

©2008

David Mislan

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

ENEMIES OF THE AMERICAN WAY: IDENTITY AND PRESIDENTIAL FOREIGN

POLICYMAKING, 1885-1901

by

DAVID MISLAN

A Dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School-New Brunswick

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in Political Science

written under the direction of

Edward Rhodes

and approved by

New Brunswick, New Jersey

October 2008

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Enemies of the American Way: Identity and Presidential Foreign Policymaking, 1885-

1901

By DAVID MISLAN

Dissertation Director:

Edward Rhodes

This dissertation asks and answers the question, “Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?” It considers four plausible explanations for differences in threat identification and concludes that a new approach, a rule-based (RBI) theory of threat identification, provides the most useful answer. The RBI approach posits that American identity is subjectively defined and varies among individuals. By analyzing the constitutive rules that a president uses to describe American identity, RBI theory explains the variation in the types of behavior that each president identifies as threatening. This dissertation concludes that how a president conceptualizes American identity will influence the types of threats he identifies. Its findings are based on a comparative case study of the presidents of the late nineteenth century. After examining the foreign policies of Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, and William McKinley, this study concludes that their different constructions of American identity account for disagreements over the British, German, and Spanish threats during the period studied. This dissertation and the RBI approach offer a novel and effective means for understanding late nineteenth century American foreign policy and put forward a template that can be applied to other eras, including the post-Cold War world.

PREFACE

While attending graduate school at Johns Hopkins, I was fortunate enough to meet Dr. Jack Kangas. Under his tutelage, he introduced me to the topic of missile defense in contemporary American defense policy. I was amazed to learn that the idea of an American missile shield preceded Ronald Reagan's *Star Wars* and even the Korean War and was surprised to learn that the rationale and methods for missile defense changed over the decades. What interested me the most, at the time, was the growing support for missile defense among America's allies in Europe and Asia. I wanted to understand why our allies would support (some of them were helping construct) a national missile defense (NMD) architecture that would primarily protect the American homeland and restore America's military advantage to 1945 levels.

Despite my naïveté or, perhaps due to it, I gained entry to key policymakers in the American defense apparatus and the embassies of allied states. My experiences while conducting my research opened my eyes to the making of defense and foreign policy and inspired me to write this dissertation.

My work brought me into contact with many Americans working on the NMD project. They included civilians, officers, and even a retired general. With each interview, I dutifully executed my list of questions about America's relationship with its allies and how NMD fit into the broader picture of national security. As a bonus, I threw in an additional question at the end of the interviews. I asked these men and women who were dedicating their professional careers to NMD if they felt that missile defense was absolutely necessary. The responses they gave were a dissertation itself.

The majority opinion was that NMD was absolutely crucial for national defense. The reason what that they believed that it was only a matter of time before rogue states would launch an unprovoked attack on the United States. These answers were so similar to each other that I initially suspected that they were rehearsed; rogue states hated America because of “what it stands for” and were jealous of our way of life. Additionally, they argued that these rogue states, such as Iraq and North Korea, could not be reasoned with and could not be deterred. They were anti-social; they were inherent enemies of the United States. Popular terms like “nuclear blackmail” accented their opinions. These people were convinced that a group of regionally influential states were going to develop weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems, and then use them against the United States. The American government needed to be ready for this inevitability.

The minority disagreed, although quietly. These people, who were also working on NMD, believed that rogue states were not a threat. The arguments against the rogue state threat varied; some claimed that rogues could be deterred with America’s overwhelming strategic advantage, some asserted that rogues would not threaten the United States if left alone, and others maintained that rogues could not possess the capacity to strike the American mainland. I even heard arguments that the real threat was China and that NMD would be useful in a future conflict over Taiwan.¹ These people, working diligently on missile defense, made their point. Not everyone agreed that the rogue state threat was the same.

¹ In all fairness, TMD (theater missile defense) would be more useful in the execution of a conflict over Taiwan, but the two programs were often confused during discussions on ballistic missile defense, written broadly.

