereby attentive public membership enhanced foreign policy issue attitude impact.

Competition and Synergy between Issue Public and Attentive Public Memberships

To examine whether personal importance and political knowledge had independent effects on issue impact, these two predictors along with their respective interactions with policy attitudes were entered simultaneously into regression equations predicting candidate preferences (see Table 10). Although there are many numbers in Table 10, their story can be told quite simply. The interactions of policy evaluations with importance and knowledge seen in Tables 8 and 9 remain almost completely unaltered in the fourth and fifth columns of numbers in Table 10. This is no surprise because issue public membership and attentive public membership were essentially uncorrelated with one another in these data.

We went a step further and tested whether there is any synergy between issue public membership and attentive public membership by estimating regression equations adding three-way interactions between policy evaluations, personal importance, and knowledge to the predictors, as shown in Table 11. Of the ten three-way interactions for issues on which the candidates took distinct stands, eight were positive (as would be expected), four of them significant, and two others marginally significant (data not shown). One of the two negatively signed three-way interactions (for strengthening the militaries of U.S. allies) was mar-

(Text continues on page???))

TABLE 9
Regressions Estimating the Effects of Policy Attitudes and Political Knowledge on Candidate Preferences

	Policy Attitude		*Personal Importance*		*Attitude × Importance*			
Issue	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	R^2	n
"Big brother" to other countries								
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	.10***	.02	−.24***	.02	.27***	.03	.07	6,994
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.09***	.02	−.22***	.02	.21***	.03	.05	6,992
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.09***	.01	−.18***	.02	.20***	.03	.06	6,979
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	.07***	.01	−.21***	.02	.27***	.02	.07	6,976
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	.03*	.02	−.12***	.01	.16***	.03	.02	6,987
Defending America								
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.09***	.02	−.12***	.01	.34***	.03	.08	6,985
Increasing military spending	.18***	.01	−.17***	.01	.38***	.02	.18	6,987
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	.01	.02	−.10***	.01	.11***	.03	.01	6,982
Protecting the environment								
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	.12***	.02	−.30***	.03	.32***	.03	.07	6,985
Immigration								
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	.08***	.02	−.11***	.01	.14***	.03	.03	6,989

No effects expected								
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.06*	.03	.08	.06	−.14**	.06	.01	6,991
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.01	.02	−.11***	.03	.07**	.03	.01	6,986
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.03**	.01	−.08***	.02	.02	.03	.01	6,990
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	−.01	.02	−.09***	.02	.05*	.03	.01	6,981
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	.02	.02	−.05***	.02	−.01	.03	.01	6,972

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

TABLE 10
Regressions Estimating the Effects of Policy Attitudes, Personal Importance, and Political Knowledge on Candidate Preferences

	Policy Attitude		*Personal Importance*		*Political Knowledge*		*Attitude × Importance*		*Attitude × Knowledge*			
Issue	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	R^2	n
"Big brother" to other countries												
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	.02	.03	.00	.03	−.25***	.02	.11***	.04	.27***	.03	.08	6,977
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	−.03	.03	−.09***	.03	−.22***	.02	.19***	.04	.21***	.03	.05	6,973
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	−.01	.03	−.08***	.03	−.18***	.02	.17***	.04	.20***	.03	.06	6,964
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	−.05**	.03	−.12***	.02	−.20***	.02	.20***	.04	.26***	.02	.08	6,954
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	.09***	.03	−.05**	.02	−.12***	.01	−.11**	.05	.16***	.03	.03	6,973
Defending America												
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.00	.03	−.09***	.02	−.12***	.01	.07	.05	.35***	.03	.09	6,953
Increasing military spending[a]	.03	.03	−.17***	.02	−.16***	.01	.22***	.04	.36***	.02	.19	6,972
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	.02	.03	−.06***	.02	−.10***	.01	−.05	.04	.11***	.03	.02	6,957
Protecting the environment												
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	−.08**	.04	.01	.04	−.34***	.03	.16***	.05	.36***	.03	.09	6,970

Immigration												
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States[b]	.05	.03	−.05**	.02	−.12***	.01	.02	.05	.15***	.03	.03	6,981
No effects expected												
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.14**	.07	−.02	.09	.08	.06	−.05	.10	−.15**	.06	.01	6,968
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	−.01	.03	−.14***	.03	−.10***	.03	.09*	.03	.06*	.03	.01	6,967
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.05	.03	−.03	.03	−.08***	.02	−.04	.04	.04	.03	.01	6,972
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	−.05	.03	−.06**	.03	−.08***	.02	.06	.04	.05*	.03	.01	6,964
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	−.04	.03	−.08***	.03	−.04**	.02	.11***	.04	−.02	.03	.01	6,954

