**Do Partisan Types Stop at the Water’s Edge?**

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Abstract: A growing number of analyses presume that distinctive “partisan types” exist in the American public’s eyes in foreign policy, with implications for questions ranging from the ability of leaders to send credible signals by going against their party’s type, to the future of bipartisanship in foreign policy. We offer the first systematic exploration of partisan types in foreign affairs, exploring their microfoundations and scope conditions using two national survey experiments. We find that partisan types vary across foreign policy issues, but are generally weaker and less distinct in foreign affairs. We also find that there is an impressive amount of congruence between the partisan stereotypes Americans hold and actual distributions of partisan preferences. Our findings have important implications for the study of public opinion, “against type” models, and the domestic politics of interstate conflict.

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1 Introduction

Do the Democratic and Republican parties have distinct types in foreign policy in the eyes of domestic audiences? A growing amount of work on the domestic politics of foreign policy and International Relations (IR) presumes they do, arguing that Republicans are from Mars, and Democrats are from Venus. Republicans are hawks, while Democrats are doves (e.g. Gries, 2014); Democrats favor working multilaterally, while Republicans are more willing to go it alone (e.g. Rathbun, 2011); Republicans are more likely to favor free trade, while Democrats are more likely to be protectionist (e.g. Milner and Judkins, 2004), and so on, such that the two parties have distinct foreign policy brands in the eyes of the public (Schultz, 2005; Saunders, 2018). If foreign policy was once characterized by bipartisanship — with politics “stopping at the water’s edge” — it is now commonly argued that policymaking regarding international affairs is becoming increasingly polarized (e.g. Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2007; Hurst, 2014).

The potential existence of distinct partisan types in foreign affairs has significant stakes for a series of important debates in IR. The first concerns the domestic politics of costly signaling. As a swiftly proliferating literature influenced by formal models of legislative bargaining tells us, if political parties have distinct types in foreign issues in the eyes of domestic audiences, and voters are uncertain about the merits of a policy proposal, parties can attempt to send more credible signals and induce greater public support by going “against type” (e.g. Cukierman and Tommasi, 1998; Schultz, 2005; Fehrs, 2014; Saunders, 2018; Kreps, Saunders and Schultz, 2018; Mattes and Weeks, 2019a). Yet parties need to be seen as having distinct types in order to be able to profitably go against them — a claim that has yet to be systematically explored.

The second concerns the study of interstate conflict. A growing body of research argues that Democratic and Republican administrations are treated systematically differently in both conflict and cooperation because strategic actors abroad are also aware of parties’ reputations. The distinctiveness of partisan types has thus been linked to everything from the rate at which the United States is targeted in disputes, to the credibility of American threats and reassurances (Prins, 2001; Foster, 2008; Clark, Fordham and Nordstrom, 2011; Clare, 2014). If partisan types are relatively weak in the eyes of domestic audiences but relatively stark in the eyes of foreign ones, it raises important questions about the microfoundations of these models.

The third involves a series of debates about how the public forms judgments about foreign policy issues more generally. Four of the major questions in public opinion in the twenty-first century — the
power of elite cues (e.g. Berinsky, 2009), the extent of partisan polarization (e.g. Chaudoin, Milner and Tingley, 2010; Busby et al., 2013), the prevalence of motivated reasoning (e.g. Bolen, Druckman and Cook, 2014), and the collective rationality of the public more generally (e.g. Page and Shapiro, 1992) depend in part on the distinctiveness of partisan types. When the two parties are perceived as sending very different messages in foreign affairs, elite cues should be easier to follow, polarization in the public should be higher, the prospects of bipartisanship in foreign affairs will be ever more fleeting, and partisan motivated reasoning should be stronger. And, if the partisan stereotypes that the public perceives in foreign policy are grossly inaccurate when compared to the actual distribution of partisan preferences on foreign policy issues, it raises further questions about whether the public is sufficiently competent to espouse judgments in foreign affairs (Kertzer and Zeitoff, 2017).

Despite the frequency with which partisan types are implicated by the IR literature, there is an absence of work that has systematically investigated the microfoundations or scope conditions of partisan types in foreign policy. In this article, we offer the first systematic exploration of partisan types in foreign affairs. First, we conceptualize partisan types, drawing from a diverse body of literature on the structure and content of stereotypes in social psychology, as well as the study of party brands in American politics, to suggest an empirical strategy political scientists can use to study the content and intensity of partisan types. We then describe the experimental design of two original national surveys in the United States, the first fielded several months before the 2014 midterm elections, and the second fielded several months after the 2018 midterm elections. These studies, which measure partisan stereotypes for 51 policy statements, representing 32 unique policies altogether, let us examine the range of issues in which the mass public perceives the Republican and Democratic parties as having distinctive types, along with how these partisan stereotypes have changed between the Obama and Trump administrations.

Our findings suggest that there is significant variation across foreign policy issues: partisan types are relatively weak across many traditional foreign policy issues (such as arms control, interventionism, unilateralism, and trade) but are somewhat more distinct in those crossover issues that relate more closely to domestic politics (such as immigration and defense spending). Against scholarship in American politics that claims the public is too ignorant to have meaningful opinions or identify party positions (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964), we also show that there is an impressive amount of congruence between the partisan stereotypes Americans hold and the actual distributions of partisan support in our surveys, and that changes in stereotype content between 2014-18 closely align with actual changes in partisan preferences in this time period. Our findings thus not only contribute to ongoing debates about
the “Trump effect” in American foreign policy, but also raise important scope conditions for signaling models relying on the assumption of distinct partisan types, suggest that the bipartisan tradition in American foreign affairs is likely to be more persistent than many critics allege, and raise questions about the microfoundations of models of interstate conflict that expect there to be systematic differences in how Democratic and Republican administrations are treated by adversaries abroad.

2 Partisanship and partisan types

In the past several decades, a robust literature has emerged on partisanship in foreign policy (e.g. Holsti and Rosenau, 1990; Gowa, 1998; Busby et al., 2013; Milner and Tingley, 2015) much of which explores whether partisanship “matters” in foreign affairs, or instead stops at the water’s edge. Yet partisanship can matter in foreign policy in two different ways. Much of the time, IR scholars focus on a direct pathway, in which partisans possess distinctive foreign policy preferences, which leads to divergent foreign policy behaviors. Rathbun (2004), for example, shows that right and left-wing governments conduct humanitarian interventions very differently, because they understand the world in very different ways, Reifler, Scotto and Clarke (2011) find that Labour and Conservative supporters in the British public have very different attitudes about international affairs, Koch and Sullivan (2010) demonstrate that left-wing governments are less likely to stay in conflicts, because left-leaning voters are less supportive of the use of force, Fordham (1998) suggests that Democratic and Republican Presidents tend to use force under very different economic conditions because their constituencies care about different economic problems, and so on. Work in this tradition tends to understand political parties as coalitions of individuals bound together by shared beliefs, such that studying the effect of partisanship in foreign affairs is largely about mapping the political consequences of these ideological differences.¹

Yet there is another way for partisanship to matter in foreign policy, an indirect pathway, in which parties have brands or reputations (Snyder and Ting, 2002; Woon and Pope, 2008), and the existence of these reputations affects parties’ strategic incentives, on the one hand, and the behavior of both voters at home and actors abroad, on the other (e.g. Schultz, 2005; Koch and Cranmer, 2007; Foster, 2008; Trager and Vavreck, 2011). This mechanism arises in a variety of contexts: Kreps, Saunders and Schultz (2018), for example, argue that hawkish brands give Republican presidents an advantage in ratifying

¹Of course, not everyone thinks of parties in ideological terms: scholars of American politics often discuss as parties as identity attachments rather than ideological commitments (Mason, 2018), and the elite cue-taking literature in foreign policy thinks about partisanship less in terms of ideological gaps and more in terms of information sources (Berinsky, 2009), for example.
arms control agreements; Trager and Vavreck (2011) argue that voters are more likely to support wars started by Democratic presidents because the public assumes Democrats are doves; Foster (2008) shows that the popular association between the political right and hawkishness means that right-wing parties are less likely to be the target of military challenges; Saunders (2018) finds that concerns about their party’s dovish stereotype lead Democratic presidents to be especially sensitive to their most hawkish advisors, and so on. While the content of these theoretical accounts differ — in some cases, parties are penalized by their brand, in others, they are advantaged by it; in some cases, the relevant audience is at home, in others it is abroad — they nonetheless share a common mechanism implicating second-order beliefs: the notion that parties are seen as having distinct “types” in foreign affairs.

Several definitional points are worth noting. First, we define types more generally as socially shared “beliefs about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviors” of particular actors (Hilton and von Hippel, 1996, 240). Although types may be built upon past actions (previous reluctance to work with the United Nations, for example, may give Republicans reputations for unilaterism), for them to have any traction, they must be socially shared by the audience; in this sense, they can also be thought of as reputations, in that they are beliefs about an actor that exist in the minds of others (Dafoe, Renshon and Huth, 2014; Brutger and Kertzer, 2018). Above all else, they are stereotypes, in that they are beliefs about the characteristics of other groups (Hilton and von Hippel, 1996, 240), specifically the groups’ policy preferences.\(^2\)

Second, types reside at multiple levels of analysis: we can understand types as operating at the individual-leader level based on leaders’ policy stances, and at the level of political parties more broadly. Although both variants are significant, we focus here on partisan types — which in an American context consists of beliefs about the policy preferences of Republicans and Democrats — consistent with a rich literature on party brands in American politics (Brady and Sniderman, 1985; Snyder and Ting, 2002; Woon and Pope, 2008; Goggin, Henderson and Theodoridis, 2019).\(^3\) We choose to focus on partisan types specifically here for a number of reasons, chief of which is that partisanship is one of the more powerful forces in American politics (Levendusky and Malhotra, 2016; Mason, 2018). Whether because of selection effects \textit{ex ante} or legislative constraints \textit{ex post}, the scope and strength of partisan types

\(^2\)As with the stereotype literature more generally — which argues that stereotypes need not be accurate in order to be widely held (Allport, 1954; Judd, Park and Kintsch, 1993)— it is possible for types to be completely unmoored from actual previous policy positions, though we find relatively little evidence of this in the results we report below.

\(^3\)Partisan types are thus somewhat different from the related concept of issue ownership, which refers to parties’ reputations for competence (Petrocik, 1996) or for prioritizing a given issue (Egan, 2013). Moreover, although the party brands literature has explored issue ownership in the context of foreign policy, it has tended to reduce foreign policy to national security — an issue on which Republicans are generally more trusted (Gadarian, 2010) — rather than exploring a richer array of foreign policy questions.
determines how much latitude individual leaders have to establish types of their own. Moreover, at least in
the United States, partisan types are typically understood as more enduring than individual-level
types: individual leaders come and go, but parties persist, such that party reputations are an important
electoral resource (Snyder and Ting, 2002; Woon and Pope, 2008): voters lack the time and capacity
to familiarize themselves with each individual candidate’s position on every issue, and thus turn to
parties instead (Rahn, 1993; Lupia and McCubbins, 2000). Especially in foreign affairs, it often takes
time for leaders to build up independent types, as most political candidates do not have the chance
to develop clear and distinctive types on foreign policy issues before entering office, compounded by
electoral incentives for candidate ambiguity (Tomz and Van Houweling, 2009), and the tendency of the
media to “devote little attention to reporting candidates’ positions” (Conover and Feldman, 1989, 912).
It is perhaps for a similar reason that the voluminous literature on stereotypes in social psychology
inevitably thinks of stereotypes as something that refers to groups rather than discrete individuals,
since the efficacy of stereotypes in person perception hinges on the perceiver drawing inferences about
an individual through social categorization.4

Finally, partisan types can matter for either domestic or foreign audiences. In some of the IR
literature in which this mechanism arises, the key audience is foreign decision-makers, figuring out
whether to target a state or reciprocate a threat, and using the partisanship of the target’s government
as a heuristic for doing so (Foster, 2008); in others, it is the domestic public, taking party reputations
into account when evaluating the merits of a policy proposal (Saunders, 2018).

