

# *Fair is Fair:*

## Social Preferences and Reciprocity in International Politics

Joshua D. Kertzer<sup>\*</sup> and Brian C. Rathbun<sup>†</sup>

Forthcoming, *World Politics*

February 25, 2015

**ABSTRACT:** Behavioral economics has shown that many people often divert from classical assumptions about self-interested behavior: they have social preferences, concerned about issues of fairness and reciprocity. Social psychologists show that these preferences vary across actors, with some displaying more prosocial value orientations than others. Integrating a laboratory bargaining experiment with original archival research on Anglo-French and Franco-German diplomacy in the interwar period, we show how fairness and reciprocity matter in social interactions. Prosocials do not exploit their bargaining leverage to the degree that proselves do, helping explain why some pairs of actors are better able to avoid bargaining failure than others. In the face of consistent egoism on the part of negotiating partners, however, prosocials engage in negative reciprocity, leading them to adopt the same behaviors as proselves.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Thanks to Chris Crabbe for his help with Multistage, Dustin Tingley for generously letting us use his Darkside platform, Therese Anders, Colin Conwell, Alexandra Babi-arz, and Mark Paradis for their research assistance, and to Debbie Larson, Elizabeth Saunders, Rob Schub, Thomas Zeitzoff, and audiences at Dartmouth College, the University of Virginia, the University of Washington, and ISA 2014 for thoughtful feedback. This is one of several joint articles by the authors; the ordering of names reflects a principle of rotation.

---

<sup>\*</sup>Assistant Professor of Government, Harvard University. 1737 Cambridge St, Cambridge MA 02138. Email: [jk-ertzer@gov.harvard.edu](mailto:jk-ertzer@gov.harvard.edu). Web: <http://http://people.fas.harvard.edu/~jkertzer/>

<sup>†</sup>Associate Professor, School of International Relations, University of Southern California. [brathbun@usc.edu](mailto:brathbun@usc.edu). <http://dornsife.usc.edu/cf/faculty-and-staff/faculty.cfm?pid=1022645>

## *Introduction*

One of the most consistent findings in the literature in behavioral economics, that branch of economics that applies psychological findings about how individuals behave, is that decision-makers have “social preferences.” Many individuals care not only about gain for themselves but also for others. Their “prosocial” nature affects their behavior in a variety of strategic settings. Prosocial behavior is not limited to altruism; much more common is a concern for fairness and reciprocity. Prosocial actors prefer outcomes in which goods are equally distributed, and tend to reward kind behavior but punish selfishness. They are even willing to forgo their own gains to promote equity and to deny gains to those who violate their norm of reciprocity. While economists have focused on the existence of social preferences, the task of examining individual-level variation in commitments to fairness and reciprocity has generally fallen to social psychologists, who have found there to be substantial heterogeneity among individuals’ social preferences. The literature on social value orientation argues that, in contrast to prosocials, “proselfs” behave in the way that one might typically expect (and is generally assumed) in a game theoretic model.

Might prosocial behavior matter in international relations? In economics, Rabin describes the finding of social preferences as “the least radical class of departure from economics,” drolly noting that “there is simply nothing perplexing about somebody sacrificing \$8 to punish a jerk who wants to split \$100 \$92/\$8 rather than \$50/\$50.”<sup>3</sup> However, what might be a relatively uncontroversial assertion made by those working in the “dismal science” about the everyday decisions of ordinary individuals might be perhaps one of the bolder claims one could make about international relations, an anarchic realm in which self-interest is generally thought to reign supreme. While the debate might be over in economics, it has only begun in international relations; although there is a large literature on reciprocity in IR, it is predicated on egoistic rather than prosocial behavior, and largely focused on mixed-motive cooperation games rather than distributive ones.<sup>4</sup> A finding of prosocial behavior in IR would thus be all the more striking.

To the extent that social preferences matter in IR, it is likely in the manner sketched by psychologists rather than behavioral economists, not as a general rule but as a function of the individual attributes of the decision-making unit, whether it be regime type, the ideological character of a government, or the personality of a foreign policy-maker. Looking for variation by political actors in the same strategic situation gives us leverage to judge

---

<sup>3</sup>Rabin 2002, 661,667.

<sup>4</sup>e.g. Axelrod 1984; Keohane 1984.

whether a concern for fairness and reciprocity matters for international politics.

To do so, we go back to the laboratory, from where the original findings on social preferences emerged. We develop and test an argument about how individuals with particular social value orientations, proselfs and prosocials, will interact in a strategic situation highlighted in bargaining theories of international relations. Two individuals are tasked with dividing up a resource. Failure to reach an agreement results in a costly lottery that determines who gains the entire resource minus a cost of non-agreement akin to the costs of war. That lottery favors one party over the other, just as war favors the more powerful. To date behavioral economists have not examined behavior in such a game, and IR scholars have not investigated how individual-level differences might factor into such a strategic scenario.

We hypothesize, and the results bear out, that the commitment to fairness on the part of prosocials leads them to make fairer offers in positions of strength when compared to proselfs. Dedicated more to equality than proselfs, they do not exploit their greater bargaining leverage. For prosocials, fair is fair, regardless of the distribution of power. Their presence in a dyad therefore makes bargaining failure less likely. In situations of weakness, however, proself and prosocial behavior converge. Prosocials are not altruists who cave in the face of pressure, or at least no more than proselfs. The results also indicate an important role for reciprocity on the part of prosocials. Consistent with prior research, we find important over-time differences in how participants with different social value orientations interact in a strategic setting. Over time, the presence of significant numbers of proselfs induces “behavioral assimilation” on the part of prosocials, in which they punish selfish behavior by increasingly behaving like proselfs themselves. This tendency is more pronounced on the part of those prosocials who happen to face more proselfs in earlier matches in the game. There are two types of fairness-oriented prosocial behavior, one driven by equality and the other by reciprocity.

Mindful of concerns about external validity, however, we apply the same argument to in-depth case studies of Anglo-French and Franco-German negotiations over security in the 1920s. Throughout the course of the decade, a series of governments in France and Britain negotiated over how to cope with the potential revival of a German threat. Throughout the decade the British were in a stronger bargaining position than the French given their greater satisfaction with the status quo, mirroring the asymmetry in the bargaining game. The prosocial character of the French and British governments varied over time, however, largely fluctuating on the basis of the ideological character of the governing coalition. Leftist parties, for reasons we explain below, are considerably more prosocial than rightist parties. This variation, particularly on the stronger British side,

is crucial for explaining the ability of two sides to reach agreement on the terms of those accords. The British Labour Party was more willing to make concessions than the Tories. However, in the face of continued French intransigence vis-à-vis Germany, the British Labour Party engaged in negative reciprocity, resorting to tough proself-like bargaining behavior. Even prosocials at the elite level engage in behavioral assimilation. A similar pattern is seen in Franco-German relations, in which leftist prosocials in France were much more committed to finding a fair agreement with the Germans on issues such as the length of the occupation than conservative proselfs.

### *Social Preferences and Behavioral Economics*

Behavioral economics is a branch of the discipline bound together by “efforts to incorporate more realistic notions of human nature into economics.”<sup>5</sup> Those working in this tradition have drawn largely from experimental data to show how individuals in social and strategic settings often depart from assumptions made in theoretical models. For instance, individuals oftentimes do not have well-defined and stable preferences, update their beliefs in Bayesian fashion based on signals they receive from others, or exponentially discount future well-being. Psychological research on decision-making is a key source of insights. One might call behavioral economics “psychological” economics.<sup>6</sup>

While a number of findings from behavioral economics have made their way into international relations, prospect theory in particular, many have so far been neglected.<sup>7</sup> The consistent findings concerning “social preferences,” that people “are not 100% self-interested, but care about the well-being of others in a variety of ways,” are identified in all the major reviews of behavioral economics.<sup>8</sup> However, this work has not entered the IR mainstream, despite the fact that it is “among the most active areas of research in experimental economics.”<sup>9</sup> As Fehr and Fischbacher summarize, “A person exhibits social preferences if the person not only cares about the material resources allocated to her but also cares about the material resources allocated to relevant reference agents. Depending on the situation, the relevant reference agents may be the colleagues in the firm with whom a person interacts most frequently, or a person’s relatives, or the trading partners, or a person’s neighbors.”<sup>10</sup> Our question is whether decision makers’ social preferences might matter for state interactions as well.

---

<sup>5</sup>Rabin 2002, 657.

<sup>6</sup>Rabin 2002, 674.

<sup>7</sup>Boettcher 1995; Levy 1997; McDermott 1998.

<sup>8</sup>Rabin 2002, 661. See Camerer 2003; Camerer, Loewenstein, and Rabin 2011.

<sup>9</sup>Rabin 2002, 665.

<sup>10</sup>Fehr and Fischbacher 2002, 1.

The most obvious prosocial behavior is simple altruism, a willingness to sacrifice gains for oneself in order to benefit another. However, such “costly moral action” is likely relatively rare in international relations, particularly in distributive conflicts on high-stake issues of national security.<sup>11</sup> Yet behavioral economists continually stress that simple altruism is hardly the only type of prosocial behavior. Rabin writes that “simple altruism may parsimoniously capture important phenomena in many contexts. But there is a mass of experimental evidence that indicates it is often a very wrong description of social preference.”<sup>12</sup>

Behavioral economists have instead focused most of their attention on the interrelated fairness considerations of equality and reciprocity. Rabin writes that many “care about fairness and equity of the distribution of resources, beyond ways that increase total direct well-being. Second, people care about intentions and motives, and want to reciprocate the good or bad behavior of others”; many individuals have “inequity aversion,” and seek to avoid unequal outcomes because they regard them as unfair.<sup>13</sup> However, in an indication that these behaviors are not a function of simple altruism, this generosity and cooperativeness is contingent on others behaving similarly. People care not just about outcomes but also the process by which those outcomes are arrived at and the motivations and intentions of one’s partner.<sup>14</sup> “The same people who are altruistic toward deserving people are often indifferent to the plight of undeserving people, and motivated to hurt those whom they believe to have misbehaved,” Rabin writes.<sup>15</sup> Unreciprocated concern for equality is considered unfair. In the absence of reciprocity, prosocial behavior unravels.<sup>16</sup>

Studies reveal consistently higher levels of cooperation in public goods and commons dilemma situations that one would expect if all individuals simply behaved self-interestedly. Experimental participants essentially convert what would be a collaboration game for purely self-interested players into a coordination game.<sup>17</sup> Importantly, many of these experiments are based on one-shot prisoner’s dilemmas and other games of collaboration, indicating that this pattern of behavior is not based on the purely self-interested expectation of future reciprocity, an argument made familiar to international relations scholars in work on repeated games.<sup>18</sup> Instead, cooperation is based on a sense of fairness.

One finds prosocial behavior in distributive games as well, most prominently in the well-established findings

---

<sup>11</sup> Kauffmann and Pape 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Rabin 1998, 17.

<sup>13</sup> Rabin 2002, 665; Fehr and Fischbacher 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Rabin 2002, 666.

<sup>15</sup> Rabin 1998, 21.

<sup>16</sup> Fehr and Fischbacher 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Rabin 1998; Kelley and Thibaut 1978; McClintock and Liebrand 1988.

<sup>18</sup> Axelrod 1984; Keohane 1984.

on ultimatum games. When a resource is divided and subjects are asked to accept or reject some allocation of that resource, a substantial fraction will reject a split that is perceived as unfair, even though any offer will leave him or her better off than before. In other words, many are willing to pay a personal price to enforce fairness norms.<sup>19</sup> As we indicate below, these ultimatum games bear an important resemblance to the bargaining models of conflict so influential in international relations theory.

### *Social Value Orientation, Psychology, and Heterogeneous Preferences*

Even as behavioral economists and social psychologists have uncovered important departures from the self-interested assumption underlying much of neoclassical economic theory, they have continually noted that social preferences are not universal. Fehr and Fischbacher complain that classical “economists routinely make worst case assumptions regarding people’s motives. Economic reasoning is typically based on the self-interest hypothesis, i.e, on the assumption that all people are exclusively motivated by their material self-interest. This assumption rules out any heterogeneity with respect to other-regarding, social, preferences.”<sup>20</sup> Just as economists already recognize that individuals exhibit “heterogeneous tastes with regard to apples and bananas,” consideration for fairness and reciprocity is a part of one’s utility function, which is inherently subjective.

