WAR, PUBLIC OPINION, AND LEADER CREDIBILITY

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Abstract

Are all leaders equally able to rally public support for a military intervention? It seems intuitive that the answer is no; however, the literature on war and public opinion focuses primarily on factors like a conflict's purpose, likely success, and partisan divisiveness to explain variations in public support. Leaders possess significant influence over the framing of public debate and are incentivized to sell proposed interventions as both important to the nation and as a feasible undertaking likely to yield success. These efforts at persuasion are not always successful, however. Variation across interventions in levels of support both in the public as a whole and within partisan groups suggests that some leaders may be more or less able to sell a military intervention or are more or less trusted to oversee it. I argue that leaders vary in their individual credibility cultivated with the public, or with different sectors of the public, and this credibility influences their ability to rally support for a conflict. In this dissertation, I provide evidence for the relationship between perceived credibility and individual support for conflict initiation, drawing on public opinion polling collected during conflicts spanning the administrations of five US presidents. I then discuss how credibility not only influences support for war, but shapes beliefs about how a conflict will unfold, focusing on expectations surrounding a conflict's likely success, casualties, and length. Finally, using a mix of existing survey data and an original survey experiment, I explore how the determinants of credibility can vary based on individual-level factors like partisanship and personality.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Much was made of Hillary Clinton's 2002 vote to authorize force in Iraq during her presidential campaigns, first in 2008 and then again in 2016. Particularly among her own party, voters questioned whether she was too hawkish and would again rush into an inadvisable military conflict. Criticism also spread to other foreign policy decisions Clinton was connected to, especially during her time as secretary of state for the Obama administration. Political commentators reminded voters that the Iraq vote was not the only evidence of her support for aggressive foreign policy: "In almost every case for the last twenty years, Clinton has reliably sided with those favoring more rather than less aggressive measures in response to foreign conflicts and crises."[1]

These concerns resonated with the public. In an October 2016 survey of registered voters, 67 percent of respondents answered that Clinton's "judgment and decisions in dealing with Syria, Iraq, and Libya" was a major or moderate concern.[2] In a different survey, 54 percent of respondents answered that they were not too confident or not at all confident in Clinton's ability to be an effective commander-in-chief, a remarkably high proportion of the electorate expressing doubt given Clinton's extensive experience in matters of national security - much more than many modern

[1] See Beauchamp 2016.

[2] 46 percent answered that it was a major concern, 21 percent moderate concern, 15 percent minor concern, and just 17 percent answered no real concern. See survey conducted by NBC News anf Wall Street Journal, October 2016. Available on the Roper Center iPoll Database under archive number 31114128. https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/ipoll/study/31114128/

presidential candidates. She fared no better on this question than her opponent, Donald Trump, a candidate with no experience at all.[3] A study by Kriner and Shen (2017) even argues that Clinton's hawkish record, particularly on Iraq, may have significantly damaged her electorally in key swing states where local communities suffered many resulting American casualties.

Had Clinton's presidential ambitions ended differently, with her defeating Trump and assuming the role of the presidency, would the American public have been more suspicious of a decision to enter into a military intervention under her administration? Would support for such an action be less forthcoming for a leader with whom there were serious question marks over past decision-making, including among many who voted for her? It seems unlikely that concerns that were so salient during election season would disappear after inauguration.

Clinton is hardly alone in being poisoned by association with the Iraq War. The conflict outlived the administration that started it and serves as a cautionary tale of destroyed credibility. George W. Bush was a reasonably popular president in early 2003 after having guided the nation through the tragedy of the September 11 attacks, but he ultimately came to be viewed by the majority of Americans as having made the wrong decision to use military force in Iraq.[4]

Although there was an early vocal minority in opposition to an American invasion of Iraq, the initial war effort had enjoyed relatively high support with about 64 percent of Americans in favor of the invasion at its outset (Smith and Lindsay 2003). As the war proceeded, however, "the public increasingly questioned efforts to link the threat

[3]See survey conducted by CBS News and the New York Times, May 2016. Available on the Roper Center iPoll Database under archive number 31091613. https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/ipoll/study/31091613/

[4]See "Public Attitudes Toward the War in Iraq: 2003-2008" March 19, 2008.

of terrorism to the war in Iraq - including repeated efforts to link Saddam Hussein to the terrorist attacks on 9/11; Secretary Colin Powell's February 5, 2003 report to the United Nations regarding the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq; and the repeated invocation of questionable claims regarding efforts by Iraq to secure yellowcake uranium ore from Niger" (Shambaugh 2013, p. 20).

Support for the war plummeted, especially among those who felt disillusioned with Bush and his administration. National surveys fielded between 2007 to 2009 indicate that the increasing distrust of information related to the war in Iraq and the justifications provided by the Bush administration was associated with diminished support for the war: "Those who distrusted the objectivity of the information provided by the national government about Iraq were less likely to agree that the invasion was justified following 9/11 and less likely to support continuing to fight given its cost in blood, treasure or time." (Shambaugh 2013, p. 46).

Similar patterns have been observed in earlier conflicts. For example, when the Tet Offensive revealed that "President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration had grossly oversold American progress to the public," having previously engaged in a "massive public relations blitz... to convince the public that the war was nearing a conclusion and that the United States was winning," the administration took a significant hit in public opinion despite an ultimate military victory in that campaign (Zelizer 2018). High profile journalists attacked the credibility of his administration, and public belief that the war was a mistake rose dramatically, while support for Johnson and his management of Vietnam rapidly dropped.

In cases like these, the American public lost confidence in the president and his administration, and support for war efforts evaporated. There is no reason to think, however, that these dynamics are limited in scope to the course of a single conflict.

A leader's reputation does not reset with each new intervention. It is built on a multitude of judgments about his past behavior, public statements, and individual characteristics.

For as long as leaders are in the public eye, they have been cultivating an image with the public. That image can have positive and negative aspects, and it can look different to different groups of people depending on things like partisan affiliation and political engagement. That reputation - the leader's credibility - plays a role in how the public interacts with a leader and how they respond to his or her decisions.

1.1 Importance of Credibility

In this dissertation, I will argue that credibility influences the public's willingness to support a leader's decision to use military force. Credibility facilitates the leader's ability to persuade when making the case for war, allowing the public to feel more confident in both the justification for conflict and in their expectations of how that conflict will unfold. Confidence in a leader's competence and trustworthiness - or lack thereof - can serve to either mitigate or amplify some of the anxieties inherent in the uncertainty of war.

While a leader's credibility likely plays a role in public opinion in a number of policy areas, decisions to use military force are uniquely suited for credibility to have an impact. Military interventions are highly salient to the public. While many foreign policy decisions often pass by the public without much notice, often only attracting the attention of the most politically engaged and heavy consumers of news, war and conflict capture the public's attention due to the potential for high costs - whether in casualties, diverted national spending, or reputation - and because they often involve

vital national interests or issues about which the public feels strongly. As such, war can stir emotions like fear, vengefulness, and nationalism, which can be potentially manipulated by a skilled or trusted leader. And unlike many areas of domestic policy, opinions about the use of force tend to be more flexible and situationally dependent than opinions on issues like abortion, gun control, immigration, or healthcare, where individuals are much more likely to apply already formed opinions to new situations that arise. Furthermore, military interventions are high in uncertainty. Despite a leader's best intentions, a conflict may not unfold as planned, as demonstrated in numerous historical examples, which can result in significiant consequences.

For these reasons, a leader must sell a new military intervention to the public, making the case that this course of action is the right things to do, will be worth potential costs, and will ultimately yield a better outcome than not acting. To get behind a conflict, the public ultimately has to trust the quality of the leader's decision making.

1.2 Contribution

Public opinion on foreign policy matters. Responsiveness to the public can act as an important constraint over whether and how a president implements force. Undertaking unpopular military campaigns, or failing to maintain support, can jeopardize a president's reelection chances or the chances of a successor from his or her party. Unpopular presidents will also often face greater struggles in accomplishing their legislative agenda, and public displeasure with the president may cost his party in congressional elections. As such, we must understand the forces that shape public attitudes, particularly on highly salient policy areas like military interventions.

This project seeks to fill a gap in our understanding of public opinion formation for foreign policy, highlighting the important role that leaders themselves play in shaping attitudes on war and conflict. Existing literature explains support by focusing on the decision to use force and how it is carried out, emphasizing various attributes of the conflict and how different actors respond to those attributes. These explanations unpack factors like the national interests at stake and the purpose of the mission, risks and patterns of casualties, partisan affiliation, elite cues, expectations of success, and individual proximity to the war or the costs of war.

While I do not argue against the importance of any of these existing explanations, my dissertation is driven by the idea that who is in charge matters, that the public will not be equally willing to follow all leaders into conflict. Public opinion is something that must be focused and captured, and for something as high stakes and potentially costly as the deployment of military force, the public must be convinced that this course of action is wise. What we are missing in the current explanations of public opinion and war is a prominent role for the decisionmaker themself. *Who* is doing the convincing matters.

This project also builds on existing explanations, particularly those focusing on the public's expectations of conflict outcomes. Leader credibility can help explain how initials expectations are formed, an early link in the causal chain. While beliefs may update as events unfold, it is important to understand their source, particularly because initial public willingness to support conflict can in some cases facilitate or stop the deployment of force.

1.3 Project Scope

While credibility undoubtedly influences the dynamic between leaders and their publics across the world, this project will focus on the American political context. The literature that this project primarily speaks to, the war and public opinion literature largely sparked by John Mueller's writings on the American public's casualty aversion, focuses almost exclusively on dynamics within American politics.

There are also several practical reasons for this choice. First, there is likely variation across cultures in how credibility is formed, perceived, and responded to, just as in some cultures there are much more strongly held, and sometimes inflexible, trends of public attitudes towards force. Rallying the public to support a war will look different in the United States than it will in other democracies. Second, while some nations live with profound security threats, often from bordering states, the United States faces very little threat of direct attack to the homeland, particularly in the post-Cold War era. Credibility matters little - if at all - in "Pearl Harbor" contexts. When a nation is directly attacked by an adversary, there is little choice but to respond, and the public is unlikely to need much convincing. Instead, most military conflicts involving the United States can be considered "wars of choice." Finally, because of its military superiority, the US also has the freedom to act independently if it chooses. We know from existing literature that public support for joining an international coalition, even in the US context, operates differently than when acting alone (e.g., see Kull and Destler 1999).

1.4 Roadmap for the Dissertation

In this chapter, I have previewed my arguments for the role of credibility in shaping public support for conflict initiation. In Chapter 2, I discuss the evolution of the rich scholarship on public opinion and war, highlighting the missing role of the leader in the formation of public attitudes. I then develop my theory of credibility, drawing foundations from existing psychological research. I argue that leaders vary in their individual credibility cultivated with the public, or with different sectors of the public, and this credibility or lack thereof influences their ability to rally the public to support armed conflict. Simply put, a highly credible leader is more likely to persuade and influence than one of lower credibility.

In Chapter 3, I empirically test the key claims of my theory. I draw on public opinion polling collected during the administrations of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump, spanning twelve actual or hypothetical conflicts. To provide evidence for the persuasion mechanism of credibility theorized in Chapter 2, I utilize a survey that recorded responses from participants before and after watching George W. Bush's 2003 State of the Union. I also draw on ANES data from the 1990s, probing general attitudes on how willing the United States should be to use of military force as a tool of foreign policy.

After establishing my theory of credibility and providing empirical evidence to support hypotheses related to conflict initiation, in the second half of the dissertation, I explore how credibility's influence varies among the populace and how it affects beliefs about how a conflict will unfold. First, in Chapter 4, I explore how credibility influences the public's confidence in an intervention, shaping expectations for how it will unfold. Multiple existing explanations for public support for war rely on

the public's expectations about a conflict - whether success is believed to be likely, anticipated costs of an intervention, or whether casualties suffered align with preexisting expectations. This chapter provides greater insight on the formation of these expectations. Hypotheses about length, casualties, and success expectations are tested in a similar fashion to those in Chapter 3.

Chapter 5 explores the determinants of credibility at the individual level. I first examine how factors like partisanship and authoritarian personalities may influence the formation of credibility perceptions and the willingness of individuals to evaluate their leader favorably. I then present the results of an original conjoint experiment that explores not only what specific leader characteristics and behaviors evoke greater trust but also how reactions to these characteristics vary by different subgroups within the public.

In the final chapter, Chapter 6, I conclude the dissertation by reviewing key findings and discussing their implications, as well as my suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

Theory of Credibility

When pursuing congressional authorization for military action against the Assad regime in Syria, Barack Obama pointed as justification to the "the worst chemical weapons attack of the 21st century" and the mass suffering of the Syrian people. He framed these events not only as a humanitarian crisis, but as "a serious danger to our national security," alluding to both the potential future use of these types of weapons in warfare involving the US or allies and their potential use by terrorists, as well as the threat to international norms. He emphasized that the proposed intervention would be "limited in duration and scope," differentiating it from the lengthy, open-ended ones in Iraq and Afghanistan, while also expressing his expectations of a positive outcome: "I'm confident we can hold the Assad regime accountable for their use of chemical weapons, deter this kind of behavior, and degrade their capacity to carry it out." Furthermore, he pledged, "We would not put boots on the ground," signaling a determination to avoid American casualties. Despite these appeals and assurances, the American public solidly opposed the use of military action in the days after Obama's speech, with only 29 percent in favor. Almost 50 percent of his own party opposed military action, while only 29 percent supported it ("Public Opinion Runs Against Syrian Airstrikes" 2013).

Existing literature on war and public opinion suggests that Obama should have received greater public support for the proposed Syria intervention. American casualties were expected to be low; security and moral stakes were high; victory was promised.

Yet the lack of public support indicates that Obama was not connecting with the public. War weariness after long interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq also cannot account for the low polling numbers. Support for the 2011 Libya intervention, even when the majority of respondents believed "U.S. involvement in military action in Libya will last for some time," was much higher at 47 percent overall, including 54 percent of Republicans and 49 percent of Democrats reacting positively ("Modest Support for Libya Airstrikes, No Clear Goal Seen" 2011).

In this chapter, I argue that leader credibility exerts an independent impact on public support for armed conflict. It seems intuitive that an announcement of deployment of US force abroad will not provoke identical reactions regardless of whether Bush, Obama, Trump, Biden, or someone else is the person deploying that force. These reactions are not divorced from the decision maker. Yet the literature on war and public opinion has paid little attention to the differences between leaders as an explanation for variations in public support.

This chapter will first survey the evolution of the public opinion literature as it relates to questions of war and the use of force, discussing what we know thus far about the factors that shape public opinion surrounding war. I will then propose the role of the leader as a piece of the puzzle that needs greater investigation. While this chapter does not seek to rebut existing explanations, exploration of leader credibility may also shed further light on how the public arrives at subjective evaluations, such as belief in the likelihood of victory, which have already been shown to be important to support. Arguing that *who* is in charge matters, I propose a theory of credibility that draws on psychological research that conceptualizes credibility as a function of perceived competence and perceived trustworthiness. Credibility provides a lens through which the case for war is evaluated by the public.

2.1 War and Public Opinion

Early work on public attitudes and foreign policy portrayed a public that was apathetic, uninformed, and inconsistent in its judgments. In his "mood theory," Almond (1950) theorizes a volatile public with shallow and unstable preferences, typically unconcerned with matters of foreign policy. The public may, however, awaken in times of significant crisis and "transform indifference to vague apprehension, to fatalism, to anger; but the reaction is still a mood, a superficial and fluctuating response" (53). Similarly, Walter Lippmann argued that the public was incapable of acting in its own best interest, portraying public opinion as something responsible leaders must circumvent and coddle for the benefit of the nation. When the public is asked to weigh in on questions of war, their reaction will typically be negative to any deviation to the nation's current path, "impos[ing] a veto upon the judgments of informed and responsible officials" (Lippmann 1955, p. 20). As such, manipulation by elected officials using "impassioned nonsense" must be used to drum up support when required (21).

Almond and Lippmann's writings in the decades following the Second World War reflected the widely agreed upon scholarly view of public opinion in the United States, which came to be known as the "Almond-Lippmann consensus." The general thrust of these findings was that public opinion was "highly volatile and thus it provides very dubious foundations for a sound foreign policy"; that the public did not create and maintain foreign policy attitudes in the same way that stable opinions on domestic policy are formed; and that public opinion ultimately has very little influence on the nation's conduct of foreign policy (Holsti 1992, p. 442).

In elaborations of this outlook, some scholars argued that Americans rarely hold

complex opinions in matters foreign or domestic, nor do they react independently to foreign or domestic events, pointing instead to the powerful role of party identification and elites. The leader and other political elites were viewed as the engine shaping foreign policy decisions, dictating their positions to the public, who otherwise held "nonattitudes" (Converse 1964; Campbell et al. 1980; Lipset 1966). As such, while public officials may pay lip service to public opinion, it was believed that the president could act relatively unconstrained by the public in its war policy since any variation within it "mirrors the complexities of the debate in Washington and probably reflects a permissiveness in either direction" (Verba et al. 1967, p. 333).

The early consensus has been repeatedly challenged, however, both regarding how the public forms attitudes on foreign policy and its ability to influence state actions. In contrast to Almond's diagnosis of public opinion as erratic and whim-driven, both in its attention and its policy preferences, studies that empirically evaluated polling data revealed a more stable mood among the American public than had been previously conceptualized for matters of foreign policy (Caspary 1970; Shapiro and Page 1988; Shapiro and Page 1992). Despite a generally low level of knowledge on foreign affairs and the lack of "sophisticated calculations or fine analytical distinctions in their thought processes," the public nevertheless is able to draw on a variety of heuristics to make coherent foreign policy judgments and "appear to have a much more pragmatic sense of strategy than they are given credit for" (Jentleson 1992, p. 71). Further, analysis revealed that policymakers both could not and did not ignore public attitudes regarding foreign policy; rather, large shifts in public sentiment would spur shifts in government policy (Page and Shapiro 1983).

The casualty aversion thesis emerged as a particularly prominent challenge to the view of public opinion as volatile and incoherent. In his classic analysis of the Vietnam

and Korean wars, Mueller (1973) found that public support for the two wars "followed a pattern of decline that was remarkably similar" (65), concluding that support for war is a function of its costs in American lives and that approval is inversely related to the log of cumulative casualties. The public is particularly sensitive to initial casualties suffered in a conflict, but as a war drags on, only substantially larger numbers of casualties have the same impact on support.

Mueller's work sparked numerous extensions and revisions to the casualty aversion thesis as an explanation of public support for war. Some of these works proposed alternative measurements of the American public's casualty aversion. Gartner and Segura (1998), for example, argued that marginal casualties better captures the relationship proposed by Mueller, because it better represents significant battlefield events and conflict shocks that are highly salient to the public. Through experimental studies, Gartner (2008b) finds that support is sensitive to the interaction of month to month casualty trends and the level of recent casualties. The former serves as the context through which the public interprets and reacts to the latter.

Other work has indiciated that there may be reason to question the accuracy of the public's knowledge of casualties suffered in combat. Analysis of New York Times' reporting of major wars has shown that casualties do not receive much coverage, and the coverage that does occur tends to underemphasize casualties suffered by American forces (Althaus et al. 2014). As such, Myers and Hayes (2010) argued that it is not the precise number or pattern of casualties suffered that matters, but rather perceived casualties - whether or not that perception is accurate - that determines public support.

Building on a rational cost-benefit perspective, many of Mueller's successors have argued that various characteristics of a conflict could moderate or supersede the

impact of casualties on public opinion. Jentleson (1992) argues that the objective of an intervention is the most important determinant of support. The public is more willing to support a mission undertaken with the aim of driving back another state's aggression over interventions aimed at regime change or internal reform. Jentleson and Britton (1998) later considered a third category of intervention, humanitarian missions, finding that regardless of a low level of understanding of the contexts surrounding these interventions, mission objective remained a critical determinant of support. In a similar vein, other scholars have found the national interests at stake play an important role both for support and casualty tolerance (e.g., see Larson 1996; Larson and Savych 2005).

Others have argued that while the mission's purpose may be important to determining base levels of public support for an intervention, victory or the perceived likelihood of victory is the driving factor in the public's cost-benefit calculation (Kull and Ramsay 2001; Eichenberg 2005; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2005-2006; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009; Sidman and Norpoth 2012). When considering the costs of conflict, most especially casualties, "individuals make judgments about the potential benefits of the conflict and weight those potential gains by the probability that their government will be able to achieve them" (Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2005-2006, p. 44). Arguing likely success supersedes a natural distaste for casualties, Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2009, p. 236) assert that the public "is far from being casualty phobic and is best viewed as being defeat phobic."

A competing camp sees elite cue givers and partisan beliefs as the most influential factors in shaping attitudes towards armed conflict and casualty tolerance (Zaller 1992; Larson 1996; Gaines et al. 2007; Berinsky 2007; Berinsky 2009; Baum and Groeling 2009; Aday 2010; Ringsmose and Børgesen 2011; Paolino 2017). Patterns

of opinion formation among citizens are influenced by or largely mirror the patterns of conflict or consensus of the political elites. Some scholars, like Larson, see public opinion as a cost-benefit calculation that heavily considers elite cues when weighing up pros and cons, while others, like Berinsky, push back against the idea that members of the public makes cost-benefit calculations at all. Partisan cues may be particularly strong when they are "costly," for example, when dissent emerges from within the leader's own party (Baum and Groeling 2009), or early on in a conflict when the government has greater control over the information made available to the public (Baum and Groeling 2010). Pre-existing partisan belief systems can also heavily shape the way battlefield events and other information relating to a conflict is understood. Even when citizens are generally knowledgeable about the basic facts surrounding a conflict, partisans may significantly differ in the conclusions they draw from those facts and the belief systems that they support (Gaines et al. 2007).

Other research has pointed to various other heuristics, including greater sensitivity to local casualties (Gartner, Segura, and Wilkening 1997; Gartner and Segura 2000; Hayes and Myers 2009; Althaus, Bramlett, and Gimpel 2012; Kriner and Shen 2012), female casualties (Gartner 2008a), and casualties with whom someone shares a social tie (Gartner 2008c), as well as the role of multilateral support and institutional endorsements in bolstering domestic approval (Kull and Destler 1999; Grieco et al. 2011).

But where do the leaders themselves fit into this picture? The literature has given significant consideration to contextual characteristics of conflicts, the domestic climate, and even certain beliefs held by the public, but there has been less focus on how who is in charge can shape and rally support for war, as well as the extent to which the leader may influence some of these dynamics already identified.

A handful of studies have pointed to rhetorical strategies and framing effects that can be utilized by leaders to influence opinion formation with regards to conflict. For example, leader rhetoric or reporting that uses frames of sunk costs (Boettcher and Cobb 2009; Schott, Scherer, and Lambert 2011), highlights inequality in casualties suffered (Kriner and Shen 2014), or frames American casualties relative to enemy casualties (Boettcher and Cobb 2006) can influence certain individuals' support for an ongoing military intervention and casualty tolerance.

A few others have considered how certain leader characteristics may hinder or enhance the leader's ability to generate public support. Testing the common wisdom that "only Nixon could go to China," Mattes and Weeks (2019) found that rapprochement initiatives by hawkish leaders towards hostile nations are better received domestically than when the same efforts are made by dovish ones. Using survey experiments, Paradis (2016) found that both female leaders and inexperienced male leaders are more likely to be rewarded at home when engaging in belligerent behavior.

These works have only begun to scratch the surface on the individual variations we observe across the public for a given intervention. What might cause variation in support within a president's own political party? When might partisans from the opposing party lend their support? Some of this may be explained by the presence or absence of partisan division, yet individuals do not uniformly and neatly fall into place as a mere reflection of elite debate. Exploring further leader-specific explanations in the IR public opinion literature is a fertile ground for greater research.

2.2 The Role of the Individual Leader

The question of how much individual leaders shape the course of history is a longstanding, cross-discipline debate. Do the idiosyncrasies of individuals have profound consequences at pivotal points of decision-making, or do systemic pressures significantly constrain their choices? Does the leader profoundly influence society, or is he or she a product of sociopolitical forces of the moment?

These questions are the essence of the debate surrounding the Great Man theory of history, which views individuals as highly influential to outcomes, or as Thomas Carlyle wrote, "The History of the world is but the Biography of great men" (Carlyle 1840, p. 28). This idea has been hotly contested, however. Critiquing Carlyle, Spencer (1873) argued that if "we go back a step and ask whence comes a great man, we find that the theory breaks down completely... the genesis of the great man depends on the long series of complex influences which has produced the race in which he appears, and the social state into which that race has slowly grown... Before he can re-make his society, his society must make him." (33-35). In International Relations, these questions manifest themselves in debates over levels of analysis: how much influence does the structure of the international system exert over states and their leaders?

This debate is not contained within academia. Leaders themselves have pondered their own autonomy and role in history. In his memoir, Barack Obama writes, describing his diplomacy efforts in the Middle East,

> "Looking back, I sometimes ponder the age-old question of how much difference the particular characteristics of individual leaders make in the sweep of history – whether those of us who rise to power are mere conduits for the deep, relentless currents of the times or whether we're at least

> partly the authors of what's to come... I wonder whether a President Hillary Clinton or President John McCain might have elicited more trust from the two sides: whether things might have played out differently if someone other than Netanyahu had occupied the prime minister's seat or if Abbas had been a younger man, more intent on making his mark than protecting himself from criticism" (Obama 2020, p. 634).

These debates typically focus on the big outcomes like decisions for war or peace. Yet these decisions are the product of many forces, including domestic machinations and public opinion. The trends of the moment have raised a particular individual to power, but cultural, sociopolitical, and economic trends do not occur one at a time. There are multiple competing forces within a society, and at the ballot box in a democracy, one prevails over alternatives, whether due to cross-sectional appeal, particular competencies or appeals of the candidate, luck, or some combination of factors.

Who that leader ends up being matters in a variety of ways, effect over their own citizens being one of them. The trends of public opinion not only aid certain types of individuals in gaining political power - Barack Obama's rise to the presidency, for example, was aided by his early stance against the Iraq War - but they can also be profoundly shaped by and react to that person's leadership.

Public opinion is an arena that is particularly likely to be affected by the idiosyncrasies of a leader. The public is not composed of purely rational beings who make lengthy and complex analyses based on the information available to them about their leader's performance. Citizens often rely on a variety of shortcuts to evaluate leaders and their policies, some of which stem from various characteristics and perceptions, the combination of which are unique to a particular leader.

The more complex the situation surrounding a leader's decision or policy, the more specialized knowledge it takes to understand, and the more difficult it is to apply one's own preexisting values, the greater the opportunity is for the leader to influence public attitudes. Military interventions and deployments of force are especially likely to have these characteristics. They are often highly complex situations that inspire disagreement among partisans, academics, policy and military experts, and the leader's own advisors over which course of action is best to pursue. Given this complexity, the leader has greater opportunity to influence the public, given that most individuals tend to be substantially less knowledgeable about matters of foreign policy and have a limited or even no understanding of the historical and strategic context in which decisions to use force must be made. Unlike many areas of domestic policy, the majority of Americans do not maintain fixed, clearly defined opinions on deployment of military force that can be easily applied across scenarios. While some individuals do maintain strongly held principles on the value or ethics of using force as a tool of foreign policy, particularly when to preemptively neutralize a threat, the majority of Americans view the appropriateness and utility of force as situationally dependent.[1] As such, it is up to the leader to justify the necessity of force to capture public support.

Unlike many other policy issues that require involvement of the legislative process, the president has significant control over the day to day management of a military intervention. He or she exerts significant influence over how it is carried out and is privy to many details of the conflict that are withheld or not easily accessible

[1]For example, see polling reported by Tyson (2017). The percentage of Americans (surveyed in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2017) who believe preemptive military force can never be justified represents only 13 to 20 percent of the public.

to the public, potentially including conditions on the ground that may shift rapidly day by day, backroom communications with foreign governments and other classified information, and details about the precise way in which the larger strategic vision is implemented.

The ambiguity and uncertainty of conflict aid the leader's impact. Leaders typically possess significant influence over how these operations are presented to the public and the framing of public debate, particularly early on in a conflict when they hold a large informational advantage (Baum and Potter 2008; Baum and Groeling 2010). Developments in a conflict can also unfold at a much more rapid pace than the typically slow churning of domestic policy, making it even more difficult for the public to keep up. Despite all of these advantages, there is nevertheless a great deal of variation in both the initial and continuing levels of public support across operations, suggesting that some leaders may be more or less able to "sell" a military operation or are more or less trusted to oversee it.

2.3 Credibility and Support for Military Interventions

Individual leaders, both through their own choices and abilities and because of certain personal characteristics, can generate varying public reactions to foreign policies and involvement in international conflict. Given the same stakes, characteristics, and political context, Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump are unlikely to produce the same effect on public opinion. These different leaders would not equally be able to rally and maintain public support for an intervention, nor would they uniformly be able to sell a conflict outcome as successful. The literature on war and public opinion suggests that conflict characteristics such as

mission stakes and likely success are key factors driving public support and willingness to accept costs, but these are subjective judgments. How does the public evaluate if a mission is important, necessary, or likely to succeed?

I argue that leaders vary in their individual credibility cultivated with the public, and this credibility influences their ability to rally the public to support armed conflict. When launching a new intervention, a democratic leader is incentivized to sell these decisions to the public as both in the national interest, whether for national security, to defend allies, or to uphold normative values, and a feasible undertaking likely to yield positive outcomes. Just because leaders frame their decisions in these terms does not guarantee public support, however.

Credibility facilitates the leader's efforts to persuade. He or she must justify to the public the reasons behind the intervention, why not acting as proposed would be the wrong choice. Because the use of military force is highly salient to the public, perceptions of the validity of an operation and how it is handled can be highly consequential for the leader's approval in general. As a result, leaders almost always put great care and attention into making the case for action that not only concerns national or humanitarian interests, but also will potentially incur costs in lives and resources.

Simply put, a highly credible leader is more likely to persuade and influence than one of lower credibility. While some members of the public may be persuaded purely by the details of the emerging conflict or by following partisan cues, for others, credibility will play an important role in persuasion. They must not only trust the leader to manage a conflict effectively, but they must also trust that the leader is accurately representing the details of the situation, that the stakes justify the action, and that no hidden agenda is involved. A credible leader will be paid greater attention

when he or she claims that something is important, whether because that leader's record demonstrates an ability to recognize and tackle complex issues or because a belief in the leader's commitment to certain values inspires greater faith in their offered justifications. They will more easily be able to persuade that an operation is the right thing to do, whether strategically, morally, or both.

Conceptually, credibility is "the believability of information," a property of either a source or a message (Metzger and Flanagin 2015, p. 446). Credibility matters because "people everywhere want to believe in their leaders. They want to have faith and confidence in them as people" (Kouzes and Posner 2011, p. 16). In a review of over 50 years of research on credibility, Pornpitakpan (2004) shows this finding has been for the most part consistently held up across dozens of studies, where credibility has been shown to have effects on persuasion, compliance, reception to feedback, and susceptibility to advertisements and consumer behavior, among other effects.

A leader's credibility depends primarily on two traits: perceived competence[2] and perceived trustworthiness.[3] Studying communication and persuasion, psychologists Hovland, Janis, and Kelley argue that "the effectiveness of a communication is commonly assumed to depend to a considerable extent upon who delivers it" (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley 1953, p. 19). A communicator's persuasive power on his audience is a byproduct both of "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions (his 'expertness')" and "the degree of confidence in the communicator's intent to communicate the assertions he considers most valid (his

[2]Some sources use the terminology "expertise" instead of competence.

[3]Dynamism is sometimes included as a third dimension of credibility, although some have suggested that "it may not be psychologically independent of the other two factors," and thus may be thought of as "an intensifier" (Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz 1969, pp. 575–576). Other scholars have put forth further dimensions, but competence (or expertise) and trustworthiness remain the most widely agreed upon (Metzger et al. 2003).

'trustworthiness')" (21). Importantly, it is whether the audience perceives these qualities in a communicator that matters rather than whether or not that person actually holds any specific trait. These perceptions are also typically not fixed but are subject to revision with time (Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz 1969).

Perceived competence is a judgment of an individual's ability to execute their role successfully and skillfully, to be well-versed in the relevant domain knowledge. This perception can be formed both based on particular traits of an individual and because of specific actions they have taken. For example, someone's title or past titles, age, and similarity to their audience are characteristics that can influence these evaluations (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley 1953). In terms of behavior, surveys indicate that employees see their bosses and company leadership as more competent when they have clear communication, have detailed plans for achieving their goals, focus on outcomes, have forward thinking vision, and take decisive action. Meanwhile, behaviors that erode perceptions of competence include shying away from tackling big or complex problems, displaying ego or vanity, taking contradictory actions, or displaying a lack of understanding when facing a crisis (Chng et al. 2018).

In terms of foreign policy, competence means reacting appropriately, thoughtfully, and sufficiently to situations that arise, as well as initiating action for the country's best interest when needed. Naturally, the public desires a highly competent figure making decisions of war and peace for the nation, although there is not a single widely agreed upon definition of what constitutes foreign policy competence. Individual leaders are often described using terms such as "strong" and "weak" in terms of their foreign policy skill. While a variety of factors may go into building these ideas, these perceptions undoubtedly emerge, both among domestic and foreign audiences. Certain presidential hopefuls often try to market themselves early on as the strong

foreign policy candidate who has the most skill, knowledge, experience, or resolve to successfully oversee complex international issues.

When a leader is viewed as knowledgeable and capable in matters of foreign policy, there is less concern that conflicts are entered into unnecessarily or ill-advisedly. It is easier to trust that the leader has considered potential undesirable ramifications and other available policy avenues, that entering into the conflict - risking casualties, protracted conflict, and geopolitical backlash - is nevertheless called for, and that the leader is capable of successfully managing the situation.

Hypothesis 1: *Individuals who view their leader as competent are more likely to support the initiation of a military intervention.*

Perceived trustworthiness is a judgment of integrity, values, and reliability. It is built from consistency between words and action, following through on commitments, and transparency, while it is eroded by deception and misrepresentation, unethical behavior or excusing unethical behavior in others, empty promises, and unilateral decision making (Chng et al. 2018). At the individual level, trust in a leader is conceptualized as "a psychological state held by the follower involving confident positive expectations about the behavior and intentions of the leader" (Dirks 2006, p. 15).

Trustworthiness is arguably more of a subjective judgment than competence, and there are competing explanations in the multi-disciplinary trust literature of how trust is developed in a leader. The *relationship-based* school invokes an interpersonal relationship that goes beyond the strict confines of a utilitarian (or economic) relationship. Instead, it is grounded in a larger communal context, where both parties are working to benefit one another and shared goals. Trust is dependent on followers' perceptions

of the leader's good intentions and care for subordinates beyond utility (or economic value). In contrast, perceptions of trustworthiness in the *character-based* school are formed based on a judgment of the leader's personal characteristics and "how it influences a follower's sense of vulnerability in a hierarchical relationship.... trust-related concerns about a leader's character are important because the leader may have authority to make decisions that have a significant impact on a follower" (Dirks and Ferrin 2002, p. 612). Finally, a smaller *institutional* perspective views trust as stemming less from the individual's assessment of the leader alone, but rather their assessment of the larger organizational structure as a whole. Feelings about a particular leader can be superseded by the existence or lack of organizational trust (Dirks 2006).

Trust in a leader's good faith is critical to rallying support for armed conflict. Any doubt that the leader is misrepresenting the strategic situation, stakes, likely outcome, or costs will erode support for an operation. Especially early on in a conflict, the public is often highly reliant upon the executive branch as a source of information about what is going on. If trust in a leader and their administration as a credible source of information is called into question by perceptions of dishonesty or misrepresentation surrounding a conflict, retaining public support for an ongoing conflict will become much more difficult.

It is worth underscoring again, however, that deceptions can only hurt credibility if the public, or certain members of the public, perceive they have occurred. If a lie is believed, it will have no effect on credibility. The presidency of Donald Trump is an extreme example. Over the course of his presidency, Trump made 30,573 false

or misleading claims according to Washington Post fact checkers,[4] an average of around 20 a day. Interestingly, however, the impact of this unprecedented embrace of dishonesty seemed primarily limited to the perceptions of individuals outside of Trump's own party. A 2019 survey found that while Democrats rated Trump incredibly low (6 percent) on perceptions of being "honest and trustworthy," 75 percent of Republicans nevertheless believed that he holds those traits (Brenan 2019). On the flip side, if deception is suspected even where none has been proven, it can still be damaging. Accusations of deception surrounding the attacks on the US compound in Benghazi continued to the plague the Obama administration through the end of his term, despite a lack of evidence proving wrongdoing by the administration.

Purposeful deception is not the only way a leader can erode informational trust, however. "Leaders who relay false or inaccurate information or keep lots of secrets jeopardize their credibility, as do those who make promises without making any effort to fulfill them" (Chng et al. 2018). Inconsistency in words and action - or a lack of "behavior integrity" - is another avenue through which trust in leadership may be eroded (Simons 2002). Lack of consistency may also signal incompetence and an inability by the leader to implement his or her vision effectively, or a lack of understanding of how to proceed in a given situation.