2.1 Partisan types in foreign policy

Perhaps the most prominent research tradition that assumes the existence of distinct partisan types in
foreign affairs involves the domestic politics of signaling. A voluminous body of scholarship has emerged
in recent years exploring the informative value of actors going against type in order to send credible
signals (Schultz, 2005; Trager and Vavreck, 2011; Fehrs, 2014; Saunders, 2018; Kane and Norpoth, 2017;
Kreps, Saunders and Schultz, 2018; Mattes and Weeks, 2019a). At their most general level, the logic
of these models is relatively straightforward: an actor (the “receiver”) is uncertain about the merits or
outcome of a potential policy being recommended by another actor (the “sender”), and thus relies on
knowledge it has about the sender in order to evaluate the credibility of its claims.5 Whether because

4 As Taylor (1981, 83) writes, “we do not stereotype a person, we stereotype a person-as-a-member-of-a-group.”
5 In this sense, these models simultaneously assume both the presence and absence of uncertainty: the legislator is both
uncertain about the outcome of a policy, and certain about the bias of her advisors (e.g. Calvert, 1985); the public is
uncertain about the merits of a policy, but knows (or at least has a rough estimate of) the ideal point of the cuegiver (e.g.
we are particularly attentive to incongruent or surprising information (Maheswaran and Chaiken, 1991), or because of the inherent value of costly signals over cheap talk (Schelling, 1960), signals are stronger if they come from unlikely or biased sources, who thus may give the most credible advice (Calvert, 1985; Kydd, 2003). If even the Pentagon says defense spending is too high, defense spending should likely be cut (Krehbiel, 1991); if even the United Nations approves of a military intervention, the intervener’s intentions are likely good (Thompson, 2009; Chapman, 2011); if even Fox News praises a Democratic policy, it is probably meritorious (Baum and Groeling, 2009), and so on. Leaders whose support of a policy goes against type are thus more persuasive (Cukierman and Tommasi, 1998; Schultz, 2005).

While some variants of these models focus on types at the leader-level — as with the adage that only Nixon can go to China — many others rely on types at the party-level, because of the extent to which party brands are “one of the most accessible and information-rich political cues available to voters.” (Trager and Vavreck, 2011, 531). In other words, if Democrats and Republicans are perceived as having distinct types on foreign policy issues in the eyes of the public, they are able to credibly signal to domestic constituents on these issues through a channel that is curtailed if the two parties’ types are indistinguishable; there are limited political gains to be had from going “against type” on an issue where your party isn’t seen as having a distinct type in the first place.

The strength of partisan types in foreign policy has important implications for questions about bipartisanship in foreign policy (e.g. Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2007; Busby and Monten, 2008; Chaudoin, Milner and Tingley, 2010; Bafumi and Parent, 2012). If public opinion in foreign policy is shaped by elite cues — particularly the presence of elite consensus or polarization (Zaller, 1992; Baum and Groeling, 2009; Saunders, 2015, though see Kertzer and Zeitzoff, 2017) — and the public sees partisan elites as espousing fairly similar foreign policy views, this likely creates a natural limit on how far public attitudes can veer away from the center. In contrast, if there are in fact strong partisan types in foreign policy, this creates the potential for a vicious cycle, as a progressively larger cleavage emerges between the foreign policy views of the supporters of the two parties. For one thing, if the public perceives party elites as differing greatly on foreign policy issues, then public attitudes are likely to follow and become more polarized. In turn, if party elites see their base supporters as shifting away from the center on foreign policy issues, they have incentives to follow suit, which would likely prompt the partisan supporters in the public to shift further from the center, thereby furthering the cycle.

It also has ramifications for the study of public opinion about foreign policy more broadly. In a

Chapman, 2011).
variety of research traditions, ranging from the “spiral of silence” model in political communication (Noelle-Neumann, 1974) to “impersonal influence” models in political science (Mutz, 1998), partisan types matter because they act as social norms, which help structure political behavior: what people think other group members think significantly affects their own preferences and behavior (Asch, 1956; Mutz, 1998; Mendelberg, 2002; Kertzer and Zeitzoff, 2017). As a result, the perceived distinctiveness of partisan types has important implications for many of the central questions in the study of public opinion, from the strength of elite cues, to the degree of polarization, to the extent of partisan motivated reasoning, to the collective rationality of the public more generally. When partisan types are stronger, elite cues are easier for the public to follow (Levendusky, 2010), and the public becomes more polarized along party lines in its own preferences – which is why correcting misperceptions about polarization cause the public to express more moderate views (Ahler, 2014). Because strong partisan types cause specific policy stances to be seen as a “badge of membership within identity-defining affinity groups”, citizens presented with them are more likely to engage in partisan motivated reasoning (Kahan, 2016, 2), causing them to express more certainty about their opinions, and engage in the various biases that follow from it (Bolsen, Druckman and Cook, 2014). Finally, the accuracy of partisan types is another means of assessing the competence of the public in foreign policy more generally (Jentleson, 1992; Kertzer and Zeitzoff, 2017). We know the American public doesn’t know a lot about foreign policy issues, which are generally far removed from most Americans’ daily lives (Guisinger, 2009; Kertzer, 2013). If the partisan stereotypes that the public holds about Democrats and Republicans in foreign affairs bear no resemblance to actual partisan preferences, it raises further questions about the extent to which the public can be trusted to espouse judgments in foreign policy issues.

Finally, although our primary focus here is on partisan types as perceived by domestic audiences, a variety of theoretical models in IR argue that partisan stereotypes also travel abroad, especially in regards to hawkishness. For example, Prins (2001, 431) finds that Democratic administrations are more likely to be targeted in militarized disputes than Republican administrations are, because foreign audiences perceive Democrats to be doves eager to compromise; Foster (2008) and Clark, Fordham and Nordstrom (2011) suggest that foreign leaders are likely to stay out of the United States’ way when Republicans are in charge, but are likely to exploit the United States when Democrats are in power. If one party is seen by foreign observers as systematically more hawkish than the other, the rate at which the United States is targeted or exploited in disputes, or has its concessions reciprocated in negotiations (Clare, 2014; Mattes and Weeks, 2019b) should vary based on which party is in power.
Yet despite the wide range of literatures that invoke assumptions about strong partisan types in foreign affairs, there are also some reasons for skepticism. First, the partisan types literature in IR is at odds with an older body of work on public opinion in foreign policy, which traditionally thought of foreign affairs as a domain in which there was relative bipartisan agreement, both among political elites, and the public at large (Schlesinger Jr., 1949; Gowa, 1998). Public opinion scholars like Holsti and Rosenau (1990) and Wittkopf (1990) turned to foreign policy orientations like “militant internationalism” and “cooperative internationalism” to explain foreign policy attitudes precisely because conventional political variables like partisanship explained relatively little of the variance in either elites’ or the mass public’s foreign policy views. The era of Scoop Jackson and Nelson Rockefeller has long passed, but the mainstream foreign policy establishment in Washington remains sufficiently congealed that it is frequently referred to as “the Blob.” Historically, the two parties have been equally prone to using force: in the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MIDs) data (Palmer et al., 2015), for example, Democrats are no less likely to initiate fatal MIDs than Republicans. Of the eleven Preferential Trade Agreements entered into between 2001-2016, for example, eight passed along bi- or cross-partisan lines (Kucik and Moraguez, 2016). Many of the fiercest debates in foreign policy occur within parties rather than between them, as foreign policy is often characterized by cross-partisan “baptist-bootlegger” coalitions, in both security (e.g. liberal internationalists and neoconservatives joining forces to support military interventions), and economics (e.g. both the critical left and the nationalist right opposing free trade and globalization).

As a result, even though the two parties often adopt different stances on specific issues (e.g. Democrats were more favorable towards the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran; Republicans are now more favorable towards the 2017 immigration travel ban), contemporary public opinion data often shows a fair amount of bipartisan consensus about more general foreign policy goals, as recent survey data from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (2016) makes clear. In other words, then, if partisan types accurately reflect either the historical record or the degree of political polarization on various issues, it is not immediately clear how distinctive partisan types should be across the board in foreign affairs.

A second reason for skepticism lies within the public itself: even if the parties were fundamentally distinct on foreign policy issues, is the public as a whole sufficiently sophisticated to perceive these distinctions given how far removed foreign policy issues are for many members of the American public? Formal models of against-type dynamics were originally developed in legislative signaling games, where

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6 http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/08/magazine/the-aspiring-novelist-who-became-obamas-foreign-policy-guru.html?_r=0
7 The same conclusions also hold in the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) data and Militarized Compellent Threat (MCT) data.
it was reasonable to treat types as common knowledge, since the types in question are relatively well-defined, both because of the nature of the senders (e.g. legislative committees, specialized by design), and the sophistication of the receivers (e.g. legislators) (Krehbiel, 1991). It is unclear how well these models translate to the context of public opinion about foreign policy, where sender preferences may be less distinct, and the receiver much less knowledgeable (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996).

Finally, much of the work that implicates distinct partisan types on foreign policy issues is formal rather than empirical, or never directly measures the contents of audiences’ second-order beliefs. As a result, despite the popularity and significance of the concept, we actually know relatively little about which foreign policy issues have distinct partisan types.

3 Operationalizing partisan types

Although there are a number of different ways to study beliefs about the policy preferences of Republicans and Democrats (e.g. Brady and Sniderman, 1985; Ahler, 2014; Levendusky and Malhotra, 2016; Goggin, Henderson and Theodoridis, 2019), we focus below on two properties of partisan types that are particularly useful for our purposes.

First, partisan types have content. The literature on stereotype content in psychology is vast (for a summary, see Stagnor and Lange, 1994; Hilton and von Hippel, 1996; Fiske et al., 2002), but for our purposes we might think simply of the content of a partisan type as the policies associated with a particular party. Based on the discussion above, one might associate hawkishness and unilateralism with the Republican party, for example, and dovishness and multilateralism with the Democratic party.

Second, partisan types vary in their intensity, based on whether a policy proposal is highly or only weakly associated with a particular party. We care about the intensity of partisan types because it provides another way of speaking to their power, and thus, how much traction a political leader can derive from going against type. For example, the relationship between unilateralism and the Republican party might be seen as weaker than the relationship between the Republican party and opposition to abortion is; the signaling gains from going against type would therefore be larger in the latter case than the former, since a leader is unlikely to procure much political advantage from going against a policy position that is only weakly associated with the party.