In the literature on “social value orientation,” social psychologists have found considerable variation in the social preferences of individuals, even when placed in the same structural situations, with important behavioral consequences.<sup>21</sup> While those with a proself value orientation are concerned only with their own gains, as is typically assumed in microeconomics, prosocials demonstrate a commitment to both fairness and reciprocity. Prosocials express a greater interest in the welfare of others in post-experiment surveys and less interest in maximizing their own utility.<sup>22</sup> The proself category is sometimes decomposed into “competitors” and “individualists,” the former seeking to maximize the difference in payoffs between themselves and others, the latter making choices that maximize their own personal take irrespective of how others do. Empirically, however, proselfs often demonstrate very similar behavior and are often aggregated into a single category.<sup>23</sup> In distributive, zero-sum games, their preference functions are identical.

Social value orientation has a strong effect on how individuals play mixed-motive as well as distributive

---

<sup>19</sup>Güth, Schmittberger, and Schwarze 1982.

<sup>20</sup>Fehr and Fischbacher 2002, 1.

<sup>21</sup>Deutsch 1960; McClintock 1972; Messick and Brewer 1983.

<sup>22</sup>De Cremer and Van Lange 2001; De Dreu and Van Lange 1995.

<sup>23</sup>Kuhlman and Marshello 1975; Kuhlman and Wimberley 1976; McClintock and Liebrand 1988.

games. Prosocials cooperate at much higher levels in prisoner's dilemma games, for instance, than proselves. Demonstrating a commitment to equal gains and fairness, prosocials prefer joint to individual gains, opting for mutual cooperation even when they have the opportunity to defect for greater payoffs.<sup>24</sup> They seek gain for both themselves and for others. For example, in prisoner's dilemma games in which players play a pre-programmed strategy, prosocials do not exploit a strategy of 100% cooperation but proselves do. A pre-programmed strategy of tit-for-tat is necessary to keep proselves cooperating. Prosocials in essence are the source of the variation in behavior that led to the discovery of social preferences in the first place.

This greater level of cooperation is contingent on reciprocity on the part of others. Prosocials are not naively altruistic or self-abnegating. They will stop cooperating when faced with a partner who consistently defects.<sup>25</sup> This is known as "behavioral assimilation," as prosocial behavior comes to converge with that of proselves. Prosocials engage in reciprocal, not simple, altruism.

These same patterns are evident in bargaining games in which players are charged with dividing up a resource. Proselvs offer less and demand more than prosocials. In experiments, proselves make less conciliatory first offers and lower overall concessions than prosocials, and higher demands of others.<sup>26</sup> In ultimatum games, proselves make offers strategically, recognizing that low offers will likely be rejected by the other side, which would not be in their interest. When experimenters have developed alternative versions of the game, in which the experimenter doubles the take of the proposer — and proposers are either told that the recipients are aware of this asymmetry, or told that recipients are unaware — prosocials do not behave differently in either condition, while proselves take advantage of the information asymmetry and make lower offers. This again allows us to distinguish between seemingly prosocial behavior by proselves and genuine fairness considerations.<sup>27</sup>

This pattern is reflective of another consistent finding: that social value orientation also interacts with bargaining power. Experimental research indicates that prosocials do not generally take advantage of the leverage that comes with an "exit option," whereas proselves do.<sup>28</sup> Proselvs are more opportunistic and exploitative negotiators.<sup>29</sup> They meet weakness with higher demands in way that prosocials generally do not, and have been found to exploit asymmetric information about other's type or the payoff structure, whereas prosocials refrain.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Kuhlman and Marshello 1975; Kuhlman and Wimberley 1976; McClintock and Liebrand 1988.

<sup>25</sup>Kelley and Stahelski 1970; Kuhlman and Marshello 1975; Kuhlman and Wimberley 1976; Rotter 1980; McClintock and Liebrand 1988.

<sup>26</sup>De Dreu and Boles 1998; De Dreu and Van Lange 1995; Carnevale and Lawler 1986; Van Lange 1999; Van Lange and Kuhlman 1994; De Cremer and Van Lange 2001; Liebrand et al. 1986; Olekalns, Smith, and Kibby 1996; De Dreu and Van Kleef 2004.

<sup>27</sup>Van Dijk, De Cremer, and Handgraaf 2004.

<sup>28</sup>Giebels, De Dreu, and Van de Vliert 2000.

<sup>29</sup>Van Lange 1999.

<sup>30</sup>De Dreu and Van Kleef 2004; Schei and Rognes 2003; Van Dijk, De Cremer, and Handgraaf 2004.

These results are consistent with a commitment to equality and fairness, as the use of power is the exploitation of inequality. In distributive situations, prosocials indicate the same commitment to reciprocity and the same tendency to assimilate to the behavior of proselfs in the face of selfish behavior. Prosocials significantly award generosity and punish stinginess.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, prosocials have been found to shift to a hard bargaining style when the number of proselfs in a group increases.<sup>32</sup>

#### SOCIAL PREFERENCES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

These findings from behavioral economics and social psychology are important because they enable us to understand reciprocity and prosocial behavior in a fundamentally different way than they have traditionally been understood in IR.<sup>33</sup> First, although we often think of international affairs as a realm governed by naked self-interest, research on social preferences encourage us to go beyond consequentialist logics when exploring how reciprocity operates.<sup>34</sup> Much of the work on reciprocity in IR has been conducted by neoliberal institutionalists, who tend to emphasize how institutions can *harness* actors' rational egoism (fostering cooperation by lowering transaction costs, and minimizing uncertainty and asymmetric information, for example) rather than transcend it, taking self-interest for granted rather than calling its universality into question.<sup>35</sup>

Indeed, although these scholars often make a point of discussing reciprocity, it is typically understood with an instrumental logic rather than a normatively driven one: for rationalists, actors play tit-for-tat in iterated Prisoners' Dilemmas not because reciprocity is a morally-laden principle for behavior like it is in the social preference literature, but because it is in actors' interests to do so.<sup>36</sup> Psychologists show, however, that prosocials consider hard bargaining strategies in distributive games to be morally inappropriate, and believe that honesty will have a greater effect on the level of cooperation than proselfs do.<sup>37</sup> In this sense, social preferences therefore suggest a moral character to global affairs that traditional instrumental accounts often miss.<sup>38</sup>

Second, although this moral character is consistent with a constructivist argument that political actors abide by a logic of appropriateness — in this case, a norm of fairness — it differs in a number of ways. First, since social value orientations vary across actors, some individuals will abide by a logic of appropriateness, and others

---

<sup>31</sup>De Cremer and Van Lange 2001; Van Lange 1999; see also Liebrand et al. 1986; Van Lange and Kuhlman 1994.

<sup>32</sup>Weingart et al. 2007; Beersma and De Dreu 1999.

<sup>33</sup>e.g. Axelrod 1984; Keohane 1984; Oye 1985.

<sup>34</sup>Waltz 1979.

<sup>35</sup>Keohane 1984; Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal 2001.

<sup>36</sup>Axelrod 1984; Oye 1985; Keohane 1986.

<sup>37</sup>De Dreu and Boles 1998; Kanagaretnam et al. 2009; Liebrand et al. 1986; Van Lange and Kuhlman 1994.

<sup>38</sup>Kertzer et al. 2014.

a logic of consequences, even in the exact same situation. In this sense, social preferences straddle IR scholars' conventional "logics of action," and offer a new way of understanding fairness and reciprocity in international politics.<sup>39</sup> Second, to the extent that constructivists have examined prosocial action in international affairs — for example, in terms of adhering to norms of warfare or taboos against particular types of weapons — they have tended to focus on altruistic behavior driven by liberal norms of concern for the fate of others, rather than the other prosocial forms of behavior noted by the social preference literature: a concern for fairness and reciprocity in which self-interest and other-regarding preferences combine.<sup>40</sup>

### *Laboratory study*

#### METHODS

In the fall of 2013 we recruited 204 college students from a large American research university to play a modified version of an incentivized bargaining game created by Tingley, one of the few experimental protocols suited to testing predictions from Fearon's bargaining model of war.<sup>41</sup> In the game, participants are tasked with dividing a resource worth ten points: one of the players proposes a division of the resource to the other player, who can then choose to accept or reject the offer. Unlike a typical ultimatum game, however, if bargaining failure occurs and the recipient rejects the offer, the resource is instead allocated to one of the players in its entirety by a costly lottery.

Within each match, participants play a repeated game in which the distribution of bargaining power, captured by the likelihood of winning the entire resource, shifts from the first round to subsequent rounds, with known probability. While the subject tasked with making an offer has only a 30% chance in the first round of winning the costly lottery if the recipient rejects the offer, that probability increases to 70% in subsequent rounds.<sup>42</sup> In this sense, Tingley's protocol is ideal for our purposes since it implicates two of the chief mechanisms IR scholars often point to as explanations of bargaining failure: commitment problems (players face an exogenous shift in their bargaining power, such that an agreement in their interest in the first round may not be in their interest in subsequent rounds) and uncertainty (all matches are anonymous, so when each match

---

<sup>39</sup>March and Olsen 1998.

<sup>40</sup>Price 1995; Tannenwald 1999. For exceptions that deal with fairness, see Stephen and Boettcher 2008; Kapstein 2008.

<sup>41</sup>Fearon 1995; see also Quek 2011. See Tingley (2011) for the equilibrium analysis. Participants ranged in age from 18-30 (mean: 20), and were predominantly (65.5%) female; 39.4% of participants self-defined as White, and 47.8% as Asian-American, and 63.4% of participants had taken an economics class before.

<sup>42</sup>The lottery cost is fixed at 2 points, such that the lottery would allocate the remaining 8 points to one of the players. Both the lottery cost and the shift in bargaining power are common knowledge.

begins, players do not know whether they're playing against a prosocial or a proself opponent). The game is thus analogous to how the first wave of bargaining theorists thought about war: as a costly lottery players resort to (in which the probability of victory is a function of the balance of power) if they fail to reach a mutually acceptable settlement.<sup>43</sup>

After an instructional period in which participants were taught the rules of the game and completed two practice rounds, participants played a series of matches against one another.<sup>44</sup> At the beginning of each match, they were randomly assigned a role as either the proposer who makes the offer ("Player A"), or the recipient who decides whether to accept or reject it ("Player B"), a role they occupied for the remainder of that particular match. The chance of occupying either position was 50%. After every round, if an offer was accepted, the probability that a subject would continue to be matched with the same player for an additional round was 50%; if the offer was rejected, bargaining ends for the rest of the match and the costly lottery allocates the resource. When a match concluded, each subject was paired with another for a new match, for 15 matches in total.

The game was highly incentivized for proself behavior. First, Tingley's game is distributive rather than mixed motive in nature. Second, subjects were paid a certain amount based on the number of points they accrued in seven randomly chosen matches, plus a show-up fee of \$10. Third, in the event that a subject won the costly lottery, he or she was awarded the full resource of ten points for every subsequent round in the match automatically. There were therefore strong incentives to exploit bargaining leverage.

In addition to the bargaining game, participants also completed a dispositional questionnaire measuring participants' social value orientation, epistemic motivation, and demographic characteristics.<sup>45</sup> Importantly, we measure participants' preexisting levels of social preferences, rather than trying to induce them through random assignment. This allows us to explore how participants with certain dispositions respond differently to the situational features of the game, but it also means that we are not studying their effects experimentally. In total, 204 subjects participated. Each session (in groups of 10, 12, or 14) lasted a little under an hour, and the average payout was approximately \$15.

---

<sup>43</sup>e.g. Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992; Fearon 1995. A second wave of bargaining theorists have moved towards thinking about bargaining as a process that continues once war begins, but for our purposes we focus on the simpler costly lottery formulation.

<sup>44</sup>The instructional period was based off the protocol of Tingley 2011, during which participants were presented with an oral presentation, a slide presentation, and written instructions. Following the presentation, participants completed a quiz on the main features of the game, and could not proceed until they had answered all of the questions correctly. The game was programmed in *Multistage*. <http://casselweb.ssel.caltech.edu>.