Perceptions of trustworthiness may be more varied among different subsets of the population compared to perceptions of competence, as trust is partially built on adherence to a certain set of values. Some of these values may be generally shared by the nation at large, while others may be specific to partisans, partisan subsets, or

[4]See https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-claims-database/

particular foreign policy orientations.[5]

Hypothesis 2: *Individuals who view their leader as trustworthy are more likely to support the initiation of a military intervention.*

Ideas of competence and trustworthiness also map onto the traits that scholars of American politics have found to represent Americans' conceptualizations of the "ideal president." Kinder et al. (1980) find that the ideal leader is "a president who, nearly everyone agrees, is competent and trustworthy" (330). While numerous personal traits are identified that are popular with the public, which often correspond to these two dimensions, the specific ranking of importance of any given trait varies over time (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986). The role of presidential traits is often discussed in the context vote choice, where different scholars have formed different conclusions on whether and how trait evaluation of candidates matters to voters (e.g. see Kinder et al. 1980; Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986; Bartels 2002; Holian and Prysby 2014). Vote choice is more complicated than the scope of this project, however. A person might support a war and still fail to vote for the incumbent president's reelection, or vice versa.

[5]Some scholars have made the case for one perception being more influential than the other in establishing and maintaining credibility. In a meta analysis of research on source credibility, Wilson and Sherrell (1993) found that expertise tends to have a greater effect on persuasion than other traits and judgments of the source. Others have argued that trustworthiness is the most important dimension. Kouzes and Posner (2011) write that "Being seen as someone who can be trusted, who has high integrity, and who is honest and truthful is essential to being believed. You may know someone who is clearly competent, dynamic, and inspirational, but if you have a sense that person is not being honest, you will not accept what that person is telling you" (18). Studies by Kim et al. (2004) support this assertion, indicating that it is more difficult to recover from a breach of trust than from an error due to incompetence. Likewise, a lack of trustworthiness inspires more cynicism than does a lack of competence (Kim et al. 2009).

2.4 Credibility in the Larger Picture

My argument for the influence of leader credibility does not dismiss the importance of the specific characteristics of any given conflict and the existing findings within the war and public opinion literature. Rather, the leader's relationship with the public is an additional piece of the puzzle that fits in along with conflict characteristics, the domestic and international political context, public expectations, and individual psychological biases and shortcuts to determine the level of public support. Credibility may also sometimes affect how some of these other factors are perceived and considered.

Because credibility is fundamentally a perceived quality, this perception will not be uniform across the public as a whole. Different groups of individuals, particularly individuals from different partisan leanings, are likely to perceive a leader's credibility differently or to different magnitudes. Later chapters will explore the role of partisanship in much greater depth, examining differences between partisan groups in both in how credibility is built and the role of partisanship in moderating the relationship between credibility and support for conflict initiation.

Finally, credibility many not always have a uniform effect across conflicts. In some conflicts, credibility may matter very little or not at all. If the nation is directly attacked, for example as in the case of Pearl Harbor, the threat to the nation is so high and clearly understandable to even the most casual observer that credibility is unlikely to exert much of an influence. In contrast, when the leader must exercise judgment in whether an intervention is the right decision, as is typically the case in the American context, credibility will play a much larger role. Such conflicts can include a broad range of interventions, such as responding to attacks on an ally, conflicts between third parties that jeopardize security interests, humanitarian interventions, counterterror

operations, preempting an emerging threat, or perhaps a mix of motivations. The next chapter will test the hypotheses presented in this chapter using survey data from a range of historical conflicts that vary in scope, purpose, and stakes.

Chapter 3

Quantitative Results: Support for Conflict Initiation

In the previous chapter, I made the argument that individual leaders matter for public opinion on war and that perceived credibility plays a key role in determining support. Existing literature has focused primarily on how the characteristics of a given conflict affects public support, whether because of the interests at stake, expectations of outcomes, the partisan lens through which the conflict is considered, or how elites react. Given that almost all military conflicts involving the United States are wars of choice, I have argued that we must consider the influence of the decision-maker as well. The decision to use force is rarely a simple one. With so many unknowns at the beginning of the conflict, I have argued that it is not just the specific details of the new conflict that influences public attitudes, but also their trust and faith in the person who chose to enter the conflict and their role in overseeing it. A leader who the public can trust to make good decisions, act only in the national interest, and provide accurate information throughout the conflict should receive greater support than a leader about whom the public holds more doubts.

In this chapter, I present evidence for the hypotheses that individuals who view their leader as competent and trustworthy are more likely to support the initiation of military operations. First, I utilize surveys fielded during twelve prior conflicts or potential conflicts that capture public sentiment at the time. I then conduct within-subject analysis, using a survey that asked participants about support for

military action against Iraq both before and after watching George W. Bush's 2003 State of the Union Address. Finally, I also conduct an analysis of three study years of ANES data probing general attitudes towards the use of force as a tool of foreign policy. The results of this analysis provides strong support for my hypotheses. Credibility matters in determining support for almost all of the historical conflicts under study, as well for hypothetical willingness to use military force.

3.1 Methodology

To test my hypotheses, I utilize historical political polling fielded in the lead up to and the early days of military conflicts involving the United States. The public is regularly surveyed by news agencies, think tanks, academics, and polling agencies to gauge attitudes on matters of foreign and domestic policy. In recent decades, it became more common to include questions not only on measures like presidential approval but also evaluation of various character traits of the president. Respondent answers to these questions can thus be used as proxies for credibility, enabling a test of my hypotheses using surveys fielded at the outset of military interventions over the past three decades.

The majority of survey data utilized in this chapter comes from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research's iPOLL database, which contains over 25,000 surveys that probe a wide range of topics. The surveys used in analysis were sponsored by news organizations, including CBS News, Los Angeles Times, CNN, USA Today, NBC News, Wall Street Journal, ABC News, Washington Post, and Time Magazine, and they were typically carried out by polling firms like Gallup, SSRS, Hart-Teeter Research Companies, Knowledge Networks, Yankelovich Partners, Inc., Opinion Research

Corporation, and Langer Research Associates. They are national samples ranging from about 640 to 2430 respondents, are typically administered by telephone, vary in length from a couple dozen questions to over a hundred, and include respondent demographic data. The relevant military intervention to my analysis is often not the only topic of the survey, and my analysis is limited to those surveys that ask respondents to both make character or ability judgments of the president and ask questions about relevant military interventions. It should be noted that it is not uncommon for these surveys to ask the character trait questions to only half of its sample.

This analysis utilizes data from surveys that were fielded at the outset of 12 different conflicts, spanning the administrations of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump. While there is a great deal of public opinion polling on military interventions conducted by earlier administrations, character trait assessments of the president were less common.

3.1.1 Case Inclusion: Military Interventions and Survey Timeline

To identify relevant surveys, I searched the iPOLL database with keywords related to military interventions beginning with the Gulf War in 1991. Because my hypotheses speak to support for conflict initiation, I limited the time frame of searches to the outbreak or just after the outbreak of military conflict. After identifying surveys with questions relevant to conflict support, I then narrowed down surveys to those that also included questions asking respondents to evaluate the current president in terms of his character or ability.

Unfortunately, because the surveys contained in the database were conducted by many different sources, there is too much variation in question wording and

Table 3.1: Summary of Included Conflicts

Conflict	President	Survey date	Start of US military action
Gulf War	Bush Sr.	January 8-12, 1991	January 17, 1991
Haiti	Clinton	September 6-7, 1994	September 19, 1994
Iraq	Clinton	October 14-18, 1994	-
Bosnia	Clinton	July 29 - August 1, 1995	August 30, 1995
Afghanistan & Sudan	Clinton	August 21-23, 1998	August 20, 1998
Iraq	Clinton	September 10-13, 1998	December 16, 1998
Kosovo	Clinton	March 25, 1999	March 24, 1999
Afghanistan	Bush	October 5-6, 2001	October 7, 2001
Iraq	Bush	January 10-12, 2003	March 19, 2003
Libya	Obama	April 9-10, 2011	March 19, 2011
Syria	Obama	September 25-29, 2013	-
North Korea	Trump	March 22-25, 2018	-

answer categories to combine multiple polls either across or within conflicts without sacrificing too much information and potentially introducing significant error. Instead, when multiple suitable surveys are available for a conflict, I selected one representative poll based on the quality of the available variables. In these cases, I prioritized independent variables first, looking for questions that best captured credibility through both trust and competence trait evaluation. If multiple polls provided equally good independent variables, I also considered dependent variables, date fielded, sample size, and available demographic questions.

The analysis in this chapter includes surveys fielded before or at the beginning of 12 conflicts or potential conflicts: The Gulf War, interventions in Haiti, Iraq 1994, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Sudan 1998, Iraq 1998, Kosovo, Afghanistan 2001, Iraq 2003, Libya, Syria, and a hypothetical conflict with North Korea. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the included conflicts.

George H.W. Bush Administration

In early August 1990, Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait following conflict over oil pricing and production, an action widely denounced by the international community. After economic sanctions, aerial and naval bombardment (launched January 17, 1991) and a final ultimatum from President George H.W. Bush failed to coerce Saddam Hussein, a coalition led by the United States launched a ground war in late February 1991 to expel Iraq from Kuwait. The survey utilized was fielded from January 8-12, 1991, the week before the beginning of Operation Desert Storm.

Bill Clinton Administration

Operation Uphold Democracy, which took place from September 19, 1994 to March 31, 1995, sought regime change in Haiti from Raoul Cédras, who came to power via military coup in 1991. The UN authorized military force in July of 1994 to restore the deposed government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The survey included in analysis was fielded September 6-7, prior to former President Jimmy Carter's successfully negotiated agreement for a transfer of power and the beginning of the US peacekeeping occupation on September 19.

Clinton began deploying troops to the Persian Gulf in Operation Vigilant Warrior in response to Saddam Hussein's mass mobilization of troops at the Kuawiti border on October 8, 1994. The included survey was fielded from October 14 to 18. At this time, Iraqi forces had begun to retreat from the border, but stopped suddenly. US officials feared that Iraqi forces were merely regrouping. One defense official stated, "My level of concern is high...They're within a distance that would enable them to move rapidly toward Kuwait, just as rapidly as they left" (Lippman and Graham 1994). Ultimately, Iraq backed down and retreated by the end of October without

conflict breaking out between the two countries.

In response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Balkans, Clinton attempted to rally support in 1993 and 1994 from the public and from Western Europe to lift an existing UN arms embargo in the region in order to aid persecuted Bosnian Muslims and to deploy airstrikes against the Bosnian Serbs. He was not able to secure the necessary support at home or abroad until 1995. In response to a massacre perpetrated by the Bosnian Serbs, NATO carried out airstrikes as part of Operation Deliberate Force, which began August 30, 1995. The included survey was fielded July 29- August 1.

Clinton ordered Operation Infinite Reach on August 20, 1998, cruise missile strikes on Al-Qaeda training camps and other targets in Afghanistan and Sudan following attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania earlier in the month. The included survey was fielded immediately after, from August 21-23. It is not possible to include a survey fielded prior to the operation, as the American public learned about the strikes in a television address by Clinton the day they were carried out. The operation received a high degree of sustained news coverage in its aftermath, in part because of threat of impeachment facing Clinton and accusations that he was trying to divert public attention.

Clinton also oversaw a four day bombing campaign in Iraq beginning December 16, 1998 due to ongoing fears that Iraq maintained or could produce weapons of mass destruction and Saddam Hussein's interference with UN inspections. The included survey was fielded from September 10-13, 1998.

From March 24 until June 10 1999, the United States and NATO carried out a bombing campaign called Operation Noble Anvil in response to atrocities committed by Yugoslav forces against Albanians in Kosovo. The included survey was fielded at

the beginning of this operation on March 25, 1999.

George W. Bush Administration

Following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, the US in conjunction with NATO invaded Afghanistan following an operation that began October 7, 2001, launching the Bush Administration's "War on Terror." The objectives of "Operation Enduring Freedom" were regime change from the Taliban, expulsion of al-Qaeda from Afghanistan, and crippling its leadership. The included survey was fielded on October 5 and 6.

In March 2003, the United States invaded Iraq on suspicions of developing weapons of mass destruction. The Bush Administration sought regime change from Saddam Hussein, hoping to transform Iraq into a democratic ally in the Middle East. The invasion was preceded by a long public and international discourse over the legitimacy of the threat and the necessity of force. The included survey was fielded January 10-12, 2003.

Barack Obama Administration

Following the outbreak of civil war in Libya sparked by Arab Spring protests, the Obama Administration supported the UN Security Council resolution proposed by France, the UK, and Lebanon, seeking approval for a military intervention in response to the threat of mass atrocities against civilians perpetrated by the regime of Muammar Gaddafi. The NATO-led intervention began March 19, 2011 and ended in October of the same year, following Gaddafi's death. The included survey was fielded at the beginning of the conflict, from April 9 to 10, 2011, and asks respondents if they would favor the use of ground troops should the NATO air and missile strikes

fail to achieve their goals.

The Arab Spring also sparked a civil war in Syria when leader Bashar al-Assad sought to brutally repress unrest. Following reports of the use of chemical weapons by the regime, the Obama Administration began exploring military options to intervene in the conflict. Obama eventually tabled plans for a military strike, agreeing instead to work with Russia to destroy chemical weapons in Syria. The included survey was fielded September 25-29, 2013, following President Obama's attempt to gain congressional support for military action earlier that month.

Donald Trump Administration

In spring of 2018, the Trump Administration was preparing for a June summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. While the goal of the summit was to improve diplomatic relations and negotiate on issues like denuclearization, Trump had previously threatened North Korea with military action should it push the US too far: "North Korea best not make any more threats to the US. They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen."[1] In the lead up to the summit (March 22-25), Americans were surveyed about their willingness to utilize military force against North Korea if diplomatic and economic strategies failed, given the ongoing tension between the two countries and the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear arsenal.

[1] BBCNews 2017

3.1.2 Independent Variables: Capturing Perceived Credibility

Perceived credibility is a difficult concept to measure, as is its components, perceived competence and perceived trustworthiness. Many distinct judgments could potentially inform these larger judgments, although they may not all carry the same weight. Each of the various character and ability judgments available in survey data are unlikely to fully capture credibility on their own. Furthermore, any person is unlikely to be able to quantify exactly how much credibility they perceive another person to possess, regardless of the specific question asked.

Among the surveys that do ask respondents to make judgments about their leaders, there is variation in which traits and abilities are asked about. As such, my independent variables are not fully consistent across interventions and administrations. Certain traits are asked about fairly frequently, allowing greater comparison across cases, while others are asked more sporadically. Variety in independent variables, however, mitigates concern that any one character trait is an inadequate proxy for credibility. Furthermore, there are reasons to be hesitant in relying on any single trait. While past studies have identified traits of an ideal president to include being "honest, knowledgeable, and open-minded, but neither power-hungry nor unstable... provides strong leadership, appoints good advisors, solves economic problems, avoids unnecessary wars, and never uses power for personal gain" (Kinder et al. 1980, p. 319), other work has found that while the general characteristics that Americans value remain steady, the relative importance of one trait over another tends to vary over and time and with historical context (Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk 1986).

The most common relevant trait asked about is some variation of whether the president is "a strong and decisive leader." Especially compared to some of the other traits respondents are asked about in these surveys, "strong leader" is an especially

Table 3.2: Credibility Proxies

Competence	Trustworthiness
Strong leader	Honest and trustworthy
Strong and decisive leader	Keeps his word
Understands complex issues	Tells the truth
Can get things done	Sincere in what he says
Effective	Stands up for what he believes in
Can manage government effectively	Consistent and stands up for beliefs
Able to handle a crisis	Man of deep convictions
Trust as Commander in Chief	Sticks with his principles

subjective descriptor. To some, strong leadership may be seen as aggressive and unyielding responses to international threats, while to others, strong leadership is the ability to bring countries together and negotiate difficult agreements to avoid conflict and mitigate threat. Credibility, however, does not need to mean the same thing to different people to produce a similar effect; different personal qualities and actions inspire confidence in different individuals, but when you do believe your leader to be competent, you are more likely to trust in the decisions they make or give them the benefit of the doubt. Regardless of what "strong" means to any given individual, it is a positive descriptor associated with ability more so than character. As such, it is well suited to approximating the competence component of credibility.

In terms of trustworthiness, the most frequently occurring relevant trait evaluation is a variation of whether the president is "honest and trustworthy." Unlike strong leadership, honesty is a character trait rather than an ability and gets at the personal integrity component of credibility characterized as trustworthiness. While "trustworthy" and "trust" can be invoked in ways that do not speak to integrity or do not speak only to integrity, such as a trust in ability to handle a complicated crisis, by linking trust to honesty in these questions, it invokes the integrity context. Perceived honesty is a

critical part of personal integrity, particularly in the context of military interventions, where the executive is often the key supplier of information related to a conflict. Synonyms for honest also frequently appear, such as "sincere in what he says", 'tell[s] the truth", and "keep[s] his word."

Other credibility proxies used in this analysis are listed in table 3.2 and specific question wording is listed in Appendix A. In many cases, the answers to the questions used for independent variables were already dichotmous. Those that were not were recoded both for uniformity across different surveys and interventions and because subjectivity in distinguishing between classifications such as "strongly agree" versus "somewhat agree" may not result in meaningfully distinct categories.

3.1.3 Dependent Variables

The primary dependent variable used is a measure of support for a hypothetical, imminent, or just beginning intervention. The survey questions used for this analysis asked questions such as "Do you favor or oppose the United States taking direct military action using ground troops in Afghanistan?", "If Saddam Hussein does not withdraw his troops from the border between Iraq and Kuwait, do you think the United States should or should not launch an air strike against Iraq?", and "If the United States does not accomplish its goals regarding North Korea with economic and diplomatic efforts, would you favor or oppose using military action against North Korea?". Like the independent variables, all dependent variables that were not already dichotomous were recoded to be so. Respondents who answered that they were unsure were excluded from analysis. Dependent variable wording is listed in Appendix B.

3.1.4 Control Variables

There is a small amount of variation between surveys based on availability, but for the most part, I utilized a consistent set of variables as controls. Most importantly, a partisanship variable indicated whether the individual respondent was a copartisan of the president, a member of the opposing party, or an independent, with independents who leaned towards either party coded with those partisans. This control was crucial to include, because partisans will be more likely to support their own presidents' policies, although Democrats also tend to be more dovish on average while Republicans tend to be more hawkish. I also included, where available, five demographic control variables: gender of the respondent (male, female), age of the respondent (depending on the survey either their specific age or an ordinal variable), whether the respondent is a college graduate (yes, no), the respondent's household income (ordinal variable), and the respondent's race or ethnicity (White, Black, Hispanic, or other).

3.1.5 A Note on Endogeneity

The simultaneous collection of the independent and dependent variables may raise some concerns of endogeneity. Particularly for a dependent variable measuring conflict support, some readers may question whether it is support of the president's decisions related to the conflict that cause respondents to rate him positively on character traits rather than perceived credibility driving support for military action. My theory does not deny the presence of a feedback loop between credibility and support. Credibility is not a fixed character trait that someone either has or lacks. Individual members of the public may continually update their perceptions of a president over the course of his term based on a variety of factors, including the president's statements and

actions, policy choices and the perceived success of those policies, traditional and social media discourse, and performance relative to expectations. While over time and as judgments are built on an increasing quantity of information, it may take more dramatic occurrences to shift an individual's perceptions of the leader, nevertheless, credibility may be gained or lost at any point in time. Even over the course on a single conflict, the leader's actions at the outset of the conflict may bolster or degrade his credibility as the conflict wears on, shaping how the public responds to events that unfold later on.

That being said, in the following analysis, I focus on questions asking about hypothetical support for a conflict that - in most cases - has not yet resulted in the outbreak of armed conflict, avoiding where possible questions that ask for judgments of current or past events. Thus, while respondents likely understand that conflict is imminent, battlefield events from a conflict have not yet begun and cannot influence assessments of the president. Support may be influenced on speculation of how battlefield events will unfold, but I expect that speculation to be at least partially influenced by pre-existing judgments of credibility.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Support for Military Action

Hypotheses 1 and 2, that individuals who do not find their leader to be competent or trustworthy are less likely to support a new military intervention, are tested in the following aggregation of models evaluating the relationship between credibility assessment and support for a variety of prior conflicts.

Each model represents a single conflict and a single survey. Because the dependent

variables for this analysis were dichotomous or recoded to be dichotomous, I used logistic regression to evaluate the effects of the credibility measures on support for military action. For each model, I calculated predicted probabilities for the values of the credibility variables.[2] Because the credibility traits are dichotomous, I then calculated the difference in probabilities between those respondents who answered that the president holds the given trait versus those who said that he does not and calculated standard errors via simulation to compute credible intervals for that difference to evaluate whether the difference between the two groups is statistically different than zero.

For the 12 conflicts or potential conflicts included in this analysis, suitable proxies for both competence and trustworthiness were available in 10 of the surveys. For the Kosovo and Libya analyses, only a competence proxy was available. Predicted probability differences for the competence measures across the 12 conflicts are displayed in Figure 3.1. Predicted probability differences for trustworthiness measures are displayed in Figure 3.2. Results in both graphs are color coded by the partisanship of the president. See Appendix C for the individual regression tables, which begin with Table A3.

In 10 of the 12 conflicts included in this analysis, at least one of the credibility proxies had a significant relationship with conflict support, where perceiving the leader to hold a credibility character trait is associated with greater likelihood of support for the new intervention. Only for the interventions in Haiti and Bosnia were neither credibility trait significant; however, the p-value for the trustworthiness

[2]These are calculated taking an average marginal effects approach. Holding a value of a credibility variable constant, the probability that the dependent variable is equal to 1 (support) is calculated for each row of the data, with the other independent variables left at their original values, and then averaged.

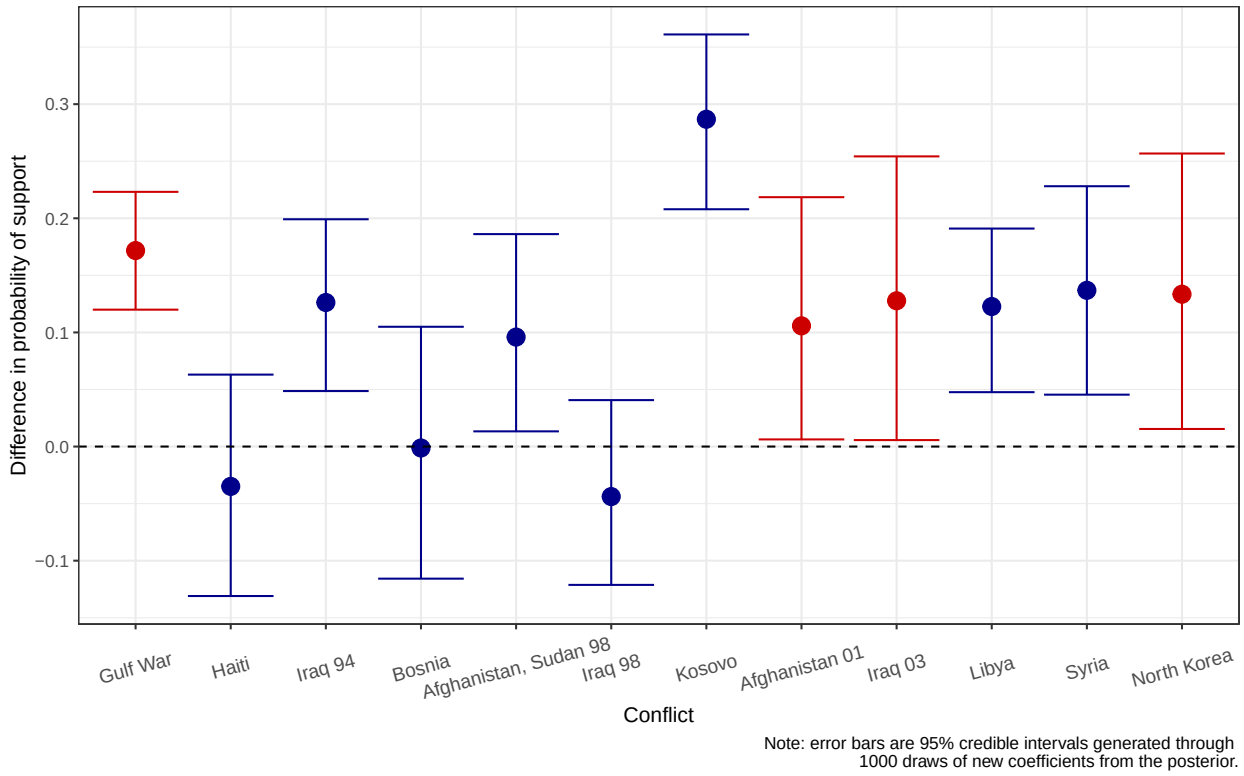

Figure 3.1: Support for Military Action: Competence

trait in the Haiti model just exceeds the significance threshold. Both credibility traits were significant in 5 of the conflicts: the Gulf War, Afghanistan & Sudan 1998, Iraq 2003, Syria, and hypothetical North Korea.

Generally speaking, competence is the more consistently significant credibility dimension and is significant in 9 of the 12 conflicts. Of the three cases where only one of two credibility traits is significant, in two of the cases (Iraq 1994 and Afghanistan 2001) it is the competence proxy. Only in the 1998 Iraq bombing campaign, is the trustworthiness rather than competence proxy significant.

The effect sizes for competence and trustworthiness are similar and substantively meaningful. For models in which the competence measure is significant, the average predicted probability difference between those who see the president as competent and

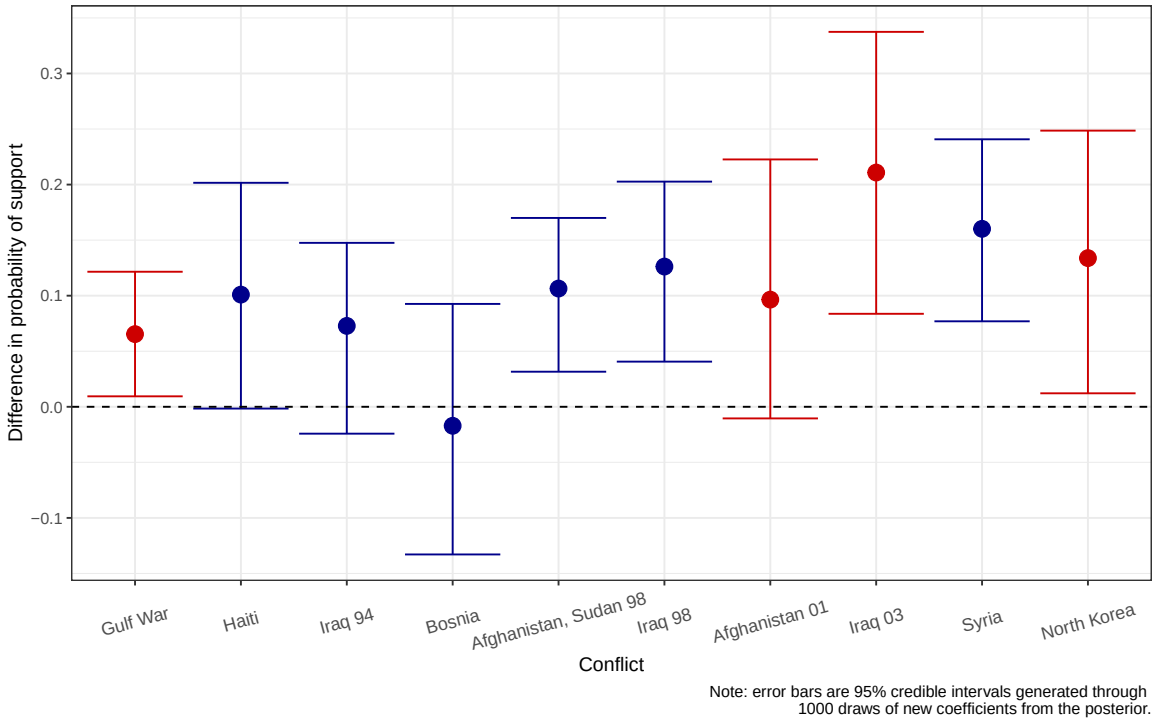

Figure 3.2: Support for Military Action: Trustworthiness

those who do not is 0.14. Among significant trustworthiness measures, the average predicted probability difference is a 0.13 increase in probability to support a military intervention. For example, positive evaluation of Trump's honesty is associated with an increase of 0.13 in probability of support for a hypothetical military action against North Korea.

3.2.2 Null Results

Although taken together, the results provide strong evidence for my hypotheses, what explains the nulls results? Are there any patterns between the two cases (Haiti, Bosnia) where neither credibility dimension was significant and the additional three cases (Iraq 94, Iraq 98, Afghanistan) where only one credibility dimension was? Two

potential explanations should be considered: (1) differences in the measurement of variables and (2) differences within the historical cases.

Of the competence proxies that were not significant, two of the three were variants on whether the president "gets things done" and the third was whether he is a "strong leader." While the repeat null of "gets things done" is suggestive, this proxy was also used in the Afghanistan & Sudan model, where it was significant. Variants of "strong leader" were the most frequently used proxy for competence and were significant in all other cases. For trustworthiness, where there was more variation in statistical significance, the proxies that were not significant were "keep[s] his word," "tell[s] the truth," "sincere in what he says," and "stands up for what he believes in," with the latter trustworthiness proxy only just failing to achieve significance in the Haiti model. The remaining three all get at the idea of honesty without specifically using that word.

While some variation in results could stem from the proxy used, I suspect differences among the conflicts themselves are more likely the drivers of the null results. Table A15 in Appendix C summarizes the action taken by the US, presidential preferences for the conflict, and what potential action respondents were asked about in the surveys. Conflicts where one or both credibility dimensions were not significant are bolded with the null results indicated in the "Conflict" column. For the most part, there is not much difference between the president's preferences and what the respondent is being asked to support, although sometimes the wording is more vague on the respondents' side (for example, "military force" rather than being explicit in

what type of force).[3]

Both of the conflicts where no credibility proxies were statistically significant shared a number of similarities, however. They were both conducted under Bill Clinton's administration, both were inherited conflicts, and each conflict had a protracted buildup in public discourse prior to the US launching military action in large part due to domestic constraints and disinterest in a military solution. Clinton inherited the "Aristide problem," assuming office with a military junta still in control of Haiti following a coup in 1991. An influx of Haitian refugees seeking asylum in the US made the issue domestically charged, and Clinton immediately went back on his campaign promise of ending the Bush administration policy of forcible repatriation after assuming office.[4] After repeated administration efforts at finding a diplomatic solution achieved little, in the summer of 1994, Clinton started shifting towards a military strategy. He faced an incredibly tough domestic climate, however. The US public and Congress were strongly against sending troops to Haiti and were "deeply suspicious still of the exiled Haitian president"(Morley and McGillion 1997, p. 375). Similarly, conflict in the Balkans following the breakup of Yugoslavia remained an ongoing area of concern for several years before the Clinton administration took military action. And again, domestic support (as well as allied support) was difficult to drum up. In mid 1993, the Clinton administration began advocating for an end to the current arms embargo and airstrikes in concert with allies to aid Bosnian Muslims. Clinton faced a number of domestic and international constraints, however, including

[3]The only case where there is a clear escalation in what is being asked of the respondent is in the case of Libya, where respondents are asked if they would support ground troops in tandem with NATO if the current strikes are not effective. This represents more than Obama's own preferences, or at least his public assurances.

[4]Perhaps actions like this can account for why the trustworthiness proxy in this model, "stands up for what he believes in," came so close to achieving statistical significance.

public opinion. The public generally displayed little interest in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, was generally against US military action, and did not believe the US held vital interests in the region (Schmidt n.d.). It is possible that in both of these cases, relatively inflexible pre-existing opinions left less room for Clinton to persuade than is typical in the other cases.

In the case of the Iraq 1998 conflict, the only other case where competence was not significant, the timing of the intervention may be contributing to the outcome we see. The operation was carried out in December, the same month as Bill Clinton's impeachment proceedings, raising accusations of diversionary war. It is perhaps not surprising then that trustworthiness rather than competence is the key dimension in this conflict, given the greater context surrounding prominent public questioning of the president's integrity.

3.2.3 Role of Partisanship

Given the significant influence of partisanship in any study of public opinion, it is worth further unpacking the effects of partisanship in these models. At least one category of the copartisanship variable is significant in 7 of the 12 models, although in two models the p-value for copartisanship was just above 0.05. In contrast, at least one credibility proxy was significant in 10 of the 12 models. Copartisanship (compared to opposing partisans) is significant for the Gulf War, Haiti, Iraq 1994, Afghanistan 2001, Iraq 2003, and North Korea, while being an independent (compared to being a copartisan) is significant in only the Gulf War, Iraq 2003, and Syria. The latter is the only case where independents (compared to copartisans) were significant while copartisans (compared to opposing partisans) were not.

These models were originally coded with independent leaners, individuals who

Table 3.3: Significance of Partisanship Variables

	Copartisan vs. Opposing	Independent - no lean	Copartisan vs. Opposing	Independent - with lean
Gulf War	✓	✓	✓	✓
Haiti	✓	×	✓	✓
Iraq 1994	✓	×	×	×
Bosnia	×	×	×	×
Afghanistan & Sudan 1998	×	×	×	×
Iraq 1998	× p=0.057	×	×	×
Kosovo	×	×	×	×
Afghanistan 2001	✓	×	×	×
Iraq 2003	✓	✓	✓	✓
Libya	× p=0.056	×	✓	×
Syria	×	✓	×	×
North Korea 2018	✓	×	✓	✓

identify as independents but say they lean towards one party over the other, coded with those respective parties. It is possible, however, that this coding is obscuring importance nuance. It could be the case that independent leaners may behave more similarly to true independents than to partisans. They may be more open to persuasion by a perceived credible leader than a partisan of an opposing party, for example. As such, I re-ran the prior analysis with independent leaners recoded as independents rather than with the partisan group they lean towards.[5] While independents are significant in four models with this change and there is a little variation for the copartisan vs. opposing categories as well, the results are not notably different. A summary of the results of the original models and the recoded models are displayed in Table 3.3. All regression tables can be viewed in Appendix C, with the

[5]Recoding independents did not diminish the strength of my previous results for credibility - if anything, it made them stronger. All previously significant credibility proxies remained significant, and additional credibility proxies became significant in two models - Afghanistan and Haiti. The latter was one of the two models (along with Bosnia) where neither credibility proxy was previously significant.

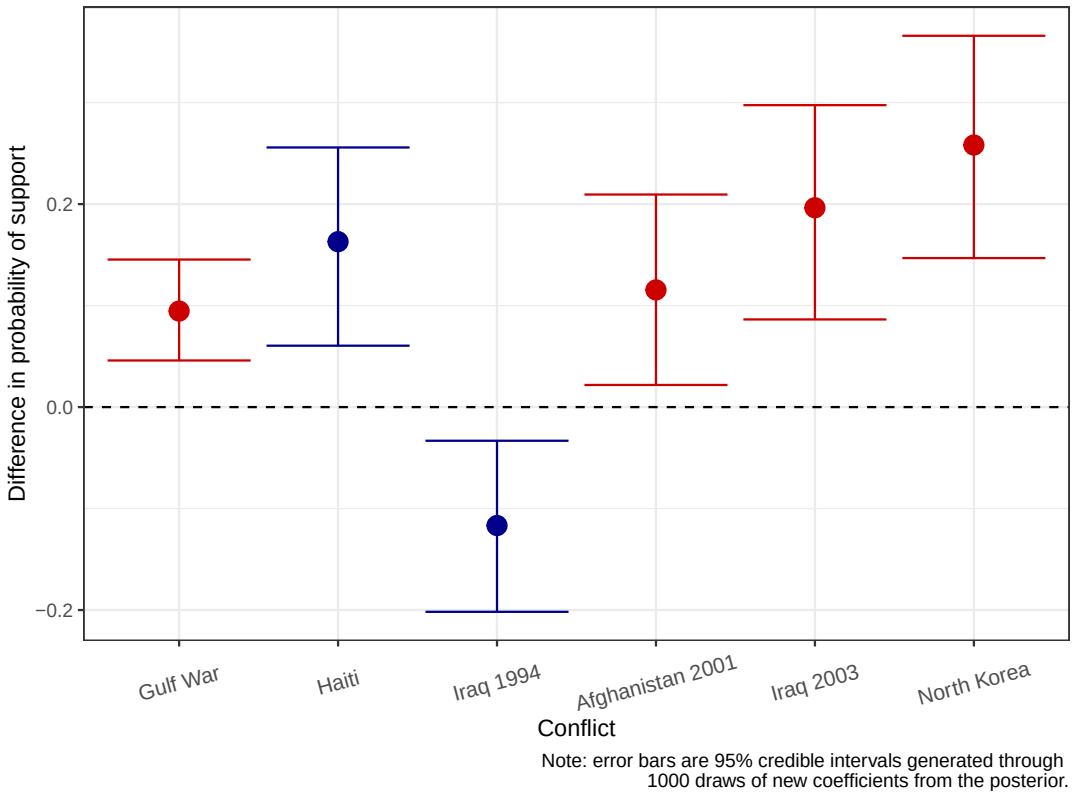

Figure 3.3: Predicted Probabilities for Copartisanship

models with recoded independents beginning in Table A20. Regardless of coding of independents, these results indicate that the effects of credibility are more consistently associated with support for conflict initation than partisanship is, at least directly.