The result of my interviews was more questions than answers. I wondered, how can these people disagree on what threats actually exist? Why were these people identifying threats differently? At the time, I vaguely attributed it to American exceptionalism and moved to complete my work, graduate with my master's degree, and enter the private sector.

Three years later, the Bush administration insisted that a pre-emptive strike was necessary to protect the United States against an imminent Iraqi threat.² The questions I had asked earlier about threat identification resurfaced, but the circumstances changed. Why did the Bush administration identify the Iraqi threat as an urgent crisis when nothing substantial had changed since the Clinton administration? Was it possible that the trauma of the 9/11 attacks changed Bush's threat perception? When reports circulated in 2003 and were confirmed in 2004 that Colin Powell disagreed with Bush and the rest of the National Security Council regarding the Iraqi threat, I thought of my interviews in 2000.³ How could Bush's advisors disagree on the Iraqi threat? After all, didn't they all have access to the same intelligence?

My experiences with NMD and our common experiences with the Iraq War led me to believe that we need to know more about threat identification. As I studied for my qualifying exams, I found surprisingly little in the international relations literature on the actual etiology of threat identification—where the idea of threat comes from. I was unsatisfied by the few answers in the literature. Dissertations usually originate in such frustrations, as did mine.

² While Bush administration officials referred to the 2003 action as pre-emption, a political scientist might argue that the correct term is preventive.

³ Allen, M. (Nov 16 2004). Powell Announces His Resignation. *The Washington Post*, A1

An investigation into threat identification can inform our understanding of foreign policymaking. When I think of the inspiration for this project, I am convinced that a better knowledge of threat identification can help us make better choices in foreign and defense policy. It is my conviction, formed years ago during discussions over missile defense and rogue states, that is the rationale for my research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Inside every fat book is a thin book trying to get out. Whoever uttered these words first must have been thinking about a dissertation. Without the advice, support, and guidance of my committee, this seemingly fat dissertation would have been morbidly obese.

I could not have started this project without my conversations on American foreign policy with Edward Rhodes in 2005. More importantly, Ed's passion for history encouraged me to look at an oft-neglected period in American diplomacy. During my draft revisions, I came to deeply appreciate his attention to detail. Michael Shafer provided valuable advice and encouragement in the latter stages of my work. His insistence on elegance made a lasting impression on me. Additionally, Michael was a true mentor to me and influenced by renewed commitment to research, education, and service. The dedication, professionalism, and advice of Jack Levy were indispensable in the early stages of my work. I am also indebted to Colin Dueck, who took time from his busy schedule to serve as my external reviewer on short notice.

I could not have completed this draft without suggestions and moral support of the faculty and graduate students at Rutgers. Daniel Tichenor, Roy Licklider, Jan Kubik, Gordon Schochet, Manny Midlarsky, Jon DiCicco, Philip Streich, Parina Patel, and Brian Cramer all contributed to my effort in various ways, whether in the form of detailed comments or friendly chats in Hickman Hall. I would be remiss if I did not thank those outside of Rutgers that offered their critiques of my work in various stages: Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, Rose McDermott, Ted Hopf, and Peter Trumbore.

My research relied heavily on archival records and required the expertise and resources of the following librarians, archivists, research institutions: Tom Glynn, Mary

Fetzer, the New York Public Library, the Firestone Library at Princeton University, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

After Steve Martin finished writing one of his screenplays, he allegedly told a friend, “I think I did pretty well, considering I started out with nothing but a bunch of blank paper.” I arrived at the same conclusion, but must confess that I started with more than blank paper. My friends and family were by my side throughout my education and their abetment was crucial to this project. My parents—Ronald, Christina, Tim, and Elaine—were my bedrock of support. My brother and sister, Ryan and Shannon, were always around to lift my spirits. My friends, too many to mention, were always available to listen to me. Without the moral support of these people, I could never have finished my draft.