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

TABLE 11
Regressions Estimating the Effects of Policy Attitudes, Personal Importance, and Political Knowledge on Candidate Preferences with Three-Way Interactions

	Policy Attitude		*Personal Importance*		*Political Knowledge*		*Attitude × Importance*		*Attitude × Knowledge*		*Importance × Knowledge*		*Attitude × Importance × Knowledge*			
Issue	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	*Unstandardized Regression Coefficient*	SE	R^2	n
"Big brother" to other countries																
Helping poor countries provide food, clothing, and housing for their people	.08**	.04	.03	.04	−.18***	.05	.03	.06	.13*	.07	−.10	.07	.22**	.19	.08	6,977
Helping resolve disputes between two other countries	.06	.04	.00	.04	−.07	.05	.04	.06	−.04	.07	−.25***	.08	.39***	.10	.05	6,973
Preventing governments of other countries from hurting own citizens	.02	.03	−.06	.04	−.14***	.04	.11**	.04	.10*	.05	−.06	.06	.15*	.09	.06	6,964
Preventing people in other countries from killing each other	−.02	.03	−.09***	.03	−.16***	.04	.15***	.05	.17***	.06	−.07	.06	.15*	.09	.08	6,954
Strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States	.03	.04	−.03	.03	−.09**	.04	−.01	.06	.28***	.08	−.07	.06	−.21*	.11	.03	6,973
Defending America																
Building weapons to blow up missiles that have been or might be fired at United States	.09*	.05	.01	.02	.10***	.03	−.01	.07	.06	.09	−.27***	.04	.28***	.11	.09	6,953
Increasing military spending	.07**	.04	−.11***	.03	−.06	.04	.16***	.06	.25***	.07	−.15***	.05	.13	.10	.19	6,972
Weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States	−.02	.02	.00	.02	.02	.03	.29***	.02	.07	.07	−.18***	.04	−.03	.08	.06	6,944
Protecting the environment																
Preventing other countries from polluting the environment	.03	.06	.00	.08	−.23***	.07	.07	.08	.04	.09	−.03	.11	.31**	.13	.09	6,970

Immigration																
Making it easier for people from other countries to move to the United States	.10**	.05	−.01	.03	−.03	.04	−.04	.07	.00	.09	−.11**	.05	.18	.12	.03	6,981
No effects expected																
Stopping terrorist groups in other countries from hurting or killing Americans	.13	.09	.04	.13	.12	.15	−.08	.14	−.11	.16	−.12	.22	.03	.24	.01	6,968
Helping American companies sell things to other countries	.00	.05	−.08	.06	−.03	.07	.04	.08	.03	.09	−.16	.11	.10	.13	.01	6,967
Making it hard for foreign companies to sell things in the United States	.01	.04	−.02	.03	−.05	.05	.02	.06	.10	.08	−.07	.07	−.08	.08	.01	6,972
Preventing democratic governments in other countries from being turned into governments that are not democratic	−.03	.04	.00	.04	.00	.04	.03	.06	.00	.07	−.16***	.07	.10	.11	.01	6,964
Changing governments in other countries that are nondemocratic into governments that are democratic	−.01	.04	−.02	.04	.04	.04	.06	.06	−.08	.07	−.17***	.07	.11	.11	.01	6,954

*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

ginally significant, and the other was nonsignificant. Thus, this evidence suggests that the conjunction of issue public membership and attentive public membership was especially potent in enhancing the link between policy goal evaluations and candidate preferences.

Discussion

Summary and Implications

This study is one of the first to document the distributions of the American public's evaluations of a wide range of foreign policy goals. Our results indicate that in 2000, people were not unanimous in their support for or opposition to foreign policy goals that the U.S. government might pursue. A great deal of support was expressed for fighting terrorism and protecting the environment, but opinion was divided on other goals, such as protecting and promoting democracy abroad, promoting free trade, enhancing quality of life in other countries, and defending America through military means. Respondents also differed in terms of the personal importance they accorded to each of these policy goals. Although there was some overlap among issue publics for the various goals, this overlap was generally modest.