Predicted probabilities differences for copartisanship are displayed in Figure 3.3 for the 6 original models in which copartisan compared to opposing partisan is significant. These predicted probabilities represent the difference in increase in probability of support for a copartisan compared to an opposing partisan. Notably, copartisanship is significant in every single model with a Republican president, while only two models with a Democrat president are significant. In one of those two models (Iraq 1994), the difference is negative, meaning that opposing partisans (in this case, Republicans)

Table 3.4: Effect Sizes of Copartisanship vs. Credibility (Difference in Probabilities)

	Copartisan - Opposing partisan	Competent - Not competent	Trustworthy - Not trustworthy
Gulf War	0.095	0.171	0.065
Haiti	0.163	Not significant	Not significant
Iraq 1994	-0.117	0.126	Not significant
Afghanistan 2001	0.115	0.106	Not significant
Iraq 2003	0.196	0.128	0.21
North Korea 2018	0.258	0.133	.134

rather than copartisans were more likely to support military action. The weak effects of copartisanship under Democrat presidents may be due to competing tendencies to support a president from your party and the tendency of Democrats to be more dovish on average than Republicans.

But how do the substantive effects compare? Table 3.4 compares the sizes of the predicted probability differences for competence (vs. not), trustworthiness (vs. not), and copartisanship (vs. opposing). Generally speaking, when significant, the effect size of copartisanship is similar to the effect size of a significant competence or trustworthiness proxy. A clear exception, however, is the hypothetical case of North Korea, where partisanship has a significantly larger substantive effect than either credibility proxy, likely due to the growing polarization under Donald Trump's presidency. It should be noted, however, that comparing effect sizes of these different measures is at best suggestive and should be considered cautiously since these variables may contain different amounts of measurement error.

Finally, I explored whether copartisanship moderates the relationship between credibility and support. I re-ran the models from the previous section, interacting partisanship with the credibility proxies. I did this both with independent leaners coded with those partisan groups and again coded as independents. Regression tables

for the interactive models can be viewed in Appendix C, starting with Table A32.

In almost all of the cases, regardless of how independents are coded, the interactions are not significant, providing little support for an interactive effect between partisanship and credibility.[6] There is not a consistent magnification or dampening of the effects of credibility on support for either copartisans, opposite partisans, or independents.[7] These results do not mean that partisanship does not matter; rather, it just does not operate as a moderator for credibility. The effects of credibility do not appear to vary by partisanship; credibility remains important across party lines.

3.3 Additional Analyses

To probe the robustness of my results and address potential concerns, I performed three additional analyses. First, taking advantage of the design of a survey that asked respondents about their support for a military intervention in Iraq before and after hearing the 2003 State of the Union, I look for evidence supporting the mechanism of persuasion by credible leaders, removing concerns of reverse causality or endogenous shocks. Those who view Bush as credible should be more likely to be persuaded by his speech than those who do not. Second, I utilize ANES data to explore whether my results hold up in a more general context. Initial results provide evidence that credibility matters when faced with an imminent conflict, but does it

[6]Regardless of how independents are coded, only one copartisan * credibility proxy is significant in two models (Iraq 1994, Afghanistan & Sudan). If independents are coded with leaners, only one independent * credibility proxy is significant (Iraq 1998). In all other models, no interaction terms are significant at $p<0.05$.

[7]These results also do not substantively change if the models are specified with the two credibility proxies combined into a single dichotomous credibility variable and therefore only a single interaction term.

also shape general willingness to use force without reference to a specific conflict? By shifting the analysis from the specific to the general, I remove consideration of how the type of crisis, its particular characteristics, and the president's own preferences for US action, as well as the resulting news coverage or partisan opposition, may be influencing support. Finally, I control for congressional approval to address concerns of indiscriminately correlated positive opinions present in public opinion data.

3.3.1 Within-Subject Analysis: 2003 State of the Union

The study design of a 2003 survey sponsored by CBS News allowed me to conduct a within-subject analysis of support among individuals before and after viewing President Bush's January 2003 State of the Union address, in which the president made the case for the imminent invasion of Iraq. Participants were recruited from the Knowledge Networks' Panel, a large, nationally representative panel of US adults. These participants agreed to watch and give feedback on the State of the Union and were surveyed before and after the speech. The pre-speech survey covered a variety of topics and included questions about perceptions of the president and opinions on a potential intervention in Iraq. The post-speech survey repeated several questions from the initial survey on topics that featured heavily in the State of the Union, including the question "Do you approve or disapprove of the United States taking military action against Iraq to try to remove Saddam Hussein from power?"

From the first survey, I split respondents into two subsets: those who had initially answered that they approved of the US taking military action against Iraq and those who initially disapproved. I then ran a logit model for each subset where the dependent variable was whether their opinion changed or stayed the same after viewing the State of the Union and the key independent variable was whether the

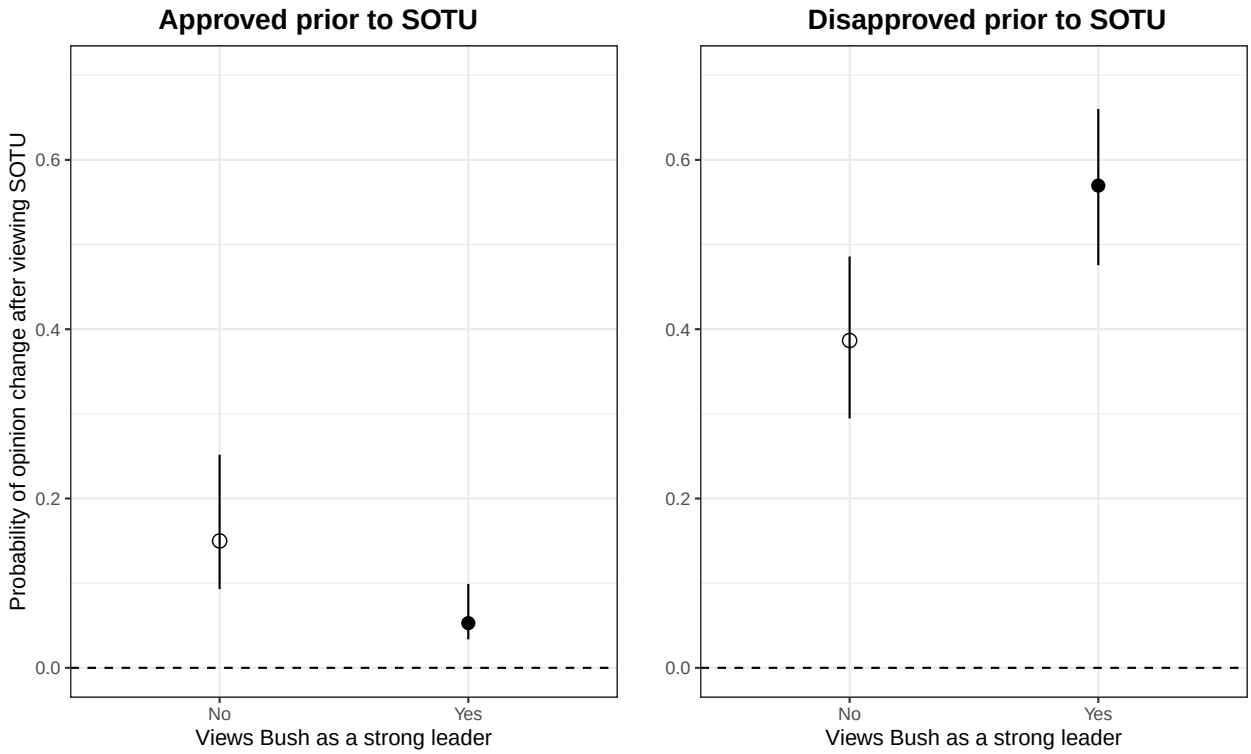

Figure 3.4: State of the Union Opinion Change

individual had said Bush "has strong qualities of leadership," a proxy for perceived competence that was recorded prior to viewing the State of the Union. Unfortunately, this survey did not include a suitable proxy for perceived trustworthiness.[8]

In both models, assessment of Bush's leadership is associated with opinion change (see Table A44 in Appendix C). Among those who initially approved of taking military action against Iraq, individuals who did not think Bush had strong qualities of

[8]The survey did ask respondents whether Bush "cares about the needs and problems of people like yourself." Existing litertaure utilizes questions of this nature as a proxy for perceived compassion (for example, see McDonald 2021), which is a distinct judgment from trustworthiness and therefore not an appropriate proxy. If the models are run with cares included, however, strong leader remains significant for the approvers model and the p-value is just above the statistical significance threshold at 0.052 in the disapprovers model (which has a smaller n than the approvers model - 220 vs. 397). Cares is not significant in either model.

leadership were more likely to answer after viewing the State of the Union that they now disapproved of military action. Among those who initially disapproved of taking military action against Iraq, those that thought Bush had strong qualities of leadership were more likely to support military action after watching the State of the Union.

Figure 3.4 contains predicted probabilities for both models. The probability of an opinion change from disapproval to support of military action was 0.18 higher among the initial disapprovers for those who viewed Bush as a strong leader compared to those who did not, while the probability of an opinion change from support to disapproval was 0.10 higher among the initial approvers for those who did not view Bush as a strong leader compared to those who did.

These results provide evidence for the mechanism of leader persuasion. Watching Bush's speech, where he advocated for military action in Iraq, made respondents who already had faith in Bush as a leader significantly more likely to abandon their prior disapproval of such an action and change their mind to supporting the intervention. Although the effect size is smaller, the results for the approvers group is perhaps even more interesting. Individuals watching the State of the Union as someone who was already supporting military action against Iraq but who had doubts about Bush's ability to lead were more likely to stop supporting military action after hearing Bush's case for war, suggesting these doubts grew, superseded justifications for military action, or eroded beliefs about the need for military action with greater exposure to Bush's rhetoric.

This analysis also helps mitigates concerns of endogeneity. A potential concern that might be raised from the previous analysis is reverse causality - that how events unfold cause people to perceive the president more positively or that pre-existing

support or opposition to the war for reasons independent of the leader causes people the adjust their view of the leader. Another concern could be that a rally round the flag effect drives both support for war and could make a leader seem more credible. The design of this survey helps allieve these concerns. Because respondents were surveyed about their perceptions of Bush prior to watching the speech, we know that the speech did not influence respondents' initial perceptions, as those perceptions preceded both the speech and any opinion change. And while rallies may sometimes occur and could have potentially contributed to some respondents who both supported the invasion and had a positive impression of Bush when recorded in the first survey, a general rally effect does not account for changes from opposition to support or vice versa in the second survey.

3.3.2 ANES Analysis: General Attitude Towards Force

Using the historical survey data from the Roper Center database allowed me to evaluate public attitudes towards specific conflicts as they were unfolding, but what about general attitudes towards force? When not faced with a particular crisis and just asked about the use of military force in the abstract, we might expect public attitudes to be more stable with some individuals being generally more hawkish while others are more dovish. But what if an individual's level of trust and confidence in the current president subconsciously or consciously influences their attitudes towards military force?

To examine general attitudes towards force, I used the the ANES Time Series Cumulative Dataset, containing election year survey data stretching back to 1948. In three of its study years, 1992, 1996, and 1998, the ANES included the question "In the future, how willing should the United States be to use military force to

Table 3.5: ANES Analysis: Willingness to Use Force (Ordered Logit)

	Willingness to use force
Not strong leadership	-0.408^{***}
	(0.062)
Not moral	-0.372^{***}
	(0.071)
Female	-0.175^{***}
	(0.057)
Age	-0.001
	(0.002)
Black	0.122
	(0.094)
Hispanic	0.319^{***}
	(0.102)
Other race or ethnicity	0.473^{**}
	(0.191)
College graduate	-0.393^{***}
	(0.069)
Income: 34 to 67 percentile	0.077
	(0.071)
Income: 68 to 95 percentile	0.185^{**}
	(0.078)
Income: 96 to 100 percentile	-0.039
	(0.136)
Independent	-0.022
	(0.097)
Republican	0.392^{***}
	(0.064)
Study year: 1996	0.255^{***}
	(0.072)
Study year: 1998	0.639^{***}
	(0.086)
Never or not very willing|Somewhat willing	-1.546^{***}
	(0.119)
Somewhat willing|Very or extremely willing	1.078^{***}
	(0.118)
Observations	4,779
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

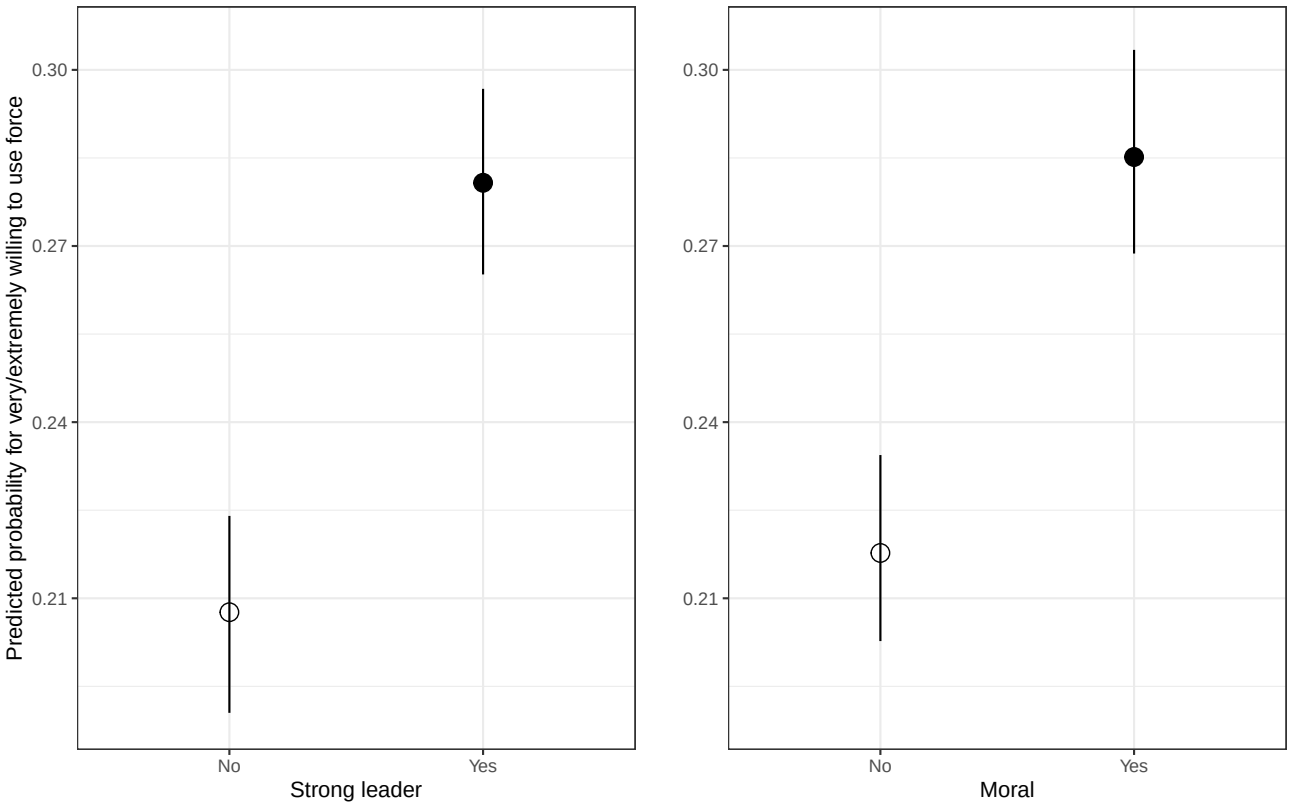

Figure 3.5: How Willing Should the US be to Use Military Force?

solve international problems?". Respondents were given the answer categories, "Never willing," "Not very willing", "Somewhat willing", "Very willing" and "Extremely willing". For the dependent variable in this analysis, I condense answer categories into three groups, combining never and not very willing into the lower category and very and extremely willing into the upper category. The independent variables are whether the respondent thinks the president is a strong leader and whether the respondent thinks the president is moral - proxies for competence and trustworthiness. Control variables include gender, age, race or ethnicity, whether the respondent is a college graduate, income, and partisan affiliation.

The results of the ordered logit model are displayed in table 3.5. Predicted

probabilities for being very or extremely willing to use force are displayed in figure 3.5. Both believing the president is a strong leader and believing he is moral are statistically significant and associated with greater willingness to use force as a tool of foreign policy. Respondents who believe the president to be a strong leader have a probability of 0.281 of answering that the US should be very or extremely willing to use force. In contrast, respondents who do not believe the president is a strong leader only have a probability of 0.208 of answering that the US should be very or extremely willing to use force, a difference of .073. The effect size is similar for the belief in the president's morality, a difference of 0.067.[9] Predicted probabilities for all three categories of the dependent variable can be viewed in figures A1 and A2 in Appendix C. The effect is mirrored for never or not very willing to use force, while there is no substantive difference in probability for the middle category, somewhat willing.

These results illustrate that people who have confidence and trust in the president are not only more willing to support specific military interventions as they occur, but that they also hold a more favorable attitude to the use of force in general. The relationship holds even without consideration of the specific characteristics, stakes, or greater context of any particular case.

[9]Strangely, the ANES Time Series Cumulative Dataset only has this dependent variable for study years 1992, 1996, and 1998; however, I found when looking at the individual 1994 dataset that this question was also asked that year. When incorporating the data from the 1994 study year, strong leadership and morality remained significant, but the effect size of the differences diminished slightly to 0.067 and 0.057 respectively for very or extremely willing to use force. Adding the 1994 study data added 721 observations to the model, however, I was not able to control for family income unlike in the model displayed in table 3.5 due to coding differences. Regardless, I do not think inclusion or exclusion of the 1994 data meaningfully changes the result.

3.3.3 Endogeneity Check: Everything is Correlated

In the previous analyses, I have sought to mitigate concerns of endogeneity relating to reverse causality or omitted variables like rally effects and related to specific conflict contextual details. In this section, I will explore the concern with political public opinion data that all opinions are correlated - that when things are good, trust in government is generally high and the public will be widely supportive across issues and institutions.

To get at this potential criticism, I control for congressional approval in the four[10] models where this variable is available: the Gulf War, Iraq 1994, hypothetical North Korea, and the ANES analysis on general attitudes towards force. Congressional approval is distinct from leader credibility; approval or disapproval of congressional performance should not affect evaluations of the leader's competence or trustworthiness. Controlling on this variable therefore provides a good check against a "general positive feeling" or high institutional trust driving both evaluations of the leader and support for war.

Tables A16-A19 in Appendix C display the results of this analysis. The results in these four models do not substantively change by adding the congressional approval control. While congressional approval is significant in two of the four models (the Gulf War model and the ANES general attitudes towards force model), the credibility proxies that were previously significant remain significant and those that were not remain not significant, with one exception. In the hypothetical North Korea model,

[10] A question about congressional approval was also included in a fifth survey - the one used for the Iraq 1998 model - however, in that survey, the sample was split into two groups that were asked different questions. The congressional approval question was not asked of the subgroup that was asked the question used for the dependent variable.

the p-value for the competence proxy increases to 0.07, just above the significance threshold. For the two cases where congressional approval is significant, the results do not tell a consistent story. In the ANES analysis, congressional approval is positively associately with willingness to use force, while in the Gulf War model, it is negatively associated with support for war. Overall, these results do not indicate the presence of indiscriminately correlated positive opinions present in the public that drive support for war.

3.4 Conclusion

The results of this analysis support my argument that individual leaders matter in support for war. Perceived trustworthiness and especially perceived competence are shown to have a relationship with support for war across a wide range of conflicts, both under Republican and Democrat presidents, in smaller operations, large scale wars with ground troops, and hypothetical conflicts that never came to fruition, for humanitarian missions, counterterror operations, and in response to state agression. In 10 of the 12 historical surveys examined, at least one dimension of credibility was associated with support, and in 5 of these surveys, both dimensions of credibility were significant. These effects do not appear to be moderated by partisanship. Credibility produces a similar effect on support for war across party lines.

The analysis of the survey that questioned respondents both before and after viewing George W. Bush's 2003 State of the Union address bolsters these results by providing evidence of the persuasion mechanism of credibility. Those who had doubts about the president's competency but initially approved of military action against Iraq were more likely to change their mind after watching a speech that advocated for that

military action. For those who initially disapproved of military action against Iraq but who believed the president was a strong leader, watching the speech made them more likely to switch to support for military action compared to those who doubted his leadership.

Finally, the analysis of the ANES data indicates that this relationship between credibility and support for war does not only exist when the public is faced with an imminent conflict, but also can be applied to general policy attitudes towards the use of military force as a tool of foreign policy.

Chapter 4

Credibility and Conflict Expectations

The assertion that the public "is far from being casualty phobic and is best viewed as being defeat phobic" became a prominent challenge to the casualty aversion thesis (Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009, p. 236). Arguing that desire for and expectations of a successful outcome can outweigh the cost of casualties, Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler's extensive analyses drawing on both survey and experimental designs illustrated that the conventional wisdom that casualties deplete public support for war is not universally true. Building on these findings, subsequent scholarly work has explored other ways that expectations may influence conflict support and casualty tolerance, particularly in terms of a conflict's likely costs.

Where do these expectations come from? While the public may make adjustments to pre-existing beliefs as battlefield events begin to unfold, on what basis do initial expectations form? Building on my findings from Chapter 3, where I demonstrated the importance of a leader's perceived credibility for rallying support for armed conflict, in this chapter I unpack how credibility can influence a wide range of beliefs and expectations surrounding a given conflict. In particular, I theorize that credibility is a determinant of expectations surrounding outcomes, conflict length, and casualties. These expectations not only relate to the initial decision of whether to support but also have implications for the longevity of that support over time.

4.1 Expectation Formation

As described in Chapter 2, John Mueller's argument that casualties were key to understanding patterns of public support for war fostered the development of a rich literature debating his thesis. A prominent strand of that debate refutes the importance of casualties alone, arguing that expectations regarding the conflict's outcome moderates the public's sensitivity to casualties. Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005-2006; 2009) argue that while a variety of factors shape casualty acceptance and public support, the key determinant is whether a successful outcome is anticipated. As such, the public is willing to maintain support for even costly conflicts if they expect it will ultimately result in victory.

Gartner and Segura (2021) critique the logic that expectations of success determine support, arguing that casualties are endogenous to the public's evaluations. Given the United States' superior military might, it could succeed in almost any conflict should it have sufficient resolve to pay the resulting costs - including casualties. Maintaining a cost-benefit framework, they instead argue that public support is a function of the value placed on the war aims of a particular conflict and the perceived costs the country will have to pay to achieve those aims. Expectations remain key. Instead of focusing on the public's prospective judgment of the war's likely outcome, the public is theorized to make a judgment on its likely costs. Experimental findings by Harris, Sechser, and White (2021) show that a mismatch between casualties suffered and expected casualties impacts how the public subsequently reacts. In particular, a higher than anticipated cost in terms of American military casualties decreases willingness to accept those casualties - holding constant the actual number of casualties suffered.

How are these expectations formed? In an examination of the Iraq War, Gelpi et

al conclude that the public defined success in terms largely mirroring the goals and rhetoric set forth by the Bush Administration and evaluated the prospects of meeting these goals as events unfolded in the conflict. Gartner and Segura argue that a strong selection effect is at play; leaders typically do not enter into conflicts that the public will find too costly relative to the value of the conflict aims, resulting in typically high initial support for the conflicts that are entered into. As the conflict unfolds, strategic shifts, evolution of conflict aims, changes in allied support, battlefield events, and casualties may lead to revision of initial support as perceived cost and benefits are altered.

These perspectives assign a minimal role to the leader in shaping beliefs about conflict, focusing instead on how expectations reflect certain objective characteristics of the conflict and its goals. Alterations to expectations thus occur when these characteristics are altered over the course of the conflict. In both of these frameworks, the leader matters only in that he has the power to alter the dynamics of the conflict, such as the strategy or aims, thus changing the calculation.

I argue that credibility not only influences the public's willingness to support a military intervention but also impacts beliefs and expectations that members of the public develop surrounding that intervention. Prior to or early on in a conflict, the public has very little information with which to form beliefs about the likely costs and benefits of an operation. Uncertainty is unavoidable when making such predictions, and even military and policy experts have trouble accurately predicting things like casualties, conflict length, and the feasibility of certain conflict objectives. The public is even less informed to be able to make sound predictions.

As such, beliefs about and trust in the leader - the leader's credibility - can fill in the information gap and shape how individuals interpret uncertainty and competing

analyses to form conflict expectations. Even as battlefield information begins to unfold, individuals may look to a credible leader to interpret and contextualize that information.

When launching a new intervention, leaders seek to assuage doubt and reassure the public of a positive outcome that will not be unbearably costly. At the commencement of Operation Desert Storm, George H.W. Bush assured the nation, "I instructed our military commanders to take every necessary step to prevail as quickly as possible, and with the greatest degree of protection possible for American and allied service men and women. I've told the American people before that this will not be another Vietnam, and I repeat this here tonight" (George HW Bush Presidential Library 1991). Likewise, discussing the imminent NATO-led intervention in Libya, Barack Obama emphasized his confidence, stating "I have no doubt that the men and women of our military are capable of carrying out this mission" (Press Secretary 2011).

Just because leaders frame their decisions in these terms does not guarantee that public expectations will match administration rhetoric, however. A highly credible leader is more likely to inspire confidence in the public that expected benefits from an operation will exceed the costs. Given the inherent uncertainty of military conflict, the skill and integrity of the leader is critical. The public not only must trust that the leader understands the risks and rewards of an intervention and is capable of overseeing it, but also that the leader is accurately representing these incentives to the public with no hidden agenda.

4.2 Translating Credibility into Conflict Expectations

Writing about presidential character, Barber argued that the president operates within a "climate of expectations" that varies between themes of reassurance, progress, and legitimacy based on the current public mood (Barber 2019). Later research revised this conceptualization of cyclical expectations, finding instead that public expectations remained remarkably stable and were based on "a consensus focused around general traits of personality, leadership, and individual virtue" (Herzik and Dodson 1982, pp. 172–173).

These expectations coalesce around two groups of public expectations: image and performance-based expectations - or in other words, what kind of person the president should be and what they should achieve while in office. The expectation that the president embodies certain ideal personal qualities can be traced historically to the establishment of the US presidency as both a ceremonial and political role and to the selection of the highly esteemed George Washington to be the first man to hold the position. It is also reinforced in how young Americans are socialized into regarding both the presidency as a position for exceptional individuals and a position historically held by exceptional individuals. In contrast, performance-based expectations have grown over time, evolving from viewing the president in more of a custodian position to regarding him as an activist figure responsible to a growing degree for the nation's domestic climate, prosperity, and status (Simon 2009).

Image and performance-based expectations correspond neatly with the two facets of credibility, perceived trustworthiness and competence. While different individuals may perceive these qualities in different ways and based on varying behaviors and personal qualities, competence and trustworthiness are qualities consistency demanded

by the American public. Falling short in one or both respects disappoints the expectations held for the person occupying the presidency, resulting in damaged credibility. When expectations related to the president are disappointed, public expectations surrounding his future performance will adjust accordingly, particularly in arenas of high uncertainty and perceived autonomy like war and deployments of force.

The outcome, length, and costs of a conflict are the greatest unknowns to a new intervention, and it is here that a leader has the greatest potential to err in their predictions. Because a military intervention always represents some amount of risk, trust in one's leader or lack thereof influences perceptions of that risk. The public must not only accept the leader's justification for the use of military force in order to support an intervention, but they must also believe that the leader is both knowledgeable and capable enough to make a reasonable assessment of the likely outcome and to deliver on it, and that there are not significant unforeseen consequences lurking around the corner.

I expect that the leader's credibility plays a role in both negative and positive expectations individuals develop surrounding a new conflict, whether explicitly where these expectations are rationalized based on the president's competencies and assessed integrity as a decision maker and source of trusted information, or implicitly through openness to persuasion and trust in the leader.

Perhaps the most important expectation related to conflict is whether success is deemed likely. Very few wars, particularly wars of choice, will be considered by the public as having been worth fighting if they are ultimately lost or result in an unsatisfactory stalemate. The outcome is perhaps the biggest unknown of all when entering into a conflict. The public must trust that a conflict is being entered into wisely and maintain trust over the course of the conflict that it is being managed

effectively to achieve its stated aims. While many people are involved in decisions of strategy, the leader is the face of the conflict for the public and the one perceived to hold ultimate responsibility. A lack of trust in that leader therefore will cast serious misgivings on assessments of the likelihood of success.

Hypothesis 1: *Individuals who do not view their leader as credible are less likely to expect a successful outcome from a military operation.*

Success is not the only consideration. War always involves costs, whether that be in resources, lives, reputation, or unforeseen consequences. In the literature, a conflict's cost has most often been considered in terms of U.S. military casualties. It is both an easily quantifiable metric and a highly impactful one. Gartner and Segura (2021) contend that "military casualties are the single most visible and salient indicator of war progress and costs, especially in the United States where combat and its effects have largely not touched our civilian populations since the 1860s" (6).

Predicting likely casualties is a very difficult task, however. Research indicates that the public is not a good judge of estimating casualties that have already occurred (Myers and Hayes 2010), let alone predicting casualties to come. Given this uncertainty, a trusted leader is better able to soothe concerns that a conflict will be unjustifiably or unbearably costly.

Some leaders may explicitly make promises regarding these potential costs. In recent years, for example, we have seen a repeated promise of "no boots on the

ground" as the US ponders various military entanglements.[1] Such a promise seeks to reassure the public that an intervention will not become a high casualty conflict; US soliers will not be put in direct harm's way.[2] At other times, while the president may be hesitant to make explicit promises, it is common to invoke the soldiers being deployed to a crisis or conflict zone at a conflict's outset, both to stress to the public that such decisions were not taken lightly and to reassure the public that their safety remains an utmost priority to the Commander in Chief.

Whatever rhetorical strategy used, members of the public who perceive the leader to be high in credibility should expect fewer casualties than those who do not. They will be more likely to believe promises that conflicts will remain limited in ways that protect American lives, and they are also more likely to trust in the leader's judgment - his competence - to make decisions that will not ill-advisedly gamble with those lives.

Hypothesis 2: *Individuals who do not view their leader as credible are more likely to expect higher casualties during conflict.*

While important, casualties are not the sole negative concern associated with war. The threat of getting bogged down in a long and costly conflict is an additional consideration. The Vietnam War in particular was a painful lesson for Americans in how the country can become stuck in a seemingly intractable military intervention that not only costs lives but also resulted in significant spending diverted away from

[1]Such promises were not new post Afghanistan and Iraq, however. When Clinton spoke to the nation about US involvement in NATO's strike against Serbian forces in Kosovo in March 1999, he stated, "Now I want to be clear with you, there are risks in this military action – risk to our pilots and the people on the ground... but I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war."

[2]"No boots on the ground" is also increasingly used to reassure that a conflict is not really a full-scale war - with all the costs that such a war brings (Traub 2016).

domestic priorities, reputational costs, and moral dissent at home and abroad. While fears of "another Vietnam" may have receded over time, the dragging out of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan renewed opposition against involvement in "forever wars."

A trusted leader will more easily convince the public that conflict goals can be achieved in a reasonable amount of time, that war will not drag out for many years without resolution. In late 2002, Bush administration officials vigorously defended against concerns that the imminent invasion of Iraq would lead to a protracted conflict, stating the conflict would last "five days or five weeks or five months, but it certainly isn't going to last any longer than that... [The US military will] do the job and finish it fast" (Esterbrook 2002). Despite the ultimate outcome, Bush administration assurances were effective at the time. Polling conducted in the months leading up to the invasion found that only between 8 and 33 percent of respondents believed the war would last longer than a year.[3]

Hypothesis 3: *Individuals who do not view their leader as credible are more likely to expect longer conflicts.*

4.2.1 A Note on the Rationality of the Public

Much of the literature on public support is situated within a rational, cost-benefit framework, where the public "makes reasoned and reasonable judgments about an

[3]Based on a search of the Roper iPoll database from December 2002 to March 20, 2003, which turned up 7 national polls conducted by the University of Maryland, ABC News, Gallup, Harris Interactive (Sponsored by Time and CNN), Los Angeles Times, TNS Intersearch (Sponsored by ABC News and Washington Post), and Knowledge Networks (sponsored by the Program on International Policy Attitudes).

issue as emotionally charged and politically polarizing as fighting a war" (Gelpi et al 2005, pg. 8). Although scholars offer a variety of explanations for what goes into this calculation, many agree that public support for war is rational or approximates rationality.

My theory of credibility does not necessarily require a rational or irrational public. Credibility could function as a useful heuristic in an environment of great uncertainty and where a significant portion of available information comes from the leader and their administration. It is quite reasonable to have doubts relating to a conflict's positive and negative outcomes when a leader has made significant mistakes in the past or there is reason to doubt their word. Credibility could therefore be another data point in calculations about costs and benefits.

It is also possible that for many people credibility judgments are both influenced by, reinforce, and cause certain cognitive biases that may affect both initial judgments about a conflict and expectations as the conflict unfolds. Trust in a leader may override early warning signs that a conflict may be difficult or costly. Individuals also tend to avoid reassessments of initial judgments unless confronted with significant evidence to the contrary. Particularly for those who feel strongly that a leader can be trusted or that entering into a conflict is the right thing do to, reconsidering these beliefs may cause unwanted psychological stress, resulting in information that does not fit in with pre-existing beliefs being overlooked or discarded.

4.3 Methodology

To test my hypotheses, I utilize survey data from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research's iPOLL database, which allowed me to conduct individual-level

analysis with data collected before or during past conflicts, following a similar procedure to the one described in Chapter 3. To identify surveys related to expectations of conflict outcomes, length, and casualties, I searched the database for downloadable datasets using a number of relevant key words, identifying surveys that contained questions getting at these expectations. I then searched within these surveys for questions asking respondents to make judgments about the current president's personal characteristics and abilities that could be used as credibility proxies.

Surveys that contained both a relevant expectation question and a credibility question were recorded, grouped by conflict. When searching was complete, I selected the surveys that contained the best measures of the dependent variable and preferably both credibility measures for each conflict. Some conflicts had few or no relevant surveys, while others, like the Iraq War, turned up a large amount. When choosing between multiple surveys with appropriate dependent and independent variables, I considered other criteria such as date fielded (prioritizing surveys fielded prior to or at the beginning of a conflict), sample size, and availability of control variables.

My resulting data contains surveys fielded during the George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump presidencies, including the Gulf War, interventions in Somalia, Haiti, and the Balkans, the war in Afghanistan, the Iraq War, NATO's intervention in Libya, the Syrian civil war, and military efforts against the terrorist group ISIS.

While all dependent variables used in this analysis are asking respondents to make judgments about the future rather than assess the current state of a conflict or crisis, I prioritize earlier surveys when possible to minimize concerns about endogeneity. Almost all of the surveys used in this analysis were fielded prior to or within in a few weeks of armed conflict initiation, when there has been little time for battlefield

information to accumulate.

4.3.1 Dependent Variables: Conflict Expectations

Dependent variables in this analysis are responses to survey questions that ask about respondents' future expectations of a potential, imminent, or ongoing conflict. In keeping with hypotheses 1-3, these expectations relate to the conflict's length, casualties, and ultimate outcome or likelihood of success.

Expectations regarding conflict length were probed with survey questions such as "How long do you think the United States troops will have to remain in [conflict location]?", "Do you think the current conflict in [conflict location] will be over in just a few weeks, or do you think it is more likely to continue for several months, or do you think it's likely to continue for a year or longer?", and "Do you think U.S. troops will be able to finish their job and withdraw from [conflict location] in a fairly timely fashion or will U.S. troops get bogged down in [conflict location] and have a difficult time withdrawing?"

Survey questions related to expected casualties had wordings such as "Do you expect casualties among the US troops occupying [conflict location] to be heavy, moderate, light, or do you expect no casualties?", "As of now, in the conflict with [conflict location], how many American soldiers would you expect to lose their lives?", and "Regarding the situation in [conflict location], how confident are you that... The US (United States) will be able to accomplish its goals with very few or no American casualties."