To make the discussion more concrete, suppose \( n \) members of the public are given a set of \( j \) different policy proposals. For each policy, respondents are asked to imagine that leaders from a political party
were taking the issue position being presented, and to indicate which party they would guess was
the one taking the position, with response options forming a five-point scale ranging from “Definitely
Democratic” to “Definitely Republican”, with a neutral scale midpoint to allow for the possible absence
of distinctive types, producing the raw distributions in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Exploring different measures of partisan type

Each panel displays the raw distributions of responses for three policy proposals, in which respondents are asked to
assess whether a policy is definitely Democratic, probably Democratic, probably Republican, definitely Republican, or
could be linked to either (or neither) party, which serves as the scale midpoint. Although Policies A and C indicate
stereotypes with very different contents (Policy A is associated with Republicans ($\bar{x}_A = 0.71$), and Policy C with
Democrats ($\bar{x}_C = 0.25$)), the intensity of each measure is relatively similar ($|\bar{z}_A| = 0.65$, $|\bar{z}_C| = 0.63$). In contrast, Policy
B has a relatively indistinct type ($\bar{x}_B = 0.49$) close to the scale midpoint, which is therefore also relatively low in
intensity ($|\bar{z}_B| = 0.33$). The distributions come from real data from study 1; see Appendix §2.1 for the distributions for
all 51 policy proposals from the two studies.

First, we can simply look at the content of each partisan type: on average, which party is associated
with each policy? We can measure stereotype content using the arithmetic mean ($\bar{x} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} x_i$).
Thus, Policy A in Figure 1 has a relatively Republican stereotype ($\bar{x}_A = 0.71$), and Policy C a relatively
Democratic one ($\bar{x}_C = 0.25$), while Policy B suggests a relatively indistinct type close to the scale
midpoint ($\bar{x}_B = 0.49$).

Second, we can look at the intensity of each partisan type: on average, how intense a stereotype
is it? Is the policy strongly associated with a given party, or only weakly associated? We can measure
stereotype intensity by re-centering the scale along its midpoint and taking the mean of the absolute
value ($|\bar{z}| = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} |z_i|$, $z_i = x_i - 0.5$).\(^8\) Thus, although the stereotype content measures for Policies
A and C are diametrically opposed, their intensity measures are similar ($|\bar{z}_A| = 0.65$, $|\bar{z}_C| = 0.63$); as
measured by stereotype intensity, these two policies are closer to one another than they are to Policy
B, whose intensity measure is weaker ($|\bar{z}_B| = 0.33$).

\(^8\)This measure is thus akin to measures of attitude extremity (Miller and Peterson, 2004), in that it focuses on the
strengths of the associations made, rather than its direction.
Each of these measures thus captures something subtly different: content tells us what parties a policy is associated with, and intensity tells us the strength of the association. These measures are deliberately simple, and there are, of course, countless other ways to characterize partisan types; in Appendix §2, we present a variety of other measures of stereotypicality (including measures of content and intensity that omit or disaggregate the “both” and “neither” categories, a prevalence measure that captures how frequently a policy is associated with parties in general, and Euclidean-distance based measures of stereotypicality that measure the degree of dissimilarity between the observed distribution and two different null distributions), but overall these alternate measures produce similar results to the simplified measures used above. Our claim, then, is not that these are the only ways to operationalize partisan types, but rather, that they constitute two simple measures that are likely intuitive to many political scientists. In the next section, we use these measures to map the topography of partisan types in foreign policy.

4 Method

To offer what we believe to be the first systematic analysis of partisan types in foreign policy, we fielded two original survey experiments on national samples of American adults by Dynata (formerly known as Survey Sampling International (SSI)). The first was fielded on a national sample of 1016 American adults in August 2014; the second was fielded on a national sample of 1005 American adults in December 2018. In each study, the main survey instrument consisted of two questionnaires.

At the beginning of the first questionnaire, participants were instructed:

For the first set of questions, we’re going to present you with a series of policy proposals. Please indicate the degree of support you would feel towards the proposed policies if politicians in the US took each position.

Participants were then presented with a list of 12 policy proposals covering a mix of domestic and foreign political issues (discussed in greater detail below, and presented in full in Appendix §1.1). For each proposal, participants indicated their degree of support on a Likert response scale ranging from 1 (extremely unsupportive) to 7 (extremely supportive).10

9See Appendix §1.3 for further discussion of the sample.
10In Appendix §2.4, we test for and find little evidence of order effects.
After participants completed the questionnaire indicating their support for each proposal, they then were presented with a second questionnaire, in which they were instructed:

Now, we would like for you to think about these issues in a different way.

If you heard that leaders from a political party were taking the issue positions described below, which party would you guess was probably the one taking that position?

Participants were then presented the same 12 policy proposals as before, but this time, asked to indicate which party was more likely to be the one taking the position, using the response options “Definitely Democratic leaders”, “ Probably Democratic leaders”, “ Probably Republican leaders”, “ Definitely Republican leaders”, “ Both Democrats and Republicans”, and “ Neither Democrats nor Republicans”. Thus, whereas the first questionnaire measures participants’ own feelings towards these proposals, the second uses these proposals to tap into the partisan stereotypes participants hold about each of the two major political parties. Finally, participants completed a short demographic questionnaire.

Although the layout of the survey was relatively straightforward from the perspective of the participants, it contained a relatively complex randomization protocol. First, to avoid potential order effects, we randomized the order in which each of the policy proposals were presented within each questionnaire. Second, for eight of the policy issues (listed in full in Table 1 in Appendix §1.1), we randomly varied the content of each proposal: for trade policy, for example, half of the participants were presented with a protectionist policy proposal, and the other half with a free trade policy proposal. This technique not only avoids conflating partisan types with issue ownership, but allows us to study a wide variety of policy proposals without inducing concerns about respondent fatigue, or the demand effects that would likely arise if each respondent were evaluating multiple policy proposals on the same issue. This randomization carried over across both questionnaires, so participants who were given a protectionist proposal in the first questionnaire, for example, were also given a protectionist proposal in the second.

Third, because it is possible that partisan types manifest themselves not with the goal of a policy, but with the tactics, for four of the foreign policy proposals (listed in full in Table 2 in Appendix §1.1), we held the purpose of each policy fixed, but varied the approach: namely, whether the policy was conducted multilaterally or unilaterally. Here, we employed a nested randomization structure. One third of participants were assigned to a pure control condition, in which, for each of these four policies,
we only presented the central purpose of the policy but did not mention how it would be conducted. For
the remaining two-thirds of participants, respondents were randomly presented with either a unilateral
or a multilateral version of each policy; each approach was randomized at the item-level, such that some
participants were in the multilateral condition for some policies, and the unilateral condition for the
others.11 Because random assignment allowed for different participants to evaluate different versions of
each policy, study 1 obtains results for 28 different policy statements in total.

Study 2 has an identical format as its predecessor, but included a slightly different set of 23 policy
proposals (listed in Appendix §1.2), some of which had also been administered in the previous study. In
this manner, the two surveys therefore obtain results for 51 policy statements altogether, representing
32 unique policies. Although the list of policies covered here is obviously not exhaustive, it nonetheless
reflects a relatively wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues, from economic issues to social
ones, from general foreign policy predilections, to specific foreign policy interventions. This breadth not
only bolsters the generalizability of our results, but also enables us to test whether participants espouse
systematically different partisan types in domestic issues than in foreign policy ones, and also test how
these partisan types change over time.

5 Results: what do partisan types look like in foreign policy?

We present our initial results in three stages. First, we look at stereotype content, showing that the
average types assigned to foreign policy issues tend to be less stark than for domestic political issues,
although some crossover issues display more distinct types. Second, we look at stereotype intensity,
showing that partisan types in foreign affairs are generally perceived as relatively less intense than
their domestic counterparts. Finally, we model variations in stereotype intensity in a multivariate
context, estimating a series of mixed effect models that suggest that there is an impressive amount of
congruence between the partisan stereotypes Americans hold, and the actual distributions of partisan
support: partisan stereotypes are more intense on issues where the policy preferences of Republicans
and Democrats differ the most. We obtain similar results longitudinally as well, showing that changes
in stereotype content between 2014-18 closely track with actual changes in the partisan composition of
these policies’ support during this time period: the correlation between changes in stereotype content
and partisan changes in policy preferences is very high ($r = 0.85$). Based on these results, it appears the

11 In this manner, we avoid potential contamination effects that would result if the pure control was also assigned at the
item level.
relative weakness of partisan types is due not to the public’s ignorance, but to partisan types generally being less distinctive than political scientists often assume.

5.1 Stereotype content

Figures 2-3 present the average stereotype content of each of our 51 policy proposals from the two studies, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals derived from $B = 1500$ bootstraps. In addition to the point estimates, the figures include light grey lines connecting each pair of treatments (or, triad of treatments, for the foreign policy approach conditions) on a given issue. Thus, the longer the grey line, the more distinct the stereotypes, and the greater the treatment effect of switching from one policy stance (e.g. interventionism) to another (e.g. isolationism). The figures show that the magnitude of the differences in stereotype content between policy pairs varies dramatically across issues. In both studies, domestic issues display a large and intuitive symmetry between opposing policy proposals: for example, a pro-choice policy has a relatively Democratic type ($\hat{x} = 0.25$ in 2014, $\hat{x} = 0.27$ in 2018), while an anti-abortion policy has a relatively Republican one ($\hat{x} = 0.71$ in 2014, $\hat{x} = 0.72$ in 2018), such that the treatment effect for switching stances on abortion is extremely large (a 46 or 44 percentage point change in the stereotype content scale, respectively). This is consistent with other domestic issues as well; of the domestic political issues in each study, the average size of the treatment effects of switching from one stance to another on stereotype content is 40 percentage points in 2014, and 37 percentage points in 2018.

Of the foreign policy issues in the middle panels, we see considerable variation both across issues and across time. The foreign policy issue where we observe the most distinct partisan types is immigration, which is frequently understood as a crossover issue bridging the divide between domestic politics and foreign policy (e.g. Coleman, 2008), and features a 32 percentage point treatment effect, consistent with the salience of the issue in both the 2016 presidential campaign and 2018 midterm election. Partisan types on military spending are also relatively distinct in both years (a 30 percentage point treatment effect in 2014, and a 24 percentage point treatment effect in 2018). Yet for other foreign policy issues — particularly those most squarely in the realm of foreign affairs — partisan types become less distinct: the treatment effect for arms control is 15 percentage points in 2014, which shrinks to 9 percentage points in 2018. Interestingly, Democrats are seen as slightly more dovish than Republicans, but the effect size pales in comparison with the domestic political issues we present here.

We see particularly striking effects for trade and isolationism. In 2014, the two parties were per-
Figure 2: Stereotype content: average partisan types for each issue (study 1)

The average stereotypes participants suggested for each of the 28 different issues measured in study 1, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals. The light grey lines connect pairs (or triads) of treatments for a given issue: the longer the line, the more distinct the stereotypes, and the greater the effect of switching from one policy stance (e.g., interventionism) to another (e.g., isolationism).
The average stereotypes participants suggested for each of the 23 different issues measured in study 2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals. The light grey lines connect pairs (or triads) of treatments for a given issue: the longer the line, the more distinct the stereotypes, and the greater the effect of switching from one policy stance (e.g. interventionism) to another (e.g. isolationism).
ceived as relatively similar on both issues: switching from a protectionist stance to a free trade stance produced a treatment effect of only 3 percentage points, while switching from an isolationist stance to an interventionist one produced a treatment effect of only 1 percentage point. A very different pattern of results emerged in 2018. In the intervening four years, Donald Trump made opposition to free trade deals like NAFTA, and an inward-looking foreign policy, major tenets of his 2016 presidential election campaign, as well as his policy agenda once in office. As a result, we see partisan types on trade and isolationism become more distinct in our 2018 study: switching from protectionism to free trade then caused a 13 percentage point treatment effect, and isolationism to interventionism a 10 percentage point treatment effect. Yet despite the centrality of these issues, it is striking how much less distinct these partisan stereotypes remain when compared to the domestic issues under consideration: in 2018, the treatment effects for isolationism are 30% the size of the treatment effect for taxes, or 27% of the size of treatment effects for gun control, for example. Even in the Trump era, then, the content of partisan types is notably less distinct for many foreign policy issues.