<sup>45</sup>See Appendix §1.1 for instrumentation. To avoid order effects, participants randomly received one of two different versions of the survey, each of which was split in half and administered in two parts, one at the beginning of the session, and the other after the bargaining game had concluded. We are therefore able to use this order manipulation to ensure that our measures of participants' social preferences were not affected by the bargaining game, and vice versa.

## THEORETICAL EXPECTATIONS

We develop a set of hypotheses for how participants with certain social value orientations will behave given a particular distribution of power. These hypotheses are derived from the simple premise that prosocials want a more equitable distribution of resources than proselfs, but do so in expectation of prosocial behavior by others. They are not altruists. Moreover, these tendencies vary situationally — both with bargaining power, as proselfs are more likely to exploit their positions of strength — and over time, as prosocials who find their generosity unreciprocated undergo behavioral assimilation and act more like proselfs. It is in situations of strength that we can best judge a commitment to equality in fairness on the part of prosocials. A generous offer by a player in a weak position reveals nothing about his or her commitment to fairness, as proselfs have incentives in the game to make better offers to avoid the costly lottery.

H1: The difference in offer size between prosocials and proselfs will be particularly pronounced in situations of strength, when prosocials will make more generous offers than proselfs, who will exploit their bargaining power.

In situations of weakness, the offer sizes of proselfs and prosocials will not be as markedly different. Proselfs will make better offers to avoid going to a costly lottery not in their favor. As prosocials are committed to fairness rather than altruism, their offers should not be markedly greater than those of proselfs. They will not simply roll over.

H2: The differences between offer sizes of proselfs and prosocials will converge in situations of weakness.

By the same logic of H1 and H2, we can expect the following:

H3: The difference between prosocials and proselfs in the likelihood of accepting offers will be particularly pronounced in situations of strength with proselfs less likely to accept offers, controlling for offer size.

H4: The acceptance rates of prosocials and proselfs will converge in situations of weakness.

The hypotheses presented above pertain mainly to the beginning rounds of the game. We also, however, offer additional hypotheses concerning the likely over-time effects of repeated play, particularly as it affects the be-

havior of prosocials. Over the course of the game, assuming a population containing a substantial number of prosocials, prosocials will exhibit negative reciprocity, making their behavior more and more like prosocials.

H5: The offer size of prosocials and their likelihood of acceptance, controlling for offer size, will decrease over time.

We can also expect that this tendency will be more pronounced for some prosocials than others based on experience over the course of the study.

H6: Behavioral assimilation on the part of prosocials should be more pronounced on the part of those prosocials who happen to face more prosocials in earlier rounds.

## RESULTS

We present our results in two phases. We begin by showing how prosocials are more generous than prosocials when in positions of strength, both in terms of the offers they make, and the offers they're willing to accept. Second, we then show how these mechanisms interact dyadically, demonstrating how the distribution of social preferences across dyads affects the likelihood of bargaining failure, and how the impact of social preferences varies across time. We discuss each in turn.

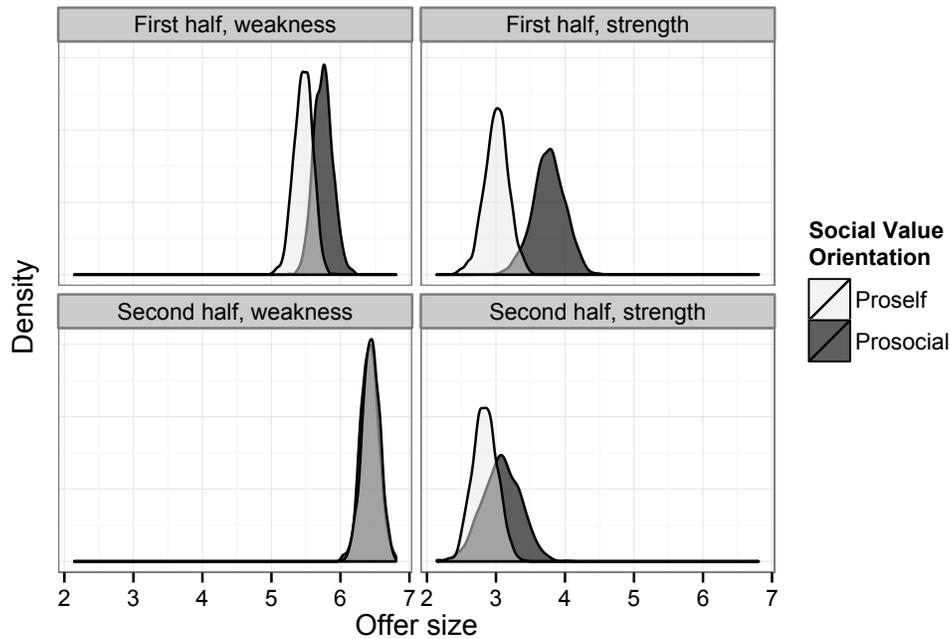
### **Prosocials are more generous than prosocials when in positions of strength**

We begin by simply comparing the average offer size by prosocials versus prosocials; to control for the effects of behavioral assimilation, we examine the results separately for the first and second half of the matches.<sup>46</sup> As the density plots in Figure 1 make clear, both prosocials and prosocials give less generous offers when in a position of weakness than in a position of strength for both the first and second half of the matches. However, prosocials are less likely to exploit this position of strength than prosocials, as predicted by H1: prosocials offer an average of 3.03 points, while prosocials offer an average of 3.76 points ( $p < 0.008$  from a clustered bootstrapped difference of means test). Although prosocials make less generous offers when in a position of strength than in a position of weakness, their change in offer size that accompanies this shift in bargaining power is smaller than that of prosocials, demonstrating their relatively greater commitment to fairness and equality, as predicted by H2 and shown in detail in Appendix §2.

---

<sup>46</sup>See Appendix §1.1 for a discussion of our measures of social preferences; we use a dichotomous measure in the main analysis, but replicate the results with a continuous measure in Appendix §1.2 and find the results hold.

Figure 1: Prosocials give more generous offers in positions of strength



Note: Probability distributions derived from 1000 clustered bootstraps.

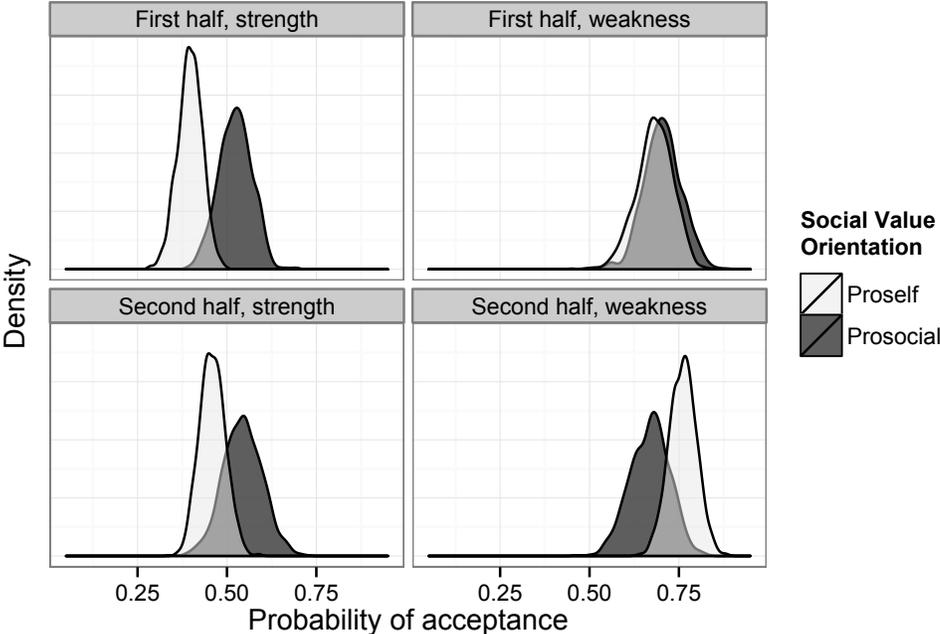
We see similar behavioral differences when we look at prosocials' tendencies to accept offers when they are in a position of strength. When in positions of strength, the predicted probability of an average offer being accepted in the first half of the matches is 12.8% higher when the recipient is a prosocial than a proself ( $p < 0.014$ ), consistent with H3.<sup>47</sup> When in positions of weakness, the predicted probability of an average offer being accepted in the first half of the matches is only 2.0% higher when the recipient is a prosocial than a proself ( $p < 0.370$ ). Thus, as was the case with offer sizes, we see that prosocials differ the most from proselfs in their likelihood of accepting offers when they are in a position of strength, rather than a position of weakness. This indicates that prosocials are not simple altruistic push-overs when compared to proselfs and confirms H4.

In the second half of the matches, however, the difference in both offer size and acceptance probabilities between proselfs and prosocials dissipates, partially because proselfs become slightly more generous over time, and partly because prosocials become less so. When in a position of strength in later matches, prosocials appear to give slightly larger average offers than proselfs (proselfs: 2.85, prosocials: 3.08), but the difference is not statistically significant ( $p < 0.240$ ).<sup>48</sup> Similarly, although prosocials are still slightly more generous than proselfs

<sup>47</sup>These predicted probabilities are derived from a clustered bootstrapped logit model on the impact of social value orientation on the probability of acceptance, controlling for offer size.

<sup>48</sup>As was the case in positions of weakness in the first half of the matches, proselfs and prosocials in the second half of the matches

Figure 2: Prosocials are more generous in accepting offers in positions of strength



Note: Predicted probability distributions derived from 1000 clustered bootstraps from logistic regression model on the impact of social preferences on the probability of accepting an offer, controlling for offer size.

in terms of the probability of accepting offers when in a position of strength (prosocials are 8.46% more likely to accept the average offer than proselves;  $p < 0.11$ ), the gap between the two has narrowed due to behavioral assimilation, as prosocials respond to a lack of reciprocity by becoming more like proselves. Interestingly, when in a position of a weakness in the second half of the matches, prosocials become 8.9% less likely to accept offers than proselves ( $p < 0.08$ ), revealing the extent to which prosocials “overshoot” over the course of the game and engage in negative reciprocity (see Rathbun, Kertzer, and Paradis, 2014), offering evidence for H6.

### Dyadic results

Having shown that proselves and prosocials use their strength differently — prosocials making more generous offers, and being more likely to accept the offers they receive — we can then combine these mechanisms to model the probability of bargaining failure in a dyadic fashion.

The first two models in Table 1 estimate a set of mixed effect logistic regressions modeling bargaining failure as a function of a each side’s social preferences, and a set of demographic control variables: gender, age, race, whether participants have taken an economics class before, and participants’ need for cognition, a dispositional variable psychologists use to measure how much people like to think.<sup>49</sup> To control for the effects of time, we also include a dummy variable separating the first from the second half of the matches, and refer the reader to a discussion of the model specification in Appendix §3. Three results are important to note here. First, mirroring the monadic analyses, we see that for round 1 offers, dyads where a prosocial is in a position of strength are significantly less likely to experience bargaining failure: dyads where player B is a prosocial are 10.35 percentage points less likely to experience bargaining failure than dyads where player B is a prosself. Although the effect of player A’s social preference is also negative — dyads where the player in a position of weakness is a prosocial are 5.7 percentage points less likely to experience bargaining failure — it escapes statistical significance. As before, then, the chief difference between prosocials and proselves emerges when in a position of strength rather than of weakness.

Second, in second-and-up round offers in model 2, social preferences have no statistically significant impact on bargaining failure, partially reflecting the selection effect through which players who make less generous offers are less likely to make it into the second round of a match. Indeed, before behavioral assimilation kicks

---

give more similar average offers when in a position of weakness — in this case, almost identical ones (proselvs: 6.44, prosocials: 6.42 ( $p < 0.562$  for a clustered bootstrapped difference of means test).

<sup>49</sup>Cacioppo and Petty 1982; Cacioppo et al. 1996.