I subjected my wife, Courtney Bell Mislán, to the horrors of graduate student life long after she had finished her degree. Perhaps even worse, I forced her to sit through countless and usually unsolicited treatises on the lives of seemingly obscure presidents. I am fairly confident that she knows more about the eating habits of Grover Cleveland than she did before we met.

Courtney’s patience and dedication to my studies sometimes outweighed mine. Over the years, she taught me that every moment in time is independent and that I should be thankful for what I have. I found her philosophy to be indispensable when I was mired in my notes. Above all, I owe my deepest gratitude to her.

While I am forever indebted to those mentioned here, I must state that any errors or omissions henceforth are mine and mine alone.

DEDICATION

Para mi machita

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright page...	
Title page...	
Abstract...	ii
Preface...	iii
Acknowledgements...	viii
Dedication...	x
Table of Contents...	xi
List of Tables...	xv
Introduction...	1
Chapter One: Thinking about Threat...	12
1.1 Why Should We Study Threat Identification?...	12
1.2 The Extant Literature...	16
1.3 Theory Development, Case Studies, and Foreign Policymaking, 1885-1901...	37
1.4 Primary Issues...	41
Chapter Two: Rule-Based Identity and Threat Identification...	43
2.1 The American Way and Threat Identification...	43
2.2 Concepts and Assumptions of the RBI Approach...	49
2.2.1 What is Social Identity?...	49
2.2.2 The Inter-group Proposition...	54
2.2.3 The Problems of Identity Multiplicity and Group Salience...	63

2.2.4	The RBI Hypothesis...	69
2.3	Primary Issues...	75
Chapter Three: Alternate Explanations...		77
3.1	Balance-of-Threat Theory...	78
3.2	Sub-national Interests Theory...	86
3.3	Social Identity Theory...	94
3.4	Primary Issues...	98
Chapter Four: Investigating Threat Identification...		99
4.1	Mill's Method of Difference and George's "structured, focused" Comparison...	99
4.2	Investigating the Balance-of-Threat Hypothesis...	101
4.3	Investigating the Sub-national Interests Hypothesis...	106
4.4	Investigating the SIT Hypothesis...	109
4.5	Investigating the RBI Hypothesis...	111
4.6	Data...	112
4.7	Primary Issues...	114
Chapter Five: Presidents and Presidential Foreign Policymaking, 1885-1909...		115
5.1	Grover Cleveland, 1885-1889, 1893-1897...	115
5.2	Benjamin Harrison, 1889-1893...	121
5.3	William McKinley, 1897-1901...	134
5.4	Primary Issues...	145

Chapter Six: Threat Identification, 1885-1901...	147
6.1 Cleveland’s Threat Identification...	147
6.2 Harrison’s Threat Identification...	154
6.3 McKinley’s Threat Identification...	166
6.4 Analysis...	183
6.5 Primary Issues...	187
Chapter Seven: Tests of the Alternate Explanations...	189
7.1 Balance-of-Threat Explanation...	191
7.1.1 Applying the Balance-of-Threat Hypothesis...	192
7.2 The Sub-national Interests Explanation...	212
7.2.1 Applying the Sub-national Interests Hypothesis...	214
7.3 The SIT Explanation...	230
7.3.1 Applying the SIT Hypothesis...	231
7.4 Results...	250
7.5 Primary Issues...	253
Chapter Eight: The RBI Explanation...	255
8.1 Grover Cleveland...	256
8.1.1 Cleveland’s American Way...	256
8.1.2 Explaining Threat Identification, 1885-1889, 1893-1897...	266
8.2 Benjamin Harrison...	280
8.2.1 Harrison’s American Way...	280
8.2.2 Explaining Threat Identification, 1889-1893...	290

8.3	William McKinley...	300
	8.3.1 McKinley's American Way...	301
	8.3.2 Explaining Threat Identification, 1897-1901...	311
8.4	Results...	324
8.5	Primary Issues...	329
Chapter Nine: Results and Implications...		331
9.1	Summary of Results...	331
9.2	What Can the Matrix Tell us about Politics Today?...	333
9.3	Making the Results Theory-Relevant...	336
9.4	Future Considerations...	344
9.5	Primary Issues...	345
Acknowledgement of Previously Published Work...		346
Bibliography...		347
Vita...		369