Finally, foreign policy approaches — whether an intervention is conducted multilaterally or unilaterally — display extremely small treatment effects (averaging 3 percentage points in each study); there is some indication that unilateral missions are more strongly associated with the Republican party, but not consistently so, and the effect sizes are modest; the principal policy objective (Jentleson, 1992) matters more for stereotype content than the approach itself.

These stereotype content findings reveal a number of key patterns. First, we find significant variation in the distinctiveness of partisan types across different types of issues. Domestic political issues tend to display relatively stark partisan types, while foreign affairs issues (including interventionism, multilateralism, and trade) generally do not. However, partisan types don’t stop at the water’s edge altogether: the two parties are seen as clearly distinct in some crossover issues, especially defense spending, or immigration in 2018.

5.2 Stereotype intensity

Figure 4 presents the intensity of partisan types, which measure the strength of the association respondents perceive between each policy proposal and the political parties. Here, our interest is less in the treatment effects of contradictory policy stances (which should exert an impact on stereotype content, rather than stereotype intensity, since it focuses on the extremity of the stereotype, rather than its direction), and more on the average stereotype intensity for each policy issue. As the plot suggests,
The average strength of stereotypes participants suggested for each of the 51 different policy statements across studies 1-2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
domestic political issues are seen as displaying significantly more intense partisan types than foreign policy issues are, with the exception of military spending (in 2014) or immigration (in 2018).

As with the stereotype content results, then, these findings should reassure those scholars concerned about the potential collapse of bipartisanship in foreign policy. At the same time, they also suggest some important scope conditions for signaling models relying on partisan types in foreign policy: if the two parties have relatively weak partisan types on foreign policy issues like multilateralism, interventionism, arms control, and trade, it suggests leaders should gain less advantage from going against their party’s type on those issues than on others like military spending or immigration.

5.2.1 Assessing the accuracy of partisan types

If partisan types are social facts, the question of their objective accuracy is a secondary one, since socially shared beliefs can have real consequences regardless of their veracity (Searle, 1995). For party-based “against type” effects to be substantively strong in foreign affairs, for example, it matters less how objectively distinct the two parties are from one another, and more how distinct the parties are perceived to be by the domestic audience. Nonetheless, the question of accuracy suggests two diametrically opposed interpretations of the findings presented above. The first is that the generally weak findings for partisan types in foreign policy simply show how ignorant or inattentive the public is about world affairs: although political scientists may know that Republicans are from Mars and Democrats are from Venus, the public itself may be too disconnected to recognize these clear partisan gaps (e.g. Guisinger, 2009; Kertzer, 2013). A very different interpretation is that the weakness of partisan types in foreign policy is not an indictment of the public, but rather, approximates the actual degree of ideological differences between the two parties on foreign policy issues.

There are two types of benchmarks one can use to measure stereotype accuracy. The first is attitudinal: assessing the congruence between participants’ second-order beliefs and their first-order preferences, thereby testing whether the issues where respondents perceive the greatest partisan gaps are the issues where the gaps themselves are the greatest. The second is behavioral: analyzing the historical record, and assessing how differently the two parties have behaved when in office. Given space constraints and the sheer number of issues examined in the experimental design, it is well beyond the scope of this article to offer a systematic behavioral test. Instead, we offer a set of four attitudinal tests: (i) studying the individual- and issue-level correlates of stereotype intensity in our data using a set of linear mixed models, (ii) assessing the accuracy of respondents’ second-order beliefs by analyzing the relationship
between issue-level polarization and stereotype intensity, (iii) investigating whether the partisan type
gap between domestic and foreign issues shrinks among more politically sophisticated respondents, and
(iv) examining the strength of the relationship between changes in stereotype content between 2014-18
and actual changes in partisan preferences during this same time period.

These tests have important implications both positively and normatively. If issue-level polarization
is strongly correlated with stereotype intensity, and changes in partisan stereotypes over time are strongly
correlated with actual changes in partisan preferences, it suggests our respondents’ stereotypes about
Republicans and Democrats in foreign affairs largely track with what Republicans and Democrats in
the mass public actually think. And, if more politically sophisticated respondents — who tend to be
more ideological, and more likely to receive cues from elites (Zaller, 1992) — are no less likely to perceive
a stereotype intensity gap between foreign and domestic policy issues than their less sophisticated
counterparts, it suggests that this gap is less likely to be due to mass ignorance.

Table 1: Linear mixed models: respondent-level and issue-level correlates of stereotype intensity

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*p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01. All models include random effects for respondents, 
issues, and years. See Appendix §2.3 for results from an ordinal mixed model.

To differentiate between these alternate interpretations, we estimate a series of linear mixed effect
models in Table 1. The first model in Table 1 estimates a simple one-way ANOVA, simply partitioning the variance in the responses to determine how much of the variation in stereotype intensity can be attributed to characteristics of respondents, rather than characteristics of the policy proposals themselves. Consistent with other work emphasizing the considerable heterogeneity of the public (e.g., Kertzer, 2013), an analysis of the intraclass correlation ($\rho = 4.43$) finds that there is over four times as much variation in the data between respondents than between issues, thereby reinforcing the importance of incorporating respondent-level predictors to explain this variation theoretically.

Thus, the second model in Table 1 adds a series of individual-level covariates: respondents’ age, gender, income, race, education, partisanship and interest in politics (all of which are described in greater detail in Table 2 in Appendix §2). The results show that, on average, more educated respondents (who are more likely to be politically sophisticated) tend to report stronger stereotypes than less educated ones; the same pattern is also detected with measures of self-reported interest in politics. Male respondents tend to provide slightly stronger stereotypes than female ones, and younger respondents tend to report slightly weaker stereotypes than older ones, although supplementary analysis in Appendix §4.3 finds no evidence of cohort effects using generalized additive models (GAMs) to account for potential nonlinearities in the effects of age. The third model in Table 1 finds the same pattern of results, this time also including a measure of the strength of participants’ own preferences on the particular policy proposal. The results show that the stronger participants themselves feel about a policy proposal, the stronger a partisan type they attribute to it.4

The fourth model in Table 1 adds our first issue-level predictor: a dichotomous variable for whether the issue is a foreign policy issue or not. Corroborating our earlier findings, foreign policy issues feature approximately 19% lower levels of stereotype intensity than domestic issues. Finally, the fifth model adds a measure of how polarized the respondents themselves were on party lines about each of the $j$ policy statements we surveyed here, calculating polarization by estimating the absolute value of the difference between Republicans’ and Democrats’ average level of support for each policy proposal ($|\bar{p}_{R,j} - \bar{p}_{D,j}|$). Including a polarization measure as an issue-level predictor in the hierarchical model provides a means of investigating how accurate these partisan types are, telling us the extent to which variation in stereotypicality maps onto actual variation in partisan polarization amongst our respondents. Importantly, the effect of the polarization measure is both substantively large and statistically significant: moving

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12In Appendix §2.3, we also replicate the results with an ordinal cumulative link mixed model to take the ordinal structure of the data into account, showing our results hold either way.
13In Appendix §4.2, we conduct robustness tests to suggest that this association is not attributable to order-induced priming effects.
from the least to the most polarized issue amongst our respondents is associated with a 17.0% increase in stereotypicality. In other words, Americans see less distinct partisan types in foreign policy issues because their peers display less distinct partisan types in foreign policy issues. In this sense, on average, the stereotypes Americans believe about the policy preferences of partisans are relatively accurate.

A series of supplementary analyses in Appendix §2.3 offer further support for this interpretation. First, we replicate the fourth model in Table 1, but this time including an interaction term between the foreign policy issue variable and participants’ level of education. We also estimate another version of this same model, but this time interacting the foreign policy issue variable with participants’ level of interest in politics. In both models, the interaction term is statistically significant, and negative: more politically sophisticated participants assign relatively weaker types to foreign policy issues than domestic political ones, rather than stronger ones. The more educated or politically engaged participants are, the more they know that foreign policy issues display relatively weaker types, perhaps because they have a better sense of the partisan landscape. Similarly, when we replicate the fifth model from Table 1, but this time interacting the polarization variable with political interest or education, the interactions are positive and significant, reconfirming that more politically sophisticated respondents more accurately gauge how Republicans and Democrats think.

Finally, we exploit the fact that 19 of the 32 unique policy proposals were fielded in both the 2014 and 2018 surveys, which lets us test whether the issues in which Republicans and Democrats’ policy preferences changed the most in this time period are the issues about which partisan types changed the most as well. Figure 5 presents a scatterplot in which the x-axis is the difference-in-difference between Republicans and Democrats’ policy preferences between 2018 and 2014 ((\(\bar{p}_{2018,R} - \bar{p}_{2014,R}\) - \(\bar{p}_{2018,D} - \bar{p}_{2014,D}\)): the further to the right an issue proposal is located on the x-axis, the more Republicans increased in their favorability of the issue proposal over time compared to Democrats. The y-axis measures \(\bar{x}_{2018} - \bar{x}_{2014}\), the change in stereotype content over time: the higher the value, the more Republican the partisan type became.

Two points are evident here. First, most of the policy proposals we examined here cluster near the (0, 0) point, indicating they were fairly stable over time — both in terms of the actual partisan composition of their bases of support, and in the partisan stereotypes respondents had about who the supporters of these policies were. Despite popular commentary emphasizing the extent to which the rise of Donald Trump has corresponded with a fundamental transformation of American foreign policy preferences, these effects appear relatively limited for most issues. Yet some issues show large changes.
Figure 5: Changes in second-order beliefs from 2014-18 reflect changes in first-order preferences

The x-axis measures \( \bar{p}_{2018,R} - \bar{p}_{2014,R} \) – \( \bar{p}_{2018,D} - \bar{p}_{2014,D} \), the difference-in-difference in Republicans' and Democrats' policy preferences between 2014 and 2018, while the y-axis measures \( \bar{x}_{2018} - \bar{x}_{2014} \), the change in stereotype content from 2014-18, for each of the 19 policy proposals fielded in both the 2014 and 2018 studies. The further to the right an issue proposal is located on the x-axis, the more Republicans in our surveys increased in their favorability of the issue proposal over time compared to Democrats; the further up an issue proposal is located on the y-axis, the more Republican the partisan type became in the eyes of our respondents. The plot thus shows two things: first, most policy proposals remain clustered close to (0, 0), but some change significantly over time (in foreign policy, isolationism and protectionism in particular). Second, changes in stereotype content are highly correlated with the actual changes in partisan preferences over time \( (r = 0.85) \), offering further evidence of the collective rationality of the public. The plot also includes a loess smoother with 95% confidence intervals.
Raising taxes on the wealthy, for example, was seen as a starkly Democratic policy in 2014, but by 2018 was seen as a policy that members of both parties might be willing to support. In the context of foreign affairs, protectionism and isolationism were seen as much more Republican in 2018 than they were in 2014.