Table 1: Dyadic determinants of bargaining failure

	Round 1 (1)	Rounds 2+ (2)	Round 1 (3)	Rounds 2+ (4)	Round 1 (5)	Rounds 2+ (6)
<i>Player A characteristics</i>						
Prosocial	-0.231 (0.164)	-0.207 (0.229)	-0.236 (0.169)	-0.215 (0.294)	-0.516 (0.383)	-0.157 (0.611)
Cognition	-0.861** (0.433)	0.702 (0.646)	-0.853* (0.437)	0.723 (0.685)	-0.835* (0.436)	0.775 (0.653)
Male	-0.399** (0.165)	0.026 (0.218)	-0.396** (0.166)	0.026 (0.236)	-0.396** (0.166)	0.047 (0.221)
Age	0.067 (0.043)	-0.027 (0.060)	0.071 (0.043)	-0.033 (0.064)	0.066 (0.043)	-0.020 (0.061)
White	0.445*** (0.171)	-0.314 (0.249)	0.454*** (0.173)	-0.360 (0.263)	0.455*** (0.172)	-0.347 (0.252)
Taken Economics	-0.372** (0.165)	-0.269 (0.234)	-0.367** (0.166)	-0.276 (0.249)	-0.359** (0.166)	-0.272 (0.235)
Prosocial opponents					0.582 (0.603)	1.131 (0.941)
Prosocial × opponents					0.721 (0.870)	0.095 (1.380)
<i>Player B characteristics</i>						
Prosocial	-0.425** (0.193)	-0.014 (0.262)	-0.426** (0.204)	0.044 (0.264)	-0.903** (0.429)	1.011* (0.612)
Cognition	-0.062 (0.497)	-1.074 (0.684)	-0.066 (0.503)	-1.284* (0.681)	-0.060 (0.510)	-1.226* (0.685)
Male	0.620*** (0.191)	-0.034 (0.271)	0.622*** (0.193)	-0.027 (0.270)	0.631*** (0.196)	-0.042 (0.269)
Age	0.005 (0.049)	-0.044 (0.071)	0.006 (0.050)	-0.041 (0.071)	0.004 (0.051)	-0.030 (0.071)
White	-0.189 (0.195)	0.401 (0.261)	-0.187 (0.198)	0.503* (0.261)	-0.173 (0.200)	0.408 (0.260)
Taken Economics	0.167 (0.194)	-0.404 (0.257)	0.159 (0.196)	-0.442* (0.256)	0.162 (0.199)	-0.496* (0.257)
Prosocial opponents					-0.854 (0.621)	0.376 (0.865)
Prosocial × opponents					1.231 (0.936)	-2.532* (1.419)
Second Half	-0.250** (0.119)	-0.104 (0.211)				
Constant	-0.525 (1.229)	1.482 (1.767)	-0.766 (1.243)	1.576 (1.830)	-0.556 (1.269)	0.513 (1.826)
N	1,443	520	1,443	520	1,443	520
AIC	1,882.927	673.535	1,895.356	683.235	1,898.688	684.923
BIC	1,967.318	737.343	2,006.120	772.565	2,030.550	787.015
Model type:	Random intercept		Random intercept and random slope			

\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01. Coefficient estimates from mixed effects logit models; see Appendix S3 for a discussion of the model specification.

in in the second half of the game (discussed in greater detail below), 13.2% of the round 1 observations occur between prosocial dyads, while 17.8% of the round 2+ observations occur between prosocial dyads (clustered bootstrapped  $p < 0.052$ ); prosocial dyads are thus more likely to make it into the second round of the match than their proself peers. Third, the dyadic effect of social preferences here is additive rather than multiplicative, reflecting the structure of the game participants are playing, as discussed in Appendix §3.2.

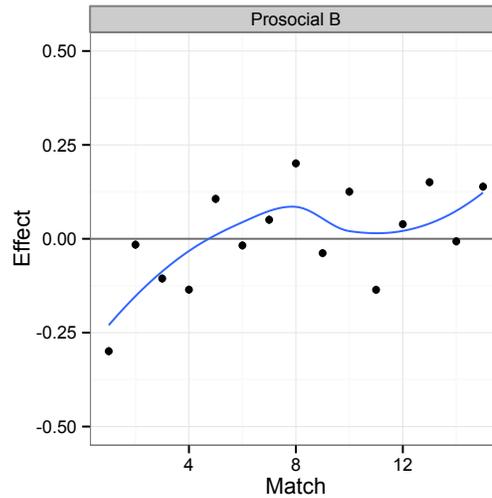
The results from the monadic analyses and model 1 showcase the importance of fairness, as prosocials tend to be less likely to take advantage of their bargaining strength and exploit the other player, and more likely to accept the offers they receive. However, prosocials are not pushovers: as time goes on and they play an increasing number of proselfs, they should engage in negative reciprocity and behavioral assimilation, effectively playing more like proselfs. To test for the effects of behavioral assimilation, we must model the effect of time more directly. Thus, the remaining models in Table 1 model behavioral assimilation by adding a random slope for each player's social preferences, thereby letting the impact of social preferences vary with time. Although on average the effect of social preferences remain the same as in the random intercept models, the random effects plotted in Figure 3 show that prosocials in a position of strength play more like proselfs in response to first round offers as time goes on, rejecting offers late in the game that they would have accepted earlier on. Not only do they become less generous throughout the first half of the matches, but over the course of the second half appear to engage in negative reciprocity and punish their opponents, such that dyads with prosocials in positions of strength in the first round of late matches may actually be *more* likely to experience bargaining failure than those with proselfs in positions of strength.

If models 3-4 look for signs of behavioral assimilation indirectly by showing how prosocials play differently over time, models 5-6 look for evidence of behavioral assimilation more directly by testing whether prosocials who have negotiated against more proselfs in the past are more likely to punish their current partners. To produce a measure of opponent history that is not correlated with time, we construct a opponent history variable reflecting the proportion of a player's previous matches that have been played against prosocials.<sup>50</sup> The significant negative interaction effect in model 6 between player B's social preference and the social orientations of her previous opponents shows that when in a position of weakness, prosocial recipients engage in behavioral assimilation: the more proselfs a prosocial player has faced, the more her likelihood of bargaining failure is like

---

<sup>50</sup>We use proportion rather than the total number so that the variable is not correlated with time; since this figure relates to players' underlying beliefs about their opponents' type, we initialize this variable at 0.5 for the first match rather than drop the match from the analyses, thereby reflecting the 50% probability that an opponent will be of either type.

Figure 3: Evidence of behavioral assimilation over time



Note: Random effects with 95% CIs for the effect of player B's social preferences, allowed to vary across each match. The blue smoother shows evidence of behavioral assimilation for player B: in early matches, prosocials in a position of strength decrease the likelihood of bargaining failure, but this effect dissipates (and potentially even reverses) by the end of the game. See model 3 from Table 1. Note that the confidence intervals are included on the plot but are extremely narrow.

that of proselves. Predicted probabilities for the conditional effect of social preferences suggest that we can be 90% certain a prosocial will experience a lower probability of bargaining failure than a proself provided that at least 57% of her opponents have been prosocials (and 95% certain when at least 79% of her opponents have been prosocials), but that below this point we fail to distinguish one from the other. Indeed, there is some evidence of a role reversal between the two types of players the more proselves the prosocial recipient has faced: we can be 90% certain a prosocial will be *more* likely to experience bargaining failure than a proself if only 20% or fewer of her opponents have been prosocials (and 95% certain when only 5% of her opponents have been prosocials).<sup>51</sup>

Thus, the results of the laboratory study show us four things: first, even though our participants were all facing an identical strategic situation, there was considerable variation in how they played the game, and whether they were able to avoid bargaining failure. Second, one key source of this variation is actors' social preferences: especially when in positions of strength, prosocials tend to give more generous offers than proselves, and tend to be more likely to accept the offers they do receive. As a result, prosocial dyads are better able to avoid bargaining failure and make it to later rounds of the game than proself dyads are. Third, prosocials are not saints: as time goes on and they find their generosity unrequited, they engage in negative reciprocity and begin to act more like

<sup>51</sup>We find a similar effect when we analyze the data monadically: prosocial recipients in positions of weakness who have faced more proselves in the past are less likely to accept the offers that they do receive.

proselfs, and prosocials who face the most prosocials tend to play the most like proselfs in this regard.

Although relying on a stylized model, the analogies between the structure of the bargaining game — in which players try to avoid bargaining failure in the face of limited information and an asymmetric distribution of power — and the dynamics of international politics are clear. However, there are clear obstacles to generalizing results from a laboratory experiment on a sample of college students to a group of world leaders, not just because foreign policy decision-makers may have systematically different social preferences, but also because the contours of international politics are far more complex than the abstract model represented in the bargaining game.<sup>52</sup> We therefore turn from the lab to the archives, showing that the same logics we outlined above also manifest themselves in Anglo-French and Franco-German relations in the interwar period.<sup>53</sup>

### *European relations in the 1920s*

We are interested in whether those foreign policy-makers with more prosocial orientations exhibit the same tendencies as our laboratory participants — an egalitarian inclination to refrain from exploiting bargaining power and also a desire to punish those who do not reciprocate cooperative bargaining moves. European foreign relations in the shadow of the First World War allow us to examine the effect of variation in social value orientation in two imbalanced dyads.

European foreign relations in the wake of WWI were preoccupied with the question of French security vis-à-vis Germany.<sup>54</sup> The French saw the Germans as naturally aggressive and bent on revenge, and thus desperately wanted a firm commitment by Britain to protect them in case of renewed conflict with Germany.<sup>55</sup> France simply could not do it alone. This dissatisfaction with the status quo made France the weaker party in security negotiations with Britain during the 1920s in which the former tried to elicit a security guarantee from the latter. This therefore parallels the setup of the laboratory study we use in the paper, in that one side is weaker than the other. France's "alternative to no agreement" was the exposed position it currently occupied vis-à-vis Germany. Even if France overstated the threat posed by Germany, Britain was more isolated and therefore less concerned about a German *revanche*. The French understood this.<sup>56</sup> Differences in security also led to very different

---

<sup>52</sup> Druckman and Kam 2011. A related concern is raised by List (2009), who wonders whether prosocials may be more likely to participate in laboratory experiments on student samples, but Falk, Meier, and Zehnder (2013) find this not to be the case, suggesting that results from student samples might actually be "a lower bound for the importance of prosocial behavior."

<sup>53</sup> For other studies that use original archival research to test psychological theories in IR, see McDermott 1998.

<sup>54</sup> Wolfers 1940, 11.

<sup>55</sup> Wolfers 1940, 76.

<sup>56</sup> Cmd. 2169, No. 35.

attitudes towards German compliance with the Treaty of Versailles, with the French insisting on scrupulous adherence.<sup>57</sup>

On the other hand, Germany was prostrate vis-à-vis France. The Rhineland was demilitarized, its left bank occupied. Germany's army was reduced to 100,000, its navy to a token number of ships, and its air force abolished, all monitored by an Inter-Allied Commission of Control. In addition to crushing reparations, Germany lost 10% of her prewar population and land. This asymmetry in power also parallels our bargaining game. France and Germany negotiated during the 1920s a multitude of issues regarding the length of the Rhineland occupation, membership in the League of Nations, and compliance with disarmament clauses of the Versailles treaty.

Before we begin the case study, we must discuss how we measure the social value orientation of decision-makers but also how we conceive of social value orientations in politics. A proself value orientation in foreign affairs is a nationally egoistic one in which leaders make choices based solely on what is good for their own country. It is not about the personal individual gain of the policy-maker as it might be some rationalist models.<sup>58</sup> A prosocial value orientation in foreign affairs is one in which decision-makers try to balance their own needs with those of other countries. While it might be the case that those who are prosocial in their everyday interactions with others (that personal attribute we capture in the survey questionnaire) are also prosocial in politics, focused on equality and fairness towards those around them, we make no such claims here (although there is a literature on personality and politics that suggests this might be the case to some degree).<sup>59</sup> Indeed it might be the case that high-ranking political officials cannot afford to be prosocials in their personal interactions to get to where they are; in other words, participation in politics selects for those who are proself in their everyday interactions if not their political commitments.

That said, the concept of a social value orientation in politics is not the attribute of a state but rather one of individuals. We are not making the case that groups have some sort of collective mind. We do, however, believe that individuals who participate in the political process likely group together based on common social value orientations in regards to their political preferences.

We measure social value orientation in two ways. First, where possible we measure it directly by looking for documentary evidence in primary sources of whether those making decisions invoke anything other than their

---

<sup>57</sup> Wolfers 1940, 11-20.

<sup>58</sup> e.g. Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995.