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 1.1: The Presidencies of the Gilded Age, 1885-1901...</i>	40
<i>Table 2.1: Hypothesized Inter-group Dynamic of George W. Bush...</i>	62
<i>Table 4.1: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for BOT Hypothesis...</i>	106
<i>Table 4.2: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for Sectional Threat Hypothesis...</i>	109
<i>Table 4.3: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for SIT Hypothesis...</i>	110
<i>Table 4.4: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for RBI Hypothesis...</i>	111
<i>Table 4.5: An Example of Constitutive Rule Violation...</i>	112
<i>Table 6.1: Threat Identifications in a Truth Table...</i>	185
<i>Table 6.2: Threat Identifications in a Truth Table with Two Cleveland Presidencies...</i>	186
<i>Table 6.3: Threat Identifications in a Fuzzy-set Truth Table with Two Cleveland Presidencies...</i>	187
<i>Table 7.1: Threats Identified, 1885-1901...</i>	190
<i>Table 7.2: US Military Capacity...</i>	193
<i>Table 7.3: UK Military Capacity...</i>	194
<i>Table 7.4: Germany Military Capacity...</i>	195
<i>Table 7.5: France Military Capacity...</i>	196
<i>Table 7.6: Russia Military Capacity...</i>	197
<i>Table 7.7: Spain Military Capacity...</i>	198
<i>Table 7.8: Japan Military Capacity...</i>	199
<i>Table 7.9: Incidence of Instigated MIDs, 1875-1901...</i>	206
<i>Table 8.1: Foreign Ports Considered by the Harrison Administration...</i>	292
<i>Table 9.1: The Identity-Threat Matrix...</i>	333
<i>Table 9.2: A Comparison of Categories of Socially Constructed Ideas in the Study of IR....</i>	342

INTRODUCTION

Henry Adams once said that the American president “resembles the commander of a ship at sea. He must have a helm to grasp, a course to steer, a port to seek.”⁴ One thing is for certain—the president’s helm, his office, is his most powerful and prominent asset. The American president has never possessed as much power and influence in foreign policymaking as he does today. His port and course, however, are more elusive.

History shows that presidents set different courses while they are at the helm. There has never been a lasting consensus on the American national interest or grand strategy.⁵ Foreign policy analysts argue whether this disagreement is a matter of changes in the international system or are simply consequences of the different personalities, cognition, or world views of the men in charge. One possible explanation is that presidents chart different courses because they see different dangers in the sea ahead.

When presidents influence foreign policy, they take into account the threats that they identify beyond the water’s edge. These threats are central to their understanding of the world and the prospects for America’s role in it. If two consecutive presidents identify different threats, they will ultimately advocate different foreign policies.

Thinking about threat and its relationship to foreign policymaking raises certain questions. Who is a threat? What is threatened? Why is the threat threatening? This dissertation is an attempt to engage these questions by looking at the process of threat identification in foreign policymaking. In particular, it seeks to understand why

⁴ Quoted by Schlesinger, A.M., Jr. (2003). Introduction. In Calhoun, C.W. (2005). *Benjamin Harrison*. (Times Books, New York), 2.

⁵ Apart from reactions to exogenous shocks, such as the one felt after the attack on Pearl Harbor, consensus is elusive in American history. See Krasner (1978), Wolfers (1952), and Trubowitz (1992)

presidents identify threats differently when confronted with substantially similar scenarios.

A case in point is the rogue state threat. The notion of rogue states did not exist before the former Bush (41st) administration. In fact, its origin is difficult to pin down. Before the rogue state label emerged, its distant relative—pariah state— was used by policymakers but was not considered to be a threat. Policymakers in the 1970s and 80s criticized pariah states for their mistreatment of their inhabitants, but they did not discuss their foreign policies. Other states that would make the rogues list in the 1990s, like Iraq and North Korea, were originally pariahs. Being identified as a pariah, did not equate with being identified as a threat.