Second, and importantly, the correlation between partisan changes in policy preferences and changes in stereotype content is extremely high ($r = 0.85$): the more Republicans support a particular policy over time, the more Republican the partisan type becomes. This longitudinal pattern nicely mirrors the cross-sectional pattern reported in the mixed effect models in Table 1 linking actual levels of partisan polarization with stereotype intensity, and offers further evidence of the collective rationality of the public. As Figures 1-2 in Appendix §2.1 show, individually, many Americans get these stereotypes wrong; on average, however, they characterize the partisan distribution of opinion on both domestic and foreign policy issues relatively well.

6 Discussion

Our findings raise a number of important implications and areas for future research. First, we show systematic variation in the distinctiveness of partisan types across foreign policy issues: partisan types are relatively weak across many traditional foreign policy issues (such as arms control, interventionism, unilateralism, and trade), while more distinct in those crossover foreign policy issues that relate most closely to domestic politics, like defense spending or immigration. Better understanding the origins of this variation is an important question for future work. Indeed, one of the virtues of our experimental design is that we focus on 32 different policies rather than just one or two, allowing us to detect variation that would otherwise be obscured. In this sense, although we examined a very wide range of foreign policy issues in this study, it would obviously be valuable for future research to analyze additional issues.

It should also be noted that although partisan types are not particularly distinct in most foreign policy issues in the United States, the same may not be true elsewhere. It is therefore worth conducting similar studies in other countries. On the one hand, one consequence of America’s hegemonic role in the international system is that the left-wing party in the American party system is generally more hawkish and interventionist than left-wing parties in many other countries, such that partisan types in foreign affairs could likely be more distinct elsewhere. On the other hand, countries with less material capabilities also have less ability to carry out interventionist foreign policies, providing less of
an opportunity for differentiation on at least some of these dimensions.

An additional interpretation might be that, although the results are mixed news for partisan types in IR, individual leaders can cultivate types of their own, such that they can choose to go against their own type rather than that of their party as a whole. Yet as noted above, this suggests important scope conditions for against type models: in order to gain traction from going against type, one must have successfully built up a type in the first place. Indeed, the reason why the American politics literature turned to “party brand” heuristics was precisely out of a concern that members of the mass public lack the time and capacity to discern individual candidates’ positions across every political issue. If leaders need to rely on personal types in order to leverage against type effects, for many political leaders this should make going against type harder, rather than easier.

Although this article focused on partisan types in the eyes of the mass public, future scholarship should turn to elites: both in measuring their second-order beliefs about partisan preferences in foreign affairs, and in exploring how they attempt to cultivate and maintain these types in the first place. This is particularly valuable because it is possible that partisan differences in foreign policy issues may be more pronounced among elites. At the same time, if these partisan differences really are so strong, and elite cue-taking is as powerful as many scholars claim (Zaller, 1992; Baum and Groeling, 2009), it raises the question of why distinct partisan types amongst elites don’t spill over into the masses. Moreover the significant negative interaction terms between foreign policy issues and political interest and education we report here suggests that the citizens who should be the most likely to receive elite cues are also the least likely to see distinct foreign policy types.

Thinking about elite incentives, however, also raises a broader theoretical puzzle for future work. Most models of against type behavior are one-shot games, where a receiver is uncertain about the quality of a policy, a sender provides a signal, the receiver updates based on the contents of the signal and its beliefs about the sender, and formulates support, whereupon the game ends. However, if leaders have an incentive to go against type in order to bolster support, and publics update their beliefs about the leader’s type over time, the long-run dynamics are worth exploring. Suppose a simple model featuring a politician trying to acquire the support of the median voter, who has beliefs \( b \) about the politician’s type that are common knowledge. In each iteration, the politician carries out a policy \( x_t = 0, 1 \), designed to maximize the voter’s support \( y_t \). If \( y_t = f(x_t|b) \), the politician should go against type by choosing the policy that maximizes the distance from \( b \). If the process repeats, however, \( b \) should change over time, as the voter updates based on \( x \). Although the setup is deliberately simple, the intuition it
conveys is worth emphasizing. If parties begin with a distinct type, which gives them an incentive to go against type in order to bolster public support, and citizens update their assessments of type based on actual behavior, the advantages of going against type should narrow over time as parties’ type erodes, or even changes. This is particularly relevant given the results from our data, which suggest that Donald Trump has shifted the content of Republicans’ type on trade and isolationism. Akin to the parable of “the boy who cried wolf”, for against type effects to be powerful, they therefore must be used sparingly. “Sister Souljah moments” can only be momentary — as the “party trespassing” literature in American politics implies (Norpoth and Buchanan, 1992; Holian, 2004).

It is thus valuable for future work to consider modeling the long-run implications of against type effects. This is also worth thinking about because historically, different presidents have approached their party’s type in foreign policy in very different ways. Nixon first built up — and then went against — his party’s type in traditional foreign policy issues in order to achieve his political goals, whereas Trump has doubled down on Republicans' foreign policy type on some issues (e.g. defense spending), but gone against it in others (e.g. trade). This raises interesting questions about how presidents chose which partisan types to buttress, and which ones to buck: given a wide range of foreign policy issues, which foreign policy types do presidents choose to double down on, and which ones do they choose to move away from? Do presidents get more credit for doing so with respect to certain kinds of foreign policy issues rather than others? It also raises important questions about the interdependence of partisan types across issue areas: Senator John McCain cultivated a reputation as a “maverick” but did so largely by going against his party’s type on domestic issues, rather than foreign ones; being consistent on the latter gave him more degrees of freedom with the former. Exploring questions such as these is an important area for future work.

7 Conclusion

As interest in the domestic politics of foreign policy grows, political scientists are increasingly interested in the role that partisan types held by the public — and parties’ ability to go against them — play in international affairs. Nevertheless, there has been surprisingly little empirical work that systematically examines partisan types in foreign policy. In this paper, field two survey experiments to explore the range of issues in which distinct partisan types exist, and how they change over time. We find that partisan types vary considerably across different foreign policy issues, but are generally less distinct and
less intense than in domestic political issues. Moreover, benchmarking our findings against participants’ own partisan preferences, both cross-sectionally and longitudinally, our results also suggest that this relative weakness of partisan types in foreign policy is not necessarily due to the public’s ignorance, but because the degree of partisan polarization in the mass public on many foreign policy issues is perhaps less stark than many political scientists assume.

In this sense, our findings have implications for a range of questions about the nature of public opinion in both domestic and foreign policy issues. One of the traditional justifications for top-down theories of public opinion in IR was that the public’s general lack of knowledge about foreign policy should make it a domain where the public is especially reliant on cues from elites (Kertzer and Zeitzoff, 2017). Yet, if the two parties are perceived as less distinct in foreign issues than domestic ones, our findings suggest a range of foreign policy issues where elite cues may be relatively harder for the public to follow, leading the public to anchor many of its foreign policy views on other considerations instead, such as core values (Rathbun et al., 2016).

Similarly, the close correspondence between partisan stereotypes and the actual distribution of partisan support in our samples is consistent with a more optimistic wave of public opinion scholarship pointing to the public’s collective rationality. Just as the public’s aggregate foreign policy preferences seem to respond sensibly to world events (Page and Shapiro, 1992), its second-order beliefs seem to respond sensibly to changes in partisan opinion. These findings thus challenge longstanding assumptions in American politics that the public is too ignorant about policy to be able to have meaningful opinions or accurately characterize policy positions (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964), or which point to the inaccuracy of the public’s second-order beliefs (Ahler, 2014; Levendusky and Malhotra, 2016).

Our results also have important ramifications for the large literature that examines the prospect of bipartisanship in foreign policy. Many studies outline reasons why bipartisanship is now likely to be elusive in foreign policy-making (e.g. Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2007; Busby and Monten, 2008; Snyder, Shapiro and Bloch-Elkon, 2009; Mellow, 2011; Bafumi and Parent, 2012; Hurst, 2014; Musgrave, 2019). Our study offers support for the alternative position in this debate by Chaudoin, Milner and Tingley (2010) and Bushy et al. (2013) that foreign policy polarization in the mass public is likely less extreme than some critics allege.

They also have important implications for against type models that are rapidly proliferating in the field. Our results suggest that political elites seeking to bolster support from the mass public by going against their partisan type are perhaps more limited in the range of foreign policy issues in which they
can do so than many IR scholars realize. Given that against type models were imported into IR from domains where types were extremely well defined (e.g. legislative politics, where a bureaucracy’s position on its own issue area is abundantly clear), our findings suggest caution in whether the assumptions that motivate these signaling models so well in other domains are present in foreign policy. Recent experimental work has found support for against type models in IR (e.g. Saunders, 2018; Mattes and Weeks, 2019a) using hypothetical vignettes that explicitly define the sender’s type on participants’ behalf, thereby bracketing the role of prior beliefs. Our findings suggest these beliefs are worthy of study in their own right as well.

Finally, they have important implications for the study of interstate conflict more generally. Although our focus here was on partisan types in the eyes of domestic audiences, IR scholars often argue that foreign audiences perceive these distinctions as well, affecting the likelihood of Democratic and Republican administrations being targeted in disputes, or having their threats or concessions reciprocated (e.g. Prins, 2001; Koch and Cranmer, 2007; Foster, 2008; Clare, 2014). The strategic conflict avoidance literature, for example, argues that foreign leaders are more likely to stay out the way when Republicans are in power, but target the United States when Democrats are in charge, precisely because the latter’s constituents are seen as significantly more dovish than the former (Clark, Fordham and Nordstrom, 2011, see also Williams, 2014). Our results here raise interesting questions about the microfoundations of these findings. If Americans perceive partisan types as being relatively weak and indistinct in foreign affairs, and these stereotypes closely mirror the actual topography of partisan support, why would partisan types be perceived as so stark by foreign audiences?

One interpretation is that our findings are simply an artifact of the contemporary political environment, such that partisan types were more distinct in the past in foreign policy issues in the United States than they are today. In this case, though, this would suggest the interstate conflict literature’s findings are similarly time-bound: which party occupies the White House should no longer affect foreign leaders’ assessments of American resolve or credibility. Another interpretation is that foreign audiences’ stereotypes about partisan beliefs are less accurate than domestic perceptions of partisan types are, raising interesting questions about where these stereotypes come from, and how long they persist. Given the extent to which the Democratic party has traditionally been more centrist on foreign policy issues than many left-wing parties in other countries, one possibility is that foreign observers perceive left- and right-wing parties in other countries through the prism of party brands in one’s own country, or that national stereotypes or embedded images condition the effects of party stereotypes, just as
party stereotypes condition the effects of gender stereotypes, for example (Hayes, 2011). Either way, these findings suggest the merits of turning to experimental methods to test these microfoundational assumptions about audiences’ beliefs directly (Kertzer, 2017). Doing so enriches our understanding of the interactions between domestic politics and international affairs.