For expectations relating to the success of the conflict outcome, I utilized both questions that specifically asked about likelihood of victory, such as "Do you think the United States can win or cannot win the war in [conflict location]?" and "Regardless

Table 4.1: Credibility Proxies

Competence	Trustworthiness
Strong leader	Honest & Trustworthy
Strong leader on foreign policy	Honest & ethical
Gets things done	Trustworthy
Trust to handle crisis[4]	Trust to keep word
Trust as commander in chief	Takes personal responsibility
Effective manager	Moral authority as commander in chief
Has right personal characteristics[5]	Man of deep convictions

of what you think about the original decision to use military force in [conflict location], do you now believe the United States will definitely succeed, probably succeed, probably fail, or definitely fail in achieving its goals?", and questions that relate to specific goals of a particular conflict, such as "Do you think the United States will be successful or unsuccessful in restoring democratic rule to Haiti?" and "Regarding the situation in Libya, how confident are you that... the following will happen... The US (United States) effort to protect civilians from (Moammar) Gadhafi's military forces will succeed." The wordings of all questions used as dependent variables in this analysis are in Appendix B.

Many of these questions used as dependent variables offered participants only two answer choices. Those that offered more were recoded to be dichotomous. Respondents who answered that they were unsure were excluded from analysis.

4.3.2 Independent Variables: Credibility Proxies

The two facets of credibility - perceived competence and perceived trustworthiness - are the independent variables in this analysis. As in previous chapters, respondents' assessments of the current president's characteristics serve as proxies for these measures.

The most frequently available questions asked some variation of if the president was a strong leader and whether he was honest and trustworthy. "Strong leader" (or some variation thereof) can have different meanings to different individuals, but it is an appropriate proxy for the competence dimension of credibility, particularly in the context of American politics. Since World War II, the American public has ascribed increasing responsibility to the role of the presidency, ascribing the president ownership over vast realms of domestic and foreign policy, whether or not he actually holds the power to significantly affect particular outcomes. To excel in such a role (or to be perceived as excelling), any person to hold the presidency would need significant leadership qualities. A president perceived to be weak in leadership is unlikely to inspire much confidence in his ability to make wartime decisions for the nation. "Honest," meanwhile, gets at the heart of the trustworthy dimension of credibility and speaks to the leader's integrity. Perceived honesty is particularly important in the context of war, as the executive branch is often the primary supplier

[4]As mentioned in Chapter 3, the use of the wording "trust" is tricky, because depending on context, it can evoke a competence or trustworthiness context. While there may be some fuzziness in the use of "trust" here, by appealing to job function (handling the crisis) and role (commander in chief), these traits more so appeal to competence. In contrast, where "trust" is used on the trustworthiness side, the associated words (such as "trust to keep word") situate the context in integrity.

[5]This proxy, asking whether Clinton has the right personal characteristics for a president, is not clearly competence over trustworthiness. It is however the only credibility proxy included in its model (Somalia), and I believe still worth including as a general credibility proxy. It is part of the conflict inhertiors analysis, not the primary analyses.

of information related to a conflict, especially early on.

Other credibility proxies used in this analysis are listed in table 4.1 and specific question wording is listed in Appendix A. As with the dependent variables, credibility questions that were not already dichotomous were recoded as such for uniformity across surveys and conflicts. Furthermore, combining answers may help to avoid the subjectivity in distinguishing between classifications like "strongly agree" versus "somewhat agree."

4.3.3 Control Variables

Availability of demographic information for control variables was mostly uniform across surveys, albeit with minor variations in question wording and answer categories. All surveys used contained the critical party identification variable, and across all models I included self categorized independents who stated they leaned towards a particular party with those partisans. This control is essential to separate tendencies of supporting a president from one's own party from the effects of perceived credibility, as well as a greater tendency towards hawkish foreign policy opinions among Republicans and a greater tendency towards dovish policies among Democrats. Where available, controls for the individual's gender (male, female), age (either numerical or ordinal), household income (ordinal), race or ethnicity (White, Black, Hispanic, or other), and whether the respondent is a college graduate (yes or no) are also included.

4.4 Analysis

Because the dependent variables are dichotomous, I use logistic regression for all analysis in this chapter. Each survey is analyzed separately, and predicted probabilities

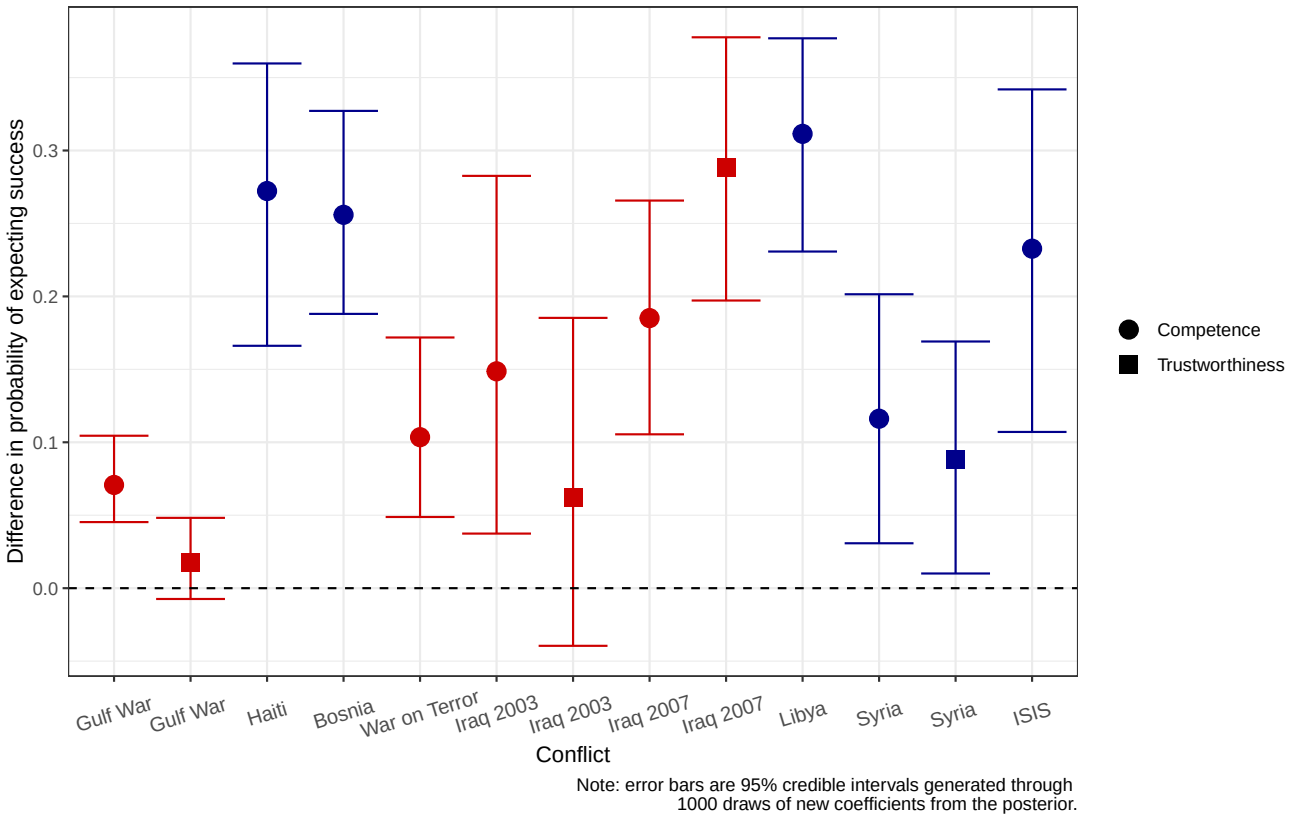

Figure 4.1: Expectation of Success

are calculated for the values of the credibility variables. Because these credibility variables are also dichotomous, I also calculated the difference in probabilities between those respondents who answered that the president holds a given trait versus those who answered that he did not. I then produced standard errors via simulation to compute credible intervals for that difference to evaluate whether the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. Results on all graphs are color coded by the partisanship of the president. All regression tables for this chapter can be viewed in Appendix D.

4.4.1 Expectations of Success

Hypothesis 1 predicts that individuals who do not view their leader as credible are less likely to expect a successful outcome from a military operation. To test this hypothesis, this analysis utilizes surveys from the Gulf War, Haiti, Bosnia, the launch of the "War on Terror" in 2001,[6] Iraq after the initial invasion, Iraq after the announcement of the troop surge in 2007, Libya, Syria, and intervention against ISIS.

Figure 4.1 displays the results of this analysis, where a positive value in the predicted probability differences indicates that individuals who perceive the leader to have the credibility character trait are more likely to expect a positive outcome. In all 9 surveys, the competence character trait is significant. Those who found the president competent were consistently more likely to expect successful outcomes to these conflicts with effect sizes ranging from 0.07 to 0.31. Individuals who rated George W. Bush as competent, for example, had a probability about 0.15 higher than those who did not rate him as competent of believing that the US would emerge victorious from the Iraq War.

Unfortunately, character trait assessments related to trustworthiness were not as consistently available for this dependent variable. In the four surveys containing them, two were significant: Iraq after the announcement of the surge and a survey considering use of force in Syria. Trustworthiness measures for the Gulf War and at the outset of the Iraq War were not significant, although the relationship is in the hypothesized direction.

[6]This poll was fielded in late September 2001, so although the wording concerns war against terrorists and countries that harbor them, the context is the prelude to US invasion of Afghanistan.

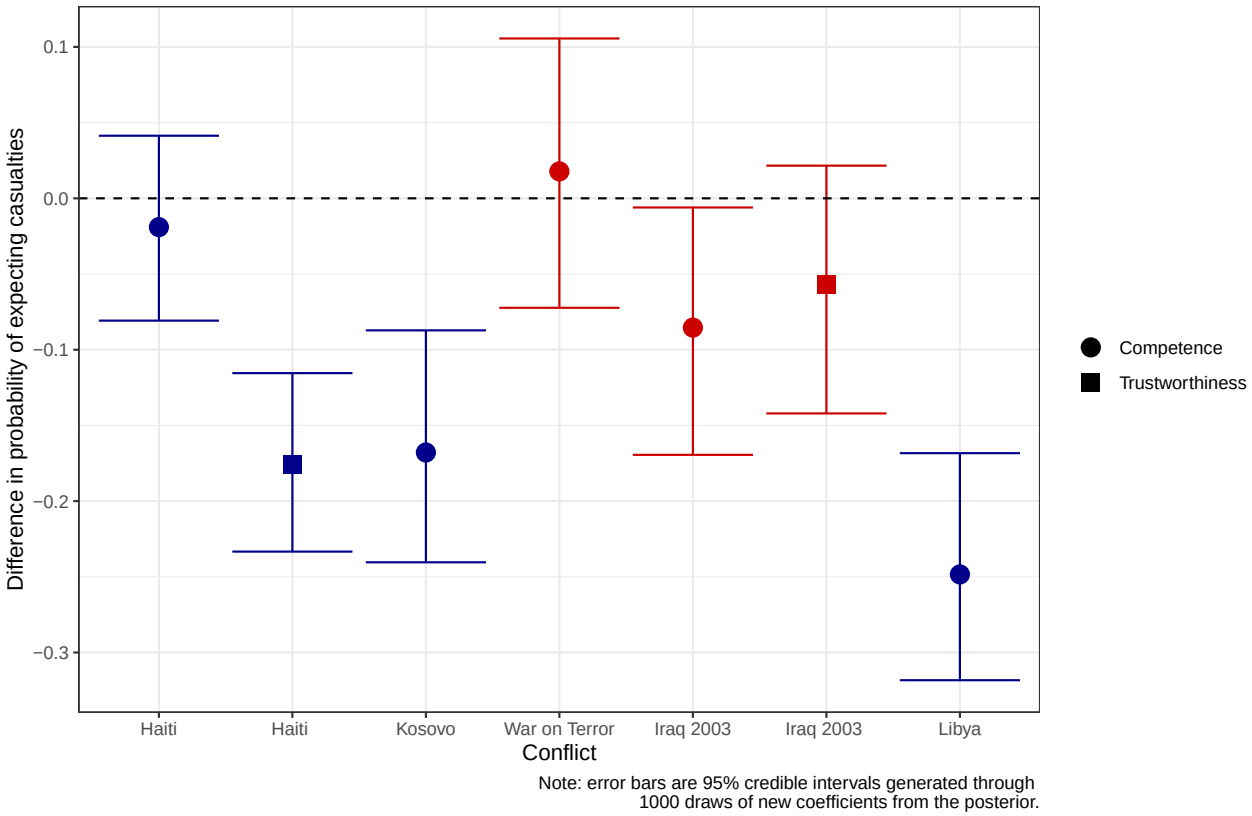

Figure 4.2: Expectation of Casualties

4.4.2 Casualties

Of the three groups of dependent variables - expected casualties, length of conflict, and expected outcome - searching the Roper database yielded the fewest surveys for expected casualties. Nevertheless, this analysis will include surveys relating to military interventions in Haiti, Kosovo, the launch of the "War on Terror" in 2001, Iraq 2003, and Libya.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that individuals who do not view their leader as credible are more likely to expect higher casualties during conflict. Figure 4.2 displays the predicted probability differences for expectations of casualties, where a negative value indicates that the individuals who perceive the leader to have the credibility character

trait are more likely to expect fewer or no casualties.

In 4 of the 5 conflicts examined, there is a significant relationship between a credibility character trait and expected casualties, and for all models except the War on Terror the relationship between the credibility variables and expected casualties is in the hypothesized direction - perceiving the leader to hold a credibility character trait is associated with fewer expected casualties. For some of the surveys, the effect is quite substantial. In the case of Libya, for example, respondents who judged Obama as competent had a probability of about 0.27 of answering that they were not confident that the US could accomplish its goals with very few or no American casualties, while those who did not judge Obama as competent had a probability of 0.52 of answering they were not confident that the US would have few or no casualties, a difference of 0.25.

Results are mixed among both dimensions of credibility, however. Neither perceived competence nor trustworthiness is consistent across surveys. There were also fewer trustworthiness proxies available than competence proxies.

4.4.3 Conflict Length

Hypothesis 3 predicts that individuals who do not view their leader as credible are more likely to expect longer conflicts. Figure 4.3 displays predicted probability differences for expectations of conflict length. The Y axis is the difference in probability of expecting longer conflict for those who agreed the president had a particular credibility trait vs. those who did not think he possessed that trait. A negative value indicates those who agreed the president had the credibility trait were more likely to expect a shorter conflict while a positive value would indicate they expected a longer conflict.

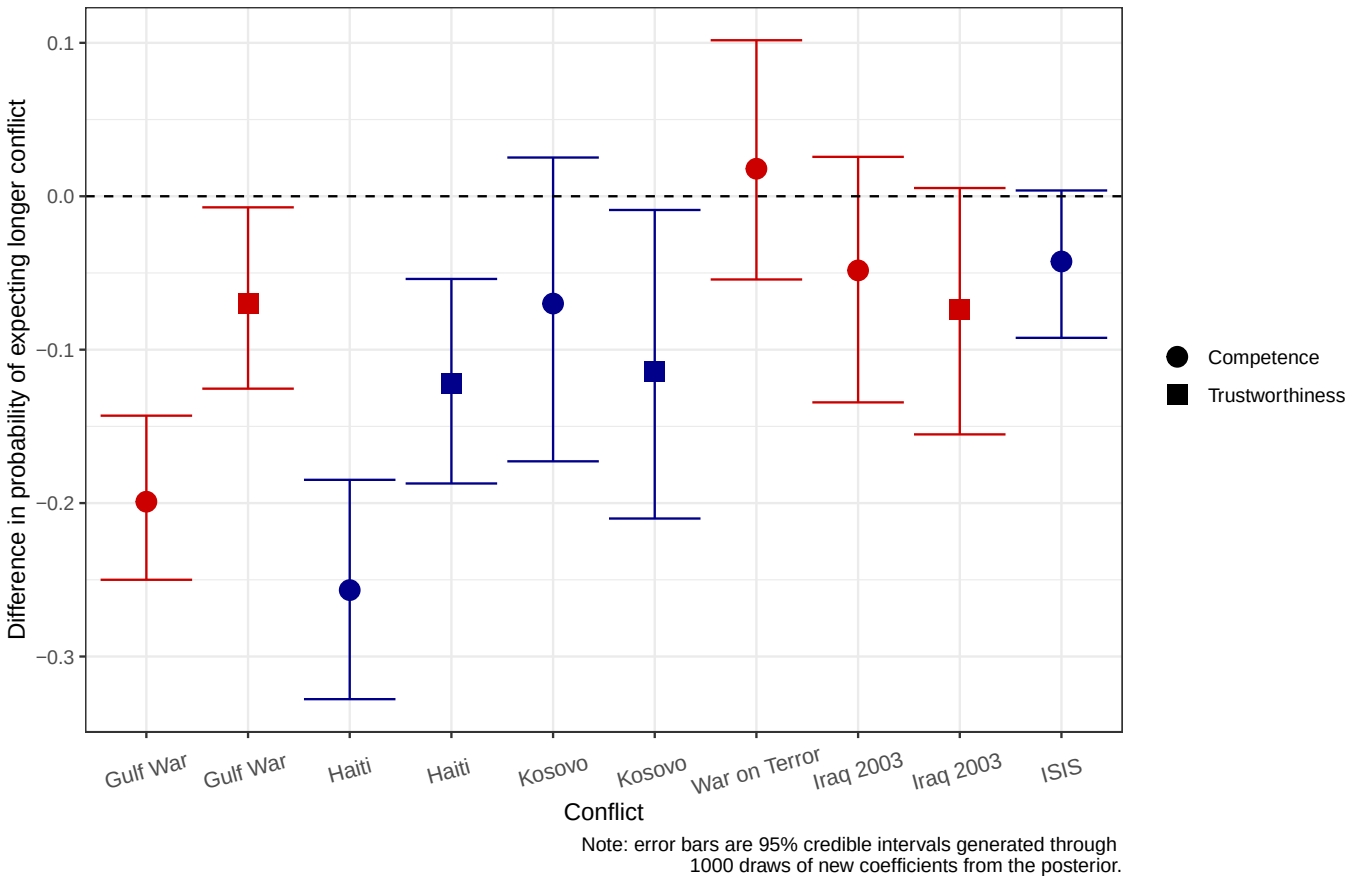

Figure 4.3: Expectation of Conflict Length

In three of the six conflicts analyzed, at least one credibility trait had a significant relationship with expected conflict length, where perceiving the leader to hold a credibility character trait is associated with expecting a shorter conflict. In the Iraq survey, however, the trustworthiness variable approaches significance with a p-value of 0.06. The remaining insiginficant credibility variables are all competence questions. Across all surveys except for the War on Terror, however, the relationship is in the hypothesized direction.

For those credibility traits that are significant, however, the size of the effect ranges from 0.07 to 0.26. For example, respondents who judged George H.W. Bush

Table 4.2: Summary of Results

	Success		Casualties		Length	
	Competence	Trust	Competence	Trust	Competence	Trust
Gulf War	✓	×	-	-	✓	✓
Haiti	✓	-	×	✓	✓	✓
Bosnia	✓	-	-	-	-	-
Kosovo	-	-	✓	-	×	✓
War on terror 2001	✓	-	×	-	×	-
Iraq 2003	✓	×	✓	×	×	×
Iraq surge 2007	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
Libya	✓	-	✓	-	-	-
Syria	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
ISIS	✓	-	-	-	×	-

as competent had a probability of 0.4 of answering it was likely that the US would get bogged down in the Gulf War, while those who did not judge Bush as competent had a probability of 0.6 of answering they believed it was likely the US would get bogged down, a difference in probability of 0.2.

4.4.4 Discussion of Primary Results

Table 4.2 summarizes the results across expectations of success, casualties, and conflict length models. The strength of the results vary by expectation type. Individuals who perceive the president to be credible, particularly in terms of competence, are consistently more likely to expect a successful outcome to a conflict. H1 was perhaps the most important test of my theory, as beliefs about the likelihood of success are key to the decision to support in general. It is hard to imagine the public supporting conflicts they do not believe will yield success. Illustrating that evaluations of the leader influence those beliefs not only fills in a missing piece of the story from existing literature but also bolsters the findings presented in Chapter 3.

Results for expectations surrounding casualties and conflict length were more mixed, with credibility proxies mattering about half the time for each. We may observe less consistent effects here due to a greater tendency for leaders to explicitly promise success than a quick conflict or low casualties. While in some conflicts, the leader makes explicit statements regarding his intention to keep casualties low or a conflict short, in others, the leader is hesitant to make promises. This is reflected in the results, where the effects of credibility are significant for evaluations of likely success in some of the same conflicts where credibility is not significant for expected casualties or conflict length, such as questions about a war against terrorists and the countries that harbor them, fielded right before the US invasion of Afghanistan. Indeed, following the invasion, George W. Bush promised victory but was vague on timeline: "This particular battle front will last as long as it takes to bring al-Qaeda to justice... It may happen tomorrow, it may happen a month from now, it may take a year or two, but we will prevail" (Whitlock 2021). He also acknowledged that soldiers were "prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice of their lives" ("Presidential Address to the Nation" 2001).

While the results for expectations surrounding conflict length seem to display a time pattern, with credibility mattering only for earlier conflicts, and results for casualties tend to be significant on more narrowly defined missions, I cannot confidently draw conclusions from patterns in the null results. Data availability for testing hypotheses related to casualty and conflict length expectations was more sparse than for expectations of success or for conflict initiation support in Chapter 3, and thus I do not have as full of a picture. What is clear, however, is that the consistency of results do not match those of the previous analyses for these types of expectations.

This does perhaps offer greater confidence in the results of those other analyses.

A concern with public opinion data is that an underlying "positive feeling" drives feelings of support and positive predictions. If the public is happy with the president in general, it blindly bleeds over to all dimensions. The casualty and conflict length expectations analysis minimizes this concern. Although credibility does matter for support and expectations of success in almost all of these conflicts, the public's calculations or inclinations for casualties and conflict length seem to follow a different pattern. They are not being blindly positive.

The null results should not be taken as definitive, however. They are not precisely estimated nulls, as illustrated by the often quite sizeable error bars surrounding the point estimates in the predicted probabilities. Rather, these indicate the uncertainty inherent in this research design. Imperfect and varied credibility proxies, as well as differences across individuals in factors like their exposure to political news may be contributing to this uncertainty.

It is also worth considering the ways in which the United States selects into these conflicts. As discussed previously, Gartner and Segura argue that leaders will only initiate conflicts that they believe will be popular with the public, although they sometimes make errors in these judgments. An additional selection consideration relates to the target of the intervention and type of action. While none of the conflicts included in this analysis include a direct attack on US territory that sparked entry into conflict, except the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, some may be considered more so "wars of choice" than others. A humanitarian intervention far afield much more so represents the leader's selection into that conflict, whereas in other interventions, selection into a conflict by the leader was significantly driven by another actor, as for example, with the threat of terrorism from ISIS and of attacks against US interests in a key region. While the survey data in this chapter is not rich enough to draw firm

conclusions, it is worth thinking about whether the methods by which conflicts are selected amplify or attenuate the effects of credibility. Perhaps the more so a conflict is a war of choice (or perceived as one), the more credibility matters to the public. What is tricky, however, is that perception of choice may in fact be a judgment over which a credible leader can persuade.

4.4.5 Conflict Inheritors

A particular subset of cases that thus far have not been included in analysis do not represent the same selection considerations - at least for the current leader. My analysis so far has been limited to examining how leader credibility impacts expectations for conflicts that they initiate. This is not the only type of conflict over which leaders can preside, however. Some leaders inherit an ongoing conflict upon entering office. To be clear, when referring to an inherited conflict, I mean conflicts in which the United States is already engaged in military force, not pre-existing points of contention or even crises. It is often the case that the issues that lead to conflict long predate the current administration, but for the sake of this analysis, I am referring to conflicts in which the decision to use force - to select into a conflict - has already been made by the president's predecessor.

Does credibility still matter for leaders who inherit an ongoing conflict when entering office? Given my theory, I would expect - generally speaking - credibility would not operate in these cases. The leader is not the one who made the case for war, did not originally make any promises surrounding outcomes or costs at its outset, and they did not control the early stages of force deployment and are not responsible for how it has unfolded; however, credibility could still be invoked if in their campaigns or early days in office they focused extensively on their role in

managing the conflict or made specific promises related to the conflict. For example, during the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump repeatedly promised that defeating ISIS would be a priority for his administration while criticizing how Obama had handled the situation. Barack Obama campaigned in 2008 on his long standing opposition to George Bush's 2003 decision to invade Iraq, promising "to end this war in Iraq responsibly," while also pledging to "finish the fight against al-Qaida and the Taliban in Afghanistan" (Barabak and Tankersley 2008).

I examined the effects of perceived credibility for expectations of a successful outcome for four inherited conflicts: the US intervention in Somalia supporting the United Nations mission as Clinton assumes leadership, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq under Obama, and the military campaign against ISIS under Trump. These four conflicts provide variation in how the new leader publicly approached how they would manage their inherited conflict. For both ISIS and Iraq, the president made clear promises about what they would do and the outcome they would achieve. In the case of Somalia, however, the conflict was almost non-existent during the campaign, in large part due to timing. George HW Bush informed the American public on December 4, 1992 of his decision to imminently send US troops to Somalia, after Bill Clinton had already won the presidential election. The Afghanistan case is a bit muddier. Ending the war quickly was less of a priority for Obama compared with getting out of Iraq, and he demonstrated a willingness to increase US military commitments, althought this featured less prominently during the campaign.

The results for this analysis are displayed in Figure 4.4 and indicate that credibility was generally less important for conflict inheritors than conflict initiators in public expectations of a successful outcome. Only in the case of Trump and ISIS was perceived credibility associated with greater likelihood in expecting a successful outcome.

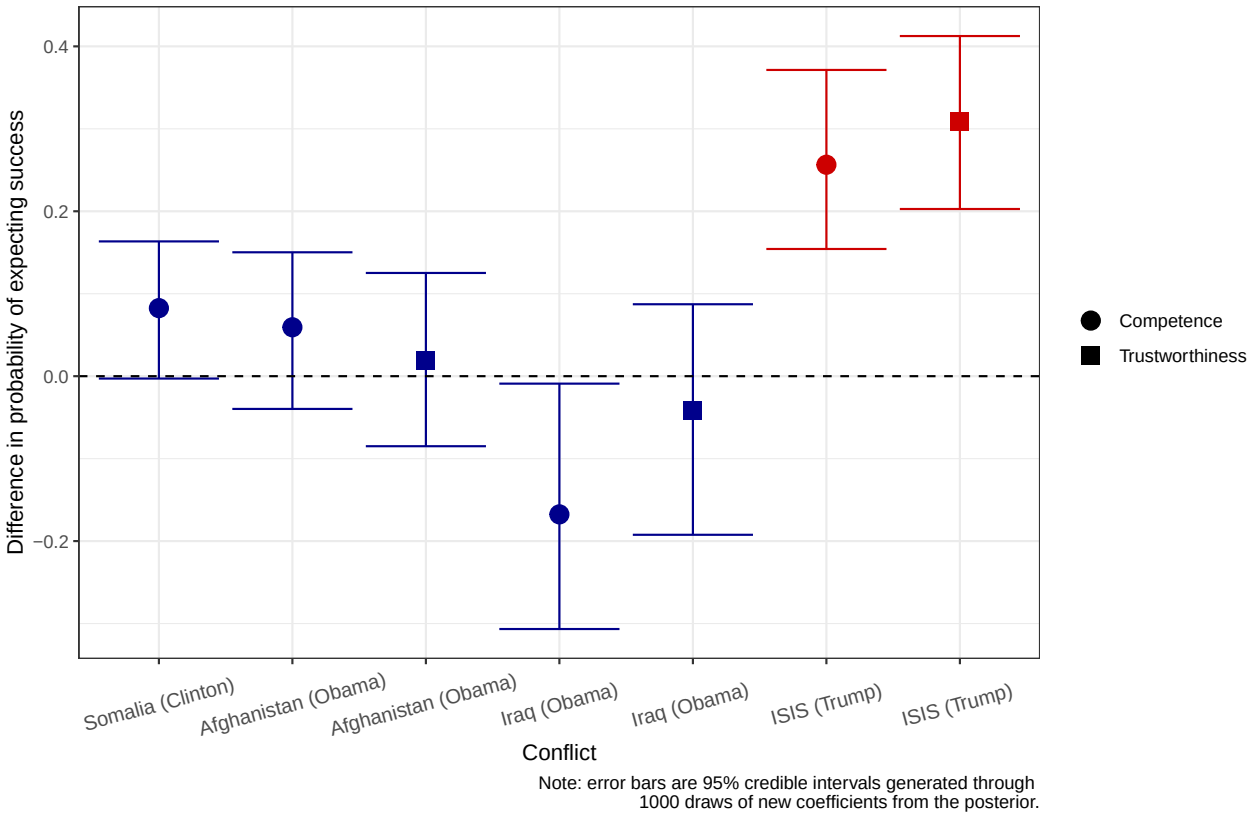

Figure 4.4: Expectation of Success for Conflict Inheritors

Those individuals who believed Trump to be competent and trustworthy were more likely to expect success than those who did not. For the case of Obama inheriting the Iraq War, Obama's perceived competence was also statistically significant but had a negative relationship with expectations for success. Those who judged Obama competent were less likely to say the United States could win the war in Iraq. This is in line, however, with Obama's campaign promise to end the war. Interestingly only competence rather than trustworthiness is significant here, perhaps suggesting that the difference came not so much from whether people believed he would do what he said he would, but rather whether he would have the skill and vision to extract the US from a complicated conflict that it had been bogged down in for many years.

Because he promised an end to the war rather than promising victory, it makes sense that we see the flip in the sign for the effect in this case.

For the two cases where the president had not made as strong commitments while campaigning, the Afghanistan and Somalia cases, no credibility character traits were significant at $p<0.05$. This fits with expectations that in cases where new leaders to not strongly invoke their own credibility over a pre-existing conflict, the new leader's credibility should not play a significant role in the public's evaluations of that conflict.

4.5 Conclusion

The results of my analysis indicate that who the leader is matters for conflict expectations. When people have faith in their leader, they report more positive beliefs surrounding an intervention. My theory of credibility works best when applied to expectations about success. Individuals who rated the president positively on a variety of character traits, particularly those related to competence, were more likely to anticipate positive outcomes to conflicts than those who did not. While less survey data was available probing casualty expectations and expectations for conflict length, the results nonetheless suggest that credibility matters in certain contexts.

While the focus of this paper is expectations, I do not suggest that expectations are unrelated to overall support for conflict. Indeed, the decision to support is likely intertwined with beliefs regarding the conflict's likely outcome and costs. And while this analysis focuses primarily on the beginning of conflict when I expect my theory to operate most strongly due to lower information and higher uncertainty, I do not believe credibility ceases to impact expectations as the conflict unfolds. Uncertainty does not vanish as battlefield events occur, and the significance of those events are

often open to subjective interpretation. So while the effects of credibility may recede over time in a conflict, credibility still may play an important role in the maintenance and updating of expectations over the course of conflict.

Chapter 5

Determinants of Credibility at the Individual Level

Having already demonstrated in prior chapters that individuals' perception of their leader's credibility matters both for supporting a new military intervention and forming certain beliefs related to that conflict, the lingering question concerns credibility itself. How are judgments of credibility formed in the first place, and how might this vary by individual level attributes?

In this chapter, I first consider how partisanship, authoritarianism, and other demographic variables influence individual evaluations of the leader. I then present an original conjoint experiment that investigates how a variety of traits and behaviors of a hypothetical president affect participant trust in that leader, as well as how these effects may vary across participants.

5.1 Partisanship

In Chapter 3, I discussed the role of partisanship in the relationship between credibility and support. I found that while credibility was significant in most of the conflicts analyzed, partisanship had a direct effect only about half the time. Further, I found no evidence that partisanship moderates the effects of credibility; instead, credibility appears to have a uniform effect on support across party lines. These results do not mean that partisanship is unimportant, however. It is likely that

a more significant influence of partisanship come earlier in the causal chain, when individuals form credibility perceptions.

Partisans are unlikely to evaluate the leader impartially, because partisanship fundamentally shapes the way people consume and process information. Instead of carefully considering all available information, partisans will often look for information that aligns with the beliefs they already hold, while they are more likely to disregard or even avoid information that does not fit (Taber and Lodge 2006; Jerit and Barabas 2012). Some scholars have argued that partisan group affiliation is so strong that individuals will alter their beliefs to maintain consistency with their party, and that "many citizens behave as partisan loyalists rather than principled ideologues" (Barber and Pope 2019, p. 52).

Even when partisans hold factually accurate beliefs, individuals from opposing partisan groups will often draw very different conclusions from the same set of facts (Gaines et al. 2007). On many high salience issues, political parties provide their adherents with particular frames to guide how information is interpreted (Slothuus and De Vreese 2010). Some scholars question the extent to which partisanship can skew interpretations of facts, however. Bullock (2011) presents experimental evidence showing that despite the fact that the public is generally poorly informed on policy, when people are exposed to factual information, opinion formation is affected just as much - and sometimes more - by that information as party cues, and that partisans sometimes do form opinions that go against party messaging.

Partisan biases in information processing and opinion formation can also apply to forming opinions of political figures. Literature on trait evaluation of political candidates and elected officials has demonstrated that partisanship plays an important role in the formation of these judgments (Bartels 2002). For example, the public is

more likely to ascribe strong leadership and greater morality to Republicans, while Democrats are more likely to be perceived as being strong in empathy and compassion (Hayes 2005).[1] Unsurprisingly, individuals are more likely to infer positive personal characteristics about political figures within their own party, particularly those with whom they are ideologically close (Martin 2022). Simas (2020), however, found that the more ideologically extreme a candidate presents themself, the more their copartisans in the public will view them as both competent and high in integrity.

Whether or not the president is a member of an individual's party matters for the opinions that are formed about him. As such, I expect that copartisanship should be an important predictor for judgments of credibility formed about the leader:

Hypothesis 1: *Copartisans are more likely to find the leader credible.*

To test this hypothesis, I utilized the ANES time series dataset, which asked a variety of trait assessment questions over many years. Unlike my previous analysis utilizing ANES data, I am not constrained here to the three study years where that dependent variable of interest was asked. Instead, in this analysis, the dependent variable is a credibility proxy. In four separate logit models, I use strong leader and moral, which were the proxies utilized in the ANES analysis from Chapter 3, and then also include models with knowledgable and decent. The key independent variable is copartisanship: whether the individual is in the same party as the president, the opposing party, or is an independent. In all models, copartisan is the reference category to which opposing partisans and independents are compared. The controls

[1]Later work by Hayes did not find consistent results for Republicans on strong leadership; however, Hayes suggests results may be artificially suppressed by low approval for elected Republicans and for the Iraq War at the time of data collection around the 2006 midterm elections (Hayes 2011).

Table 5.1: Effect of Copartisanship on Judgments of Credibility

	Dependent variable:			
	Strong leader	Moral	Knowledgeable	Decent
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Opposing partisan	-2.080***	-1.850***	-1.603***	-2.071***
	(0.041)	(0.048)	(0.047)	(0.146)
Independent	-1.324***	-1.240***	-1.082***	-1.434***
	(0.059)	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.188)
Female	-0.074**	0.081**	0.052	0.186**
	(0.036)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.093)
Age	-0.0004	0.009***	0.003**	0.008***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.003)
Black	0.039	-0.301***	-0.095	-0.968***
	(0.055)	(0.057)	(0.061)	(0.116)
Hispanic	0.290***	-0.016	-0.082	-0.585***
	(0.066)	(0.069)	(0.072)	(0.155)
Other race or ethnicity	0.113	-0.043	-0.053	-0.227
	(0.115)	(0.125)	(0.125)	(0.282)
College graduate	-0.262***	-0.234***	-0.419***	-0.179
	(0.045)	(0.049)	(0.048)	(0.125)
Income: 34 to 67 percentile	-0.042	0.041	0.101**	0.137
	(0.044)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.108)
Income: 68 to 95 percentile	-0.003	0.044	0.126**	0.332***
	(0.049)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.127)
Income: 96 to 100 percentile	-0.185**	0.056	-0.019	0.516*
	(0.087)	(0.099)	(0.092)	(0.307)
Constant	0.281***	2.109***	1.817***	2.736***
	(0.091)	(0.106)	(0.101)	(0.212)
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	16,908	16,658	16,874	4,475
Log Likelihood	-9,380.760	-8,055.441	-8,066.887	-1,582.974
Akaike Inf. Crit.	18,807.520	16,156.880	16,179.770	3,193.947
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

utilized in all models are gender, age, race or ethnicity, whether the individual is a college graduate, and household income, as well as year fixed effects.[2]

The results of the four models are presented in Table 5.1. Across all four models, partisanship is associated with perceptions of credibility. Copartisans are more likely than opposing partisans to judge the president to be a strong leader, moral, knowledgable, and decent. Copartisans are also more likely than independents to believe the president holds these traits. Predicted probabilities for these partisan groups are displayed in Figures 5.1-5.4. Partisans have a high likelihood of finding the president credible on each of the four traits, while opposing partisans are much less likely to do so. While independents are more likely than opposing partisans to find the president credible, their predicted probabilities are typically closer to opposing partisans than copartisans. For example, the probability of copartisans viewing the president as having strong leadership is 0.80, while the probability for opposing partisans is 0.39 and 0.55 for independents. The probability of copartisans viewing the president as moral is 0.76, while the probability for opposing partisans is 0.47 and 0.58 for independents.[3]

These results fall in line with expectations. Partisanship acts as a bias when evaluating a leader. Copartisans, whether because they are exposed to more information sources that paint a favorable picture of the president or because they are more likely to draw favorable conclusions from observing the president, are the most likely to evaluate him positively. Opposing partisans are the least likely to evaluate the

[2]The available study years varied by credibility trait. Strong leader, moral, and knowledgable were available 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2004, and 2008, while decent was only available 1984, 1986, and 1988.