<sup>59</sup> e.g. Caprara, Barbaranelli, and Zimbardo 1999

country's own egoistic interests. Our cases offer such primary evidence in abundance, although French records are somewhat worse than the German and the British. One potential concern might be that prosocial rhetoric is uninformative since all decision-makers should want to cloak their proself policies in prosocial language, but as we show in the discussion below, there is considerable variation in the justifications decision-makers give for their actions, and we utilize both private and public sources.<sup>60</sup>

However, such data is potentially uneven since decision-makers might not all be equally reflective or explicit about their motivations. Therefore we also develop measures of individuals' social value orientation in politics through reference to the political ideology of those in power. Van Lange and colleagues have found that prosocials are marked from proselfs by their commitment to equality and the welfare of others.<sup>61</sup> Extending this logic to politics, we are looking for collections of individuals bound together by a commitment to equality. It is well established in literatures on party politics and political psychology that the left is more prosocial than the right. Indeed every major research strand on political ideology identifies egalitarianism and altruistic concern as the defining principles of the left, even as the particular disadvantaged groups the left has sought to empower has evolved over time.<sup>62</sup> In Shalom Schwartz's scheme of universal values, those who identify with the left score more highly on self-transcendence values, marked by benevolence, that is concern for the welfare of close others in everyday interactions, but more importantly universalism – understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection of all people and nature.<sup>63</sup> Schwartz himself refers to these as “prosocial attitudes.” The left identifies more strongly with the moral foundations of protecting others from harm and caring for their well-being as well as ensuring fairness and equality.<sup>64</sup> The left has an “approach” orientation. It wants to provide for others, which explains its support for state programs to help the most disadvantaged.<sup>65</sup>

All of these diverse strands of research lead to a common conclusion: prosocial behavior in international relations is likely to receive its greatest support from the left. Indeed research shows that leftist parties externalize their social value orientation in domestic politics to the international arena as well, where it is more supportive of multilateralism and humanitarianism.<sup>66</sup> We should stress that the studies on which these conclusions are based are interested in the differences between the democratic left and democratic right and should not be applied to

---

<sup>60</sup>Goldsmith and Posner 2005.

<sup>61</sup>Van Lange 1999.

<sup>62</sup>Lipset et al. 1954, 1135; Putnam 1973; Kitschelt and Hellemans 1989; Inglehart and Flanagan 1987.

<sup>63</sup>Schwartz 1992, 12; see also Schwartz, Caprara, and Vecchione 2010; Barnea and Schwartz 1998; Piurko, Schwartz, and Davidov 2011.

<sup>64</sup>Graham, Haidt, and Nosek 2009.

<sup>65</sup>Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, and Baldacci 2007.

<sup>66</sup>Lumsdaine 1993; Rathbun 2004, 2007.

communism and fascism, which are qualitatively different phenomena. Revolutionary communist parties are not prosocial in the same way as social democratic parties, for instance. In Appendix §4, we discuss research on political conservatism that affirms an expectation of a nationally egoistic proself foreign policy on the right based on conservatives' own particular set of moral values.

What mechanism might serve to introduce particular social value orientations in politics into the foreign policy decision-making process? We suggest political parties serve as such vehicles. We can say something about the foreign policy value orientation of a government by reference to the domestic political positions and ideological placement of the parties in power. In this view, common in comparative politics, parties are seen as policy-seekers whose policy preferences in domestic and foreign affairs are linked together by core values, rather than mere aggregators of constituency preferences.<sup>67</sup> Values such as fairness are thought to be universal in nature by those who hold them, which should mean they apply at home and abroad.<sup>68</sup> Parties certainly seek office, but do so to implement a particular ideological agenda that cannot be reduced simply to the views or material gains of their voters. We recognize, however, that using political parties in this way might be less appropriate in cases involving international political economy that have distributive implications for the constituents of political parties.

Using political parties enables us to measure social value orientation non-tautologically without reference to the foreign policy behavior we are trying to explain, while simultaneously allowing us to say something systematic about the foreign policy behavior of states in a way that is not possible by reference only to the personal characteristics of individual leaders. Yet it allows us to retain our focus on individual-level variables, as parties are collections of relatively like-minded individuals. When individual decision-makers are completely out of step with the political-social value orientation of their party, however, we also expect that they will face considerable pressure to change their behavior, something we demonstrate in the cases that follow as well as more in-depth in Appendix §5.

The cases of Anglo-French and Franco-German negotiations we explore have the advantage of seeing how variation in the social value orientation of the parties in power in the stronger country affected negotiating behavior. We recognize of course that the distinction is relative in nature, that any distinction in prosocial behavior is likely one of degree, and that particular contexts make prosocial action extremely improbable. However, by showing that social value orientation plays a role even in matters of "high politics," we attempt to establish the

---

<sup>67</sup>Rathbun 2004.

<sup>68</sup>Schwartz, Caprara, and Vecchione 2010; Barnea and Schwartz 1998; Piurko, Schwartz, and Davidov 2011.

importance of fairness and reciprocity in international relations.

#### BILATERAL SECURITY NEGOTIATIONS, 1922

The British were genuinely desirous in the early 1920s of a security pact with France in which Britain would give a unilateral guarantee of France's western borders.<sup>69</sup> It "did not throw heavy obligations upon us," but "would be of great value to France," the cabinet concluded privately.<sup>70</sup> It would also be in Britain's interest, as Prime Minister Lloyd George recognized. This kind of guarantee would serve to deter Germany in a way that it had not been when Britain remained non-committal in the run up to the Great War.<sup>71</sup> The British felt a commitment to the sanctity of France's western borders to be in their interest given the changing nature of military technology that made the Rhine, rather than the Channel, the new strategic border of Britain.

For their part, the more insecure French desired a more extensive security arrangement than the British were willing to provide, including a commitment to use force against Germany in the event it violated any of its Versailles obligations, a guarantee of its Eastern European allies, and a military convention specifying which British forces would be used for France's benefit in the event of an attack.<sup>72</sup> The two sides commenced negotiations over a potential security pact in January 1922.

Britain had greater leverage in the negotiations and was led by Conservatives and a rump Liberal Party that had been devastated by splits over policy towards the Great War. It was effectively a conservative coalition with Tories supplying the vast majority of the ministers. The pro-self value orientation of the British in particular, the strong side in negotiations, made agreement hard to reach. The British exploited their strength, seeking not only a security agreement on their limited terms but also to demand a price on top of that. This recalls the behavior predicted by H1 and H3, which the bargaining experiment confirmed. Even though they valued a bilateral (trilateral if, which was possible, Belgium was to be associated) security guarantee in its own right, they linked successful conclusion of a security agreement with France to the resolution of a number of outstanding issues between the two countries in Britain's favor, such as differences over the nationalist uprising in Turkey.<sup>73</sup> British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon made this linkage diplomatically but unmistakably in his rhetorical queries of the French ambassador:

---

<sup>69</sup>Cmd. 2169, No. 33.

<sup>70</sup>CC 1(22).

<sup>71</sup>Cmd. 2169, No. 34.

<sup>72</sup>Cmd. 2169, Nos. 33 and 35.

<sup>73</sup>Hall 1978.

Did he contemplate, in his outlook, that the consideration of a treaty of alliance between France and ourselves should or should not be accompanied by a general clearing up of all the questions upon which we disagreed... What was the good of an alliance — and indeed, could an alliance be entered into which allowed such questions as Morocco and Egypt, to mention two subjects only where the French view appeared to be sharply opposed to our own, to remain unsettled?<sup>74</sup>

As Marks writes, “Clearly, Britain intended to extract a stiff price for the limited guarantee of French soil she offered.”<sup>75</sup>

The proself British exploited their greater bargaining leverage by stalling. Lloyd George stated to his colleagues: “After some weeks have elapsed and the French begin to realize that we did not regard the pact as of supreme importance to ourselves, it was likely that they would approach us in a more reasonable frame of mind.”<sup>76</sup> Lord Curzon reported of the “extreme importance which the French Government attach to the conclusion of the Pact, upon which the existence of Monsieur Poincaré’s Ministry may be said in fact to depend, and left me with the impression that while we hold it in suspense... we may find in it a powerful lever for securing a favourable settlement of the other issues.”<sup>77</sup>

The sides were unable to reach an agreement, which had major consequences akin to the costly lottery in the bargaining above, leaving both sides worse off. It left the British without a potential means of restraining France in the latter’s coercion of Germany to make good on its reparations payments. In 1923, against British wishes and without British participation, the French military invaded and occupied the German Ruhr, seizing industrial assets as compensation for Germany’s failure to pay. The period immediately following the collapse of negotiations was perhaps the nadir of interwar Anglo-French relations.

## THE GENEVA PROTOCOL

The nature of the interactions between Britain and France in 1922 likely does not come as a surprise to many international relations scholars given the largely egoistic nature of world politics, particularly in the security realm, and the incentives to misrepresent one’s reservation price and exploit bargaining power. However, the same two countries came much closer to agreement just two years later following a shift from the right to the

---

<sup>74</sup>Cmd. 2169, No.23. In his formal memorandum to Briand outlining the position to be taken by his government at Cannes, Prime Minister Lloyd George stated that the British opposed “any piecemeal treatment of the questions by which the conference is faced. On the contrary, they consider it absolutely necessary that the problem should be treated as a whole” (Cmd. 2169, No. 34).

<sup>75</sup>Marks 1982, 538.

<sup>76</sup>CC 2(22).

<sup>77</sup>CP 3664 (22).

left in Britain. The Conservative government in Britain was defeated by the Labour Party, which formed a weak minority government relying on the parliamentary support of what was left of the Liberals. The prosocial value orientation of Labour made bargaining between the two countries very different.

Indicative of its prosocial value orientation in foreign policy, Labour came out consistently against the conception of foreign policy as zero-sum in character. A party manifesto read: “In foreign affairs the Labour Party stands for the view that the vital interests of the world, whether economic or political, are the common interests of all peoples. It holds that, in general, what is one nation’s gain is all nations’ gain, and what is one nation’s loss is all nations’ loss. Accepting the logical consequences of this view, the Party repudiates entirely the principles of the old diplomacy... those principles assumed that what was one nation’s gain must necessarily be a loss to all other nations, and that every State should perpetually pursue its own material interests at the expense of other peoples.” It grounded this view in its socialist policies: “The Labour Party... is a Socialist party... It is the practical recognition of the familiar commonplace that ‘morality is in the nature of things’ and that men are all, in very truth, members one of another.”<sup>78</sup> A prominent Labour leader who would become foreign secretary, Arthur Henderson, wrote that “Labour’s policy at home and abroad forms one organic whole, because our foreign policy is a function of our domestic policy.”<sup>79</sup>

The French continued to be interested in greater security through a closer relationship with Britain. However, the new British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, would not countenance a traditional bilateral alliance or pact as it was inconsistent with Labour’s values. The party had argued against an alliance with France since the end of the war as part of a general rejection of “partial” military arrangements that perpetuated the pursuit of national armaments and the creation of hostile blocs. Labour had come out specifically against the French proposals in 1922 on these grounds.<sup>80</sup> Labour had a different starting point in negotiations than the Conservatives.

However, Labour was more willing than the Conservatives to depart from its vision to reach a fair agreement. MacDonald proposed as an alternative a strengthening of the arbitration procedures of the League of Nations so as to plug what was called the “gap” in the Covenant by legally requiring states to arbitrate all of their disputes, even if the League Council could not agree on a settlement.<sup>81</sup> Given their greater insecurity, the French sought automatic economic sanctions against those who refused to arbitrate or settle their disputes or those who did

---

<sup>78</sup>Labour Party 1928.

<sup>79</sup>Gordon 1969, 6.

<sup>80</sup>Winkler 1994, 86-87.

<sup>81</sup>Winkler 1994, 86-87; PRO 30/69/123, C 11976/70/18; DBFP I, Vol. 26, No. 508.

not comply with a League decision.<sup>82</sup>

Multilateral negotiations were held in Geneva in fall 1924 looking for an agreement that would blend French and British interests. The delegates agreed to negotiate a voluntary supplement to the Covenant that could be signed, ratified and applied by members of the League who consented. The British did not want to militarize the League in the way preferred by the French, as this would significantly increase Britain's sanctions obligations. Britain's global navy made it the most important enforcer of economic embargoes under League auspices.