References


Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. The American


Contents

1 Study instrumentation ........................................ 2
   1.1 Study 1: August 2014 ......................................... 2
       Table 1: Study 1 policy proposals .......................... 3
       Table 2: Study 1 policy proposals (continued) ............ 4
       Table 3: Individual difference variable descriptions ...... 5
   1.2 Study 2: December 2018 ..................................... 6
       Table 4: Study 2 policy proposals .......................... 7
   1.3 Sampling methodology ....................................... 8
       Table 5: Sample characteristics ............................. 8

2 Supplementary analysis ......................................... 9
   2.1 Raw distributions of second-order beliefs .................. 9
       Figure 1: Raw distributions of responses: study 1 ....... 10
       Figure 2: Raw distributions of responses: study 2 ....... 11
   2.2 Alternative measures of partisan types ..................... 12
       Figure 3: Stereotype prevalence: study 1 .................. 14
       Figure 4: Stereotype prevalence: study 2 .................. 15
       Figure 5: Stereotype content (alternate measure): study 1 16
       Figure 6: Stereotype content (alternate measure): study 2 17
       Figure 7: Stereotype intensity (alternate measure): study 1 18
       Figure 8: Stereotype intensity (alternate measure): study 2 19
       Figure 9: Euclidean distance measure of stereotypicality (study 1) 20
       Figure 10: Euclidean distance measure of stereotypicality (study 2) 21
       Figure 11: Ternary plot of Euclidean distance measures (studies 1 and 2) 22
       Figure 12: Stereotype content (dropping “neither” category): study 1 25
       Figure 13: Stereotype content (dropping “neither” category): study 2 26
       Figure 14: Stereotype content by “neither” classification rates (studies 1 and 2) ... 27
   2.3 Political sophistication and stereotype accuracy ............ 28
       Table 6: More politically sophisticated participants are more aware of polarization and see foreign policy issues as relatively less stereotypical 29
       Figure 15: More politically sophisticated respondents see foreign policy issues as relatively less stereotypical 30
       Table 7: Ordinal cumulative link mixed-effect model ........ 31
   2.4 Order effects .................................................. 32
       Figure 16: Little evidence of priming-induced order effects 33
   2.5 Cohort effects ................................................ 34
       Table 8: Generalized additive models find little evidence of cohort effects 36
       Figure 17: Little evidence of cohort effects in perceived stereotypicality 37
1 Study instrumentation

1.1 Study 1: August 2014

Study 1, fielded in August 2014 by Survey Sampling International (SSI) on a national sample of American adults, predominantly consisted of two questionnaires.

At the beginning of the first questionnaire, participants were instructed:

> For the first set of questions, we’re going to present you with a series of policy proposals. Please indicate the degree of support you would feel towards the proposed policies if politicians in the US took each position.

Participants were then presented with a list of 12 policy proposals covering a mix of domestic and foreign political issues (randomly drawn from the 28 proposals presented in Tables 1-2). For each proposal, participants indicated their degree of support on a Likert response scale ranging from 1 (extremely unsupportive) to 7 (extremely supportive).

After participants completed the questionnaire indicating their support for each proposal, they then were presented with a second questionnaire, in which they were instructed:

> Now, we would like for you to think about these issues in a different way.

> If you heard that leaders from a political party were taking the issue positions described below, which party would you guess was probably the one taking that position?

Participants were then presented the same 12 policy proposals as before, but this time, asked to indicate which party was more likely to be the one taking the position, using the response options "Definitely Democratic leaders", "Probably Democratic leaders", "Probably Republican leaders", "Definitely Republican leaders", "Both Democrats and Republicans", and "Neither Democrats nor Republicans". Thus, whereas the first questionnaire measures participants’ own feelings towards
these proposals, the second uses these proposals to tap into the partisan stereotypes participants hold about each of the two major political parties. Finally, participants completed a short demographic questionnaire, collecting the individual difference variables presented in Table 3.

Table 1: Study 1 policy proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Protectionist</th>
<th>Free trade</th>
<th>Pro-environment</th>
<th>Anti-environment</th>
<th>Interventionist</th>
<th>Isolationist</th>
<th>Anti-arms control</th>
<th>Pro-arms control</th>
<th>Increase military spending</th>
<th>Decrease military spending</th>
<th>Pro-gun control</th>
<th>Anti-gun control</th>
<th>Pro-tax hike</th>
<th>Anti-tax hike</th>
<th>Pro-abortion</th>
<th>Anti-abortion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increasing limits on imports of foreign-made products, and refraining from signing more free trade agreements like NAFTA.</td>
<td>Decreasing limits on imports of foreign-made products, and signing more free trade agreements like NAFTA.</td>
<td>Decreasing offshore drilling for oil and gas in U.S. coastal areas and increasing restrictions on drilling on public lands in order to protect the environment.</td>
<td>Increasing offshore drilling for oil and gas in U.S. coastal areas and decreasing restrictions on drilling on public lands in order to increase energy production.</td>
<td>Encouraging the US to play an active role in solving problems around the world.</td>
<td>Discouraging the US from playing an active role in solving problems around the world.</td>
<td>Opposing an arms control treaty that would reduce both US and Russian nuclear arsenals.</td>
<td>Supporting an arms control treaty that would reduce both US and Russian nuclear arsenals.</td>
<td>Increasing military spending to allow the US to better solve international problems.</td>
<td>Decreasing military spending to allow the US to better solve international problems.</td>
<td>Passing a law making the sale of firearms more strict than they are today.</td>
<td>Passing a law lowering restrictions on the sale of firearms.</td>
<td>Passing a new law that would raise taxes on households earning $1 million a year or more.</td>
<td>Passing a new law that would lower taxes on households earning $1 million a year or more.</td>
<td>Allowing abortions to be generally available to those who want it.</td>
<td>Placing stricter limits on abortions than there are now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Participants randomly assigned to receive one version of each of the eight policies (e.g. for trade, either a protectionist policy, or a free trade policy). The order of the policy statements is randomized, along with those from Table 2.
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stop piracy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>Sending American ships to stop overseas piracy in an area critical to the American shipping industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Unilateral</strong></td>
<td>Sending American ships to stop overseas piracy in an area critical to the American shipping industry. The US would seek to stop piracy by deploying US military forces on their own without seeking military assistance from other countries or approval from the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Multilateral</strong></td>
<td>Sending American ships to stop overseas piracy in an area critical to the American shipping industry. The US would seek to stop piracy by deploying US military forces alongside military personnel from many other countries by working through the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enviro sanction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>Placing major sanctions on a country that is violating environmental regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Unilateral</strong></td>
<td>Placing major sanctions on a country that is violating environmental regulations. The US would implement the sanctions by acting alone without seeking approval from the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Multilateral</strong></td>
<td>Placing major sanctions on a country that is violating environmental regulations. The US would implement the sanctions by cooperating with other countries and seeking backing from the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Troops oil</strong></td>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country with oil reserves that has been attacked by its larger neighbor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Unilateral</strong></td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country with oil reserves that has been attacked by its larger neighbor. The US would do so by deploying US ground troops on their own without seeking military assistance from other countries or backing from the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Multilateral</strong></td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country with oil reserves that has been attacked by its larger neighbor. The US would do so by deploying US ground troops alongside the troops provided by many other countries by working through the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Troops humanitarian</strong></td>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country against attacks by its larger neighbor in order to protect civilians who are being brutally attacked. The attacks include mass rapes and slaughters, particularly of members of ethnic minority groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Unilateral</strong></td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country against attacks by its larger neighbor in order to protect civilians who are being brutally attacked. The attacks include mass rapes and slaughters, particularly of members of ethnic minority groups. The US would do so by deploying US ground troops on their own without seeking military assistance from other countries or backing from the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Multilateral</strong></td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country against attacks by its larger neighbor in order to protect civilians who are being brutally attacked. The attacks include mass rapes and slaughters, particularly of members of ethnic minority groups. The US would do so by deploying US ground troops alongside the troops provided by many other countries by working through the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* participants either assigned to control condition for all four of these policy statements, or a policy approach condition, in which the approach taken (unilateral or multilateral) randomly varies for each item. The order of the statements are randomized, along with those from Table 1.
Table 3: Individual difference variable descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partisanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of preferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue-level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign policy issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polarization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2 Study 2: December 2018

Study 2, fielded in December 2018 by Dynata (formerly Survey Sampling International (SSI)) has an identical format to study 1, but utilizes a slightly different set of policy proposals; respondents were shown 11 policy proposals (randomly drawn from the 23 policy proposals listed in Table 4). 19 of the 23 policies had also been fielded in Study 1, allowing for comparisons of how partisan types have evolved between the Obama and Trump administrations. The remaining four policy proposals were new proposals, two on domestic politics (affirmative action), and two on a non-traditional foreign policy issue (immigration), selected using the “Most Important Problem” results from a Gallup poll fielded the same month as our survey. The full list of policy proposals fielded in the second study is presented in Table 4. Altogether, then, the two studies measure partisan types about 32 unique policy proposals (51 policy proposals in total).

\footnote{The other two issues in the top four for the month, “Government”, and “Unifying the Country”, were less amenable to being distilled into specific policy proposals. See https://news.gallup.com/poll/245513/healthcare-immigration-down-important-problem.aspx.}
Table 4: Study 2 policy proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Protectionist</th>
<th>Free trade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increasing limits on imports of foreign-made products, and refraining from signing more free trade agreements like NAFTA. Decreasing limits on imports of foreign-made products, and signing more free trade agreements like NAFTA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decreasing offshore drilling for oil and gas in U.S. coastal areas and increasing restrictions on drilling on public lands in order to protect the environment. Increasing offshore drilling for oil and gas in U.S. coastal areas and decreasing restrictions on drilling on public lands in order to increase energy production.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Encouraging the US to play an active role in solving problems around the world. Discouraging the US from playing an active role in solving problems around the world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Opposing an arms control treaty that would reduce both US and Russian nuclear arsenals. Supporting an arms control treaty that would reduce both US and Russian nuclear arsenals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Increasing military spending to allow the US to better solve international problems. Decreasing military spending to allow the US to better solve international problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Passing a law making the sale of firearms more strict than they are today. Passing a law lowering restrictions on the sale of firearms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Passing a new law that would raise taxes on households earning $1 million a year or more. Passing a new law that would lower taxes on households earning $1 million a year or more.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Allowing abortions to be generally available to those who want it. Placing stricter limits on abortions than there are now.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reforming America’s immigration policy by increasing the number of immigrants to the United States. Reforming America’s immigration policy by decreasing the number of immigrants to the United States.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Supporting affirmative action programs designed to increase the number of racial minorities in colleges and universities. Opposing affirmative action programs designed to increase the number of racial minorities in colleges and universities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sending American troops to defend a country against attacks by its larger neighbor in order to protect civilians who are being brutally attacked. The attacks include mass rapes and slaughters, particularly of members of ethnic minority groups. Sending American troops to defend a country against attacks by its larger neighbor in order to protect civilians who are being brutally attacked. The attacks include mass rapes and slaughters, particularly of members of ethnic minority groups. The US would do so by deploying US ground troops on their own without seeking military assistance from other countries or backing from the United Nations. Sending American troops to defend a country against attacks by its larger neighbor in order to protect civilians who are being brutally attacked. The attacks include mass rapes and slaughters, particularly of members of ethnic minority groups. The US would do so by deploying US ground troops alongside the troops provided by many other countries by working through the United Nations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Participants randomly assigned to receive one version of each of the eleven policies (e.g. for trade, either a protectionist policy, or a free trade policy). The order of the policy statements is randomized.
1.3 Sampling methodology