Correlations among attitudes toward policy goals were somewhat consistent with past researchers' claims about the structure of foreign policy belief systems (e.g., Holsti and Rosenau 1986; Wittkopf 1981, 1986). A "humanitarianism" cluster of positive correlations appeared among attitudes toward helping poor countries provide for their people, preventing people in other countries from killing each other, preventing governments of other countries from hurting their own citizens, and resolving disputes between other countries. And a militaristic cluster of positive correlations appeared among attitudes toward building weapons to destroy missiles fired at the United States, weakening the militaries of countries that might threaten the United States, and strengthening the militaries of countries that are friends of the United States. Support for building weapons to destroy missiles fired at the United States was negatively correlated with preventing environmental pollution, preventing democratic governments from being turned into nondemocratic ones, and changing nondemocratic governments into democratic ones. Thus, the humanitarianism and militaristic clusters were antithetical to one another. But most of these correlations were relatively weak, so it seems most sensible to both recognize the clustering that is present and also analyze the data acknowledging the independence among these various attitudes, as we did here.

Also consistent with past claims, most notably by Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida (1989), Americans' attitudes toward foreign policy goals seem to have affected their evaluations of candidates. Respondents who wanted government to pursue a particular foreign policy goal felt more positively toward the candidate who also endorsed pursuit of that goal. However, the magnitude of this impact varied with three factors. First, strong issue impact only occurred when the candidates took clear and different positions on an issue. Second, issue impact was enhanced considerably among people who attached more personal importance to the issue. And third, issue impact was enhanced among people who were more

knowledgeable about politics. These three factors appear to have combined additively in their regulating roles, so the most pronounced effects of foreign policy issues on candidate preferences occurred when the candidates took distinct positions and when voters both attached great importance to the issue and possessed a great deal of knowledge.

In a few instances, foreign policy goals that we expected would not affect candidate evaluations (because the candidates either shared the same position or failed to adopt specific positions) were nonetheless significantly associated with candidate preferences. We presume that this occurred because issue public or attentive public members could infer the candidates' positions on such issues using cues, such as a candidate's party affiliation or ideology, and were sufficiently motivated to do so.

The results showing personal importance was a moderator of the association between issue attitudes and candidate preferences support the core of the notion of issue publics. Just as Converse (1964) and Krosnick (1988b, 1990) suggested, any single policy issue is likely to be of concern to only a small handful of Americans. Among these subsets of people appears the greatest evidence of policy voting. Studies of candidate choice that investigated only the main effects of issue stands have therefore missed part of the story; our results indicate the need to incorporate interactions with importance in predictive equations. Our findings in this regard resonate with other recent work providing evidence that citizens primarily focus on issues they consider to be personally important when evaluating candidates for public office and making vote choices (e.g., Chuang, Krosnick, and Rabinowitz 2001; Krosnick and Telhami 1995; Miller, Krosnick, and Fabrigar 2001). And this evidence reinforces the notion in the social psychological literature that personal importance is a feature of attitudes that is correlated with their strength (Petty and Krosnick 1995).

We also found that membership in attentive publics was generally independent of membership in issue publics. In fact, the correlation between the average personal importance accorded to the various issues and political knowledge was quite low, albeit significant ($r = .05, p < .01$). Furthermore, political knowledge continued to be a significant moderator of the relation between foreign policy attitudes and candidate preferences, even when controlling for personal importance, and vice versa. This suggested that the two constructs, knowledge and personal importance, independently moderated the relation between policy attitudes and candidate preferences. And this finding contradicts the claim that attitude attributes such as importance and knowledge are simply surface manifestations of a single underlying "attitude strength" construct (see, e.g., Krosnick et al. 1993).

Our results speak to the sometimes expressed view that the vast majority of the American electorate is uninterested in government policies in general and foreign policies in particular. We found clear indications that a wide range of foreign policy attitudes exists in the general public and appears to shape the presidential candidate evaluations of many citizens. Certainly, the groups of people who manifested the most impact of any one issue (i.e., the issue public and attentive public members) did not compose anywhere near the majority of the nation's population. But the issue publics were sufficiently nonoverlapping to support the conclusion that large segments of the American public made considerable use of one or more foreign policy issues when evaluating the 2000 presidential contenders.

Method Caveats

Our data reveal associations between respondents' policy attitudes and their candidate preferences, and we have presumed that these associations reveal causal impact of the former on the latter. However, the associations we observed could in principle reflect one of several other possibilities: (1) that preexisting candidate preferences led people to adjust their policy attitudes so that they agreed with the positions advocated by the candidates they liked most, (2) that policy attitudes and candidate preferences each influenced the other, or (3) that neither shaped the other but both were independently shaped by common causes. It seems unlikely that these correspondences emerged because candidates shaped the opinions of members of the issue public and the attentive public. Members of these groups have firmly crystallized attitudes that are highly stable over time (Schuman and Presser 1981; Krosnick 1988a) and resistant to change (Fine 1957; Gorn 1975). Likewise, more knowledge about an issue usually enhances attitude crystallization and resistance to change (e.g., Davidson 1995; Wood, Kallgren, and Preisler 1985; Wood, Rhodes, and Biek 1995). Therefore, the fact that the policy attitude–candidate preference relation was stronger among people with more knowledge or higher importance ratings is unlikely to represent impact of candidate preferences on policy attitudes.