The prosocial Labour government did not exploit its leverage in the way that its proself predecessor had, however. MacDonald later recounted: "French interests are not always the same as ours. I have said so in public several times and in private very often. But France has got no interest so diverse from ours that France and ourselves, approaching the problem in a friendly spirit, cannot find agreement upon it."<sup>83</sup> In addition to an agreement legally requiring Covenant parties to resolve disputes peacefully, the British agreed to automatic economic sanctions under Article 16 of the League Covenant should states resort to force rather than submit their disputes to collective settlement, a great expansion of British obligations under collective security.<sup>84</sup> The British made significant concessions to the French on security in a way that the previous government under the Conservatives had not. The French in private "rendered homage to the great effort of conciliation made by the British delegation."<sup>85</sup>

#### THE TREATY OF LOCARNO

Just after the draft treaty was concluded, however, the Labour government fell and the Conservatives returned to power with Stanley Baldwin as prime minister. For the Conservatives, a thorough examination of the Geneva Protocol was hardly necessary. The arrangement simply made too many concessions, extending British commitments to maintaining global security in a prosocial way that the Conservatives would not countenance.<sup>86</sup> The new Foreign Secretary, Austen Chamberlain, made clear the government's exclusively egoistic orientation. Chamberlain said that "the way to promote the peace" was not "by proceeding from the particular to the general... the reason why the Covenant fails is because we undertake equal obligations in respect of matters in which we have a vital concern and matters in which we have no concern whatsoever, except as one society of nations."<sup>87</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Wolfers 1940, 153-8; B DFA, Part II, Series F, Vol. 17, No. 91: 308; FO 371/10570/W8159; and W7877/134/98.

<sup>83</sup> Hansard Series 5, Vol. 182: col. 345.

<sup>84</sup> Walters 1952, 268-275; FO 371/10570, W8159/134/98.

<sup>85</sup> FO 371/10570, W8063/134/98.

<sup>86</sup> CP 105(25), minutes of 4 December 1924 meeting of CID.

<sup>87</sup> CP 105(25), minutes of 13 February 1925 meeting of CID.

The new government did not submit the instrument for ratification.

While the British “could not accept an extension to every frontier of obligations of the most serious kind, they could properly undertake such obligations in that sphere with which British interests are more closely bound up, namely, the frontier between Germany and her western neighbors.”<sup>88</sup> The opportunity to do so came from an unlikely source. Upon Chamberlain’s appointment as Foreign Secretary, German foreign minister Gustav Stresemann, seeking to forestall a bilateral alliance between the two countries, proposed a different scheme in which Britain would guarantee both France and Germany from aggression by the other.<sup>89</sup>

Stresemann’s proposal was greeted warmly by the prosocial French government, a new electoral alliance called the *Cartel des Gauches* composed of the center-left Radicals and the Socialists. Even in this case of negotiations with a former adversary, the political left was more committed to fairness than the political right. The French were in a position of tremendous leverage over the Germans, which Stresemann was deeply conscious of, yet the *Cartel des Gauches* did not exploit their position as they might have.<sup>90</sup>

The French premier, Édouard Herriot told the British “that, if France is guaranteed against German aggression, Germany has an equal right to be similarly guaranteed against any attack by France.”<sup>91</sup> In keeping with our theoretical expectations, the leader of the French right, Raymond Poincaré, complained that the French were entertaining the German idea and giving far too much away.<sup>92</sup> Of their meetings to draw up a draft treaty, Chamberlain wrote of the French foreign minister: “[Aristide] Briand was the first to insist...that we must prepare for a real discussion with the Germans so as to arrive at a mutual agreement, and not another treaty imposed by the Allies upon Germany.”<sup>93</sup> The British urged the Germans to take advantage of the prosocial character of the French government, lest the *Cartel des Gauches* be “swept away and replaced by an administration of more Nationalist temper.”<sup>94</sup>

After an exchange of notes, the three countries, accompanied by representatives of Belgium, Italy, Poland and Czechoslovakia, met in Switzerland in October 1925 to successfully negotiate what became known as the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, based largely on Stresemann’s model. The more powerful French conceded to the weaker Germans on the two main issues of contention – the relation of the pact to Germany’s eastern neighbors

---

<sup>88</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, No. 349; also Hansard Series 5, Vol. 182: col. 320.

<sup>89</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, No. 189; Jacobson 1972.

<sup>90</sup>Wright 2002, 298; Stresemann, Vol. 2: 88-95).

<sup>91</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, No. 198.

<sup>92</sup>DGFP I, Vol. 27, No. 277.

<sup>93</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, No. 439.

<sup>94</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, No. 198.

and the conditions of German accession into the League.<sup>95</sup> At the conference, the Germans described Briand as “conciliatory on even the most difficult questions.”<sup>96</sup> Lampson, the veteran British civil servant familiar with past efforts at conference diplomacy, reported: “For the first time since the war the French and the Germans meet as man to man, one might almost say as friend to friend. There is complete equality.”<sup>97</sup> This was a persistent theme in accounts of the negotiations on all sides, even those of the Germans.<sup>98</sup>

The French even acquiesced to a significant easing of the Rhineland occupation, including the removal of most ordinances governing civilian life, the reduction of the size of foreign garrisons, the abolition of the hated delegates that served as liaisons between German local government and foreign troops, and the full (albeit belated) evacuation of the Cologne zone by December 1.<sup>99</sup> Following Locarno, in late 1926, Briand proposed to Stresemann the complete evacuation of the Rhineland within the year, as well as the return of the Saarland and its valuable coal mines to German control and the termination of allied inspection of German disarmament, in exchange for a single early payment of a reparations installment.<sup>100</sup> Stresemann called the offer a “great gesture” that was “almost too good to be true.”<sup>101</sup>

#### THE HAGUE CONFERENCE

However, this bold new proposal of Briand was made under new domestic conditions. He was now serving as foreign minister in a conservative government under the conservative premier Poincaré called the *Union Nationale*, which quickly clipped his wings. In January 1927, Briand was forced to publicly disavow in a statement unanimously approved by the cabinet any support for withdrawing French troops from occupied Germany in advance of the Versailles Treaty schedule, particularly for “financial trifles,” as conservative minister Louis Marin put it.<sup>102</sup> This is to be expected as the center-leftist Briand’s social value orientation in politics was markedly different from that of his colleagues.<sup>103</sup>

Poincaré proposed that evacuation of the Rhineland would only begin after a comprehensive reparations agreement, not a one-time payment. And French troops would only be gradually pulled out as Germany con-

---

<sup>95</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, Appendices 10, 12.

<sup>96</sup>ADAP, A14, No. 163.

<sup>97</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, No. 529.

<sup>98</sup>DBFP I, Vol. 27, Nos. 516, 547; Kabinette Luther, Vol. 2, No. 180; ADAP A14, No. 157.

<sup>99</sup>Jacobson 1972, 64; Wright 2002, 347; Kabinette Luther, Vol. 2, No. 223; DBFP Ia, Vol. 1, No. 69; Stresemann Vol. 2, p. 211.

<sup>100</sup>ADAP, B1/2, Nos. 94, 88; Kabinette Marx, No. 83; Wright, 2002, 374-80; Jacobson, 1972, 87-90.

<sup>101</sup>Wright 2002, 374; ADAP, B1/2, Nos. 88, 94, Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83.

<sup>102</sup>Jacobson 1972, 103,138; Wright 2002, 382,404; Keeton 1987, 176; Stresemann Vol. 3, pp. 57-59, 73-77; Keeton 1987, 173.

<sup>103</sup>Significantly, however, the conservative government did not abrogate the Treaty of Locarno, consistent with previous findings about the binding effects of international law in the event of governmental turnovers. See Grieco, Gelpi, and Warren (2009).

tinued to make its payments.<sup>104</sup> The Rhineland was held to be held hostage as a bargaining chip, even as it was of decreasing value to France as conservatives genuinely (and of course incorrectly) believed the new Maginot Line would provide them a degree of permanent security.<sup>105</sup> Poincaré was transparent about exploiting French bargaining leverage. He told the German ambassador that security considerations no longer made continued occupation necessary, yet France would only abandon German territory piecemeal so as to maintain its leverage.<sup>106</sup> When the Germans asked for a unilateral concession as a sign of good faith, as Briand had done, Poincaré refused such prosocial behavior. “The French would not understand if France, suddenly out of high heaven, made direct sacrifices to Germany,” he said.<sup>107</sup> He was backed by his most conservative colleagues in the cabinet, André Tardieu and Louis Marin. The Germans complained that France was exploiting its bargaining power in a way that the previous prosocial French government did not.<sup>108</sup>

Occupation and reparations were discussed simultaneously at a conference in The Hague in fall 1928. Prior to the convening of the interested parties, the Labour Party returned to power in Britain. While the British Conservatives shared the view of Labour that it was not in Britain’s interest to maintain British forces in the Rhineland, and had pushed the French to keep its earlier promises, Labour’s position was driven by an additional factor — a prosocial concern for fair treatment of Germany.<sup>109</sup>

Even before the end of the war, the party had condemned the harsh peace terms being contemplated and Germany’s exclusion from the League. It was not that the party was “pro-German.” Rather it objected to the inequality and lack of fairness of the peace settlement.<sup>110</sup> The Labour Party had a “tradition of sympathy for post-Versailles Germany, deriving from a characteristic concern for the underdog,” writes Carlton.<sup>111</sup> Labour members blamed Germany’s autocratic leaders for the war rather than the German people and complained bitterly that the former were paying too high a price for the sins of their officials.<sup>112</sup>

Before the 1928 election, Labour castigated the Conservatives in the House of Commons for their European policy and promised the “immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Rhineland.”<sup>113</sup> It justified its position on the basis of reciprocity, arguing that “the continued occupation of which is indefensible

---

<sup>104</sup> ADAP, B9, Nos. 139, 263; Stresemann Vol. 3, pp. 383-392; Jacobson 1972, 157,173-4,193,279,301; Wright 2002, 413.

<sup>105</sup> Keeton 1987, 229,306.

<sup>106</sup> Keeton 1987, 307.

<sup>107</sup> ADAP, B9, No. 139; Jacobson 1972, 173).

<sup>108</sup> Stresemann, Vol. 3: 179-182.

<sup>109</sup> Jacobson 1972, 82,133; Stresemann Vol. 3: 119-124, 168-9.

<sup>110</sup> Naylor 1969, 5.

<sup>111</sup> Carlton 1970, 34.

<sup>112</sup> Labour Party 1919; also Winkler, 1994, ch. 2.

<sup>113</sup> Jacobson 1972, 209, 211, 214.

in view of the fact that Germany has fulfilled her obligations under the Treaty of Versailles, that she is a member of the League of Nations, and that she is a signatory” of the Locarno and Kellogg-Briand treaties outlawing war.<sup>114</sup> Germany had a “right” to evacuation due to its good behavior.<sup>115</sup>

Before meeting in The Hague, the British Cabinet approved in July a decision that Britain would evacuate the Rhineland unilaterally, with a private deadline of Christmas that year. The evacuation would not be made contingent on other issues, such as reparations, as the proself French desired.<sup>116</sup> At The Hague, the conservative and proself French government continued to exploit its bargaining leverage by refusing to negotiate an early occupation of the Rhineland unless there were prior progress on the reparations issue. At this point, Henderson engaged in negative reciprocity vis-à-vis the French, announcing that British troop removal would begin almost immediately, in mid-September and all troops would be home before Christmas.<sup>117</sup> Consistently proself French behavior vis-à-vis the Germans had induced behavioral assimilation on the part of the British prosocials, mirroring our results in the bargaining game that confirmed H5.

The British move broke the logjam at the conference. The prospect of being left isolated in the Rhineland induced the French to agree to begin the French withdrawal of the second zone alongside the British irrespective of progress on reparations.<sup>118</sup> France and Germany eventually agreed that all allied forces would be removed from the Rhineland by June 30, 1930, five years ahead of schedule.

## *Conclusion*

Over the past several decades, a prodigious volume of scholarship on social preferences has emerged in behavioral economics and social psychology, offering two key insights. First, many individuals have social preferences: they are not simply self-interested, but care about others, and are concerned with fairness and reciprocity. Second, social preferences vary, such that some actors are more prosocial than others. Yet to our knowledge, political scientists have yet to systematically explore how social preferences might matter in International Relations.