Both the 2014 and 2018 surveys were fielded by Dynata (known in 2014 as SSI). Dynata panels employ an opt-in recruitment method, after which panel participants are randomly selected for survey invitations, using population targets rather than quotas to produce a nationally diverse sample of registered voters. As the sample characteristics in Table 5 show, because of the recruitment technique the sample is nationally diverse, although not a national probability sample; for other examples of recent political science articles using SSI/Dynata samples, see Barker, Hurwitz and Nelson (2008); Healy, Malhotra and Mo (2010); Popp and Rudolph (2011); Kam (2012); Malhotra and Margalit (2010); Malhotra, Margalit and Mo (2013); Berinsky, Margolis and Sances (2014); Kertzer and Brutger (2016); Kertzer and Zeitzoff (2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2018 (Weighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.518</td>
<td>0.524</td>
<td>0.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.476</td>
<td>0.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 18-24</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>0.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 25-44</td>
<td>0.357</td>
<td>0.371</td>
<td>0.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 45-64</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.371</td>
<td>0.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 65+</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: High school or less</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>0.244</td>
<td>0.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: Some college</td>
<td>0.261</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: College/university</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>0.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: Graduate/professional school</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>0.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>0.472</td>
<td>0.408</td>
<td>0.471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.230</td>
<td>0.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td>0.362</td>
<td>0.372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 also shows that the 2014 and 2018 samples differ slightly in composition (the 2014 sample skews older than the 2018 sample does, for example), which may have important implications when comparing partisan types between the two years. In supplementary analyses we therefore also reweight the 2018 survey using entropy balancing (Hainmueller, 2012) to more closely approximate the composition of the 2014 sample, although the same patterns of results obtain regardless of whether weights are used.
2 Supplementary analysis

2.1 Raw distributions of second-order beliefs

Figures 1-2 present the raw distributions of responses from for each of the 51 policy proposals across the two studies. The panels show that the distributions differ markedly by policy issue. To study them more systematically, we therefore turn to our measures of partisan types introduced in the main text.
Figure 1: Raw distributions of responses: study 1

Distribution of responses by policy proposal
Figure 2: Raw distributions of responses: study 2
2.2 Alternative measures of partisan types

The main text focuses on two relatively simple measures of partisan type. The first is stereotype content: on average, which party is associated with each policy? We measure stereotype content using the arithmetic mean ($\bar{x} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} x_i$). The second is stereotype intensity: how strongly is the policy associated with a given party? We measure stereotype intensity by taking the mean of the absolute value, re-centered along the scale midpoint ($|\bar{z}| = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} |z_i|$, $z_i = x_i - 0.5$). We utilize these measures in the main text since they are relatively simple, and correspond to statistics (the mean and absolute value) that will likely be familiar to many political scientists.

At the same time, however, there are a number of alternate measures of partisan types, six of which we present below.

First, we might simply be interested in stereotype prevalence: what proportion of the sample is willing to associate a policy proposal with a particular political party? There are debates amongst psychologists about how crucial consensus is for stereotypes (e.g. Jussim, 2012; Judd, Park and Kintsch, 1993), but in a political science context, just as social facts are predicated upon intersubjectivity, partisan types are the most powerful when they are widely held. If only a small segment of the population associates an issue with a particular party, it may still be politically relevant, but is of less interest to us than if a majority of the population makes the association. More formally, we can measure stereotype prevalence for a given policy proposal by calculating the proportion of respondents who don’t choose the “both” or “neither” categories ($p(x_i \neq 0.5)$).

The measures of stereotype content and stereotype intensity reported in the text already take stereotype prevalence into account (the greater the proportion of respondents who choose “both” or “neither”, the less distinct the stereotype content, and the weaker the stereotype intensity), but we may also wish to calculate revised measures of stereotype content and intensity that focus solely on the second-order beliefs of those respondents who were willing to assign a type for a given policy in the first place. In that case, the revised measure of stereotype content ($\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} x_i$, $x_i \neq 0.5$) has a subtly different interpretation: for those participants who did associate a policy with a particular party, on average, how Republican or Democratic a type is it? The revised measure of stereotype intensity ($\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} |z_i|$, $z_i = x_i - 0.5$, $x_i \neq 0.5$) has an analogous interpretation: of those who assigned
A distinct type for a particular policy proposal, how extreme a stereotype was it?

An alternative measure of stereotypicality focuses on the degree of dissimilarity between the observed distribution of responses and distributions that would indicate the weakest possible stereotypes. Two such reference distributions exist: the first would be a uniform distribution $U\{0,1\}$, as would be the case if respondents were choosing randomly across all response options. The second would be a null distribution, in which all respondents chose the “Both” or “Neither” categories. Each reference distribution implies a slightly different substantive interpretation: the closer the observed distribution is to a uniform distribution, the greater the uncertainty it suggests about the partisan type; the closer the observed distribution is to a null distribution, the greater the certainty it suggests about the absence of a partisan type. Distance from the null distribution is thus also closely related to the prevalence measure from above, since it focuses on the proportion of respondents who chose not to assign a distinct type for a given policy.

Finally, the analysis in the main text combines the “both” and “neither” categories to form a single scale midpoint. However, it is also possible to think about each category as implying a subtly different interpretation. To argue that both parties are equally likely to endorse a policy implies an indistinct partisan type due to bi- or cross-partisanship, whereas to argue that neither party would endorse a policy might imply something improbable about the policy proposal itself. An alternate measure of stereotype content and intensity would thus include only the “both” category as the scale midpoint, and omit the “neither”.

Figures 3 - 14 therefore present alternate measures of partisan types for each of our two studies. Figures 3-4 present stereotype prevalence measures for studies 1 and 2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals derived from $B = 1500$ bootstraps. The results show that domestic issues generally display relatively high levels of stereotype prevalence: regardless of whether the policy statements are in favor or opposed, over three quarters of our participants assign a partisan type to abortion, taxes and gun control, for example. In contrast, apart from military spending, the

2 Since respondents had six response options to choose from when evaluating each policy (from definitely Democratic to definitely Republican, with “both” and “neither” as additional options), a uniform distribution would be $(\frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{6})$; because we combine the “both” and “neither” categories to form a single scale midpoint in our analysis above, the relevant reference distribution becomes $(\frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{3})$.

3 Here, because we combine the “both” and “neither” categories to form a single scale midpoint in the analysis above, the relevant reference distribution is $(0, 0, 1, 0, 0)$. 

13
Figure 3: Stereotype prevalence: the proportion of participants who assigned a partisan type on each issue (study 1)

The proportion of respondents who assigned a type to each of the 28 different proposals in study 1, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
Figure 4: Stereotype prevalence: the proportion of participants who assigned a partisan type on each issue (study 2)

The proportion of respondents who assigned a type to each of the 23 different proposals in study 2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
Figure 5: Stereotype content (alternate measure): average partisan types among respondents who assigned types on each issue (study 1)

The average stereotypes among those respondents willing to assign a type for each of the 28 different issues in study 1, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
The average stereotypes among those respondents willing to assign a type for each of the 23 different issues in study 2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
The strength of the stereotypes among those respondents willing to assign a type for each of the 28 different issues in study 1, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
Figure 8: Stereotype intensity (alternate measure): strength of partisan types among respondents who assigned types on each issue (study 2)

The strength of the stereotypes among those respondents willing to assign a type for each of the 23 different issues in study 2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
Figure 9: Euclidean distance measure of stereotypicality (study 1)

A Euclidean-distance-based measure of stereotypicality, comparing the observed distribution of responses for each of the 28 different issues in study 1 with either a uniform or a null distribution, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals. The shorter the distance estimate, the lower the stereotypicality. The figure suggests a uniform distribution is a more reasonable reference point than the null distribution.
Figure 10: Stereotype intensity (alternate measure): strength of partisan types among respondents who assigned types on each issue (study 2)

A Euclidean-distance-based measure of stereotypicality, comparing the observed distribution of responses for each of the 23 different issues in study 2 with either a uniform or a null distribution, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals. The shorter the distance estimate, the lower the stereotypicality. The figure suggests a uniform distribution is a more reasonable reference point than the null distribution.
This ternary plot presents Euclidean distance measures of stereotypicality, comparing the observed distribution of responses for each of the 51 issues in studies 1 and 2 with a uniform distribution (along the base of the triangle; the shorter the distance, the lower the stereotypicality), along with Euclidean distance measures from two other ideal type distributions: a pure Republican type \((0, 0, 0, 1)\) (along the right-hand side of the triangle), and a pure Democratic type \((1, 0, 0, 0)\) (along the left-hand side). The plot shows that the partisan types reported here are closer to the uniform distribution than to the other two ideal types.
stereotype prevalence levels for many of the foreign policy issues in study 1 are relatively low: half of our participants don’t assign a partisan type to a proposal for arms control, and barely more than that for interventionist or isolationist policies and trade policies. The multilateral/unilateral treatments also appear to have relatively little effect when measured by stereotype prevalence. The results in study 2 are similar, although the trade and immigration issues display higher stereotype prevalence rates than the other foreign policy issues.

Figures 5-6 present revised stereotype content measures for studies 1 and 2, depicting the average stereotypes perceived by those respondents willing to assign a type for a specific issue. As expected, it presents similar results to the regular stereotype content measures depicted in the main text, with relatively distinct partisan types for many domestic political issues, and more mixed results foreign policy issues: military spending (in study 1) and immigration (in study 2) display more distinct types, whereas arms control, interventionism, multilateralism and free trade display relatively less distinct ones.

Similarly, Figures 7-8 present revised stereotype intensity measures for studies 1 and 2, depicting the strength of partisan types perceived by those respondents willing to assign a type for a specific issue. It presents similar results to the regular stereotype intensity measures depicted in the main text: in study 1, partisan types in domestic politics issues are significantly more intense than in foreign policy issues (although environmental policy displays weaker types than the other domestic political issues, and military spending displays stronger partisan types than other foreign policy issues). In study 2, we see a similar pattern, with the exception of immigration, which displays a higher level of stereotype intensity.

Figures 9-10 present two Euclidean-distance based measures of stereotypicality, calculating how dissimilar the observed pattern of responses is to two different distributions that would imply the weakest possible stereotypes. The first (depicted in black) calculates the distance from the observed distribution of responses to a uniform distribution, suggesting the highest possible level of uncertainty about a partisan type. The second (shown in grey) calculates the distance to a null distribution in which all respondents choose either the “Both” or “Neither” categories for a given issue, suggesting the highest possible level of certainty about the absence of a partisan type. In both cases, the
shorter the distance, the lower the stereotypicality. Figure 9 shows that domestic political issues are generally higher in stereotypicality than foreign issues; a similar pattern exists in Figure 10, apart from immigration. In both cases, the distance from the uniform distribution is shorter than the distance from the null distribution, suggesting that uncertainty about partisan types is higher than certainty about the absence of partisan types. Figure 11 compares the uniform distribution-based distance measure with Euclidean distance measures from two other ideal type distributions: a distribution in which a type is seen as being definitely Democratic (1, 0, 0, 0, 0), and a distribution in which a type is seen as being definitely Republican (0, 0, 0, 0, 1). The clustering in the ternary plot shows that for all 51 issues in studies 1 and 2, the distance from the uniform distribution is lower than the distance from the other two ideal type distributions, but that there is also variation across issues, and that many of the more stereotypical issues tend to be domestic.