[3]Predicted probabilities for "Decent" are higher for all three groups than for the other traits. This is likely due to being based on much fewer study years than the other traits, all of which occur under one president: Ronald Reagan.

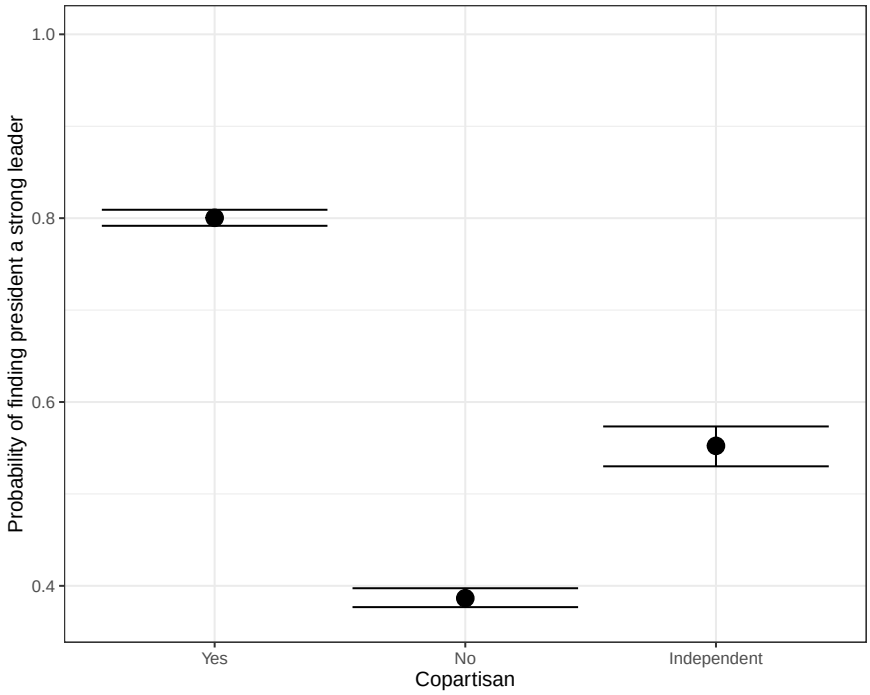

Figure 5.1: Predicted Probabilities: Strong Leader

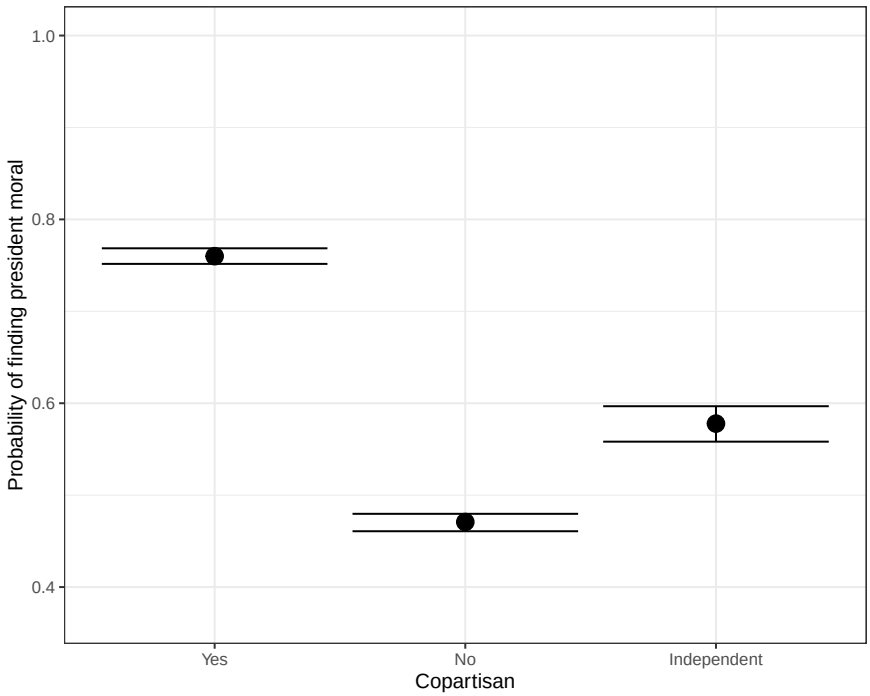

Figure 5.2: Predicted Probabilities: Moral

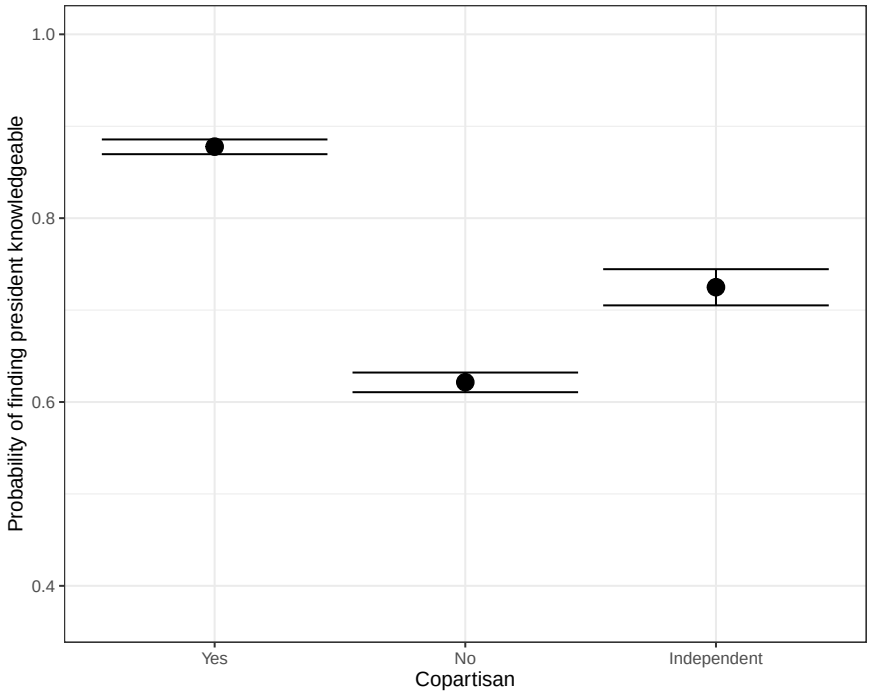

Figure 5.3: Predicted Probabilities: Knowledgeable

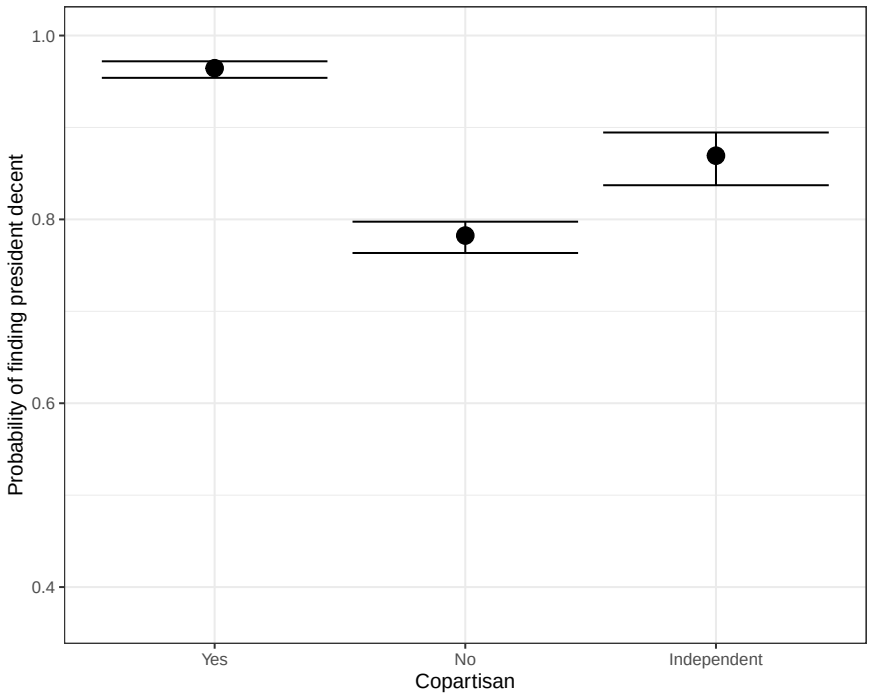

Figure 5.4: Predicted Probabilities: Decent

president favorably, although a substantial amount still do. Independents are somewhere in between the two groups, tending to be more generous with their evaluations than opposing partisans but not as enthusiastic as copartisans. It is interesting, however, that the probabilities for independents tend to be a little closer to those of opposing rather than copartisans, although independents are still on average more likely than not to answer that the president holds the trait in question. While the results from Chapter 3 indicate that individuals who find the president credible have similar patterns of support for conflict initiation regardless of partisanship, these results show that individuals from different partisan groups are not equally likely to find the president credible in the first place. It is more difficult for a president to gain credibility with both independents and opposing partisans, which has consequences for their likelihood to support a new conflict.

5.2 Other Demographic Determinants

A striking result from the analysis of presented in Table 5.1 is that while all categories of partisanship are significant across all four traits, none of the other included demographic variable have such a consistent effect. While women are more likely to find the president to be trustworthy, they are less likely to find him competent - when there is an effect on the latter. Gender was not significant for judgments of whether the leader is knowledgeable.[4] Similarly, age was significant for three of the four credibility traits (moral, knowledgeable, and decent), with the likelihood of

[4]Note that in the analysis that will be presented in Table 5.2 in the next section, the effects of gender vanish when authoritarianism is controlled for, although that analysis has significantly reduced observations and study years.

finding the president to hold these traits increasing with age. College graduates were less likely to find the president to be a strong leader, moral, or knowledgeable than individuals without a college degree. It is perhaps the case that more eduation inspires greater skepticism of the leader. Finally, Black individuals were less likely than white individuals to perceive the leader as trustworthy, but there was no statistically significant difference on competence.

5.3 Authoritarianism

Personality can also play a role in how individuals form judgments of their leaders. While partisanship encompasses both ideology and group membership, which can predispose an individual to certain perceptions and behaviors, personality also influences relevant psychological processes like openness to new ideas, critical thinking, and opinion formation.

In particular, authoritarian personality types have been discussed at length in both American Politics and International Relations literatures. An authoritarian is someone who has the following characteristics: (1) "a high degree of submission to the authorities who are perceived to be established and legitimate in the society in which one lives," (2) "a general aggressiveness, directed against various persons, that is perceived to be sanctioned by established authorities," and (3) "a high degree of adherence to the social conventions that are perceived to be endorsed by society and

its established authorities" (Altemeyer 1996, p. 6).[5]

Of particular relevance here is authoritarians' tendency towards submission to and respect for leadership. Altemeyer (1996) writes that authoritarians tends to believe "authorities should be trusted to a great extent and deserve obedience and respect... They tend to assume that officials know what is best and that critics do not know what they are talking about" (9).[6] Because of these tendencies, I expect that authoritarians will be generally more likely to hold more positive perceptions of their leaders on both competence and trustworthiness dimensions:

Hypothesis 2: *Authoritarians are more likely to find the leader credible.*

The ANES provides a series of four questions that can be used to construct an authoritarian scale. Respondents were asked about which traits it was more desirable for children to have: 1) curiosity or good manners, 2) self-reliance or obedience, 3) being considerate or well behaved, and 4) independence or respect for elders. Following the example from Cizmar et al. (2014), I created the authoritarian scale by coding the non-authoritarian response as 0, the authoritarian response as 1,

[5]In his work, Altemeyer distinguishes between right wing (which is quoted here) and left wing authoritarism, where the same three principles apply but the submission is to revolutionary authorities who seek to overthrow the established authorities. Right vs. left wing does not directly translate to right vs. left political orientation, and in this context, refers to a psychological orientation towards a particular type of authority. See Altemeyer 1996, pages 10 and 219. While authoritarianism tends to be associated with more conservative ideologies, authoritarians are present in both the Democrat and Republican party. Luttig (2017) finds that authoritarians are associated with more extreme partisan viewpoints, as well as social conservatism, concluding that "many of the most polarized Republicans and Democrats are psychologically similar, possessing an authoritarian worldview that divides the world into groups, 'us' versus 'them' (885)."

[6]Altemeyer notes that some extremist authoritarians may reject the established authorities if they perceive they have been compromised in some way and are acting contrary to a higher established authority; however, authoritarians still "will submit to established authorities they like, and those they do *not* like, more readily than nonauthoritarians will" (9).

Table 5.2: Effect of Authoritarianism on Judgments of Credibility

	Dependent variable:		
	Strong leader	Moral	Knowledgeable
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Opposing partisan	-2.025***	-1.840***	−1.671***
	(0.076)	(0.097)	(0.093)
Independent	-1.573***	-1.381***	-1.294***
	(0.108)	(0.134)	(0.130)
Authoritarian	0.411***	0.479***	0.489***
	(0.122)	(0.139)	(0.139)
Female	-0.055	0.034	0.053
	(0.067)	(0.075)	(0.076)
Age	-0.005**	0.011***	0.005**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Black	-0.114	-0.519***	-0.216*
	(0.101)	(0.106)	(0.110)
Hispanic	0.177	-0.184	-0.238**
	(0.114)	(0.123)	(0.121)
Other race or ethnicity	0.014	-0.329	-0.397**
	(0.180)	(0.201)	(0.201)
College graduate	-0.261***	-0.191**	-0.187**
	(0.083)	(0.095)	(0.095)
Income: 34 to 67 percentile	-0.166**	0.123	0.164*
	(0.082)	(0.091)	(0.091)
Income: 68 to 95 percentile	0.059	0.158	0.382***
	(0.092)	(0.105)	(0.106)
Income: 96 to 100 percentile	-0.117	0.299	0.215
	(0.155)	(0.187)	(0.175)
Constant	1.652***	1.991***	2.132***
	(0.161)	(0.185)	(0.185)
Year Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	4,886	4,828	4,877
Log Likelihood	-2,763.374	-2,251.741	-2,235.273
Akaike Inf. Crit.	5,558.748	4,535.481	4,502.546
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

and respondents who answered "both" as 0.5.[7] I then averaged the values for all non-missing responses for the four variables, which resulted in a final authoritarianism value between 0 and 1, with 1 being the most authoritarian.

The authoritarian questions were included in a more limited number of study years, however, which is why I did not conduct the previous analysis of partisanship in the same models as authoritarianism.[8] These questions were also not available in the study years where respondents were asked about the president's decency.

Table 5.2 displays the results of this analysis. Authoritarianism is significant across the three credibility traits, with the likelihood of believing the president to hold these traits increasing with higher authoritarianism. The effects of partisanship also remain consistent in these models. Predicted probabilities are displayed in Figure 5.5. Compared to individuals scoring the lowest on authoritarianism, the highest authoritarians have an increased probability by 0.1 of seeing the president as a strong leader, an increased probability of 0.12 of seeing the president as moral, and an increased probability of 0.08 of viewing him as knowledgeable.

A tendency towards submission to authority is not the only relevant trait of authoritarians, however. Research indicates that authoritarians are more likely to be attracted to and supportive of the use of military force for a number of reasons. Authoritarians have been found to be more prone to blind patriotism (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999), which in turn reduces sensitivity to the suffering that results from

[7] In the ANES questions, "both" was not a provided answer category. This response was only recorded if that answer was volunteered by the respondent.

[8] The only study years in which the credibility questions and the questions used for the authoritarian scale were both available were the 1992, 2000, 2004, and 2008 study years. While the partisanship models for strong leader, moral, and knowledgeable have over 16,000 observations, the authoritarian models for these three traits have around 4800 each. Losing all these observations was too high of a tradeoff for being able to combine both analyses into the same models.

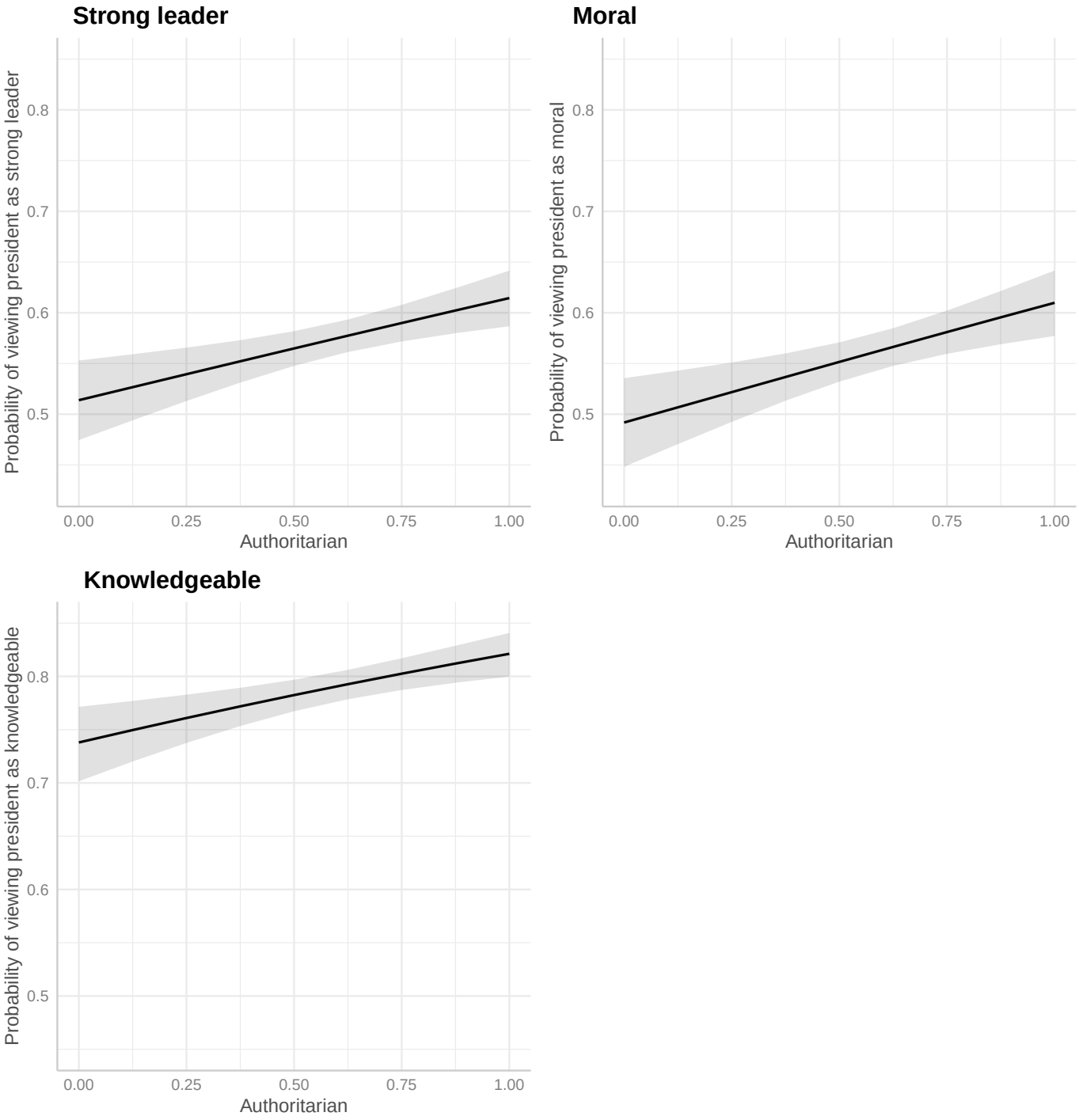

Figure 5.5: Predicted Probabilities for Authoritarianism on Credibility Traits

war, like civilian deaths (McFarland 2005). Authoritarians are also more persuaded by messages that emphasize threat (Lavine et al. 1999), as is often the case for rhetoric in the lead up to military conflict, or may require environments of threat for activation (Feldman and Stenner 1997). They are typically ethnocentric, often extremely so, and display prejudice towards outgroups (Altemeyer 1998). Authoritarianism is associated with a realist rather than idealist wordview (Kertzer and McGraw 2012), and a number of studies have found authoritarians to be more likely to support the use of military force (McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina-Paap 1992; Doty et al. 1997; Cohrs and Moschner 2002; McFarland 2005),[9] while individuals low in authoritarianism are more likely to engage in anti-war activism (Izzett 1971; Duncan and Stewart 1995).

Because authoritarianism can affect both attitudes towards leaders and support for war, it is worth considering the interaction of these two effects. My theorized relationship between leader credibility and support for war, particularly given the persuasion mechanism, may not apply equally to both high and low authoritarians. Authoritarians may need less convincing to lend their support for a new conflict, since authoritarians tend to form opinions that are "based more on memorization of what authorities have told them than on independent, critical appraisal" (Altemeyer 1998, p. 48). As such:

Hypothesis 3: *The effects of credibility will be greater for individuals low in authoritarian personality traits compared to individuals high in authoritarian personality traits.*

Available data for testing Hypothesis 3 are even more limited. Returning to the willingness to use force variable utilized in Chapter 3, I can utilize only a single study

[9]There are some studies that have not found support for authoritarians favoring military force. See, for example, Cizmar et al. (2014).

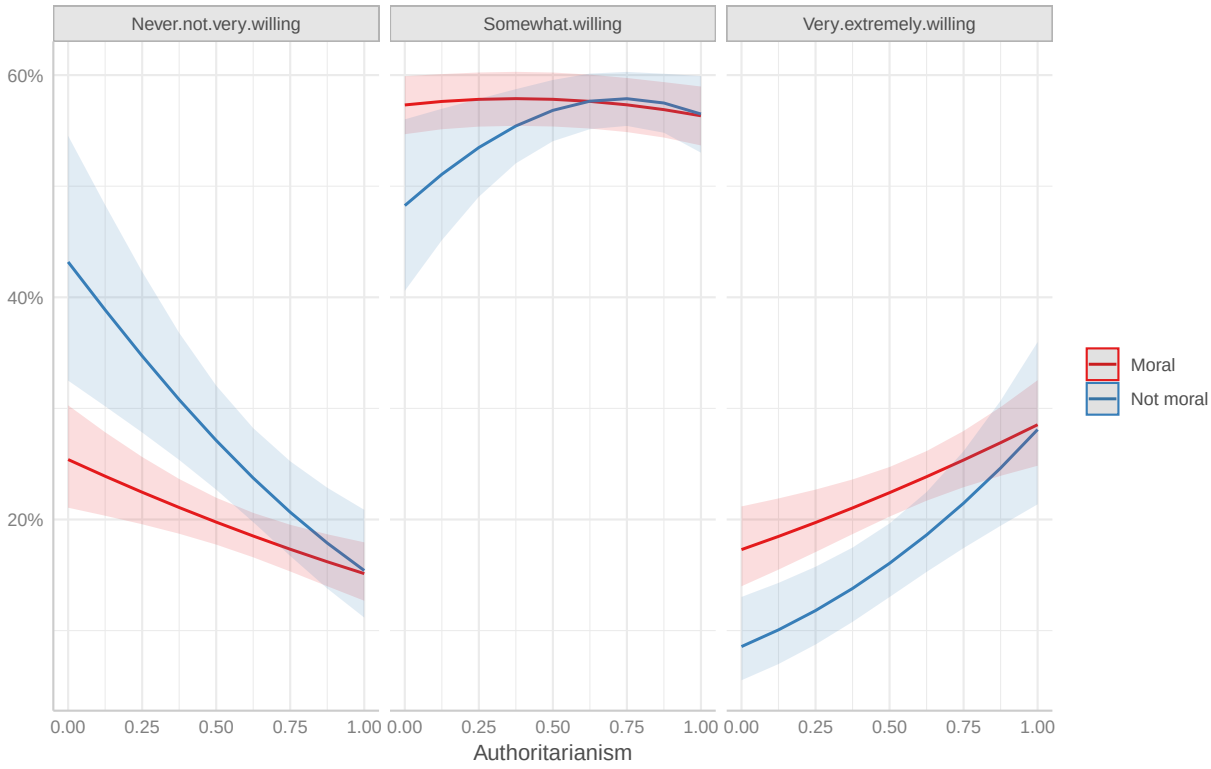

Figure 5.6: Predicted Probabilities for Willingness to Use Force

year of the ANES data - 1992 - that contains both that dependent variable as well as the authoritarian and credibility questions. Using this data, the authoritarianism scale is interacted with assessments of the president as a strong leader and as moral, the two credibility proxies utilized in the original ANES analysis.

The results of this analysis indicate that not only is increasing authoritarianism associated with a greater willingness to use force, there is also a significant interaction between authoritarianism and the trustworthiness proxy, whether the individuals views the president as moral. The interaction between authoritarianism and whether the individual views the president to be a strong leader is not significant, however. The regression table for the ordered logit model can be found in Table A69 in

Appendix E.

Figure 5.6 plots predicted probabilities for willingness to use force for this interaction. While authoritarians are more willing to use force in general, the effects of credibility operate more strongly for individuals lower in authoritarianism. Low authoritarians who do not find the president to be moral are generally less willing to use force than low authoritarians who do find him to be moral. They are more likely to answer "never" or "not very willing" (an increase in probability of 0.18) when asked about how willing the United States should be to use military force and less likely to answer "very" or "extremely willing" (a decrease in probability of 0.09). A difference holds even for those with moderate authoritarian scores of 0.50. The gap between those who perceive the president to be moral vs. those who do not narrows significantly after that, however, with no significant difference for those scoring 0.75 (those individuals who chose the more authoritarian selection in three of the four ANES pairings) or higher. For those individuals rated highest in authoritarianism, not only is there no significant difference in willigness to use force regardless of perceptions of the president's morality, the point estimates for the two groups converge. These findings fit with the expectations of Hypothesis 3, at least on the trustworthiness dimension of credibility. Trustworthiness considerations only affect respondents' expressed willingness to use force for those individuals who hold low or moderate authoritarian tendencies.

5.4 Conjoint Experiment

To dig deeper into the determinants of credibility, I fielded a conjoint experiment where respondents were presented with a series of hypothetical leader profiles with randomly varying attributes. Using a conjoint design allows me to not only examine

differences in how leaders are evaluated based on individual respondent characteristics, but also dig deeper into the specific leader attributes and behaviors that inspire or inhibit trust in the leader. The theoretical discussion of credibility in Chapter 2 highlighted multiple factors related to trust and competence, some of which this experimental design incorporates, getting in particular at the leader's experience, quality of judgment, effectiveness, honesty, and consistency.

Conjoint designs allow the researcher to implement multiple treatments at once, while isolating the casual effect of each on respondent evaluations. They also have the benefit of providing increased external validity, as the range of factors under consideration more closely mimics the complex choices made in real life. Respondents are thus not required to consider a single factor in a vaccuum, but consider and weigh a range of factors when making their evaluations (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014; Bansak et al. 2021).

The experiment was fielded in May 2022, with a sample of U.S. based respondents aged 18 and older recruited using the Lucid Theorem platform. It resulted in usable completes from 2244 respondents[10] and a total of 22364 hypothetical leader profile evaluations.

5.4.1 Experimental Design

In the experiment, respondents were presented with a table displaying two side-by-side leader profiles, Leader A and Leader B. Respondents were told that each profile represents qualities of a hypothetical president already in office. Each profile contained

[10]Respondents who failed to consent to the survey and speeders who completed the survey in 90 seconds or less were removed from analysis.

Table 5.3: List of Attributes and Levels

Leader Attribute	**All Possible Attribute Levels**
Age	45, 60, 75
Partisanship	Republican, Democrat
Political background prior to presidency	Mayor of major US city, Senator, Governor, No previous elected office
National security experience prior to presidency	Significant experience, No significant experience
Fact checker accuracy rating from nonpartisan Center for Political Integrity	90%, 75%, 60%
Consistency of policy positions	Changed policy position on multiple major issues, Changed policy position on a major issue, Changed policy position only on minor issues
During presidency, has passed domestic legislation that was centerpiece of campaign	Yes, No
Supported invading Iraq in 2003	Yes, No

8 attributes that randomly vary for each leader. Age, political background, and national security experience gets at different facets of qualification and expertise, which credibility literature has identified as important to evaluations of competence. A fact checker rating has been included as a proxy for honesty, a key component of trustworthiness. Likewise, greater consistency in position should also increase perceptions of trustworthiness. The profile tells respondents whether the president has passed domestic legislation that they campaigned on, which speaks to effectiveness and thus competence. Respondents are also told whether the leader supported the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Based on the respondents' own current opinion on Iraq, this attribute should serve as an indication of the quality of the leader's judgment. Finally, the hypothetical leader is randomly assigned partisanship. All of the levels for these attributes can be viewed in Table 5.3.

Each level of an attribute had an equal probability of appearing as any other

The following profiles represent qualities of a hypothetical president already in office.

	Leader A	**Leader B**
Age	45	60
National security experience prior to presidency	Significant experience	No significant experience
Fact checker accuracy rating from nonpartisan Center for Political Integrity	60%	90%
During presidency, has passed domestic legislation that was centerpiece of campaign	No	Yes
Political background prior to presidency	Governor	Senator
Consistency of policy positions	Changed policy position on a major issue	Changed policy position on a major issue
Partisanship	Republican	Republican
Supported invading Iraq in 2003	No	No

Figure 5.7: Sample Screen of Profiles Displayed to Respondents

level of that attribute, and each attribute was assigned independently of the others. The order in which attributes were displayed in the table was randomized across participants but remained constant across profiles for each participant. Figure 5.7 is a sample screen of how profile pairs were displayed to respondents.

For each pair of profiles, respondents were asked "If you had to choose between them, which leader would you trust more to oversee a major military conflict?", selecting between the two profiles. They were then asked "how confident or concerned would you be in Leader [A/B] initiating a major military conflict?", rating each profile on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 was extremely concerned and 7 was extremely confident. Respondents then repeated this process 4 more times, evaluating a total of 10 hypothetical leader profiles each.

5.4.2 Analysis

For each dependent variable, I ran a series of linear regressions - one for each attribute, where all attribute categories are included as dummies except for a baseline category. Because the experiment was fully randomized, no functional form assumption is needed (Bansak et al. 2021). When conjoint designs have dependent attributes - where the level of one attribute is restricted based on the level of a different attribute - all attributes must be run together in the same regression. When this is not the case, however, separating the models is preferable for an increase in statistical power. In all models, robust standard errors are clustered by respondent. These models yielded Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) for each attribute.

After my primary analysis, I will present conditional AMCEs for different subgroups of respondents. These are calculated the same way as AMCEs but are run on a subset of the data based on pre-existing respondent attributes that are not randomly

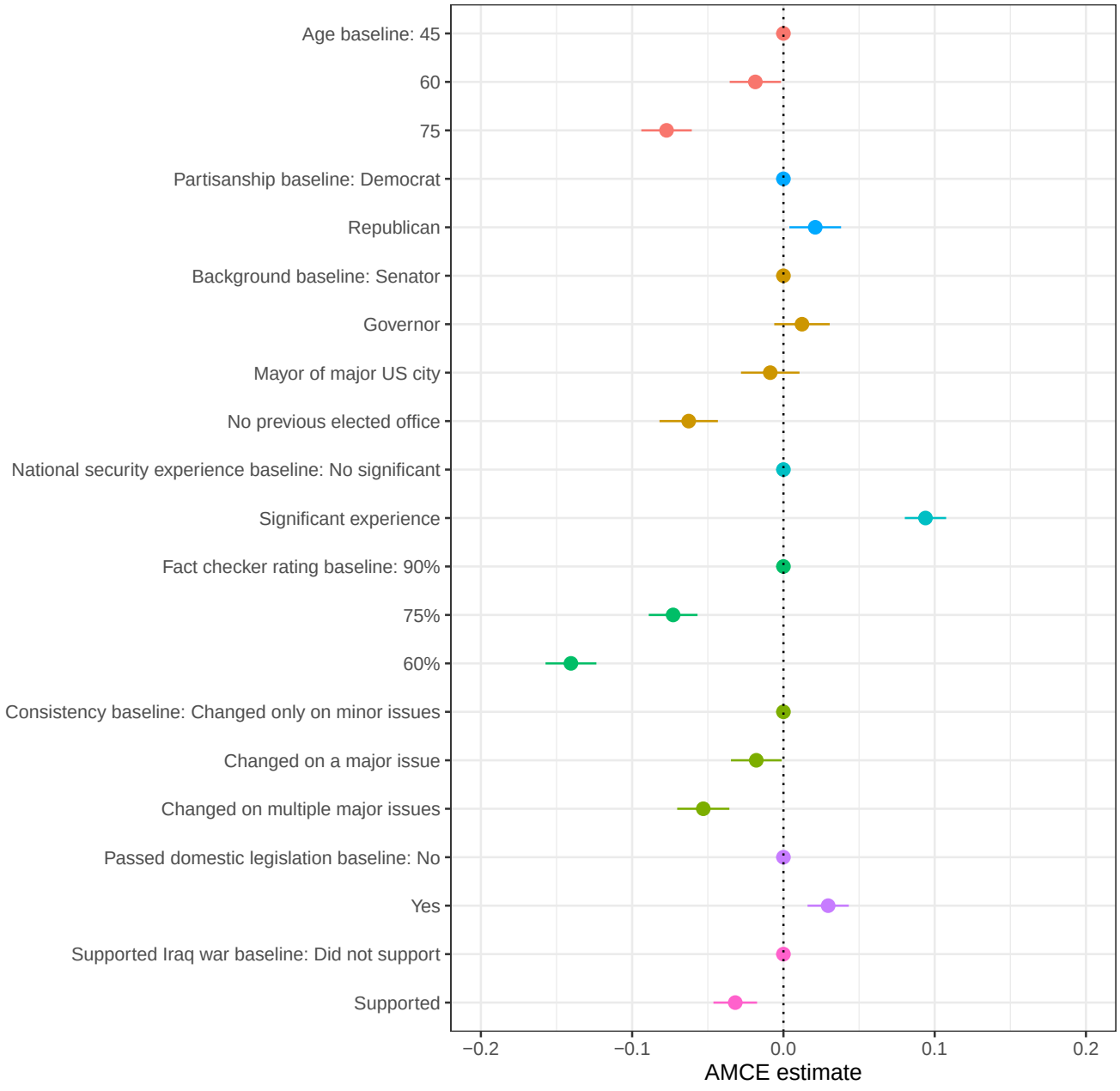

Figure 5.8: AMCEs for Respondent Selection between Profile Pairs

distributed; therefore, they cannot be intepreted as causal effects when comparing different values of a respondent-level attribute (Bansak et al. 2021).

5.4.3 Overall Results

Figure 5.8 displays Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) for respondents' selection between a pair of two profiles, where respondents were asked which leader they would trust more to oversee a major military conflict. AMCEs represent the coefficients from the regression models, and for the forced choice outcome can be interpreted as the change in probability of selecting a leader profile when it contains that attribute level, compared to the baseline attribute level.

Across respondents, in terms of leader background and experience, respondents place greater trust in a younger leader. The effect is small, but significant, for a leader that is 60 years old. On average, respondents have a probability of 0.02 less of selecting a leader of that age compared to a leader that is 45 years old. The substantive effect increases with a 75 year old leader, who respondents have a probability of 0.08 less of selecting compared to a 45 year old leader. Of the different political backgrounds, only never having previously held elected office has a significant effect. Compared to senators, having no background in elected office reduces the probability of selection by 0.06. As anticipated, having significant national security experience increases the probability of selection by 0.09. And in terms of effectiveness, the leader having passed domestic legislation that was the centerpiece of their campaign increased the probability of selection by just 0.03.

Respondents are influenced more by the leader's fact checker rating than by their consistency in policy positions. Having a 75% fact checker rating rather than a 90% rating reduces the probability of selection by 0.07, and a 60% rating reduces the

probability of selection by 0.14, the largest attribute effect in this analysis. In contrast, changing policy positions on a major issue compared to only on minor issues had a small, significant effect, reducing the probability of selection by 0.02, while changing policy positions on multiple major issues reduced the chance of selection by 0.05.

While the effects of partisanship and support for the Iraq war will need to be unpacked more within subgroups of respondents, overall, the leader being a Republican slightly increased probability of selection, while past support for the Iraq war slightly decreased probability of selection.