In this study, we suggested one potential application of social preferences to IR: helping to explain why some pairs of actors are better able to avoid bargaining failure than others. Combining an experimental economics-style laboratory game with archival research on Anglo-French and Franco-German diplomacy in the 1920s, we show

---

<sup>114</sup>Labour Party 1928; also Jacobson 1972, 210,242,281-3.

<sup>115</sup>Jacobson 1972, 282.

<sup>116</sup>DBFP Ia, Vol. 5, No. 189; also No. 300). The British finance minister, however, did take a proself line on reparations issues, for which he drew the scorn of his prosocial Labour colleagues. See Appendix §5.

<sup>117</sup>ADAP, B12, Nos. 157, 158; DBFP Ia, Vol. 6, No. 316.

<sup>118</sup>Winkler 1994, 235.

how prosocials are better able to avoid bargaining failure than their proself counterparts: prosocials tend to be more generous than proselfs, and less likely to exploit their bargaining power. At the same time, however, prosocials are not saints or pushovers, and will engage in negative reciprocity if their generosity is unrequited and they receive less than their fair share.

We conclude by noting a number of potential objections to our argument. One potential objection is that what looks like prosocial behavior in our cases is actually driven by a different conception of how to pursue one's self-interest akin to that highlighted historically in the rationalist IR literature on cooperation and reciprocity. It might be that prosocials in our cases differ from proselfs not in their commitment to equal outcomes but in their beliefs and expectations about their negotiating partners. Might it be the case that prosocials are simply those who expect that their greater generosity in a position of strength is the smart strategy going forward, one that will be met with reciprocity and greater mutual gain that leaves both better off? In other words, are these prosocials simply proselfs with a longer "shadow of the future"?<sup>119</sup>

This is somewhat akin to asking whether what we are capturing with our proself and prosocial distinction is simply the more common separation of decision-makers into "hawks" and "doves."<sup>120</sup> Hawkishness is associated with a view of one's adversaries as hostile in nature. As a consequence, they must be dealt with harshly as acts of generosity or cooperation will be interpreted as signs of weakness and subsequently exploited. This is captured in their embrace of what Jervis calls the "deterrence model" of international politics as a mindset guiding their foreign policy behavior.<sup>121</sup> In addition, any fair offer might be expected to lead to relatively greater gains for the other that could subsequently be exploited to one's detriment. Hawks might as a consequence exploit their bargaining leverage not as a function of their egoistic orientation but rather given a more pronounced belief that they will be taken advantage of should they not do so. Doves, in contrast, might not be fairness-oriented but rather simply have a more benign view of how others will treat their softer line. Exploitation or excessive egoism gives way to a hostile "spiral," undermining the interests of both sides.

This is not a concern in our bargaining game given the stopping rule. If such a rule was not in place, we can imagine a situation in which supposed "prosocials" make fair offers in the hope of reciprocation that might enable them to equally split the pie for multiple rounds out of no other concern than their own welfare. Nor is information about how one played in one match transmitted to future partners in our bargaining game, which

---

<sup>119</sup> Axelrod 1984.

<sup>120</sup> Schultz 2005. In a public opinion context, see Wittkopf 1990; Herrmann, Tetlock, and Visser 1999; Kertzer and McGraw 2012.

<sup>121</sup> Jervis 1976.

might create an incentive to invest in a reputation for generosity based on purely self-interested and instrumental considerations. This allows us to distinguish between real fairness-oriented prosocials and those mimicking their behavior for personal gain. The same can be said of negative reciprocity. In our game, we know that the increasing likelihood of punishing stingy, proself players on the part of prosocials is not undertaken to induce better and fairer offers since their assimilation to the behavior of proselfs takes place against new partners, not those with which they are in an ongoing relationship. And their punishment of previous proselfs is not known to future ones. It is done for the pure satisfaction of enforcing a fairness norm.

These features of our game, however, are not true of our cases in which leaders represent nation-states who engage in continual interaction. Nevertheless, there are number of reasons to believe that fairness and reciprocity norms are indeed driving the dynamics in these historical instances. First, we see the same pattern of differences in the behavior of prosocials and proselfs in positions of strength in both the Anglo-Franco and the Franco-German cases even though the former involved interactions among two closely tied countries with a recent history of successful wartime cooperation considering a potential alliance and the latter involved interactions among two bitter rivals. In the Anglo-Franco case, to the extent that there were differences between the proself Conservatives and prosocial Labourites in their views about France, the latter were more suspicious of the French.<sup>122</sup> Yet they were the ones offering the former wartime ally a better deal.

Second, even in interactions among France and Germany, the prosocial French left was as fearful of a potential resurgence of Germany as the French right, as internal documents reveal. Leftist Prime Minister Édouard Herriot told the British: “My country has a dagger pointed at its breast, within an inch of its heart...I think that I should not have done my duty towards my country if I did not place Germany in a condition to do no harm...If there was a new war, France would be wiped off the map of the world ...One takes precautions against common criminals.”<sup>123</sup> We cannot speak of French doves and French hawks in any meaningful way in the 1920s, as neither had different views of their interlocutor, Germany, than the other.<sup>124</sup> Their different approaches owe to social preferences, not beliefs.<sup>125</sup>

What about negative reciprocity? Can we distinguish in cases between an egoistic concern for inducing future cooperativeness and compliance through punishment from a prosocial defense of a norm of reciprocity? Here the findings of *overassimilation* are important. Recall that the Labour Party was willing to unilaterally

---

<sup>122</sup> Wolfers 1940.

<sup>123</sup> PRO 30/69/123, C 11976/70/18; see also DFFP I, Vol. 26, No. 508.

<sup>124</sup> Wolfers 1940.

<sup>125</sup> On the importance of motive attributions in IR more generally, see Herrmann 1988.

withdraw troops from the Rhineland out of a frustration with the French in literally dragging their heels, which they saw as fundamentally unfair treatment of Germany. While their Conservative predecessors saw the egoistic interest for Britain in such an evacuation, they were worried that such a provocative move might limit Britain's ability to influence France in the future by removing a source of leverage. Chamberlain stressed to the importance of having a "hand in the game in order to be able to exercise pressure on France so that the evacuation of Rhineland should be carried out by both Powers in common."<sup>126</sup> This was a proself rather than a prosocial concern. Chamberlain was also worried that by provoking the French in such a manner, it would undermine long-term cooperation with them in a way that would damage British interests. Fair treatment of Germany was not a concern for him, but Labour was willing to pay such costs to enforce this norm.

It is important to recognize that distinguishing a prosocial commitment to fairness and reciprocity from an egoistic one driven merely by self-interest is absolutely necessary and requires careful qualitative research, since researchers cannot manipulate the environment outside of the laboratory in such a way to allow these difference to reveal themselves behaviorally. However, this can be done. For instance, in contrast to the more genuine prosocials, an examination of Germany's foreign policy during this period reveals an instrumental, egoistic approach. Nations "are always egoists," he claimed, and cooperative relations with other states depended on "parallel interest." Under his leadership Germany sought "understanding and peace because we need both."<sup>127</sup> More specifically, but in a similar vein, he said: "If I am told that I pursue a policy friendly to England, I do not do so from any love of England, but because in this question German interests coincide with those of England, and because we must find someone who helps us."<sup>128</sup>

We end therefore with a plea to future researchers for a careful combination of methods in examining the psychology of decision-making in international relations. Although the combination of bargaining experiment and archival research is unusual (the first such combination in IR, to our knowledge), this multimethod approach allows us to harness the strengths of both approaches: the game gives us a direct way of cleanly measuring social preferences in a controlled, stylized environment, while the archival research lets us show that the patterns we see in the lab also translate into the real world of high-stakes diplomacy. Both are necessary. Fair is fair.

---

<sup>126</sup>Stresemann, Vol. 3: 119-124.

<sup>127</sup>Wright 2002, 344, 298.

<sup>128</sup>Stresemann, Vol. 2: 225.

## Primary Sources

- ADAP A14: *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik, 1918-1945*. 1995. Serie A, Band XIV (14. August bis 30. November 1924). Göttingen: Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes.
- ADAP B9: *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik, 1918-1945*. 1976. Serie B, Band IX (1. Mai bis 30. August 1928). Göttingen: Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes.
- ADAP B12: 1978. Serie B, Band XII (1. Juni bis 2. September 1929). Göttingen: Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes.
- B DFA: British Documents on Foreign Affairs. 1993. Part 2: *From the First to the Second World War*, Series F, Vol. 17: Europe. Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America.
- CC: Conclusions of the British cabinet, sometimes providing a summary of discussions. Minutes are numbered sequentially throughout the year, with the last two digits of the year in parentheses.
- Cmd. 2169: Parliamentary Command Paper 2169, *Papers Respecting Negotiations for an Anglo French Pact*. 1924. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office.
- CP: British Cabinet Papers circulated to ministers. Papers are numbered sequentially throughout the year, with the last two digits of the year in parentheses.
- DD: *Documents diplomatiques: Documents relatifs aux négociations concernant les garanties de sécurité contre une agression de l'Allemagne (10 janvier 1919 - 7 décembre 1923)*. 1962. Paris: Ministère des Affaires étrangères
- DBFP I, Vol. 26: Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. 1985. First Series, Volume XXVI: *Central Europe and the Balkans 1924; German Affairs 1924*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- DBFP I, Vol. 27: Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. 1986. First Series, Volume XXVII: *Central Europe, the Balkans and Germany, January-October, 1925; The Conference of Locarno, October 1925*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- DBFP IA, Vol. 1: Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. 1966. Series Ia, Volume I: *The Aftermath of Locarno, 1925-1926*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- DBFP IA, Vol. 5: Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. 1973. Series IA, Volume V: *European and Security Questions, 1928*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- DBFP IA, Vol. 6: Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939. 1975. Series IA, Volume VI: *The Young Report and the Hague Conference: Security Questions, 1928-1929*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- FO 371: Political files of the British Foreign Office. "W" refers to Western Europe.
- Hansard*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (British parliamentary record).
- Kabinette Luther: *Akten der Reichskanzlei Weimarer Republik: Die Kabinette Luther I and II*, vols. 1-2. 1977. Edited by Karl-Heinz Minuth. Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag.
- Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1: *Akten der Reichskanzlei Weimarer Republik: Die Kabinette Marx III und IV*, Vol. 1. Edited by Günther Abramowski. Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag.
- Labour Party. 1919. *Labour and the Peace Treaty* (pamphlet).
- Labour Party. 1928. *Labour and the Nation* (election manifesto).
- PRO 30/69: Papers of Prime Minister James Ramsay MacDonald (located in the National Archives, London)
- Stresemann: *Stresemann, Gustav: His Diaries, Letters and Papers*. 1940. Edited by Eric Sutton. New York: Macmillan: Vols. 2-3.

## References

- Axelrod, Robert. 1984. *The Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Barnea, Marina F., and Shalom H. Schwartz. 1998. "Values and Voting." *Political Psychology* 19 (1): 17-40.
- Beersma, Bianca, and Carsten K.W. De Dreu. 1999. "Negotiation Processes and Outcomes in Prosocially and Egoistically Motivated Groups." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 10 (4): 385-402.
- Boettcher, William A. III. 1995. "Context, Methods, Numbers, And Words: Prospect Theory in International Relations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39 (3): 561-583.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and David Lalman. 1992. *War and Reason*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and Randolph M. Siverson. 1995. "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability." *American Political Science Review* 89 (4): 841-855.