Finally, Figures 12-13 replicate the stereotype content analysis from the main text, but disaggregating the “both” and “neither” categories; the results from before hold. More importantly, Figure 14 replicates Figures 12-13 (displaying stereotype content estimates on the y-axis), while also presenting the proportion of respondents who attributed each issue position to “neither” party. The plot shows that domestic issues tend to have less distinct types than foreign issues, but also that foreign issues have slightly higher “neither” attribution rates (an average of 11.7% for foreign issues, and 8.6% for domestic ones). The issue area where the highest proportion of respondents chose the “neither” category, and the one outlier on the plot, is isolationism in 2014, where over 24% of respondents chose the “neither” category; interestingly, only 16% of them did the same in 2018, showing the extent to which partisan types change over time. This is also consistent with a broader pattern in the data: in general, respondents tended to be slightly less likely to attribute policy proposals to neither party in 2018 than they did in 2014.

In sum, then, the conclusions we draw from Figures 3-14 are highly consistent with those reported from the two simpler measures of partisan types presented in the main text. We see considerable variation in the content and intensity of partisan types across a range of issues, but the strongest and most distinct types tend to be in domestic political issues.
The average stereotypes among respondents (dropping responses in the “neither” category) for each of the 28 different issues in study 1, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
Figure 13: Stereotype content (dropping “neither” category): average partisan types (study 2)

The average stereotypes among respondents (dropping responses in the “neither” category) for each of the 23 different issues in study 2, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals.
For each of the 51 issues from studies 1 and 2, this plot depicts the proportion of respondents who attributed the issue proposal to “neither” Democrats nor Republicans, on the x-axis, and the amended stereotype content scores from Figures 12-13 on the y-axis, which present the average stereotypes presented by respondents who attributed the issue to one or both parties (thereby dropping the “neither” responses). Foreign policy issues are depicted in turquoise, domestic issues in red. The plot shows that domestic issues tend to have less distinct types than foreign issues, but also that foreign issues have slightly higher “neither” rates.
2.3 Political sophistication and stereotype accuracy

Table 1 in the main text presents results from a series of linear mixed effect models (with random effects on both respondents and issues), showing the respondent- and issue-level correlates of respondents’ stereotypicality scores, our aggregate measure of stereotype strength. As we note in the main text, we employ these models as a means of providing an attitudinal benchmark to evaluate the accuracy of the partisan types respondents carry around in their heads. For example, the statistically significant and substantively large positive coefficient for the polarization variable showed that the issues where Republicans and Democrats in our sample were the most polarized were also the issues where respondents perceived the strongest overall partisan types.

Table 6 looks at stereotype accuracy a different way, estimating a series of interaction terms between respondents’ level of political sophistication (as measured by education, and self-reported political interest), and two issue-level covariates: whether the issue is a foreign policy issue or not, and respondents’ levels of partisan polarization. If the relative weakness of partisan types in foreign affairs in our sample compared to their domestic counterparts is simply due to our participants being ignorant of international politics, we would expect that the gap between foreign and domestic issues should shrink as our respondents become more politically sophisticated. Instead, as models 1 and 2 from Table 6 show (also illustrated graphically in Figure 15), the more politically sophisticated respondents are, the weaker the bigger the gap they see between foreign and domestic issues. Models 3 and 4 also demonstrate that there are significant positive interaction effects between polarization and political sophistication, suggesting that although the issues where Republicans and Democrats in our sample were the most polarized were also the issues where our respondents perceived the strongest overall partisan types, the relationship is even stronger amongst our most politically sophisticated respondents, offering further confidence in the validity of our findings.

Finally, whereas Table 1 from the main text treats the stereotypicality measure as if it were continuous by estimating a linear mixed-effect model, as a robustness check Table 7 replicates the results in the main text using a cumulative link mixed effect model with a probit function to relax the assumption of interval-level data; although the interpretation of the coefficient estimates differs because of the probit function, the pattern of results holds.
Table 6: More politically sophisticated participants are more aware of polarization and see foreign policy issues as relatively less stereotypical

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*p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01. Linear mixed-effect model with random effects on both respondents, issues, and years.
Figure 15: More politically sophisticated respondents see foreign policy issues as relatively less stereotypical.

The two panels display the conditional effects from models 1 and 2 of Table 6, with 95% confidence intervals in grey. The left-hand panel displays the effects of foreign policy issues on stereotypicality scores, conditioning on respondents’ levels of education; the right-hand panel does the same, but conditioning on respondents’ levels of political interest instead. Both plots show that regardless of how we operationalize political sophistication, more sophisticated respondents see foreign policy issues as relatively less stereotypical than domestic political issues.
Table 7: Ordinal cumulative link mixed-effect model

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*p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01. Ordered probit cumulative link mixed-effect model with random effects on both respondents and issues.
2.4 Order effects

Although the experimental protocol randomized both which policy proposals were presented to each participant (e.g. half the participants received an interventionist policy proposal, and the other half an isolationist), and the order in which they were presented, the questionnaire measuring policy attitudes was always administered before the questionnaire measuring partisan stereotypes. Although this ordering cannot account for our main finding — the relative weakness of partisan types in foreign issues compared to domestic ones — one possibility is that asking people to think about their own attitudes before asking them to invoke partisan stereotypes primes respondents to anchor their second-order beliefs on their first-order ones, potentially accounting for part of the relationship between the strength of respondents’ own preferences and the respondent-level stereotypicality reported in Table 1 in the main text.

To test for this potential priming effect, we exploit the fact that although the sequence of the two questionnaires was fixed, the order of the questions within each questionnaire was not. For illustrative purposes, suppose two respondents completed the survey in study 1, with different order randomizations. Respondent A ended the first questionnaire (twelve items long) with a question about gun control, and began the second questionnaire (also twelve items long) by answering a question about that same topic. Respondent B was administered the gun control question at the beginning of the first questionnaire, and at the end of the second questionnaire. If we are concerned about priming effects on this issue, we should be more concerned about them for Respondent A (who answered the gun control stereotype question immediately after the gun control policy preference question, such that $Order_{i,j} = 1$) than for Respondent B (who answered 22 different questions in between the two gun control questions, such that $Order_{i,j} = 23$).

Figure 16 thus presents the results from a series of regression models from study 1. Panels (a) and (b) use a respondent-level measure of stereotype prevalence as the dependent variable, whereas panels (c) and (d) use the respondent-level measure of stereotypicality employed in the analysis in Table 2 in the main text. In panel (a), each dot depicts the point estimate (accompanied by 95% confidence intervals) for the marginal effect of the largest possible difference in order randomizations (i.e., $Order_{i,j} = 23$) on stereotype prevalence, controlling for a set of respondent covariates (parti-
Figure 16: Little evidence of priming-induced order effects

For panels (a) and (c), each dot represents a point estimate of the marginal effect of $Order_\Delta_{i,j} = 23$, the largest possible difference in order randomizations for a given issue (accompanied by 95% confidence intervals), in a regression model controlling for a set of respondent-level covariates, estimating separate models for each of the 28 issues from study 1. For panels (b) and (d), the dots instead depict conditional effects, for the interaction between the maximum order randomization difference for a given issue and the strength of respondents’ own preferences on the issue. The results suggest little evidence of priming-induced order effects.
sanship, education, gender, race, age, political interest, income, and participants’ own preference on the issue), estimated separately for each of the 28 issues. In panel (c), each dot depicts the quantity as before, but this time on stereotypicality. In panels (b) and (d), each dot depicts the conditional effect between the strength of participants’ policy preferences and $Order_{i,j} = 23$, accompanied as before by 95% confidence intervals, and controlling for the same respondent demographic covariates listed above. Importantly, we find very little evidence of order effects: only 3 of the 28 marginal effects presented in panel (a), 2 of the 28 marginal effects presented in panel (c), 3 of the 28 conditional effects presented in panel (b), and 2 of the 28 conditional effects presented in panel (d) are significant at the 95% level.

### 2.5 Cohort effects

The mixed linear models in Table 1 in the main text operationalizes age with a linear functional form, finding evidence that older participants perceive slightly weaker stereotypes in general. Combined with the results of the observational data showing how different administrations used force at different rates, this raises the prospect of cohort-based heterogeneity in partisan types, in which individuals from different generations, who witnessed different formative events in American foreign policy may rely on systematically different mental models (Khong, 1992; Schuman and Rieger, 1992; Levy, 1994; Sylvan and Voss, 1998) perceive the stereotypicality of foreign policy issues in systematically different ways.

To test this possibility, we estimate a series of generalized additive models (GAMs) (Keele, 2008) in Table 8, regressing a variety of stereotypicality measures (described in detail below) on participants’ age (modeled with a cubic spline), gender, income, race, education, partisanship, and self-reported level of interest in politics. In the first model of Table 8 (also plotted visually in Figure 17(a)), the dependent variable is each participant’s average stereotypicality score for the six policy statements implicating hawkishness or interventionism (interventionism, isolationism, increasing defense spending, decreasing defense spending, pro-arms control, and anti-arms control). In this manner, we can model the effects of age on perceived stereotypicality of the hawkish or interventionist policies studied with observational data later in the paper in a nonlinear fashion. In model 2 of
Table 8 (plotted in Figure 17(b)) we also include the free trade and protectionist statements, thereby averaging across all 8 of the foreign policy proposals shown in the middle panel of Figures 1 or 2 in the main text. Model 3 of Table 8 (see also Figure 17(c)) focuses instead on the 12 foreign policy approaches shown in the bottom panel of Figures 1 or 2 in the main text, while model 4 of Table 8 (also depicted in Figure 17(d)) average across all 20 foreign policy proposals included in the study. Finally, model 5 of Table 8 (plotted in Figure 17(e)) calculates each respondent’s average difference in stereotypicality between the foreign policy issues and domestic policy issues in the data, enabling us to test how the distinctiveness of partisan types in foreign affairs compared to their domestic counterparts varies across time. Importantly, across all of these different dependent variables, across all five panels of Figure 17, we find very little evidence of cohort effects: in general, the figures reconfirm the results from Table 2 in the main text that older respondents perceive slightly weaker stereotypes than younger ones, but the slope of the effect is modest.4

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4The results in Table 8 also hold if we estimate bivariate models that study the effects of age on stereotypicality without any additional demographic controls.
Table 8: Generalized additive models find little evidence of cohort effects

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<td>0.080***</td>
<td>0.089***</td>
<td>−0.016*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.011)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.010)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>−0.024</td>
<td>−0.011</td>
<td>0.078*</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>−0.128***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s(Age)</td>
<td>4.586*</td>
<td>4.869</td>
<td>5.111***</td>
<td>5.47***</td>
<td>2.261***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.944)</td>
<td>(1.688)</td>
<td>(4.563)</td>
<td>(3.331)</td>
<td>(4.333)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBRE</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01. Main entries for spline results are estimated degrees of freedom; entries in parentheses are F statistics. To substantively interpret the effect of age, see Figure 17.
Figure 17: Little evidence of cohort effects in perceived stereotypicality.
References