AMCEs for leader ratings can be viewed in Appendix E, Figure A3. For this dependent variable, the AMCE estimates are smaller with larger standard errors than the forced choice dependent variable, indicating that many respondents were likely giving similar ratings across profiles. This may be due to factors like respondent fatigue or may be due to differences in the evaluation task. Fewer respondents were willing to express confidence compared to neutrality or concern at the prospect of war initiation, which is likely heightened in an artificial experimental environment that lacks the richer context of the real world.

All subsequent subgroup analysis will utilize AMCEs based on the forced choice outcome variable.

5.4.4 Partisan Groups

Conditional AMCEs based on respondents' partisanship are presented in Figure 5.9. For this analysis, independent leaners are grouped with their respective partisan groups. Generally speaking, there are not substantial differences by partisanship across attributes, with the exception of the hypothetical president's partisan affiliation. Republicans have an increased probability by 0.28 of selecting a hypothetical leader

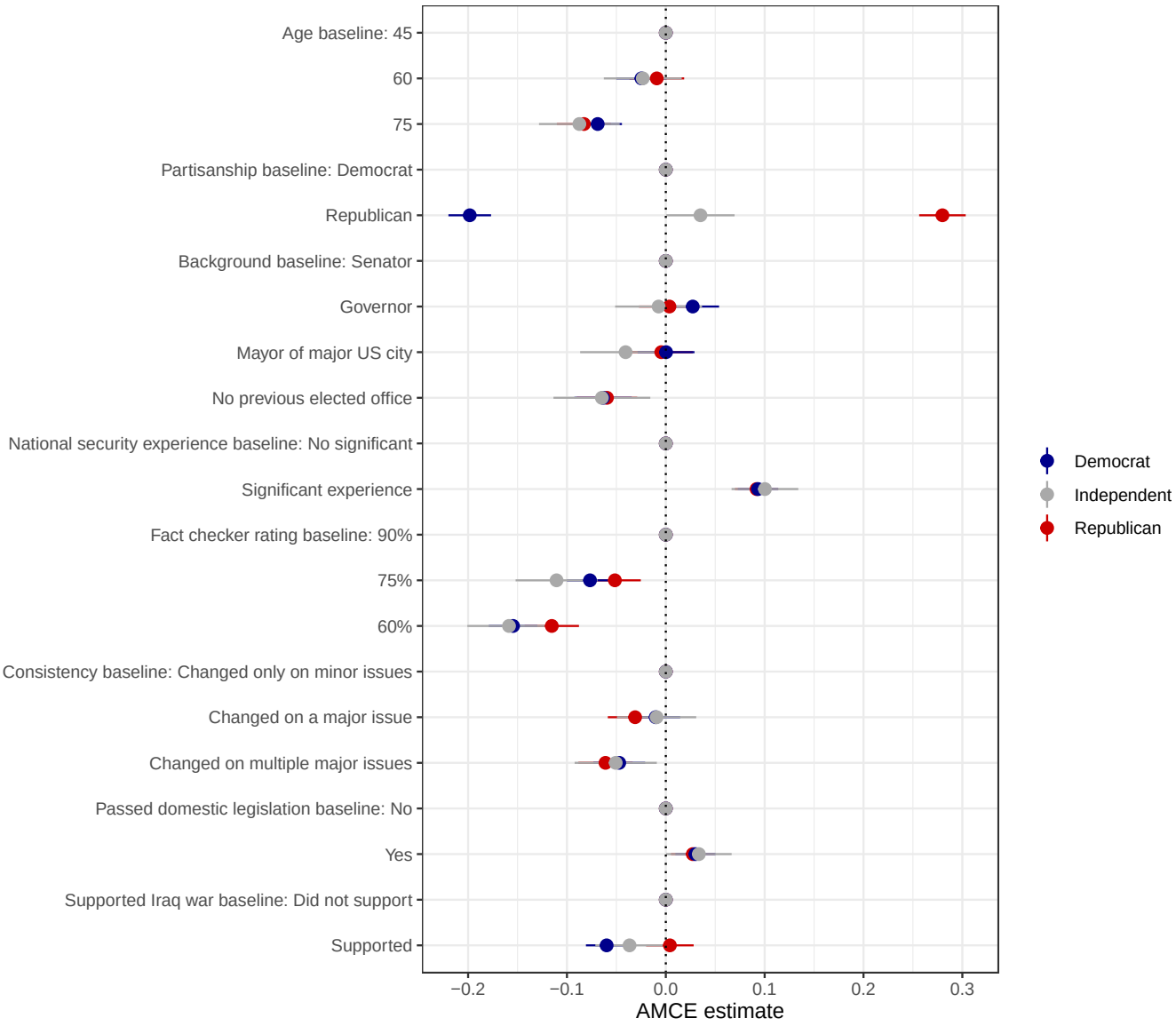

Figure 5.9: Conditional AMCEs based on Respondent Partisanship

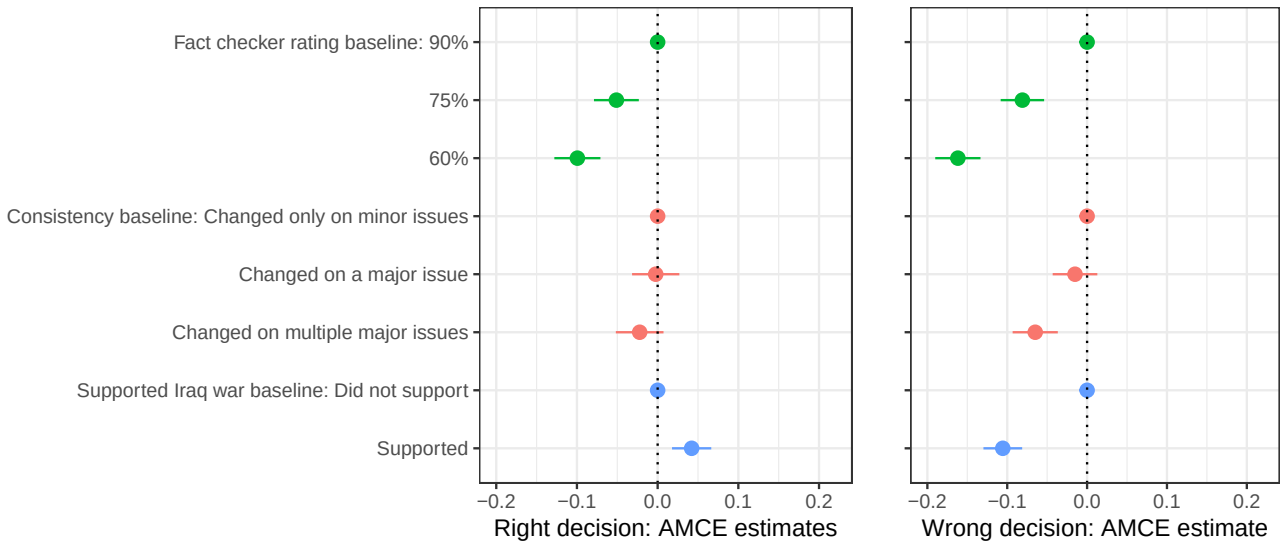

Figure 5.10: Conditional AMCEs based on Respondent's Opinion about the Iraq War

as more trusted to oversee a major military conflict if that leader is also a Republican, whereas Democrats have a decreased probability by 0.20 of selecting a leader if they are a Republican. Independents generally have the greatest decrease in probability of selecting a leader if they have lower fact checker ratings than the 90% baseline, although they are essentially the same as Democrats for the lowest category of fact checker rating (60%). Democrats and Independents are both less likely to select a leader if they supported the Iraq war, while this produces no effect on Republicans. Overall, these results indicate that beyond partisanship, other attributes operate similarly across party lines.

5.4.5 Iraq Opinion

Conditional AMCEs based on respondents views on the Iraq war are presented in Table 5.10. Participants were asked "Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision using military force in Iraq in 2003?". The side-by-side graphs

display AMCEs for a selection of attributes for those who answered "Right decision" vs. "Wrong decision." Those who answered "Unsure" were not included in this analysis. Graphs of AMCEs for all attributes for the two subgroups can be viewed in Figure A4 in Appendix E.

As expected, a match between participant opinion and the leader's past support makes selection more likely, although the effect is larger for those who believe the US made the wrong decision. For those individuals, a president who supported invading Iraq in 2003 decreased probability of selection by 0.11 as the more trusted leader to oversee a major military conflict. For those respondents who do believe the US made the right decision, a leader's past support of the Iraq war increased probability of selection by 0.04.

Interestingly, those participants who believed going into Iraq was the wrong decision also were more influenced by honesty and consistency, perhaps in part because of dissatisfaction with how the Iraq war was conducted and how the Bush administration communicated with the public. While consistency was not significant for participants who believed going to war was the right decision, a leader who has changed policy positions on multiple major issues decreased probability of selection for those who believed it was the wrong decision. The lower fact checker ratings also resulted in greater decreases in probability of selection for this group, particularly on the lowest category. Leaders with only 60% fact checker ratings decreased probability of selection by 0.16.

5.4.6 Authoritarians

Figure 5.11 displays a selection of conditional AMCEs for low vs. high authoritarians. Figure A5 in Appendix E displays AMCEs for all attributes for both groups. In

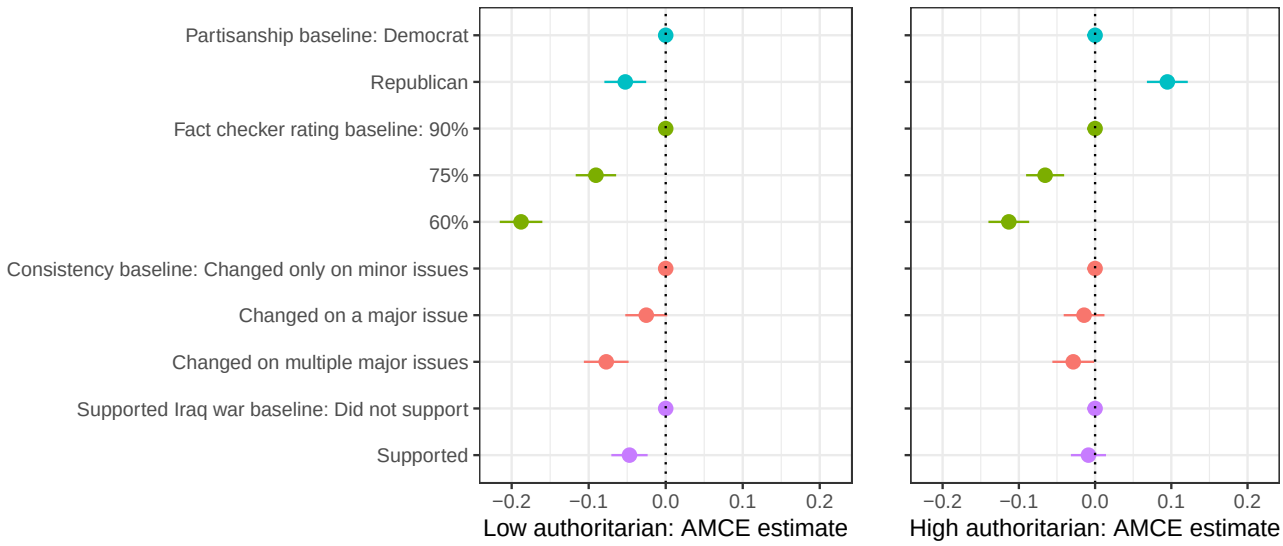

Figure 5.11: Conditional AMCEs based on Respondent Authoritarianism

the survey, I utilized questions asking which traits of the same pairings from the ANES is it was more desirable for children to have: 1) curiosity or good manners, 2) self-reliance or obedience, 3) being considerate or well behaved, and 4) independence or respect for elders. I then constructed an authoritarian scale following the same method described for the analysis in section 5.3. Individuals who received a score of 0 or 0.25 were then classified as low authoritarians, while those who received a score of 0.75 or 1 are classified as high authoritarians. Those who received a moderate score (0.5) are not included in this analysis.

Compared to high authoritarians, low authoritarians are more likely to be discouraged from selecting a leader with lower fact checker ratings or greater inconsistency. A 60% fact checker rating decreases low authoritarians' probability of selection by 0.19, whereas the decrease is only 0.11 for high authoritarians. Past support of the Iraq war also has a negative, significant effect for low authoritarians, while there is no effect for high authoritarians. Finally, the leader being a Republican increased the

probability of selection for high authoritarians but decreased the probability for low authoritarians.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to explore the determinants of credibility, and how different types of individuals make credibility evaluations. I found that both partisanship and authoritarianism affect the development of credibility perceptions and the likelihood for individuals to evaluate the leader favorably. Furthermore, my analysis suggests the presence of an interactive effect between authoritarian personalities and support for war. Perceptions of the leader's trustworthiness only alter an individual's general willingness to see the United States use military force when that individual does not score highly in authoritarianism.

The conjoint analysis confirmed that many of the theoretically expected behaviors and attibutes associated with credibility do indeed affect respondents' willingness to place their trust in the leader. Not surprising, partisanship was still found to hold a significant influence over this trust, yet as in previous analyses, partisanship did not cause notable differences in the evaluation of the other behaviors and characteristics under analysis. In contrast, high authoritarians were generally less affected by negative behaviors that resulted in decreased trust in individuals scoring lower in authoritarianism.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This dissertation has sought to illuminate a missing piece of the puzzle in explanations of public support for and beliefs about war. While various conflict characteristics, domestic climate, and partisanship all matter, without considering the role of the leader, this picture is not complete. Particularly early on in conflicts, when uncertainty is typically at its highest, the public has very little on which to base its judgments. When a leader initiates a new conflict, in some ways, they are asking the public to make a leap of faith - to trust in their decision, that they can effectively manage the conflict as it unfolds, make tough decisions when needed, and that they will put national interests above any personal ones. The leader's credibility can facilitate or hinder the public's choice. When people believe that the leader is competent and trustworthy, they are more likely to be persuaded and to ultimately expect that the conflict will end in success. This is a reasonable consideration; the quality of the leader is not irrelevant to the outcome of a military intervention. Past conflicts have been mismanaged. Leaders have made poor choices and have sometimes sought to keep important information from the public.

Chapter 2 presented my theory of credibility in detail. I first gave an overview of the development of the literature, identifying a gap in the existing explanations of public support for war and justifying the need to examine the influence of the leader when a new conflict is introduced. In arguing that a leader's credibility faciliates or hinders their ability to rally support from the public, I drew on psychological research

that conceptualizes credibility as a function of perceived competence and perceived trustworthiness.

Chapter 3 sought to test the core hypotheses derived from that theory. Using historical survey data from 12 past conflicts, I found that perceived credibility does have a significant and substative effect on support for conflict initiation. This effect held controlling for partisanship and operates similarly across party lines; there was no evidence that copartisanship acts as a moderator on this relationship. Digging deeper into the mechanism, analysis of a survey fielded before and after Bush's 2003 State of the Union speech indicated that credility was an important determinant of whether that speech sparked opinion change. Those who already viewed Bush as competent were more likely to shift from disapproval to approval, while those who had doubts about Bush's competency were more likely to abandon their support following the speech. Further, the relationship between credibility and support for war also holds up outside of a specific conflict or crisis scenario. Analysis of ANES data indicated that evaluations of the current president influences an individual's willingness to condone the use of military force in the abstract.

Chapter 4 goes beyond support and considers how credibility may shape the beliefs and expectations the public holds surrounding a conflict. While there is mixed evidence for a connection between credibility perceptions and expectations for conflict length and likely casualties, the results are much more substantial for expectations of success. Individuals who perceive their leader to be trustworthy and, especially, competent are more likely to anticipate a positive outcome. These findings shed greater insight on existing work that has already identified expectations of success as an important predictor of support in general.

Finally, Chapter 5 takes a step back to examine the determinants of credibility

itself and certain individual-level characteristics that may influence how someone perceives their leader. While my previous analysis identified a limited, intermittent role for partisanship, I found here that partisanship is most influential earlier in the causal chain: when credibility perceptions are formed or revised. Copartisans are significantly more likely than both opposing partisans and independents to evaluate their president positively on measures of competence and trustworthiness. While opposing partisans are the least likely to find the president credible, it is not rare for them to do so. This story cannot simply be boiled down to partisanship, however. Differences also emerge between individuals who are high in authoritarian personality tendencies vs. those who are not. I also fielded a conjoint experiment that validated that many of the characteristics and behaviors highlighted in Chapter 2 do affect credibility, while also providing additional support for the importance of partisanship and the differences between high vs. low authoritarians.

6.1 Implications

First and foremost, the findings of this dissertation establish the importance of the leader in attitude formation surrounding conflict, a consideration largely overlooked in existing IR literature about support for war. Public opinion is not simply the sum of reactions to the details of the situation, its expected outcome, or the application of pre-existing values. Leaders have the capacity to influence not only views on issues of low stakes and salience but can also shape issues of great interest, risk, and importance like the use of force. Credibility can be relied upon in environments of high uncertainty. Particularly at the outset of a conflict, the consequences of both acting and not acting cannot be known with certainty. The leader is thus asking the

public for their trust. It is reasonable to draw on what is already known about that leader when deciding whether to grant the leader that trust.

By centering the influence of leaders on public attitudes, this work contributes to a larger body of literature that has asserted the importance of leaders in International Relations.[1] Numerous studies have shown that differences between leaders can affect international outcomes both because of differences in how different individuals process information and make decisions (for example, see Jervis 1976; Lebow 1981; Kahneman and Renshon 2007; Horowitz and Stam 2014; Yarhi-Milo, Kertzer, and Renshon 2018), and, importantly, because of how differences between leaders can alter how they are viewed by various audiences of interest (for example, Lupton 2018; Mattes and Weeks 2019).

While I have proposed a number of reasons why leader credibility should be particularly important in the realm of military conflict, there are likely other areas of policy where this is also the case. This is an important implication for not only theory, but leaders themselves. In an era where political polling is widespread with steadily decreasing costs due to technological innovation, there is a temptation to craft policy stances as a reaction to this polling. While this is a useful tool and starting point, a credible leader should not overlook their own ability to shift those numbers. This is, however, an influence that must be exercised carefully and responsibly.

Some literature has suggested that partisanship plays a dimished role in attitude formation for foreign policy issues compared to domestic issues (for example, see Kertzer, Brooks, and Brooks 2021). While this project has shown that partisanship is by no means wholly determinative, it also cautions that partisanship may have more

[1] For an overview of the contributions of this research, see Horowitz and Fuhrmann 2018.

subtle influences outside of its immediate, direct effects. While shared partisanship with the leader was only significant for support for conflict initiation in about half of the conflicts under study, when I dug deeper into the formation of credibility perceptions, partisanship - and especially copartisanship - plays a substantial role.

This dissertation offers insights that can be applied to ajacent literatures as well. The idea of diversionary war - that leaders engage in foreign policy aggression to distract from domestic difficulties by producing a "rally round the flag" boost to leader support - has received a great deal of attention in both scholarly and popular discourse, yet the results of empirical analyses often prove weaker than conventional wisdom expects, and taken as a whole, provide only mixed support at best (Levy 1989). Setting aside the question of whether and how leaders intentionally engage in diversion, whether conflict involvement represents an effective means of rallying support to a troubled leader is also an open debate with some empirical studies indicating little to no evidence of a boost to leader approval in the aggregate (for example, see Lian and Oneal 1993, Baker and Oneal 2001). Rallies are not a given, and a variety of scholars have proposed explanations for what may generate or increase the size of a rally. Chatagnier (2012) finds that trust in government mediates the size of a rally; individuals predisposed to institutional trust are more likely to positively update their approval of the president following crisis or conflict initiation. Given that a rally logically must also be accompanied by support for conflict initiation, the findings of this dissertation suggest that we would likely observe a similar pattern for trust not just in government as an institution, but trust in the leader themself, supporting Chatagnier's assertion that "Diversionary war is most effective for those who have the least need to divert." (643).

6.2 Limitations and Future Research

This project has sought to establish a more prominent role for leaders in the study of war and public opinion. There are, however, a number of limitations to this work and even more unanswered questions for future research to explore.

Although my analyses of historical conflicts include conflicts of varying scope, aims, and purpose, further work digging into these differences between conflicts could shed further light on when the effects of credibility operate most strongly. Given the intersection of so many competing factors surrounding these conflicts, including the domestic political climate, extent of threat perceived by the public, and the various characteristics of the proposed conflict, this question is perhaps best explored in an experimental design.

My analyses also focus on conflict initiation, both because of theoretical expectations and to circumvent methodological challenges. My theory expects that credibility will operate most strongly when uncertainty is highest, which is typically the case at a conflict's outset, before the public has battlefield events to evaluate and when they are more reliant on the executive as a source for information. A focus on initiation also helped to minimize concerns of reverse causality - that a conflict going well and generating support causes the public to evaluate the president favorably. Exploring how credibility operates over the course of a conflict, both for support and for conflict expectations, is an important area for future work. I expect that displeasure with the leader's perceived handling of the conflict or perceived breaches of trust will heighten any dissatisfaction beyond that solely based on conflict characteristics and battlefield events.

In this project, I have also focused solely on the leader himself, assuming that the actions of his administration are conflated by the public with the leader. Yet

in the lead up to and during a conflict, a variety of administration officials often speak on the president's behalf. On occasion, these appearences can attract a great deal of attention and scrutiny, as with Colin Powell's speech at the United Nations, laying out the justification for the imminent US invasion of Iraq. Future work should explore the extent to which the words, actions, and perceived credibility of prominent administration officials affect the credibility of the leader and support for war.

Finally, I have focused solely on the American political context. A natural extension of this research would be an examination of whether and how the relationship between leader credibility and public support for war travels to other democracies. There is no reason to expect that the influence of leader credibility is limited to only the United States. There are, however, a number of considerations that may alter the dynamic in other settings. Few countries have the ability and public appetite to wage unilateral wars of choice. How do different levels of military power and cultural norms for the use of force alter this relationship? Further, different governmental and electoral systems - such as parliamentary rather than presidential systems or the presence of more than two competitive political parties - may alter public evaluations of the leader and perceptions of his or her responsibility for a conflict in meaningful ways.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Question Wording for Credibility Proxies

Table A1: Question Wording for Credibility Proxies

Analysis	Conflict	Roper No.	Wording
Support	Gulf War	31092942	Do you think George Bush has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Support	Gulf War	31092942	Do you think George Bush is a man of deep convictions, or not?
Support	Haiti	31088227	(Now, I'm going to read off some personal characteristics and qualities. As I read each one, please tell me whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to (President) Bill Clinton....Can get things done
Support	Haiti	31088227	(Now, I'm going to read off some personal characteristics and qualities. As I read each one, please tell me whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to (President) Bill Clinton.)...Stands up for what he believes in
Support	Iraq 1994	31094752	When it comes to... his ability to handle a crisis... how would you rate Bill Clinton, using a five-point scale, on which a '5' means a very good rating, a '1' means a very poor rating, and a '3' means a mixed rating?
Support	Iraq 1994	31094752	When it comes to... keeping his word... how would you rate Bill Clinton, using a five-point scale, on which a '5' means a very good rating, a '1' means a very poor rating, and a '3' means a mixed rating?

Support	Bosnia	31094761	When it comes to...being a strong leader, how would you rate Bill Clinton, using a five-point scale, on which a '5' means a very good rating, a '1' means a very poor rating, and a '3' means a mixed rating?
Support	Bosnia	31094761	When it comes to...telling the truth, how would you rate Bill Clinton, using a five-point scale, on which a '5' means a very good rating, a '1' means a very poor rating, and a '3' means a mixed rating?
Support	Afghanistan and Sudan 1998	31088358	(I'm going to read some personal characteristics and qualities. As I read each one, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to Bill Clinton.)...Can get things done
Support	Afghanistan and Sudan 1998	31088358	I'm going to read some personal characteristics and qualities. As I read each one, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to Bill Clinton....Honest and trustworthy
Support	Iraq 1998	31094785	When it comes to... being effective and getting things done...how would you rate Bill Clinton, using a five-point scale, on which a 5 means a very good rating, a 1 means a very poor rating, and a 3 means a mixed rating?
Support	Iraq 1998	31094785	When it comes to...being consistent and standing up for his beliefs... how would you rate Bill Clinton, using a five-point scale, on which a 5 means a very good rating, a 1 means a very poor rating, and a 3 means a mixed rating?

Support	Kosovo	31099365	Do you have trust and confidence in Bill Clinton as Commander in Chief, or don't you?
Support	Afghanistan 2001	31088468	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about... understands complex issues?
Support	Afghanistan 2001	31088468	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about... is sincere in what he says?
Support	Iraq 2003	31088503	Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is a strong and decisive leader?
Support	Iraq 2003	31088503	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is honest and trustworthy?
Support	Libya	31095486	Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to Barack Obama....Is a strong and decisive leader
Support	Syria	31087014	Please tell me whether the following statement applies to (Barack) Obama or not....He is a strong leader
Support	Syria	31087014	Please tell me whether the following statement applies to (Barack) Obama or not....He sticks with his principles

Support	North Korea 2018	31114960	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think each one applies or doesn't apply to Donald Trump.)...Can manage the government effectively
Support	North Korea 2018	31114960	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think each one applies or doesn't apply to Donald Trump.)...Is honest and trustworthy
Support	2003 State of the Union	31090917	Do you think George W. Bush...has strong qualities of leadership?
Length of conflict	Gulf War	31092942	Do you think George Bush has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Length of conflict	Gulf War	31092942	Do you think George Bush is a man of deep convictions, or not?
Length of conflict	Haiti	31093037	Do you think Bill Clinton is a strong and decisive leader, or not?
Length of conflict	Haiti	31093037	Do you think Bill Clinton has the moral authority to serve as Commander-in-Chief of America's armed forces, or does Clinton lack the moral authority to serve as Commander-in-Chief?
Length of conflict	Kosovo	31090864	Do you think Bill Clinton has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Length of conflict	Kosovo	31090864	Do you think Bill Clinton can be trusted to keep his word as President, or not?
Length of conflict	2001 War on Terror	31091478	Do you think George W. Bush has strong qualities of leadership, or not?

Length of conflic	Iraq 2003	31088516	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is a strong and decisive leader?
Length of conflict	Iraq 2003	31088516	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is honest and trustworthy?
Length of conflict	ISIS	31091076	Do you think Barack Obama has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Casualties	Haiti	31093037	Do you think Bill Clinton is a strong and decisive leader, or not?
Casualties	Haiti	31093037	Do you think Bill Clinton has the moral authority to serve as Commander-in-Chief of America's armed forces, or does Clinton lack the moral authority to serve as Commander-in-Chief?
Casualties	Kosovo	31091458	Do you have confidence in Bill Clinton's ability to deal wisely with an international crises, or are you uneasy about his approach?
Casualties	2001 War on Terror	31091478	Do you think George W. Bush has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Casualties	Iraq 2003	31088516	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is a strong and decisive leader?
Casualties	Iraq 2003	31088516	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is honest and trustworthy?

Casualties	Libya	31095485	Overall, do you trust Barack Obama as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, or not?
Expectation of success	Gulf War	31092942	Do you think George Bush has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Expectation of success	Gulf War	31092942	Do you think George Bush is a man of deep convictions, or not?
Expectation of success	Haiti	31099304	Do you think President (Bill) Clinton is doing a good job or a poor job: providing strong leadership for the country?
Expectation of success	Bosnia	31099327	Do you think President (Bill) Clinton is doing a good job or a poor job: Providing strong leadership for the country?
Expectations of success	2001 War on Terror	31091478	Do you think George W. Bush has strong qualities of leadership, or not?
Expectation of success	Iraq 2003	31088516	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is a strong and decisive leader?
Expectation of success	Iraq 2003	31088516	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to George W. Bush.) How about...is honest and trustworthy?
Expectation of success	Iraq 2007	31096887	Please tell me whether or not you think each of the following phrases describes George W. Bush. What about...has strong leadership qualities? Does this describe Bush, or not?
Expectation of success	Iraq 2007	31096887	Please tell me whether or not you think each of the following phrases describes George W. Bush. What about...is honest and ethical? Does this describe Bush, or not?

Expectation of success	Libya	31095485	Overall, do you trust Barack Obama as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, or not?
Expectation of success	Syria	31103018	On foreign policy, do you think Barack Obama is a strong and decisive leader or a weak and indecisive leader?
Expectation of success	Syria	31103018	In general, do you think Barack Obama is good at taking personal responsibility for his statements and actions or does he spend too much time blaming others?
Expectation of success	ISIS	31095588	Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to Barack Obama....Is a strong and decisive leader
Conflict inheritors	Somalia (Clinton)	31094736	How confident are you that Bill Clinton has the right set of personal characteristics to be President of the United States –extremely confident, quite confident, only somewhat confident, or not at all confident?
Conflict inheritors	Afghanistan (Obama)	31095991	(As I read some pairs of opposite phrases, please tell me which one best reflects your impression of Barack Obama.) Does Barack Obama impress you as...able to get things done or not able to get things done?
Conflict inheritors	Afghanistan (Obama)	31095991	As I read some pairs of opposite phrases, please tell me which one best reflects your impression of Barack Obama. Does Barack Obama impress you as...trustworthy or not trustworthy?

Conflict inheritors	Iraq (Obama)	31095447	Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to Barack Obama...Is a strong and decisive leader
Conflict inheritors	Iraq (Obama)	31095447	Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think it applies or doesn't apply to Barack Obama...Is honest and trustworthy
Conflict inheritors	ISIS (Trump)	31095618	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think each one applies or doesn't apply to Donald Trump.)...Can manage the government effectively
Conflict inheritors	ISIS (Trump)	31095618	(Thinking about the following characteristics and qualities, please say whether you think each one applies or doesn't apply to Donald Trump.)...Is honest and trustworthy

Appendix B: Question Wording for Dependent Variables

Table A2: Question Wording for Dependent Variables

Analysis	Conflict	Roper No.	Wording
Support	Gulf War	31092942	As you may know, the United Nations passed a resolution authorizing force against Iraq if it doesn't remove its troops by the January 15th deadline. Overall, taking into consideration everything you heard or read about the Mideast crisis, do you think the United States should go to war against Iraq if the United Nations deadline of January 15th is not met, or do you think we should give economic sanctions more time to work?
Support	Haiti	31088227	If all other diplomatic efforts, including economic sanctions, fail to restore a democratic government in Haiti, do you think the United States should send military troops to Haiti along with troops from other countries, or should the U.S. not send military troops to Haiti at all?
Support	Iraq 1994	31094752	If Saddam Hussein does not withdraw his troops from the border between Iraq and Kuwait, do you think the United States should or should not launch an air strike against Iraq?

Support	Bosnia	31094761	If Serbian forces continue to attack Bosnian cities or the United Nations peacekeeping troops in Bosnia who are trying to deliver humanitarian assistance, would you favor or oppose having the United States and its European allies conduct air strikes against the Serbian military forces?
Support	Afghanistan and Sudan 1998	31088358	As you may know, the United States recently launched military attacks against terrorist facilities in the countries of Afghanistan and Sudan. Do you approve or disapprove of those attacks?
Support	Iraq 1998	31094785	As you may know, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein still has not fully complied with United Nations inspections for chemical and biological weapons materials. Do you think that the United States should continue to rely on diplomatic negotiations, or should the United States use military force to resolve this matter with Iraq?
Support	Kosovo	31099365	If the Yugoslavia government signs a peace agreement in Kosovo, would you favor or oppose sending in U.S. and NATO peacekeeping forces to enforce it?
Support	Afghanistan 2001	31088468	Do you favor or oppose the United States taking direct military action in Afghanistan?
Support	Iraq 2003	31088503	Would you favor or oppose invading Iraq with United States ground troops in an attempt to remove Saddam Hussein from power?

Support	Libya	31095486	If the current NATO air and missile strikes are not effective in achieving the United States' objectives in Libya, would you favor or oppose President Obama sending U.S. ground troops into the region along with troops from other NATO countries?
Support	Syria	31087014	If the diplomatic efforts to take control of Syria's chemical weapons do not work, do you think Congress should or should not approve the use of military force against Syria?
Support	North Korea 2018	31114960	If the United States does not accomplish its goals regarding North Korea with economic and diplomatic efforts, would you favor or oppose using military action against North Korea?
Support	2003 State of the Union	31090917	Do you approve or disapprove of the United States taking military action against Iraq to try to remove Saddam Hussein from power?
Length of conflict	Gulf War	31092942	From what you have seen or heard, do you think the crisis in the Middle East could bog down and become another Vietnam situation for this country? Would you say the chances of that are very likely, or somewhat likely, or somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely that the crisis in the Middle East could become another Vietnam situation?
Length of conflict	Haiti	31093037	Do you think US troops will be able to finish their job and withdraw from Haiti in a fairly timely fashion or will US troops get bogged down in Haiti and have a difficult time withdrawing?

Length of conflict	Kosovo	31090864	Do you think the current conflict in Kosovo will be over in just a few weeks, or do you think it is more likely to continue for several months, or do you think it's likely to continue for a year or longer?
Length of conflict	2001 War on Terror	31091478	Do you think a war against one or more countries who harbor terrorists will last just a few weeks, or do you think it is more likely to continue for several months, or do you think it's more likely to continue for a year or longer?
Length of conflict	Iraq 2003	31088516	Now that the U.S. (United States) has taken military action against Iraq, how much longer do you think the war will last–less than one month, up to three months, up to six months, up to one year, or more than one year?
Length of conflict	ISIS	31091076	How concerned are you that US intervention in Iraq and Syria will lead to a long and costly involvement there–very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?
Casualties	Haiti	31093037	Do you expect casualties among the US troops occupying Haiti to be heavy, moderate, light or do you expect no casualties?
Casualties	Kosovo	31091458	As of now, in the conflict in Kosovo, how many American soldiers would you expect to lose their lives–a lot, some, or hardly any?

Casualties	2001 War on Terror	31091478	In a war against terrorists and the country or countries that harbor them, how many American soldiers would you expect to lose their lives – under one thousand, between one thousand and five thousand, or more than that?
Casualties	Iraq 2003	31088516	How many American troops do you think will be killed before the war (with Iraq) is over–up to two hundred, up to five hundred, up to one thousand, up to three thousand, or more than three thousand?
Casualties	Libya	31095485	Regarding the situation in Libya, how confident are you that each of the following will happen? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not confident at all?...The US (United States) will be able to accomplish its goals with very few or no American casualties.
Expectation of success	Gulf War	31092942	How confident are you in the capabilities of the American military forces in the Persian Gulf winning a war against Iraq–are you very confident, somewhat confident, or not very confident, or not confident at all in the capabilities of the American military forces winning a war against Iraq?
Expectation of success	Haiti	31099304	Do you think the United States will be successful or unsuccessful in restoring democratic rule to Haiti?

Expectation of success	Bosnia	31099327	In your view, will the N.A.T.O. (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) peacekeeping force–which includes 20,000 U.S. (United States) troops–be successful in establishing a long-term lasting peace in Bosnia, or don't you feel that way?
Expectation of success	War on Terror	31091478	In any war against terrorists, do you expect the United States will win or not?
Expectation of success	Iraq 2003	31088516 2003	Which comes closest to your view about the war with Iraq–you are certain that the U.S. (United States) will win, you think it is likely that the U.S. will win, but you are not certain, you think it is unlikely that the U.S. will win, but you are certain that the U.S. will not win?
Expectation of success	Iraq 2007	31096887	How likely do you think it is that (George W.) Bush's plans for more US (United States) troops (in Iraq)...will be successful in reducing the violence in Baghdad, the capital city? Would you say this is very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?
Expectation of success	Libya	31095485	(Regarding the situation in Libya, how confident are you that each of the following will happen? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not confident at all?)...The US (United States) will be able to accomplish its goals without sending in US ground troops.