The rise of the rogue state label coincided with the former Bush (41st) administration's argument that regional powers could endanger American interests abroad. Without specifically coining the term rogue, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney led the development of a grand strategy to counter aspiring regional hegemony as early as 1990. Interestingly enough, this planning focused on Iraq and North Korea while ignoring other regional powers like Brazil, Pakistan, and Egypt.⁶ Cheney's review of force posture and U.S. defense strategy, published during the lame duck days of the Bush (41st) administration, would become the cornerstone of military doctrine in the post-Cold War era.⁷ Centered on the threat that uncooperative, anti-Western, and seemingly violent states posed to regional stability, Cheney recommended an interim force transformation from the Cold War-era military designed to deter Soviet aggression to a leaner and

⁶ At the end of the Cold War, one could easily make the argument that these states had the capacity for regional domination—Brazil in South America, Egypt in North Africa, and Pakistan over Afghanistan.

⁷ United States Department of Defense 1991. Posen and Ross (1996) argue that the two-regional war strategy was an emerging idea among George H.W. Bush and his advisors by the close of his term.

meaner force capable of fighting two regional wars against lesser powers. The changes in force posture and grand strategy that resulted over the next ten years were based on the assumption that the United States would be faced with a future of fighting mid-level wars against regional hegemonic aspirants instead of a great power.⁸

George H.W. Bush did not make the Iraqi and North Korean threats the cornerstones of his foreign policy, but he paid increasing attention to them as his term progressed.⁹ In the years that followed, grand strategy continued to focus on rogue states, yet the Clinton administration was unconvinced that rogue states were the greatest danger to the United States during the 1990s.¹⁰

Bill Clinton was never convinced that rogue states were America's most urgent threat. Accordingly, grand strategy from 1993 to 2000 oscillated between containment and engagement. Clinton's inability (possibly hesitance) to develop a grand strategy coincided with his disorganized and inconsistent view of the rogue state threat. His administration acknowledged that rogue states were outcasts in the international system, but did not definitively identify them as threats. Clinton's national security advisor, Anthony Lake, wrote about rogue states¹¹ in 1994:

Our policy must face the reality of recalcitrant and outlaw states that not only choose to remain outside the family but also assault its basic values. There are few backlash states: Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and Libya. For now they lack the resources of a superpower, which would enable them to seriously threaten the democratic order being created around them. Nevertheless, their behavior is often

⁸ Department of Defense (1990). Department of Defense Base Structure Report for Fiscal Year 1991. Supplement. (Government Printing Office). Accessed electronically on June 1, 2008 at <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA242825>

⁹ Bush, G.H.W. and Scowcroft, B. (1998). *A World Transformed*. (Random House) The authors argue that their administration, under the direction of Bush, transitioned from a Cold War strategy to one that focused on threats posed by rogue states, although they do not use this particular term.

¹⁰ For a thorough assessment and discussion of the opposing grand strategies available to the Clinton administration, see Posen and Ross (1996).

¹¹ Lake referred to these agents as "backlash states" instead of rogue states, although the meanings are interchangeable.

aggressive and defiant. The ties between them are growing as they seek to thwart or quarantine themselves from a global trend to which they seem incapable of adapting.¹²

Lake argued that rogue states must be confronted, but was unclear on whether they were actual threats. The result was a mixed message. At times, the Republican-led Congress was more concerned with the rogue state threat than Clinton was; the Helms-Burton Act stemmed from Congressional dissatisfaction with Clinton's soft touch with Cuba after tensions flared over the Florida Straits in 1996.¹³ Clinton and Albright required State Department documents and officials to use the term "states of concern" instead of "rogue states" in order to dampen their pejorative tone.¹⁴ *Indeed, Clinton did not view the rogue state threat with the same sense of urgency as his successor currently does.*

The current Bush (43rd) administration defines a rogue state as those that "brutalize their own people and squander their natural resources for the personal gain of the rulers, display no regard for international law, are determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction, sponsor terrorism around the globe, and reject basic human values and hate the United States and everything for which it stands."¹⁵ Mentioned at the fore of its most important published grand strategy documents (including the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review), it is clear that the current White House identifies rogue states as a threat and a central organizing concept in making foreign policy.