One approach to generating more definitive evidence of causal impact would be to assess lagged effects of policy attitudes on candidate preferences in longitudinal studies. For example, if data were collected on both variables from a panel of respondents preelection and postelection, one could predict postelection reports of candidate preferences with preelection measures of policy attitudes and candidate preferences. Chuang, Krosnick, and Rabinowitz (2001) did just this and found that the personal importance that respondents attached to their policy attitudes significantly affected candidate choice.

Our analytic approach differed from that employed in some investigations of the causes of candidate preferences in recent years. First, we did not ask survey respondents about the candidates' positions on the issues and instead inferred people's perceptions of those positions from the candidates' own public statements and those of their parties. This approach would lead to understatement of the impact of issues in our analyses if some voters used an issue for candidate evaluation but misperceived the candidates' positions.

However, this seems unlikely to have been a major problem in the present context, for a number of reasons. First, we observed robust impact of policy attitudes, so if this impact was understated, then a corrected set of results would only support our conclusions even more strongly than do the current results. Second, asking respondents about their perceptions of the candidates' positions on the issues would have severely limited the scope of this investigation: such questions would have consumed a great deal of interviewing time and would have forced us to address considerably fewer policy issues in the questionnaire. And finally, there is no readily apparent and more desirable analytic approach available. People's answers to candidate perception questions may be biased by the projection process, whereby voters intentionally adjust their candidate perceptions to overstate agreement with candidates they like and understate agreement with candidates they dislike (see, e.g., Krosnick 2002). So using answers to such questions would have required an analytic tool to separate

projection from policy voting, and it is not yet clear how to accomplish that effectively without paying a significant price (see Chuang, Krosnick, and Rabinowitz 2001). We suspect that our findings are both robust and properly interpreted, but it is important to keep in mind this alternative perspective.

In our analyses, we sidestepped an interesting and important debate in the current literature regarding spatial versus directional policy voting (Adams and Merrill 1999; Macdonald, Listhaug, and Rabinowitz 1995; Iversen 1994). Participants in this debate have differed in terms of how to model the impact of issue positions on candidate preferences. However, the participants in the debate agree with the general proposition that attitudes toward policy options should be generally monotonically related with candidate preferences most of the time when two competing candidates take positions on opposite sides of the midpoint of a dimension and are moderately extreme. Estimates of the magnitudes of issue impact vary slightly depending on whether spatial or directional modeling is done, but any inaccuracy in our mathematical representation here is again most likely to have caused underestimation of policy attitude effects. Because those effects were sizable here, we suspect our conclusions are not misleading in problematic ways.

Finally, we have chosen to analyze our data one issue at a time, in keeping with some past investigations (see, e.g., Krosnick 1988b), and not controlling for any other potential predictors, including demographics, partisanship, and ideology. We made this choice because we are not convinced that political scientists are yet in a position to fully describe the mutual influence that policy attitudes may have on and receive from this array of other factors. Therefore, it is possible that highly personally important policy attitudes are causes of party affiliations and ideological self-identifications, so controlling for party affiliations and ideological self-identifications would reduce the apparent impact of policy attitudes in a regression predicting candidate evaluations. But this reduction in the apparent effect of issues may occur because party affiliations and ideological self-identifications are mediators of the effects of policy attitudes. If that were so, it would be inappropriate to dismiss nonsignificant direct effects of policy attitudes as unimportant or inconsequential. Rather than attempt to explore such mediation here, we have simply reported our results issue by issue with no controls and left it to future investigations to explore the paths of influence responsible for the observed effects.

Conclusion

Our results are very encouraging with regard to further in-depth investigation of the presence of foreign policy attitudes in the mass public and the impact of such attitudes on election outcomes in contemporary America. We hope that the approach taken here to measuring people's evaluations of foreign policy goals will inspire other scholars to do the same and to allow for the possibility that Americans may have clear and powerful views about what the United States should and should not try to accomplish internationally, though people may have much less crystallized and consequential views about how those international goals should be achieved. Measuring and exploring the impact of evaluations of goals

may do a great deal to fill out our understanding of public opinion because those attitudes seem to have played powerful roles in the American public's evaluations of the two leading contenders for president of the United States in the 2000 election.

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