Expectation of success	Syria	31103018	Do you think the US taking military action against Syria is more likely to prevent additional violence in the Middle East or provoke additional violence in the Middle East?
Expectation of success	ISIS	31095588	Regarding the situation in Iraq and Syria, how confident are you that the US effort to degrade and destroy the military ability of ISIS forces will succeed? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not confident at all?
Conflict inheritors	Somalia (Clinton)	31094736	Which one of the following do you think will be the ultimate result of our actions in Somalia? American will achieve its objectives without military conflict; America will achieve its objectives, but only with military conflict; America will have to withdraw without achieving its objectives
Conflict inheritors	Afghanistan (Obama)	31095991	Regardless of what you think about the original decision to use military force in Afghanistan, do you now believe that the United States will definitely succeed, probably succeed, probably fail, or definitely fail in achieving its goals in Afghanistan?
Conflict inheritors	Iraq (Obama)	31095447	Do you think the United States can or cannot win the war in Iraq?
Conflict inheritors	ISIS (Trump)	31095618	(How likely is it that Donald Trump will accomplish each of the following–very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not likely at all?)...Defeat ISIS (Islamic militants operating in Syria and Iraq)

Appendix C: Chapter 3 Models

Regression Tables: Support for Conflict Initiation

Table A3: Support for Conflict Initiation: Gulf War

	Dependent variable:
	Go to war with Iraq
Not strong leader	-0.751^{***}
	(0.121)
Not man of deep convictions	-0.293^{**}
	(0.136)
Female	-0.824^{***}
	(0.102)
Age	-0.003
	(0.003)
College Graduate	-0.293^{**}
	(0.118)
Income	0.106^{*}
	(0.056)
Black	-0.679^{***}
	(0.189)
Hispanic	-0.211
	(0.254)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.377
	(0.335)
Opposing partisan	-0.424^{***}
	(0.114)
Independent	-0.456^{***}
	(0.147)
Constant	1.086^{***}
	(0.231)
Observations	1,798
Log Likelihood	$-1,132.639$
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,289.278
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A4: Support for Conflict Initiation: Haiti

	Dependent variable:
	Send US troops to Haiti
Gets things done: Doesn't apply	0.151
	(0.223)
Stands up for beliefs: Doesn't apply	-0.433^{*}
	(0.230)
Female	-0.527^{***}
	(0.203)
Age	-0.011^{*}
	(0.006)
College Graduate	-0.203
	(0.224)
Income	0.137^{*}
	(0.079)
Black	0.365
	(0.416)
Hispanic	0.184
	(0.455)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.601
	(0.774)
Opposing partisan	-0.690^{***}
	(0.229)
Independent	-0.299
	(0.435)
Constant	0.569
	(0.479)
Observations	440
Log Likelihood	-288.532
Akaike Inf. Crit.	601.064
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A5: Support for Conflict Initiation: Iraq 1994

	Dependent variable:
	Launch airstrike
Keeps word: Poor or mixed	−0.469
	(0.296)
Able to handle a crisis: Poor or mixed	−0.796***
	(0.258)
Female	−0.413**
	(0.206)
Age	−0.052
	(0.073)
College Graduate	−0.477**
	(0.221)
Income	−0.019
	(0.062)
Black	−0.061
	(0.346)
Hispanic	−0.390
	(0.516)
Other race or ethnicity	0.394
	(0.791)
Opposing partisan	0.697***
	(0.262)
Independent	0.424
	(0.292)
Constant	2.432***
	(0.460)
Observations	605
Log Likelihood	−306.058
Akaike Inf. Crit.	636.116
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A6: Support for Conflict Initiation: Bosnia

	Dependent variable:
	Favor US and allies conducting air strikes
Strong leader: Poor or mixed	0.006
	(0.287)
Truthful: Poor or mixed	0.086
	(0.294)
Female	-0.824^{***}
	(0.244)
Age	0.036
	(0.086)
College Graduate	0.089
	(0.267)
Income	0.027
	(0.067)
Black	-0.179
	(0.380)
Hispanic	0.058
	(0.559)
Other race or ethnicity	-1.091^{*}
	(0.610)
Opposing partisan	-0.160
	(0.310)
Independent	-0.320
	(0.334)
Constant	1.197^{**}
	(0.502)
Observations	370
Log Likelihood	-215.392
Akaike Inf. Crit.	454.784
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A7: Support for Conflict Initiation: Afghanistan & Sudan 1998

	Dependent variable:
	Approve of attacks against terrorist facilities
Honest: Doesn't apply	-0.909^{***}
	(0.350)
Gets things done: Doesn't apply	-0.660^{**}
	(0.280)
Female	-0.707^{***}
	(0.252)
Age	0.010
	(0.007)
College Graduate	-0.040
	(0.281)
Income	0.237^{**}
	(0.103)
Black	-0.563
	(0.463)
Hispanic	-0.407
	(0.464)
Other race or ethnicity	-1.530^{***}
	(0.547)
Opposing partisan	-0.161
	(0.280)
Independent	-0.474
	(0.522)
Constant	1.940^{***}
	(0.565)
Observations	546
Log Likelihood	-230.712
Akaike Inf. Crit.	485.423
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A8: Support for Conflict Initiation: Iraq 1998

	Dependent variable:
	Should the US use military force
Effective and gets things done: Mixed or poor	0.186
	(0.183)
Consistent, stands up for beliefs: Mixed or poor	-0.536^{***}
	(0.181)
Female	-0.411^{***}
	(0.156)
Age	-0.077^{***}
	(0.027)
College Graduate	-0.575^{***}
	(0.171)
Income	0.023
	(0.042)
Black	-0.196
	(0.259)
Hispanic	0.214
	(0.329)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.688
	(0.498)
Opposing partisan	0.375^{*}
	(0.197)
Independent	0.263
	(0.205)
Constant	0.854^{***}
	(0.319)
Observations	737
Log Likelihood	-488.725
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,001.450
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A9: Support for Conflict Initiation: Kosovo

	Dependent variable:
	Favor US and NATO peacekeeping forces
Does not trust as CIC	-1.290^{***}
	(0.180)
Female	0.106
	(0.158)
Age	-0.110^{***}
	(0.042)
College Graduate	0.367^{**}
	(0.173)
Income	0.012
	(0.057)
Black	-0.168
	(0.322)
Hispanic	-0.110
	(0.305)
Other race or ethnicity	0.170
	(0.376)
Opposing partisan	-0.199
	(0.195)
Independent	0.003
	(0.270)
Constant	1.558^{***}
	(0.305)
Observations	825
Log Likelihood	-488.532
Akaike Inf. Crit.	999.064
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A10: Support for Conflict Initiation: Afghanistan 2001

	Dependent variable:
	Favor direct military action
Understands complex issues: Does not apply	-0.776^{**}
	(0.373)
Sincere: Does not apply	-0.685^{*}
	(0.399)
Female	-0.483
	(0.322)
Age	0.002
	(0.010)
College Graduate	-0.749^{**}
	(0.374)
Income	0.286^{**}
	(0.131)
Black	0.099
	(0.583)
Hispanic	0.542
	(0.727)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.434
	(0.701)
Opposing partisan	-0.929^{**}
	(0.393)
Independent	-0.629
	(0.588)
Constant	2.089^{***}
	(0.691)
Observations	360
Log Likelihood	-138.623
Akaike Inf. Crit.	301.246
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A11: Support for Conflict Initiation: Iraq 2003

	Dependent variable:
	Favor invading with US ground troops
Strong leader: Does not apply	-0.625^{**}
	(0.310)
Honest: Does not apply	-0.999^{***}
	(0.302)
Female	-0.061
	(0.233)
Age	-0.166
	(0.130)
College Graduate	-0.895^{***}
	(0.254)
Income	-0.055
	(0.091)
Black	0.121
	(0.445)
Hispanic	-0.263
	(0.800)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.351
	(0.554)
Opposing partisan	-0.942^{***}
	(0.264)
Independent	-1.612^{***}
	(0.449)
Constant	2.295^{***}
	(0.559)
Observations	404
Log Likelihood	-229.799
Akaike Inf. Crit.	483.597
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A12: Support for Conflict Initiation: Libya

	Dependent variable:
	Favor sending US ground troops
Strong leader: does not apply	-0.763^{***}
	(0.234)
Female	-0.147
	(0.198)
Age	-0.065^{*}
	(0.033)
College Graduate	-0.127
	(0.222)
Income	-0.147^{**}
	(0.074)
Black	-0.537
	(0.450)
Hispanic	-0.379
	(0.448)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.969^{**}
	(0.492)
Opposing partisan	0.458^{*}
	(0.240)
Independent	0.074
	(0.441)
Constant	0.133
	(0.432)
Observations	669
Log Likelihood	-333.517
Akaike Inf. Crit.	689.034
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A13: Support for Conflict Initiation: Syria

	Dependent variable:
	Should Congress approve military force
Not strong leader	-0.609^{***}
	(0.208)
Does not stick with principles	-0.718^{***}
	(0.196)
Female	-0.418^{***}
	(0.158)
Age	0.075
	(0.063)
College Graduate	-0.191
	(0.183)
Income	0.034
	(0.052)
Black	1.024^{***}
	(0.305)
Hispanic	0.613^{**}
	(0.284)
Other race or ethnicity	0.533
	(0.346)
Opposing partisan	-0.188
	(0.205)
Independent	-0.717^{**}
	(0.310)
Constant	0.248
	(0.337)
Observations	780
Log Likelihood	-478.777
Akaike Inf. Crit.	981.554
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A14: Support for Conflict Initiation: Hypothetical North Korea 2018

	Dependent variable:
	Favor military action
Effective manager: Does not apply to Trump	-0.647^{**}
	(0.289)
Honest: Does not apply to Trump	-0.652^{**}
	(0.283)
Female	0.308^{*}
	(0.183)
Age	-0.092^{*}
	(0.054)
College Graduate	-0.495^{**}
	(0.198)
Income	0.033
	(0.047)
Black	-0.290
	(0.329)
Hispanic	0.873^{***}
	(0.321)
Other race or ethnicity	0.276
	(0.295)
Opposing partisan	-1.190^{***}
	(0.263)
Independent	-0.648
	(0.420)
Constant	1.516^{***}
	(0.360)
Observations	725
Log Likelihood	-401.888
Akaike Inf. Crit.	827.776
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A15: Presidential Preferences vs. Respondent Support

Conflict	**Action ultimately taken**	**President preferences**	**Respondent asked to support**
Haiti (neither signfifcant)	Peacekeeping occupation	Ousting dictators by force if needed	Sending troops along with other countries if diplomatic or economic measures fail
Bosnia (neither signfifcant)	NATO airstrikes	Airstrikes	US and allies conducting air strikes
Iraq 1994 (Trust not significant)	Troop deployment	Deter invasion of Kuwait	US launch air strike on Iraq
Iraq 1998 (Competence not significant)	Four day bombing campaign	Bombing	Military force rather than continued reliance on negotaitions
Afghanistan (Trust not significant)	Ground war	Invasion	Direct military action by US in Afghanistan
Gulf War	Bombardment, then ground war	Expel Iraq from Kuwait	Go to war if UN deadline not met
Afghanistan & Sudan 1998	Cruise missile strikes on terrorist facilities	Strike	Military attacks on terror facilities
Kosovo	NATO aerial bombing campaign	Stop atrocities, restore peace, "I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo to fight a war"	Peacekeeping forces to enforce potential peace agreement
Iraq 2003	Ground war	Invasion	Invading Iraq with US ground troops
Libya	NATO-led airstrikes, blockade, no fly zone	Work with allies to stop attacks on civilians, explicitly not deploying ground troops	If current strikes not effective, ground troops in tandem with NATO
Syria	Diplomatic	Congressional authorization for punitive strikes	Use of military force if diplomacy fails
North Korea	Hypothetical only	Unclear	Military action if goals not accomplished with economic or diplomatic

Endogeneity Check - Support for Conflict Initiation

Table A16: Endogeneity Check: Gulf War

	Dependent variable:
	Go to war with Iraq
Not strong leader	-0.785^{***}
	(0.123)
Not man of deep convictions	-0.327^{**}
	(0.138)
Congressional disapproval	0.090^{***}
	(0.020)
Independent	-0.068
	(0.147)
Republican	0.359^{***}
	(0.116)
Income	0.086
	(0.057)
Age	-0.003
	(0.003)
Male	0.787^{***}
	(0.104)
College graduate	-0.321^{***}
	(0.119)
Black	-0.634^{***}
	(0.190)
Hispanic	-0.139
	(0.256)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.270
	(0.339)
Constant	-0.787^{***}
	(0.266)
Observations	1,780
Log Likelihood	$-1{,}112.399$
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,250.797
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A17: Endogeneity Check: Iraq 1994

	Dependent variable:
	Launch air strike
Keeps word: Poor or mixed	−0.450
	(0.320)
Ability to handle crisis: Poor or mixed	−0.787***
	(0.278)
Congress: Disapprove	0.120
	(0.252)
Age	−0.060
	(0.079)
Income	−0.042
	(0.066)
Male	0.382*
	(0.220)
College graduate	−0.437*
	(0.234)
Black	0.097
	(0.371)
Hispanic	−0.564
	(0.573)
Other race or ethnicity	0.994
	(1.061)
Independent	0.420
	(0.316)
Republican	0.652**
	(0.274)
Constant	2.064***
	(0.457)
Observations	549
Log Likelihood	−274.801
Akaike Inf. Crit.	575.602
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A18: Endogeneity Check: North Korea

	Dependent variable:
	Favor military action
Effective manager: Does not apply to Trump	-0.531^{*}
	(0.294)
Honest: Does not apply to Trump	-0.600^{**}
	(0.290)
Congress: Disapprove	-0.171
	(0.252)
Female	0.260
	(0.187)
College graduate	-0.491^{**}
	(0.203)
Income	0.031
	(0.049)
Age	-0.092
	(0.057)
Black	-0.257
	(0.341)
Hispanic	0.931^{***}
	(0.332)
Other race or ethnicity	0.299
	(0.297)
Independent	0.666
	(0.432)
Republican	1.285^{***}
	(0.270)
Constant	0.336
	(0.489)
Observations	688
Log Likelihood	-382.200
Akaike Inf. Crit.	790.399
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A19: Endogeneity Check: ANES General Use of Force

	DV: Willingness to use force
Not strong leadership	-0.435^{***}
	(0.065)
Not moral	-0.332^{***}
	(0.075)
Feeling thermometer for Congress	0.011^{***}
	(0.002)
Independent	0.060
	(0.104)
Republican	0.409^{***}
	(0.067)
Age	-0.001
	(0.002)
Female	-0.180^{***}
	(0.060)
Black	0.078
	(0.101)
Hispanic	0.258^{**}
	(0.110)
Other race or ethnicity	0.591^{***}
	(0.208)
College graduate	-0.352^{***}
	(0.073)
Income: 34 to 67 percentile	0.066
	(0.075)
Income: 68 to 95 percentile	0.191^{**}
	(0.083)
Income: 96 to 100 percentile	-0.017
	(0.143)
Study year: 1996	0.165^{**}
	(0.078)
Study year: 1998	0.549^{***}
	(0.090)
Never or not very willing|Somewhat willing	-1.000^{***}
	(0.146)
Somewhat willing|Very or extremely willing	1.656^{***}
	(0.148)
Observations	4,349

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Support Analysis with Recoded Independents

Table A20: Recoded Independents: Gulf War

	Dependent variable:
	Go to war with Iraq
Not strong leader	-0.745^{***}
	(0.120)
Not man of deep convictions	-0.275^{**}
	(0.134)
Female	-0.803^{***}
	(0.102)
Age	-0.003
	(0.003)
College Graduate	-0.321^{***}
	(0.118)
Income	0.104^{*}
	(0.056)
Black	-0.674^{***}
	(0.188)
Hispanic	-0.237
	(0.243)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.144
	(0.345)
Opposing partisan	-0.408^{***}
	(0.137)
Independent	-0.491^{***}
	(0.129)
Constant	1.128^{***}
	(0.247)
Observations	1,806
Log Likelihood	$-1,146.227$
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,316.455
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A21: Recoded Independents: Haiti

	Dependent variable:
	Send US troops to Haiti
Gets things done: Doesn't apply	0.110
	(0.222)
Stands up for beliefs: Doesn't apply	−0.499**
	(0.231)
Female	−0.567***
	(0.204)
Age	−0.011*
	(0.006)
College Graduate	−0.199
	(0.224)
Income	0.124
	(0.079)
Black	0.325
	(0.419)
Hispanic	0.072
	(0.459)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.542
	(0.775)
Opposing partisan	−0.655**
	(0.272)
Independent	−0.538**
	(0.266)
Constant	0.753
	(0.503)
Observations	438
Log Likelihood	−288.263
Akaike Inf. Crit.	600.526
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A22: Recoded Independents: Iraq 1994

	Dependent variable:
	Launch airstrikes
Keeps word: Poor or mixed	−0.374
	(0.294)
Able to handle a crisis: Poor or mixed	−0.676***
	(0.256)
Female	−0.443**
	(0.206)
Age	−0.051
	(0.072)
College Graduate	−0.490**
	(0.220)
Income	−0.012
	(0.062)
Black	−0.149
	(0.344)
Hispanic	−0.468
	(0.517)
Other race or ethnicity	0.447
	(0.789)
Opposing partisan	0.380
	(0.299)
Independent	0.189
	(0.260)
Constant	2.452***
	(0.469)
Observations	605
Log Likelihood	−308.850
Akaike Inf. Crit.	641.699
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A23: Recoded Independents: Bosnia

	Dependent variable:
	Favor US and allies conducting airstrikes
Not strong leader	−0.019
	(0.287)
Not truthful	0.068
	(0.291)
Female	−0.813***
	(0.245)
Age	0.034
	(0.086)
College Graduate	0.097
	(0.267)
Income	0.019
	(0.067)
Black	−0.159
	(0.378)
Hispanic	0.061
	(0.562)
Other race or ethnicity	−1.107*
	(0.611)
Opposing partisan	−0.056
	(0.353)
Independent	−0.177
	(0.294)
Constant	1.213**
	(0.513)
Observations	370
Log Likelihood	−215.648
Akaike Inf. Crit.	455.297
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A24: Recoded Independents: Afghanistan & Sudan 1998

	Dependent variable:
	Approve of attacks against terrorist facilities
Honest: Doesn't apply	-0.899^{***}
	(0.347)
Gets things done: Doesn't apply	-0.671^{**}
	(0.278)
Female	-0.742^{***}
	(0.253)
Age	0.008
	(0.008)
College Graduate	-0.029
	(0.282)
Income	0.225^{**}
	(0.103)
Black	-0.643
	(0.468)
Hispanic	-0.413
	(0.461)
Other race or ethnicity	-1.488^{***}
	(0.548)
Opposing partisan	-0.211
	(0.346)
Independent	-0.523^{*}
	(0.318)
Constant	2.225^{***}
	(0.598)
Observations	544
Log Likelihood	-229.565
Akaike Inf. Crit.	483.129
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A25: Recoded Independents: Iraq 1998

	Dependent variable:
	Should the US use military force
Effective and gets things done: Mixed or poor	0.227
	(0.181)
Consistent, stands up for beliefs: Mixed or poor	-0.539^{***}
	(0.182)
Female	-0.417^{***}
	(0.156)
Age	-0.079^{***}
	(0.027)
College Graduate	-0.581^{***}
	(0.171)
Income	0.026
	(0.041)
Black	-0.212
	(0.259)
Hispanic	0.185
	(0.329)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.758
	(0.496)
Opposing partisan	0.243
	(0.221)
Independent	0.295
	(0.190)
Constant	0.842^{***}
	(0.322)
Observations	737
Log Likelihood	-489.397
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,002.795
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A26: Recoded Independents: Kosovo

	Dependent variable:
	Favor US and NATO peacekeeping forces
Do not trust as CIC	-1.339^{***}
	(0.172)
Female	0.107
	(0.158)
Age	-0.109^{***}
	(0.042)
College Graduate	0.376^{**}
	(0.172)
Income	0.011
	(0.057)
Black	-0.161
	(0.323)
Hispanic	-0.093
	(0.306)
Other race or ethnicity	0.169
	(0.375)
Opposing partisan	-0.139
	(0.227)
Independent	-0.110
	(0.199)
Constant	1.569^{***}
	(0.319)
Observations	825
Log Likelihood	-488.931
Akaike Inf. Crit.	999.861
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A27: Recoded Independents: Afghanistan 2001

	Dependent variable:
	Favor direct military action
Understands complex issues: Does not apply	-0.883^{**}
	(0.369)
Sincere: Does not apply	-0.792^{**}
	(0.394)
Female	-0.484
	(0.321)
Age	0.002
	(0.010)
College Graduate	-0.795^{**}
	(0.371)
Income	0.297^{**}
	(0.129)
Black	-0.035
	(0.578)
Hispanic	0.572
	(0.734)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.469
	(0.696)
Opposing partisan	-0.754^{*}
	(0.456)
Independent	-0.527
	(0.428)
Constant	2.079^{***}
	(0.719)
Observations	360
Log Likelihood	-140.036
Akaike Inf. Crit.	304.071
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A28: Recoded Independents: Iraq 2003

	Dependent variable:
	Favor invading with US ground troops
Strong leader: Does not apply	-0.771^{**}
	(0.303)
Honest: Does not apply	-0.963^{***}
	(0.296)
Female	-0.083
	(0.230)
Age	-0.124
	(0.130)
College Graduate	-0.829^{***}
	(0.249)
Income	-0.057
	(0.090)
Black	0.227
	(0.435)
Hispanic	0.017
	(0.812)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.145
	(0.550)
Opposing partisan	-1.070^{***}
	(0.319)
Independent	-0.685^{**}
	(0.290)
Constant	2.210^{***}
	(0.566)
Observations	404
Log Likelihood	-234.074
Akaike Inf. Crit.	492.148
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A29: Recoded Independents: Libya

	Dependent variable:
	Favor sending US ground troops
Strong leader: does not apply	-0.738^{***}
	(0.224)
Female	-0.179
	(0.198)
Age	-0.066^{**}
	(0.033)
College Graduate	-0.157
	(0.221)
Income	-0.141^{*}
	(0.073)
Black	-0.491
	(0.457)
Hispanic	-0.359
	(0.448)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.909^{*}
	(0.492)
Opposing partisan	0.636^{**}
	(0.282)
Independent	0.190
	(0.253)
Constant	0.094
	(0.451)
Observations	669
Log Likelihood	-332.627
Akaike Inf. Crit.	687.253
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A30: Recoded Independents: Syria

	Dependent variable:
	Should Congress approve military force
Not strong leader	-0.693^{***}
	(0.202)
Does not stick with principles	-0.734^{***}
	(0.197)
Female	-0.458^{***}
	(0.162)
Age	0.072
	(0.064)
College Graduate	-0.194
	(0.185)
Income	0.026
	(0.052)
Black	0.875^{***}
	(0.296)
Hispanic	0.648^{**}
	(0.290)
Other race or ethnicity	0.542
	(0.353)
Opposing partisan	-0.117
	(0.246)
Independent	-0.348^{*}
	(0.196)
Constant	0.394
	(0.357)
Observations	776
Log Likelihood	-477.239
Akaike Inf. Crit.	978.478
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A31: Recoded Independents: Hypothetical North Korea 2018

	Dependent variable:
	Favor military action
Effective manager: Does not apply to Trump	-0.929^{***}
	(0.274)
Honest: Does not apply to Trump	-0.902^{***}
	(0.270)
Female	0.248
	(0.179)
Age	-0.100^{*}
	(0.054)
College Graduate	-0.520^{***}
	(0.195)
Income	0.046
	(0.046)
Black	-0.314
	(0.329)
Hispanic	0.811^{***}
	(0.313)
Other race or ethnicity	0.208
	(0.289)
Opposing partisan	-0.800^{***}
	(0.292)
Independent	-0.479^{**}
	(0.238)
Constant	1.688^{***}
	(0.373)
Observations	725
Log Likelihood	-408.246
Akaike Inf. Crit.	840.491
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Credibility * Copartisan Interactions

Table A32: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Gulf War

	DV: Go to war with Iraq	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not strong leader	−0.464**	−0.580**
	(0.208)	(0.264)
Opposing partisan	−0.366***	−0.322**
	(0.138)	(0.164)
Independent	−0.351**	−0.495***
	(0.175)	(0.150)
Not deep convictions	−0.450*	−0.352
	(0.236)	(0.298)
Female	−0.828***	−0.804***
	(0.103)	(0.102)
Age	−0.003	−0.003
	(0.003)	(0.003)
College Graduate	−0.284**	−0.313***
	(0.119)	(0.118)
Income	0.108*	0.107*
	(0.056)	(0.056)
Black	−0.682***	−0.671***
	(0.190)	(0.189)
Hispanic	−0.204	−0.239
	(0.255)	(0.244)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.374	−0.146
	(0.336)	(0.346)
Not strong leader: Opposing partisan	−0.443	−0.316
	(0.272)	(0.334)
Not strong leader: Independent	−0.429	−0.120
	(0.365)	(0.321)
Not deep convictions: Opposing partisan	0.313	0.050
	(0.303)	(0.373)
Not deep convictions: Independent	0.007	0.139
	(0.404)	(0.358)
Constant	1.035***	1.093***
	(0.236)	(0.252)
Observations	1,798	1,806

Table A33: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Haiti

	Dependent variable:	
	Send US troops to Haiti	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Does not get things done	0.557	0.703*
	(0.340)	(0.425)
Opposing partisan	−0.299	−0.231
	(0.351)	(0.400)
Independent	−0.111	−0.199
	(0.703)	(0.381)
Does not stand up for beliefs	−0.500	−0.453
	(0.431)	(0.542)
Female	−0.536***	−0.562***
	(0.204)	(0.206)
Age	−0.010*	−0.011*
	(0.006)	(0.006)
College Graduate	−0.174	−0.177
	(0.227)	(0.227)
Income	0.141*	0.122
	(0.080)	(0.079)
Black	0.416	0.424
	(0.424)	(0.428)
Hispanic	0.249	0.136
	(0.460)	(0.462)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.649	−0.614
	(0.801)	(0.778)
Does not get things done: Opposing partisan	−0.686	−0.991*
	(0.468)	(0.563)
Does not get things done: Independent	−0.953	−0.681
	(0.886)	(0.558)
Does not stand up for beliefs: Opposing partisan	−0.005	0.108
	(0.519)	(0.641)
Does not stand up for beliefs: Independent	0.831	−0.224
	(0.965)	(0.663)
Constant	0.381	0.508
	(0.495)	(0.523)
Observations	440	438
Log Likelihood	−286.659	−286.332
Akaike Inf. Crit.	605.318	604.665
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table A34: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Iraq 1994

	Dependent variable:	
	Launch airstrike	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Does not keep word	−0.772**	−0.870**
	(0.364)	(0.414)
Opposing partisan	−1.134	−1.221
	(0.699)	(0.832)
Independent	0.200	0.051
	(0.675)	(0.523)
Not able to handle crisis	−0.891***	−0.345
	(0.337)	(0.394)
Female	−0.423**	−0.452**
	(0.208)	(0.208)
Age	−0.061	−0.054
	(0.073)	(0.073)
College Graduate	−0.461**	−0.467**
	(0.223)	(0.221)
Income	−0.020	−0.013
	(0.062)	(0.062)
Black	−0.010	−0.116
	(0.350)	(0.347)
Hispanic	−0.317	−0.387
	(0.521)	(0.518)
Other race or ethnicity	0.378	0.381
	(0.796)	(0.799)
Does not keep word: Opposing partisan	1.762**	2.134**
	(0.839)	(1.027)
Does not keep word: Independent	0.507	0.874
	(0.742)	(0.628)
Not able to handle crisis: Opposing partisan	0.325	−0.501
	(0.633)	(0.768)
Not able to handle crisis: Independent	−0.145	−0.804
	(0.671)	(0.590)
Constant	2.695***	2.651***
	(0.495)	(0.517)
Observations	605	605
Log Likelihood	−302.786	−305.696
Akaike Inf. Crit.	637.572	643.393
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table A35: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Bosnia

	Dependent variable:	
	Favore US and allies conducting airstrikes	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not strong leader	−0.192	−0.271
	(0.392)	(0.442)
Opposing partisan	0.057	−0.334
	(0.844)	(1.052)
Independent	−0.822	−0.505
	(0.600)	(0.510)
Not truthful	0.124	0.096
	(0.393)	(0.442)
Female	−0.855***	−0.830***
	(0.247)	(0.247)
Age	0.043	0.048
	(0.086)	(0.086)
College Graduate	0.128	0.110
	(0.269)	(0.269)
Income	0.007	0.008
	(0.069)	(0.068)
Black	−0.216	−0.153
	(0.384)	(0.380)
Hispanic	0.010	0.028
	(0.563)	(0.566)
Other race or ethnicity	−1.155*	−1.121*
	(0.617)	(0.612)
Not strong leader: Opposing partisan	0.643	1.748
	(0.744)	(1.410)
Not strong leader: Independent	0.163	0.333
	(0.693)	(0.592)
Not truthful: Opposing partisan	−0.795	−1.377
	(0.801)	(1.234)
Not truthful: Independent	0.605	0.216
	(0.730)	(0.610)
Constant	1.344**	1.320**
	(0.544)	(0.551)
Observations	370	370
Log Likelihood	−213.926	−214.239
Akaike Inf. Crit.	459.853	460.477
Note:	184	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A36: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Afghanistan & Sudan 1998

	Dependent variable:	
	Approve of attacks against terrorist facilities	
Not honest	−1.433***	−1.803***
	(0.445)	(0.566)
Opposing partisan	−1.780***	−2.243***
	(0.616)	(0.770)
Independent	−1.455	−1.325**
	(1.309)	(0.641)
Doesn't get things done	−1.170**	−0.917
	(0.531)	(0.762)
Female	−0.758***	−0.765***
	(0.257)	(0.257)
Age	0.009	0.008
	(0.008)	(0.008)
College Graduate	−0.095	−0.070
	(0.286)	(0.286)
Income	0.245**	0.240**
	(0.105)	(0.104)
Black	−0.638	−0.688
	(0.478)	(0.482)
Hispanic	−0.531	−0.455
	(0.471)	(0.467)
Other race or ethnicity	−1.558***	−1.601***
	(0.559)	(0.566)
Not honest: Opposing partisan	1.774**	2.422***
	(0.696)	(0.877)
Not honest: Independent	0.949	1.146
	(1.383)	(0.743)
Doesn't get things done: Opposing partisan	0.554	0.208
	(0.629)	(0.872)
Doesn't get things done: Independent	0.953	0.126
	(1.115)	(0.866)
Constant	2.433***	2.878***
	(0.620)	(0.710)
Observations	546	544
Log Likelihood	−226.436	−225.445
Akaike Inf. Crit.	484.872	482.890

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A37: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Iraq 1998

	Dependent variable:	
	Should the US use military force	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not effective	−0.230	−0.464
	(0.303)	(0.367)
Opposing partisan	0.210	0.199
	(0.364)	(0.395)
Independent	0.093	0.256
	(0.357)	(0.299)
Not consistent	−0.441*	−0.271
	(0.253)	(0.287)
Female	−0.397**	−0.396**
	(0.157)	(0.157)
Age	−0.076***	−0.077***
	(0.028)	(0.028)
College Graduate	−0.551***	−0.559***
	(0.172)	(0.172)
Income	0.016	0.019
	(0.042)	(0.042)
Black	−0.215	−0.239
	(0.261)	(0.261)
Hispanic	0.239	0.170
	(0.330)	(0.329)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.630	−0.677
	(0.501)	(0.497)
Not effective: Opposing partisan	0.602	0.644
	(0.433)	(0.505)
Not effective: Independent	0.724	1.086**
	(0.461)	(0.451)
Not consistent: Opposing partisan	−0.108	−0.190
	(0.441)	(0.486)
Not consistent: Independent	−0.166	−0.533
	(0.458)	(0.413)
Constant	0.910***	0.868**
	(0.332)	(0.340)
Observations	737	737
Log Likelihood	−487.143	−486.336
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,006.286	1,004.672

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A38: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Kosovo

	Dependent variable:	
	Favor US and NATO peacekeeping forces	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Do not trust as CIC	-1.139^{***}	-1.060^{***}
	(0.285)	(0.355)
Opposing partisan	-0.277	-0.134
	(0.265)	(0.323)
Independent	0.544	0.041
	(0.409)	(0.244)
Female	0.101	0.105
	(0.159)	(0.158)
Age	-0.109^{***}	-0.108^{***}
	(0.042)	(0.042)
College Graduate	0.372^{**}	0.376^{**}
	(0.174)	(0.173)
Income	0.018	0.009
	(0.057)	(0.057)
Black	-0.138	-0.146
	(0.323)	(0.323)
Hispanic	-0.124	-0.111
	(0.307)	(0.306)
Other race or ethnicity	0.168	0.196
	(0.375)	(0.378)
Do not trust as CIC: Opposing partisan	-0.003	-0.208
	(0.387)	(0.479)
Do not trust as CIC: Independent	-1.127^{*}	-0.454
	(0.591)	(0.432)
Constant	1.498^{***}	1.515^{***}
	(0.311)	(0.325)
Observations	825	825
Log Likelihood	-486.315	-488.341
Akaike Inf. Crit.	998.630	1,002.682
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A39: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Afghanistan 2001

	Dependent variable:	
	Favor direct military action	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not sincere	14.345	14.540
	(1,060.019)	(1,021.974)
Opposing partisan	−0.800*	−0.311
	(0.461)	(0.622)
Independent	−0.819	−0.917*
	(0.719)	(0.473)
Does not understand complex issues	−0.859	−1.999**
	(0.839)	(0.939)
Female	−0.437	−0.389
	(0.328)	(0.327)
Age	0.001	0.002
	(0.010)	(0.010)
College Graduate	−0.748**	−0.830**
	(0.379)	(0.378)
Income	0.257*	0.319**
	(0.133)	(0.132)
Black	0.074	−0.256
	(0.586)	(0.596)
Hispanic	0.480	0.781
	(0.733)	(0.765)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.670	−0.651
	(0.764)	(0.728)
Not sincere: Opposing partisan	−14.999	−15.904
	(1,060.019)	(1,021.975)
Not sincere: Independent	−31.281	−15.027
	(1,489.751)	(1,021.975)
Does not understand: Opposing partisan	−0.042	0.713
	(0.957)	(1.122)
Does not understand: Independent	15.880	1.645
	(1,046.765)	(1.089)
Constant	2.183***	2.084***
	(0.715)	(0.724)
Observations	360	360
Log Likelihood	−135.877	−136.963
Akaike Inf. Crit.	303.754	305.925

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A40: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Iraq 2003

	Dependent variable:	
	Favor invading with US ground troops	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not strong leader	−0.902	0.043
	(0.758)	(1.287)
Opposing partisan	−1.058***	−1.369***
	(0.299)	(0.366)
Independent	−1.816***	−0.633**
	(0.524)	(0.322)
Not honest	−1.366**	−3.014**
	(0.605)	(1.345)
Female	−0.053	−0.088
	(0.234)	(0.236)
Age	−0.173	−0.139
	(0.131)	(0.131)
College Graduate	−0.876***	−0.861***
	(0.258)	(0.254)
Income	−0.063	−0.057
	(0.092)	(0.091)
Black	0.126	0.164
	(0.447)	(0.439)
Hispanic	−0.170	−0.059
	(0.824)	(0.827)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.296	−0.186
	(0.557)	(0.548)
Not strong leader: Opposing partisan	0.196	−0.383
	(0.835)	(1.356)
Not strong leader: Independent	1.279	−1.336
	(1.274)	(1.361)
Not honest: Opposing partisan	0.554	2.285
	(0.696)	(1.403)
Not honest: Independent	−0.327	2.143
	(1.432)	(1.414)
Constant	2.382***	2.316***
	(0.570)	(0.584)
Observations	404	404
Log Likelihood	−228.768	−231.028
Akaike Inf. Crit.	489.536	494.057

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A41: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Libya

	Dependent variable:	
	Favor sending US ground troops	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not strong leader	−1.512***	−1.245*
	(0.495)	(0.637)
Opposing partisan	0.087	0.440
	(0.313)	(0.374)
Independent	−0.001	0.133
	(0.562)	(0.290)
Female	−0.153	−0.182
	(0.198)	(0.198)
Age	−0.067**	−0.066**
	(0.033)	(0.033)
College Graduate	−0.164	−0.167
	(0.222)	(0.222)
Income	−0.151**	−0.142*
	(0.074)	(0.073)
Black	−0.594	−0.522
	(0.451)	(0.458)
Hispanic	−0.373	−0.349
	(0.450)	(0.449)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.952*	−0.899*
	(0.492)	(0.493)
Not strong leader: Opposing partisan	1.130*	0.714
	(0.586)	(0.743)
Not strong leader: Independent	0.678	0.511
	(0.965)	(0.708)
Constant	0.284	0.165
	(0.440)	(0.456)
Observations	669	669
Log Likelihood	−331.415	−332.125
Akaike Inf. Crit.	688.830	690.250
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table A42: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: Syria

	Dependent variable:	
	Should Congress approve military force	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Not strong leader	−0.478	−0.445
	(0.301)	(0.398)
Opposing partisan	−0.398	−0.401
	(0.308)	(0.408)
Independent	−0.503	−0.291
	(0.447)	(0.237)
Does not stick with principles	−1.096***	−1.170**
	(0.346)	(0.484)
Female	−0.421***	−0.450***
	(0.159)	(0.162)
Age	0.067	0.066
	(0.064)	(0.064)
College Graduate	−0.219	−0.211
	(0.184)	(0.186)
Income	0.037	0.031
	(0.052)	(0.053)
Black	1.022***	0.865***
	(0.307)	(0.297)
Hispanic	0.642**	0.660**
	(0.287)	(0.293)
Other race or ethnicity	0.569	0.567
	(0.353)	(0.357)
Not strong leader: Opposing partisan	−0.064	0.096
	(0.434)	(0.585)
Not strong leader: Independent	−0.620	−0.479
	(0.730)	(0.477)
Doesn't stick with principles: Opposing partisan	0.597	0.433
	(0.430)	(0.596)
Doesn't stick with principles: Independent	0.413	0.594
	(0.768)	(0.555)
Constant	0.303	0.406
	(0.347)	(0.366)
Observations	780	776
Log Likelihood	−477.351	−476.011
Akaike Inf. Crit.	986.702	984.023