The Bush administration, as the cornerstone of its grand strategy, claims that "We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and

¹² Lake 1994:45

¹³ Lowenfeld, A. (1996). Congress and Cuba: The Helms-Burton Act. *American Journal of International Law* 90:3, 419-34.

¹⁴ Reuters (June 19, 2000). Iran No Longer a Rogue State.

¹⁵ Bush 2002

friends.”¹⁶ George W. Bush considered rogue states to be threats to national security, but was willing to take a wait-and-see approach with them in 2001. The 9/11/01 attacks on Washington and New York seem to have changed the administration’s calculus.¹⁷ Subsequently, rogue states took a secondary role as non-state actors operating in Afghanistan became the preeminent threat to American national security. By the start of 2002, for whatever reason, the administration expanded its focus beyond Operation Enduring Freedom to include the rogue state threat.¹⁸ In particular, Iraq’s continued refusal to admit IAEA inspectors and the now dubious intelligence indicating Iraq’s acquisition of weapons of mass destruction convinced Bush to abandon the engagement-deterrence model and to adopt a pre-emptive strategy with Iraq.¹⁹ The Bush administration focused on Iraqi defiance of UN Security Council resolution 1441. It was determined to force Iraq to submit to the will of the international community, which would reduce the material threat it posed to American national security. The President asked the American Congress and the UN Security Council for approval of the use of military force to compel Iraq’s compliance in 2002 and 2003, respectively. The former granted authority while the latter declined. A crisis between Iraq and the United States developed into the 2003 Iraq War. Robert Jervis claims that the war signified a new doctrine and an important addendum to Lake’s 1994 doctrine; Bush now claimed that the

¹⁶ Bush 2002:6. For a through analysis of Bush’s grand strategy, see Jervis 2003 or Rhodes 2003.

¹⁷ See Kurth 2005

¹⁸ This should not, however, downplay the significance of continuing American “War on Terrorism” (also known as the Long War in the 2006 QDR.)

¹⁹ The use of pre-emption versus prevention is one that should speak to the concerns of classic IR theorists. Pre-emptive war exists when a state takes a first strike because it is in immediate danger of being attacked; preventive war is elected by a state in order to stop a challenging state from eventually dominating it. One wonders if the use of pre-emption by the policymakers and political scientists advising Bush (43rd) is an honest mistake or a clever rhetorical use of a term coined by and used by political scientists.

United States reserved the right to pre-empt a rogue state when it possessed the ability to immediately harm the United States or American interests.²⁰

If Jervis was right, the evidence for a new preemptive strategy did not materialize on other fronts. While 150,000 American troops occupied Iraq, the United States continued to employ the engagement-deterrence strategy elsewhere, including the recalcitrant Kim Jong Il and the DPRK. Libya acquiesced to UN demands in 2003, ending two decades of isolation from the international community without the use of force or regime change. Iran announced its intention to renew its nuclearization efforts in 2005 and Cuba continued to resist American demands without a change in its relative position since 1996 and the Helms-Burton Act. The mixed strategy continued except for the Iraq War.