- Cacioppo, John T., and Richard E. Petty. 1982. "The Need for Cognition." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 42 (1): 116.
- Cacioppo, John T., Richard E. Petty, Jeffrey A. Feinstein, and W. Blair G. Jarvis. 1996. "Dispositional Differences in Cognitive Motivation: The Life and Times of Individuals Varying in Need for Cognition." *Psychological Bulletin* 119 (2): 197.
- Camerer, Colin. 2003. *Behavioral game theory: Experiments in strategic interaction*. Princeton University Press.
- Camerer, Colin F., George Loewenstein, and Matthew Rabin. 2011. *Advances in behavioral economics*. Princeton University Press.
- Caprara, Gian Vittorio, Claudio Barbaranelli, and Philip G. Zimbardo. 1999. "Personality Profiles and Political Parties." *Political Psychology* 20 (1): 175-197.
- Carlton, David. 1970. *MacDonald versus Henderson: the foreign policy of the second Labour Government*. Macmillan London.
- Carnevale, Peter JD, and Edward J. Lawler. 1986. "Time pressure and the development of integrative agreements in bilateral negotiations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 30 (4): 636-659.
- De Cremer, David, and Paul A.M. Van Lange. 2001. "Why prosocials exhibit greater cooperation than proselves: The roles of social responsibility and reciprocity." *European Journal of Personality* 15 (S1): S5-S18.
- De Dreu, Carsten K.W., and Gerben A. Van Kleef. 2004. "The influence of power on the information search, impression formation, and demands in negotiation." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 40 (3): 303-319.
- De Dreu, Carsten K.W., and Paul A.M. Van Lange. 1995. "The impact of social value orientations on negotiator cognition and behavior." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 21 (11): 1178-1188.
- De Dreu, Carsten K.W., and Terry L. Boles. 1998. "Share and Share Alike or Winner Take All?: The Influence of Social Value Orientation Upon Choice and Recall of Negotiation Heuristics." *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 76 (3): 253-276.
- Deutsch, Morton. 1960. "The effect of motivational orientation upon trust and suspicion." *Human relations* 13 (2): 123-139.
- Druckman, James N., and Cindy D. Kam. 2011. "Students as Experimental Participants: A Defense of the 'Narrow Data Base'" In *Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, ed. James N. Druckman, Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski, and Arthur Lupia. Cambridge University Press.
- Falk, Armin, Stephan Meier, and Christian Zehnder. 2013. "Do Lab Experiments Misrepresent Social Preferences? The Case Of Self-Selected Student Samples." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 11 (4): 839-852.
- Fearon, James. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49 (3): 379-414.
- Fehr, Ernst, and Urs Fischbacher. 2002. "Why social preferences matter: the impact of non-selfish motives on competition, cooperation and incentives." *The economic journal* 112 (478): C1-C33.
- Giebels, Ellen, Carsten K.W. De Dreu, and Evert Van de Vliert. 2000. "Interdependence in negotiation: Effects of exit options and social motive on distributive and integrative negotiation." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30 (2): 255-272.
- Goldsmith, Jack L., and Eric A. Posner. 2005. *The Limits of International Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gordon, Michael R. 1969. *Conflict and consensus in Labour's foreign policy, 1914-1965*. Stanford University Press.
- Graham, Jesse, Jonathan Haidt, and Brian A. Nosek. 2009. "Liberals and Conservatives Rely on Different Sets of Moral Foundations." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 96 (5): 1029-1046.
- Grieco, Joseph M., Christopher F. Gelpi, and T. Camber Warren. 2009. "When Preferences and Commitments Collide: The Effect of Relative Partisan Shifts on International Treaty Compliance." *International Organization* 63 (2): 341-355.
- Güth, Werner, Rolf Schmittberger, and Bernd Schwarze. 1982. "An experimental analysis of ultimatum bargaining." *Journal of economic behavior & organization* 3 (4): 367-388.
- Hall, Hines. 1978. "Lloyd George, Briand and the Failure of the Anglo-French Entente." *The Journal of Modern History*: D1121-D1138.
- Herrmann, Richard. 1988. "The Empirical Challenge of the Cognitive Revolution: A Strategy for the Drawing Inferences about Perceptions." *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (2): 175-203.

- Herrmann, Richard K., Philip E. Tetlock, and Penny S. Visser. 1999. "Mass Public Decisions to Go to War: A Cognitive-Interactionist Framework." *American Political Science Review* 93 (3): 553-573.
- Inglehart, Ronald, and Scott Flanagan. 1987. "Value Change in Industrial Societies." *American Political Science Review* 81 (4): 1289-1319.
- Jacobson, Jon. 1972. *Locarno Diplomacy: Germany and the West, 1925-1929*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Janoff-Bulman, Ronnie, Sana Sheikh, and Kate G. Baldacci. 2007. "Mapping Moral Motives: Approach, Avoidance And Political Orientation." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 44 (4): 1091-1099.
- Jervis, Robert. 1976. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kanagaretnam, Kiridaran, Stuart Mestelman, Khalid Nainar, and Mohamed Shehata. 2009. "The impact of social value orientation and risk attitudes on trust and reciprocity." *Journal of Economic Psychology* 30 (3): 368 - 380.
- Kapstein, Ethan B. 2008. "Fairness Considerations in World Politics: Lessons from International Trade Negotiations." *Political Science Quarterly* 123 (2): 229-245.
- Kauffmann, Chaim D., and Robert A. Pape. 1999. "Explaining Costly International Moral Action: Britain's Sixty-Year Campaign Against The Atlantic Slave Trade." *International Organization* 53 (4): 631-68.
- Keeton, Edward D. 1987. *Briand's Locarno Policy: French Economics, Politics and Diplomacy, 1925-1929*. New York: Garland.
- Kelley, Harold H., and Anthony J. Stahelski. 1970. "Social interaction basis of cooperators' and competitors' beliefs about others." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 16 (1): 66.
- Kelley, Harold H., and John W. Thibaut. 1978. *Interpersonal Relations: A Theory of Interdependence*. New York: Wiley.
- Keohane, Robert O. 1984. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Keohane, Robert O. 1986. "Reciprocity in International Relations." *International Organization* 40 (1): 1-27.
- Kertzer, Joshua D., and Kathleen M. McGraw. 2012. "Folk Realism: Testing the Microfoundations of Realism in Ordinary Citizens." *International Studies Quarterly* 56 (2): 245-258.
- Kertzer, Joshua D., Kathleen Powers, Brian C. Rathbun, and Ravi Iyer. 2014. "Moral Support: How Moral Values Shape Foreign Policy Preferences." *Journal of Politics* 76 (3): 825-840.
- Kitschelt, Herbert, and Staf Hellemans. 1989. "The Left-Right Semantics and the New Politics Cleavage." *Comparative Political Studies* 23: 210-238.
- Koremenos, Barbara, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal. 2001. "The Rational Design of International Institutions." *International Organization* 55 (4): 761-799.
- Kuhlman, D. Michael, and Alfred F. Marshello. 1975. "Individual Differences in Game Motivation as Moderators of Preprogrammed Strategy Effects in Prisoner's Dilemma." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 32 (5): 922-931.
- Kuhlman, D. Michael, and David L. Wimberley. 1976. "Expectations of Choice Behavior Held by Cooperators, Competitors, and Individualists Across Four Classes of Experimental Games." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 34 (1): 69-81.
- Levy, Jack S. 1997. "Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations." *International Studies Quarterly* 41 (1): 87-112.
- Liebrand, Wim BG, Ronald WTL Jansen, Victor M. Rijken, and Cor JM Suhre. 1986. "Might over morality: Social values and the perception of other players in experimental games." *Journal of experimental social psychology* 22 (3): 203-215.
- Lipset, Seymour M., Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Allen H. Barton, and Juan Linz. 1954. "The Psychology Of Voting: An Analysis Of Political Behavior." In *Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Gardner Lindzey. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- List, John A. 2009. "Social Preferences: Some Thoughts from the Field." *Annual Review of Economics* 1 (1): 563-579.
- Lumsdaine, David Halloran. 1993. *Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- March, James G., and Johan P. Olsen. 1998. "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders." *International Organization* 52 (4): 943-969.
- Marks, Sally. 1982. "Ménage À Trois: The Negotiations for an Anglo-French-Belgian Alliance in 1922." *The International History Review* 4 (4): 524-552.
- McClintock, Charles G. 1972. "Social motivation – A set of propositions." *Behavioral science* 17 (5): 438-454.
- McClintock, Charles G., and Wim B. Liebrand. 1988. "Role of Interdependence Structure, Individual Value Orientation, and Another's Strategy in Social Decision Making: A Transformational Analysis." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 55 (3): 396-409.
- McDermott, Rose. 1998. *Risk-Taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy*. University of Michigan Press.
- Messick, David M., and Marilynn B. Brewer. 1983. "Solving social dilemmas: A review." *Review of Personality and Social Psychology* 4: 11-44.
- Naylor, John F. 1969. *Labour's international policy: the Labour Party in the 1930s*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Olekals, Mara, Philip L. Smith, and Rachael Kibby. 1996. "Social value orientations and negotiator outcomes." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 26 (2): 299-313.
- Oye, Kenneth A. 1985. "Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies." *World Politics* 38 (1): 1-24.
- Piurko, Yuval, Shalom H. Schwartz, and Eldad Davidov. 2011. "Basic Personal Values and the Meaning of Left-Right Political Orientations in 20 Countries." *Political Psychology* 32 (4): 537-561.
- Price, Richard. 1995. "The Genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo." *International Organization* 49 (1): 73-103.
- Putnam, Robert D. 1973. *The Beliefs of Politicians: Ideology, Conflict and Democracy in Britain and Italy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Quek, Kai. 2011. "Rationalist experiments on war." Working paper.
- Rabin, Matthew. 1998. "Psychology and economics." *Journal of economic literature*: 11-46.
- Rabin, Matthew. 2002. "A perspective on psychology and economics." *European Economic Review* 46 (4): 657-685.
- Rathbun, Brian C. 2004. *Partisan Interventions: European Party Politics and Peace Enforcement in the Balkans*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Rathbun, Brian C. 2007. "Hierarchy and Community at Home and Abroad: Evidence of a Common Structure of Domestic and Foreign Policy Beliefs in American Elites." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51 (3): 379-407.
- Rathbun, Brian C., Joshua D. Kertzer, and Mark Paradis. 2014. "Homo Diplomaticus: Mixed-Method Evidence of Variation in Strategic Rationality." Working paper.
- Rotter, Julian B. 1980. "Interpersonal trust, trustworthiness, and gullibility." *American psychologist* 35 (1): 1.
- Schei, Vidar, and Jørn K. Rognes. 2003. "Knowing me, knowing you: Own orientation and information about the opponent's orientation in negotiation." *International Journal of Conflict Management* 14 (1): 43-59.
- Schultz, Kenneth A. 2005. "The Politics of Risking Peace: Do Hawks or Doves Deliver the Olive Branch?" *International Organization* 59 (1): 1-38.
- Schwartz, Shalom H. 1992. "Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests of 20 Countries." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25: 1-63.
- Schwartz, Shalom H., Gian Vittorio Caprara, and Michele Vecchione. 2010. "Basic Personal Values, Core Political Values, and Voting: A Longitudinal Analysis." *Political Psychology* 31 (3): 421-452.
- Stephen, Roland, and William A. III Boettcher. 2008. "Fair Treatment in International Politics: Distributing Gains and Losses in the Ultimatum Game." Working paper.
- Tannenwald, Nina. 1999. "The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use." *International Organization* 53 (3): 433-68.
- Tingley, Dustin H. 2011. "The Dark Side of the Future: An Experimental Test of Commitment Problems in Bargaining." *International Studies Quarterly* 55 (2): 521-544.
- Van Dijk, Eric, David De Cremer, and Michel JJ Handgraaf. 2004. "Social value orientations and the strategic use of fairness in ultimatum bargaining." *Journal of experimental social psychology* 40 (6): 697-707.
- Van Lange, Paul A.M. 1999. "The Pursuit of Joint Outcomes and Equality in Outcomes: An Integrative Model

- of Social Value Orientation." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 77 (2): 337-349.
- Van Lange, Paul A.M., and D. Michael Kuhlman. 1994. "Social value orientations and impressions of partner's honesty and intelligence: A test of the might versus morality effect." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 67 (1): 126.
- Walters, Francis P. 1952. *A History of the League of Nations*. Vol. 1 London: Oxford University Press.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Weingart, Laurie R., Jeanne M. Brett, Mara Olekalns, and Philip L. Smith. 2007. "Conflicting social motives in negotiating groups." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 93 (6): 994.
- Winkler, Henry R. 1994. *Paths not taken: British labour and international policy in the 1920s*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Wittkopf, Eugene R. 1990. *Faces of internationalism: Public Opinion and American foreign policy*. Duke University Press.
- Wolfers, Arnold. 1940. *Britain and France between two wars: conflicting strategies of peace from Versailles to World War II*. Hamden, Conn., Archon.
- Wright, Jonathan. 2002. *Gustav Stresemann: Weimar's Greatest Statesman*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.