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A43: Credibility*Copartisan Interaction: North Korea 2018

	Dependent variable:	
	Favor military action	
	Ind - no lean	Ind - with lean
Effective manager: Does not apply to Trump	−0.648*	−1.025**
	(0.376)	(0.513)
Opposing partisan	−1.109*	−1.340*
	(0.592)	(0.717)
Independent	−0.881	−0.481
	(0.701)	(0.307)
Honest: Does not apply to Trump	−0.672*	−0.934**
	(0.346)	(0.457)
Female	0.305*	0.247
	(0.183)	(0.179)
Age	−0.095*	−0.101*
	(0.055)	(0.055)
College Graduate	−0.484**	−0.523***
	(0.199)	(0.195)
Income	0.033	0.043
	(0.047)	(0.046)
Black	−0.286	−0.311
	(0.330)	(0.328)
Hispanic	0.865***	0.806**
	(0.322)	(0.313)
Other race or ethnicity	0.283	0.223
	(0.296)	(0.291)
Not effective manager: Opposing partisan	−0.245	0.473
	(0.634)	(0.869)
Not effective manager: Independent	0.829	0.056
	(1.034)	(0.633)
Not honest: Opposing partisan	0.169	0.206
	(0.681)	(0.814)
Not honest: Independent	−0.389	0.029
	(1.055)	(0.596)
Constant	1.530***	1.731***
	(0.368)	(0.394)
Observations	725	725
Log Likelihood	−401.379	−407.890
Akaike Inf. Crit.	834.759	847.781
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

SOTU and ANES analyses

Table A44: 2003 State of the Union Model - Within Subject Analysis

	Dependent variable: Opinion change	
	Disapprove initially	Approve initially
	(1)	(2)
Strong leader: No	-0.826**	1.341***
	(0.325)	(0.513)
Income	-0.100	-0.111
	(0.138)	(0.223)
College graduate	-0.792**	1.239**
	(0.343)	(0.567)
Female	-0.145	1.017*
	(0.300)	(0.526)
Age	0.004	0.023
	(0.009)	(0.017)
Independent	-0.777**	-0.335
	(0.355)	(0.538)
Republican	0.695	-2.936***
	(0.423)	(1.090)
White	0.148	-0.878
	(0.395)	(0.609)
Constant	0.555	-3.558***
	(0.765)	(1.269)
Observations	220	398
Akaike Inf. Crit.	286.573	142.177
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

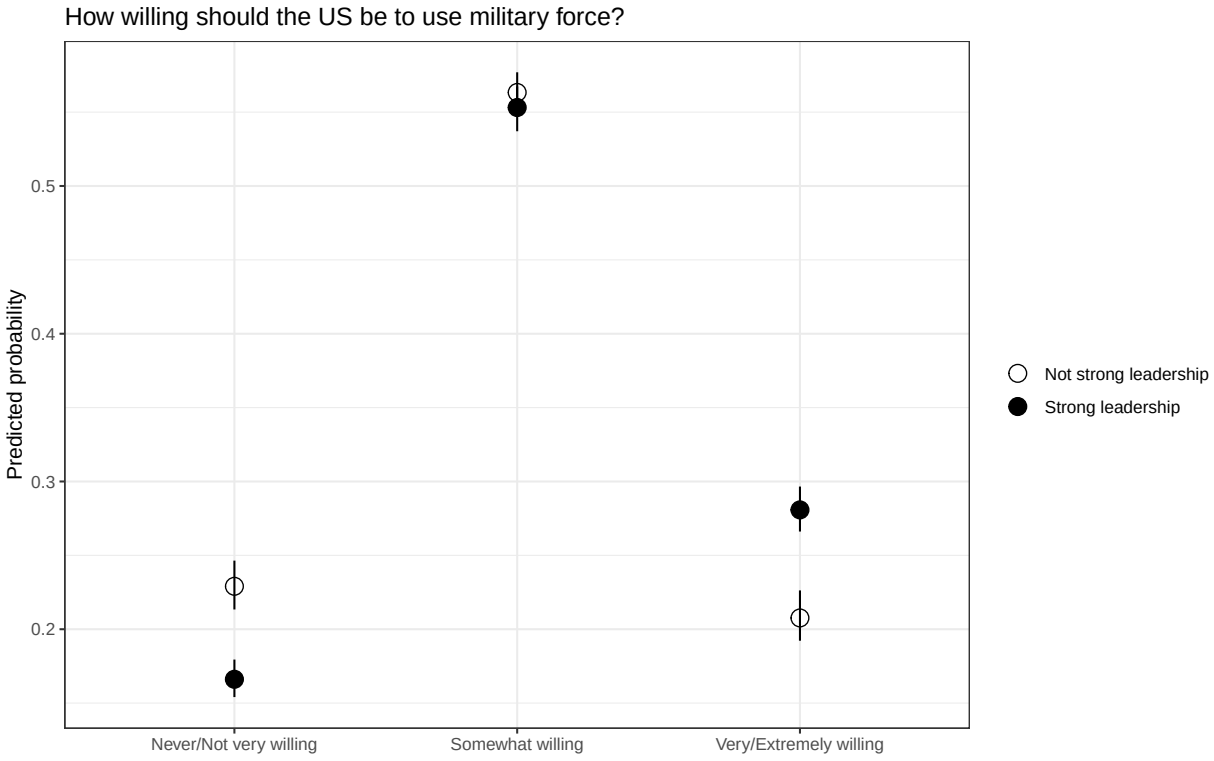

Figure A1: Full Predicted Probabilities for ANES Analysis: Competence

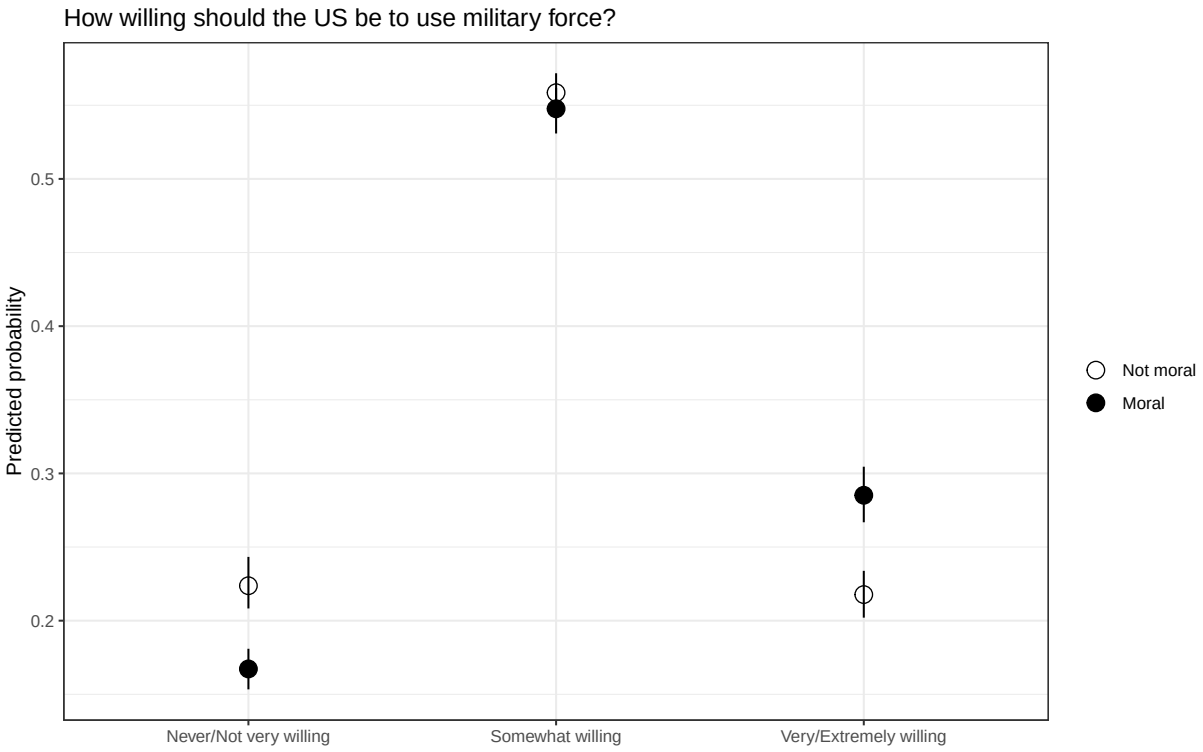

Figure A2: Full Predicted Probabilities for ANES Analysis: Trustworthiness

Appendix D: Chapter 4 Regression Tables

Table A45: Expectations of Success: Gulf War

	Dependent variable:
	Confident in US winning
Not strong leader	-1.194^{***}
	(0.227)
Not deep convictions	-0.306
	(0.229)
Independent	-0.185
	(0.275)
Republican	0.413^{*}
	(0.249)
Income	-0.020
	(0.112)
Age	-0.013^{**}
	(0.006)
Male	0.812^{***}
	(0.216)
College graduate	-0.516^{**}
	(0.231)
Black	-1.259^{***}
	(0.253)
Hispanic	-0.422
	(0.492)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.390
	(0.630)
Constant	3.913^{***}
	(0.475)
Observations	1,874
Log Likelihood	-381.130
Akaike Inf. Crit.	786.260
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A46: Expectations of Success: Haiti

	Dependent variable:
	Successfully restore democratic rule
Strong leadership: Poor job	-1.177^{***}
	(0.213)
Female	0.213
	(0.184)
Age	-0.098^{*}
	(0.051)
Income	-0.039
	(0.076)
Independent	-0.449
	(0.340)
Republican	-0.578^{***}
	(0.219)
College graduate	0.202
	(0.205)
Black	-0.099
	(0.382)
Hispanic	-0.117
	(0.362)
Other race or ethnicity	0.155
	(0.445)
Constant	1.606^{***}
	(0.363)
Observations	558
Log Likelihood	-347.785
Akaike Inf. Crit.	717.571
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A47: Expectations of Success: Bosnia

	Dependent variable:
	Successful in establishing lasting peace
Strong leadership: Poor job	-1.360^{***}
	(0.207)
Female	-0.271
	(0.177)
Independent	-0.788^{**}
	(0.336)
Republican	-0.456^{**}
	(0.212)
Age	-0.111^{**}
	(0.049)
Income	-0.112
	(0.074)
College graduate	-0.027
	(0.193)
Black	-0.207
	(0.311)
Hispanic	-0.082
	(0.369)
Other race or ethnicity	0.514
	(0.403)
Constant	0.869^{***}
	(0.328)
Observations	725
Log Likelihood	-390.981
Akaike Inf. Crit.	803.963
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A48: Expectations of Success: 2001 War on Terror

	Dependent variable:
	US will win
Not strong leader	-1.122^{***}
	(0.271)
College graduate	-0.122
	(0.268)
Black	-0.075
	(0.431)
Hispanic	1.115
	(0.747)
Other race or ethnicity	0.016
	(0.520)
Independent	-0.0004
	(0.404)
Republican	1.241^{***}
	(0.326)
Income	-0.074
	(0.108)
Age	0.019
	(0.132)
Female	0.483^{*}
	(0.252)
Constant	2.234^{***}
	(0.542)
Observations	970
Log Likelihood	-247.120
Akaike Inf. Crit.	516.241
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A49: Expectations of Success: Iraq 2003

	Dependent variable:
	Will US win
Strong leader: Does not apply	-0.937^{***}
	(0.361)
Honest: Does not apply	-0.431
	(0.376)
Female	-1.125^{***}
	(0.296)
Age	0.332^{**}
	(0.145)
Income	0.042
	(0.095)
Independent	-0.181
	(0.544)
Democrat	-0.318
	(0.330)
College graduate	-0.372
	(0.297)
Black	-0.731
	(0.456)
Hispanic	-0.179
	(0.906)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.288
	(0.547)
Constant	1.869^{**}
	(0.733)
Observations	427
Log Likelihood	-178.449
Akaike Inf. Crit.	380.899
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A50: Expectations of Success: Iraq Surge 2007

	Dependent variable:
	Success in reducing violence in Baghdad
Not strong leader	-1.025^{***}
	(0.204)
Not honest	-1.407^{***}
	(0.213)
Female	-0.184
	(0.175)
Age	-0.054
	(0.060)
Black	0.488
	(0.341)
Hispanic	-0.189
	(0.363)
Other race or ethnicity	0.874^{*}
	(0.492)
Independent	0.394
	(0.357)
Republican	1.283^{***}
	(0.210)
College graduate	0.058
	(0.179)
Constant	0.867^{**}
	(0.349)
Observations	862
Log Likelihood	-409.936
Akaike Inf. Crit.	841.872
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A51: Expectations of Success: Libya

	Dependent variable:
	Accomplish goals without ground troops
Trust as CIC: No	-1.445^{***}
	(0.200)
College graduate	0.192
	(0.173)
Black	0.006
	(0.342)
Hispanic	0.317
	(0.435)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.816^{***}
	(0.315)
Independent	-0.345
	(0.312)
Republican	0.427^{**}
	(0.208)
Income	-0.030
	(0.058)
Age	0.119^{***}
	(0.027)
Female	-0.615^{***}
	(0.157)
Constant	0.264
	(0.362)
Observations	816
Log Likelihood	-492.935
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,007.870
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A52: Expectations of Success: Syria

	Dependent variable:
	Prevent additional violence
Personal responsibility: Spends too much time blaming others	-0.719^{**}
	(0.345)
Strong leader on FP: Weak and indecisive	-0.946^{***}
	(0.361)
Female	-0.091
	(0.247)
Age	-0.067
	(0.090)
Income	-0.147
	(0.095)
Independent	-0.267
	(0.399)
Republican	0.317
	(0.341)
College graduate	0.301
	(0.261)
Black	0.589^{*}
	(0.334)
Hispanic	0.291
	(0.385)
Other race or ethnicity	0.735
	(0.504)
Constant	-0.627
	(0.466)
Observations	568
Log Likelihood	-224.462
Akaike Inf. Crit.	472.924
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A53: Expectations of Success: ISIS

	Dependent variable:
	Successfully destroy military ability of ISIS
Strong leader: Does not apply	-1.018^{***}
	(0.257)
Independent	-0.708^{*}
	(0.427)
Republican	-0.944^{***}
	(0.262)
Income	-0.038
	(0.079)
Age	-0.122
	(0.121)
Female	0.107
	(0.221)
College graduate	-0.132
	(0.239)
Black	0.495
	(0.499)
Hispanic	-0.017
	(0.480)
Other race or ethicity	-0.199
	(0.370)
Constant	1.565^{***}
	(0.483)
Observations	422
Log Likelihood	-252.531
Akaike Inf. Crit.	527.062
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A54: Expectations of Casualties: Haiti

	Dependent variable:
	Expectation of casualties
Not strong leader	0.121
	(0.209)
Lacks moral authority as CIC	1.110***
	(0.199)
Age	−0.001
	(0.005)
Income	−0.108**
	(0.049)
College graduate	−0.349*
	(0.188)
Male	−0.732***
	(0.165)
Black	0.671***
	(0.252)
Hispanic	0.052
	(0.360)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.659
	(0.644)
Independent	0.296
	(0.280)
Republican	0.194
	(0.194)
Constant	−1.248***
	(0.365)
Observations	1,027
Log Likelihood	−500.170
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,024.341
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A55: Expectations of Casualties: Kosovo

	Dependent variable:
	How many US soldiers killed
Trust to deal with crises: Uneasy	0.735***
	(0.181)
Age	0.011**
	(0.005)
Income	−0.115
	(0.074)
Male	0.090
	(0.171)
Black	0.317
	(0.367)
Hispanic	0.586
	(0.381)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.428
	(0.464)
Independent	−0.081
	(0.373)
Republican	−0.240
	(0.189)
College graduate	−0.040
	(0.182)
Constant	0.036
	(0.376)
Observations	652
Log Likelihood	−420.119
Akaike Inf. Crit.	862.239
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A56: Expectations of Casualties: 2001 War on Terror

	Dependent variable:
	How many US soldiers killed
Strong leader: No	−0.088
	(0.228)
College graduate	−0.396**
	(0.173)
Black	0.380
	(0.302)
Hispanic	0.441
	(0.275)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.356
	(0.416)
Independent	−0.035
	(0.297)
Republican	0.119
	(0.171)
Income	0.001
	(0.068)
Age	−0.109
	(0.081)
Female	−0.099
	(0.155)
Constant	−0.488
	(0.334)
Observations	858
Log Likelihood	−516.409
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,054.817
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A57: Expectations of Casualties: Iraq 2003

	Dependent variable:
	How many US soldiers killed
Strong leader: Does not apply	0.490**
	(0.244)
Honest: Does not apply	0.336
	(0.244)
Female	0.138
	(0.183)
Age	0.011
	(0.095)
Income	−0.151***
	(0.058)
Independent	1.225***
	(0.322)
Democrat	0.289
	(0.222)
College graduate	0.248
	(0.197)
Black	0.810***
	(0.275)
Hispanic	0.839
	(0.528)
Other race or ethnicity	0.356
	(0.352)
Constant	−1.253***
	(0.435)
Observations	803
Log Likelihood	−397.665
Akaike Inf. Crit.	819.330
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A58: Expectations of Casualties: Libya

	Dependent variable:
	Low confidence will be few or no casualties
Trust as CIC: No	1.124^{***}
	(0.196)
College graduate	-0.245
	(0.169)
Black	-0.525
	(0.356)
Hispanic	-1.239^{**}
	(0.524)
Other race or ethnicity	0.441
	(0.308)
Independent	0.250
	(0.300)
Republican	-0.535^{***}
	(0.206)
Income	0.019
	(0.057)
Age	-0.050^{*}
	(0.026)
Female	0.536^{***}
	(0.153)
Constant	-0.538
	(0.361)
Observations	819
Log Likelihood	-509.291
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,040.582
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A59: Expectations of Length: Gulf War

	Dependent variable:
	Bog down and become another Vietnam
Not strong leader	0.899^{***}
	(0.122)
Not deep convictions	0.325^{**}
	(0.137)
Independent	-0.145
	(0.146)
Republican	-0.324^{***}
	(0.114)
Income	-0.170^{***}
	(0.056)
Age	-0.013^{***}
	(0.003)
Male	-0.938^{***}
	(0.103)
College graduate	-0.231^{*}
	(0.119)
Black	0.725^{***}
	(0.193)
Hispanic	-0.128
	(0.254)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.725^{**}
	(0.349)
Constant	1.108^{***}
	(0.231)
Observations	1,871
Log Likelihood	$-1{,}139.272$
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,302.543
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A60: Expectations of Length: Haiti

	Dependent variable:
	Will US troops get bogged down
Lacks moral authority as CIC	0.587^{***}
	(0.168)
Not strong leader	1.159^{***}
	(0.175)
Male	-0.254^{*}
	(0.148)
College graduate	-0.290^{*}
	(0.164)
Black	0.488^{**}
	(0.230)
Hispanic	0.666^{*}
	(0.344)
Other race or ethnicity	0.021
	(0.469)
Independent	−0.079
	(0.260)
Republican	0.278
	(0.176)
Income	0.056
	(0.045)
Age	−0.005
	(0.037)
Constant	-0.603^{**}
	(0.279)
Observations	981
Log Likelihood	−569.567
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,163.134
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A61: Expectations of Length: Kosovo

	Dependent variable:
	Length of conflict
Not strong leader	0.300
	(0.220)
Cannot be trusted to keep word	0.492**
	(0.232)
College graduate	0.245
	(0.188)
Black	0.848***
	(0.295)
Hispanic	−0.283
	(0.396)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.367
	(0.474)
Independent	−0.060
	(0.341)
Republican	0.112
	(0.215)
Income	0.083
	(0.072)
Age	0.195**
	(0.087)
Constant	−1.659***
	(0.347)
Observations	647
Log Likelihood	−420.218
Akaike Inf. Crit.	862.436
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A62: Expectations of Length: 2001 War on Terror

	Dependent variable:
	How long would a war last
Strong leader: No	−0.093
	(0.213)
College graduate	0.089
	(0.163)
Black	−0.309
	(0.289)
Hispanic	0.055
	(0.284)
Other	−0.083
	(0.355)
Independent	0.338
	(0.303)
Republican	−0.265
	(0.165)
Income	0.145**
	(0.064)
Age	0.241***
	(0.077)
Female	−0.270*
	(0.149)
Constant	0.196
	(0.314)
Observations	1,019
Log Likelihood	−578.080
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,178.160
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A63: Expectations of Length: Iraq 2003

	Dependent variable:
	How much longer
Strong leader: Does not apply	0.304
	(0.249)
Honest: Does not apply	0.460*
	(0.247)
Female	0.080
	(0.186)
Age	−0.057
	(0.097)
Income	−0.058
	(0.059)
Independent	0.868***
	(0.321)
Democrat	0.225
	(0.227)
College graduate	−0.047
	(0.200)
Black	0.464*
	(0.277)
Hispanic	0.516
	(0.522)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.046
	(0.394)
Constant	−1.460***
	(0.447)
Observations	837
Log Likelihood	−396.231
Akaike Inf. Crit.	816.462
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A64: Expectations of Length: ISIS

	Dependent variable:
	Concern will be long, costly conflict
Doesn't have strong leadership	0.434^{*}
	(0.254)
Income	-0.027
	(0.071)
Black	-0.470
	(0.349)
Hispanic	0.231
	(0.432)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.289
	(0.398)
College graduate	-0.432^{*}
	(0.224)
Female	0.603^{***}
	(0.215)
Age	0.117
	(0.109)
Independent	-0.355
	(0.307)
Republican	-0.650^{**}
	(0.290)
Constant	1.988^{***}
	(0.463)
Observations	1,025
Log Likelihood	-346.660
Akaike Inf. Crit.	715.321
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A65: Conflict Inheritors: Somalia

	Dependent variable:
	Success in Somalia
Doubts about personal characteristics	-0.622^{*}
	(0.325)
Independent	-0.365
	(0.401)
Republican	-0.483
	(0.346)
Income	0.063
	(0.085)
Age	-0.273^{***}
	(0.099)
Male	0.274
	(0.282)
College graduate	-0.855^{***}
	(0.316)
Black	-0.325
	(0.435)
Hispanic	0.261
	(0.650)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.165
	(1.119)
Constant	2.920^{***}
	(0.599)
Observations	401
Log Likelihood	-176.670
Akaike Inf. Crit.	375.341
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A66: Conflict Inheritors: Afghanistan

	Dependent variable:
	Succeed in Afghanistan
Not trustworthy	−0.080
	(0.231)
Not able to get things done	−0.254
	(0.205)
Independent	−0.359
	(0.352)
Republican	0.414*
	(0.216)
Income	−0.031
	(0.036)
Female	−0.011
	(0.162)
College graduate	−0.240
	(0.175)
Black	0.567*
	(0.295)
Hispanic	0.958***
	(0.361)
Other race or ethnicity	−0.175
	(0.281)
Constant	0.529**
	(0.251)
Observations	675
Log Likelihood	−443.220
Akaike Inf. Crit.	908.441
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A67: Conflict Inheritors: Iraq

	Dependent variable:
	Win Iraq war
Not strong leader	0.835^{**}
	(0.389)
Not honest	0.210
	(0.369)
Independent	0.624
	(0.421)
Republican	1.569^{***}
	(0.287)
Income	-0.127
	(0.083)
Age	-0.210^{*}
	(0.125)
Female	-0.377
	(0.230)
College graduate	-0.374
	(0.252)
Black	0.334
	(0.426)
Hispanic	0.454
	(0.540)
Other race or ethnicity	-0.536
	(0.487)
Constant	0.740
	(0.528)
Observations	416
Log Likelihood	-237.365
Akaike Inf. Crit.	498.730
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A68: Conflict Inheritors: ISIS

	Dependent variable:
	Defeat ISIS
Honest: Does not apply	-1.762^{***}
	(0.263)
Effective manager: Does not apply	-1.510^{***}
	(0.268)
Independent	0.423
	(0.401)
Republican	0.829^{***}
	(0.265)
Age	0.012^{**}
	(0.006)
Income	-0.099
	(0.076)
College graduate	-0.242
	(0.220)
Black	-0.114
	(0.362)
Hispanic	0.350
	(0.384)
Other race or ethnicity	0.401
	(0.336)
Female	-0.895^{***}
	(0.206)
Constant	1.597^{***}
	(0.523)
Observations	828
Log Likelihood	-331.443
Akaike Inf. Crit.	686.886
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix E: Additional Analyses for Chapter 5

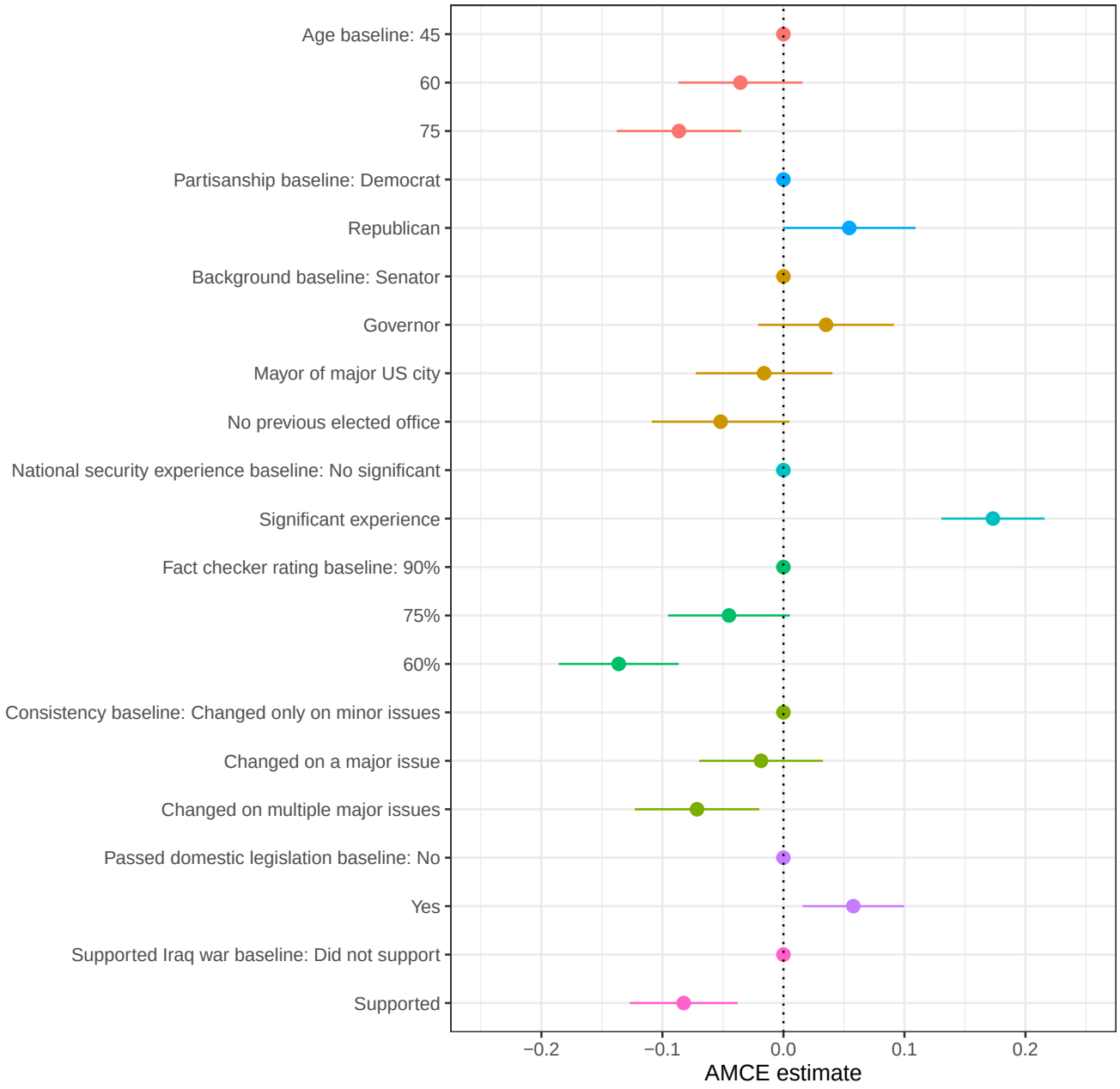

Figure A3: AMCEs for Respondent Ratings

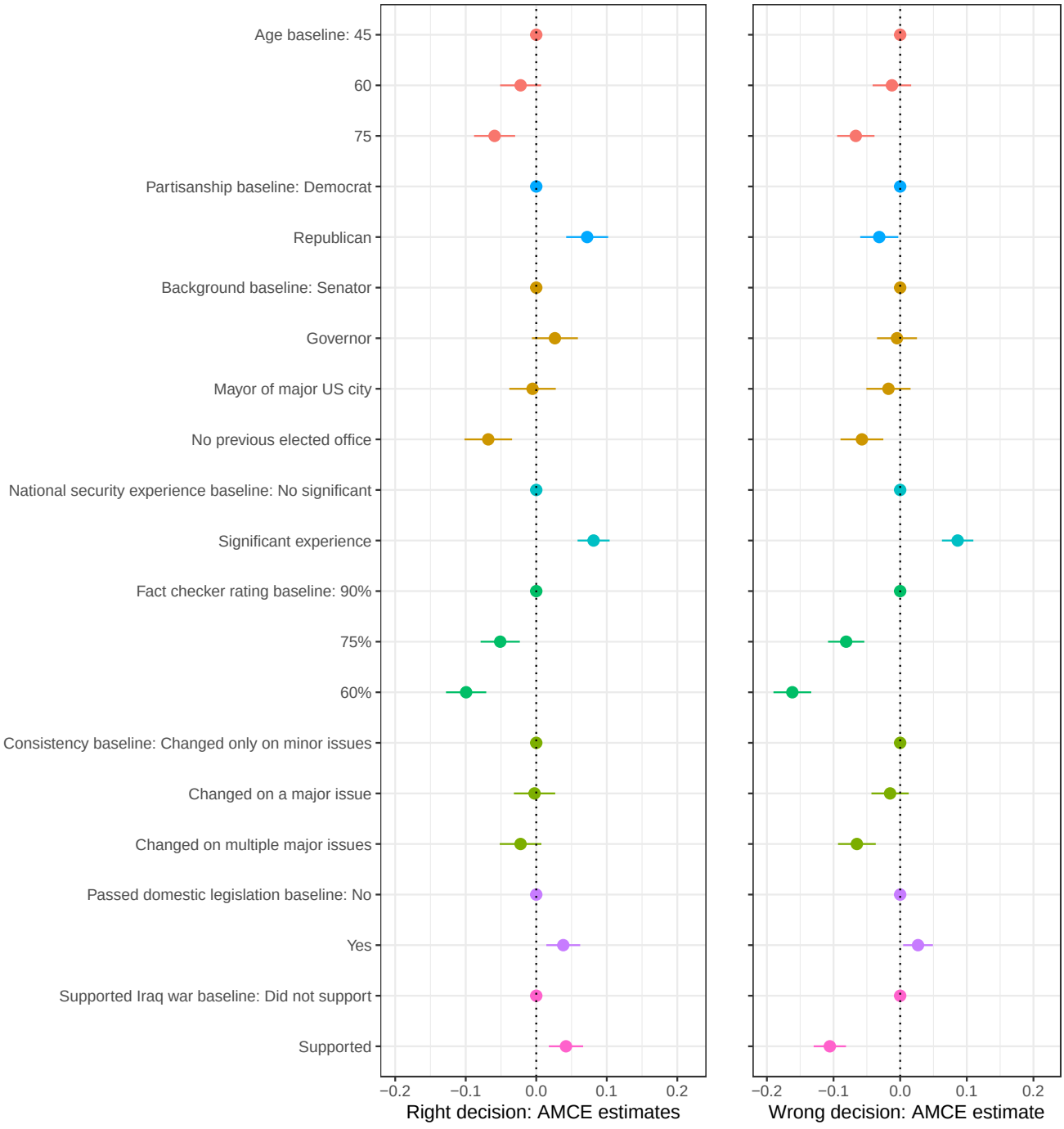

Figure A4: Full Conditional AMCEs for Iraq War position

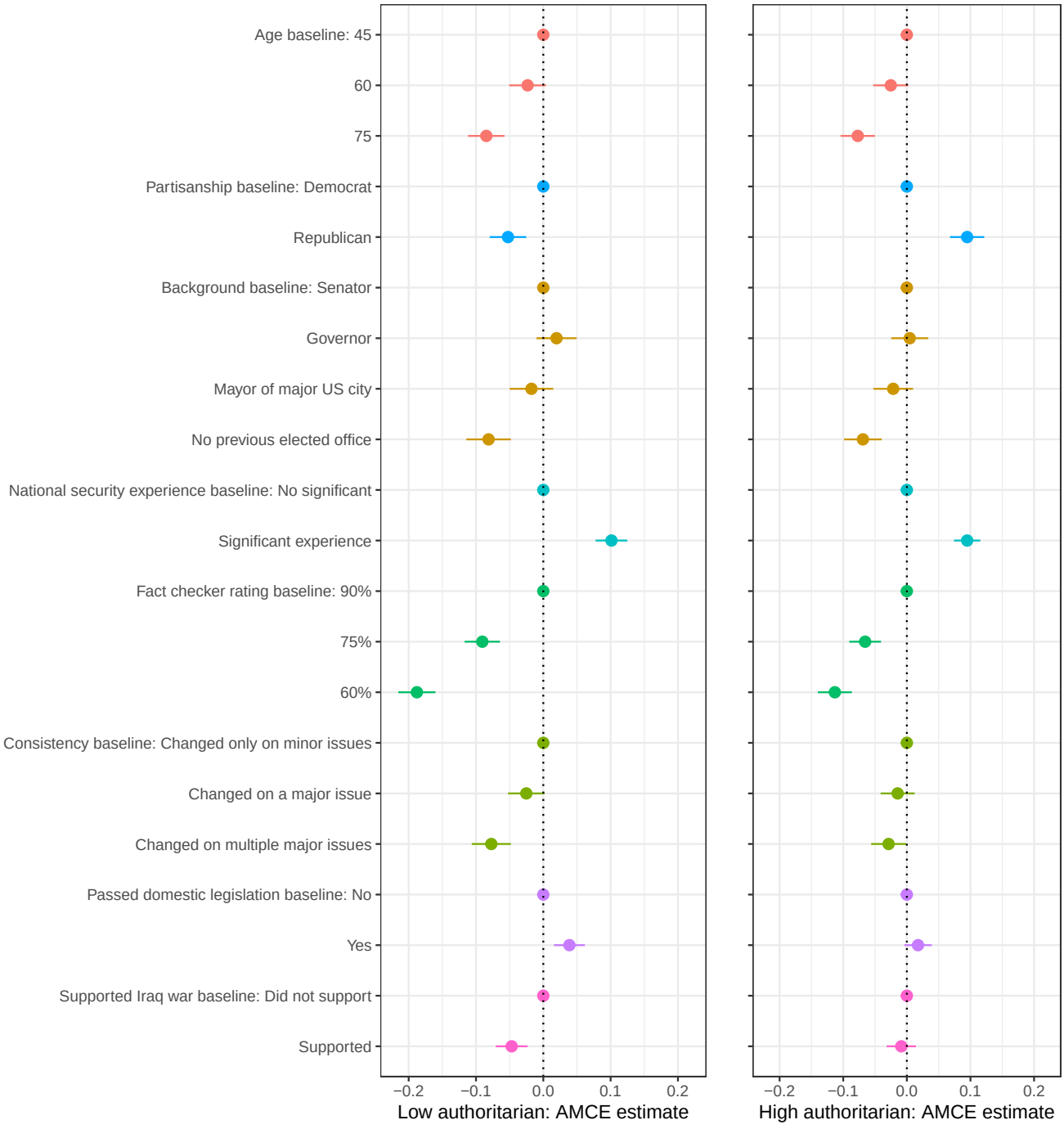

Figure A5: Full Conditional AMCEs for Authoritarianism

Table A69: Interaction: Authoritarianism and Credibility

	Dependent variable:
	Willingness to use force
Not strong leadership	-0.608^{***}
	(0.211)
Not moral	-0.803^{***}
	(0.254)
Authoritarian	0.613^{***}
	(0.222)
Independent	0.014
	(0.153)
Republican	0.299^{***}
	(0.113)
Female	-0.036
	(0.096)
Black	-0.022
	(0.156)
Hispanic	0.269
	(0.178)
Other race or ethnicity	0.746^{**}
	(0.308)
Age	0.001
	(0.003)
College graduate	-0.277^{**}
	(0.124)
Income: 34 to 67 percentile	0.140
	(0.121)
Income: 68 to 95 percentile	0.190
	(0.128)
Income: 96 to 100 percentile	0.094
	(0.244)
Authoritarian:Not strong leadership	0.079
	(0.317)
Authoritarian:Not moral	0.782^{**}
	(0.378)
Observations	1,762
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01