While the idea of a “rogue state” gained popularity over the past twenty years, presidents’ identification of a rogue state threat varied. Bush (41st) viewed rogue states as a potential threat in the future. Clinton understood rogue states to be nuisances but not imminent threats. Bush (43rd) maintains that rogue states are the preeminent threats in existence today. The Iraq example confounds: Saddam Hussein defied UNSC mandates and fired on British and American warplanes in 1998, yet it appears that Clinton did not find the Iraq threat to be as urgent as Bush did in 2002, when Hussein was as defiant but less violent. Why did they disagree on the rogue state threat? *Can we explain the variance with exogenous changes, or do different presidents identify threats differently? This is the focus of this dissertation.*

Presidents have never agreed on threat. Far more dramatic than the rogue state example was the controversy over threat in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Prior

²⁰ Jervis 2003

to the War of 1812, Federalists argued that French harassment of American shipping was the greatest threat to the United States and that Great Britain was a natural ally. Anti-Federalists, on the other hand, believed that the French were allies against Great Britain, which was also harassing American sailors. John Adams identified France as an enemy while his successor, Thomas Jefferson, viewed Britain as an enemy.

Why do presidents disagree on what is a threat? Considering the importance of threat to the overall determination of foreign policy and the president's prominent role therein, this dissertation asks a substantial question. It presents an answer based on a cognitive-constructivist theory of identity and the study of presidential foreign policymaking during the Gilded Age.

Identity, Threat, and Foreign Policymaking during the Gilded Age

This dissertation seeks to develop a theoretical understanding of threat identification. As chapter one argues, threat is a central concept to how we think about and analyze international politics. Yet, there is little in the literature to explain *how* policymakers identify threats. When we consider the fact that not all policymakers agree on what the actual threat is, as the preceding discussion of rogue states argues, we are faced with an additional question: *Why* do threat identifications differ between foreign policymakers? Because the American president is the most influential foreign policymaker, this dissertation seeks to answer the related question, "Why do threat identifications differ among presidents?"

Chapter two proposes a novel answer to this question by theorizing the relationship between identity and threat identification. In particular, it looks at the role that constitutive rules play in identity formation and threat identification and takes cues

from classic sociology and Searle's speech act theory. The chapter proposes a rule-based identity (RBI) approach, which posits that presidents will use different constitutive rules in order to define American identity. These rules define what behavior is appropriate to be an American; presidents will consider behavior that violates these rules to be un-American. Presidents identify rule-violating behavior as threatening or identify rule-challenging behavior as threatening. If foreign states violate the constitutive rule, it is likely to be identified as a threat. Since presidents can use various constitutive rules to define America, the potential exists for variation in threat identifications.

In order to effectively assess the value that the RBI approach adds to the subject, its results are compared to the testing of three plausible alternate hypotheses that have the potential to explain why threat identifications vary among presidents. Chapter three elaborates on Walt's balance-of-power theory, Trubowitz's sectional politics theory, and social identity theory from social psychology. Chapter four follows with a research strategy and design for testing these four hypotheses: RBI, BOT, sub-national interests, and SIT.

Chapters five and six examine the presidents, presidencies, foreign policies, and threat identifications of the Gilded Age, from 1885 to 1901. Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley all identified threats differently, yet they all operated in a relatively stable and placid international system.²¹ The chapter demonstrates this variance through a comparison of the presidents' assessments of the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, and other great powers. It also gives an overview of the presidents, their presidencies, and their foreign policies.

²¹ Chapter 1.3 offers a justification of case selection; Chapter 4 elaborates on the methods used in this dissertation.

Next, the dissertation applies the alternate hypotheses to the presidencies of the Gilded Age to determine if they can explain why they produce diverse threat identifications. Cleveland's benign assessment of the United Kingdom during his first term, when the balance-of-threat variables indicate that he should have identified it as a threat, casts a shadow of doubt on the theory's explanatory capacity. An examination of the sub-national interests most influential to the three presidents yields dubious results; McKinley's allies, in particular, saw the Spanish and their control of Cuba as an asset to their business interests, yet the president identified Spain as the greatest threat during his first term. Finally, the social identity hypothesis argues that Cleveland should have been negatively biased against Germans when he identified the German threat, but he had a long history of friendships and carousing with German immigrants, the latter even while he was in the White House. Chapter seven provides this disconfirming evidence and more, concluding that the three alternate hypotheses do not effectively explain why threat identifications varied during the period studied.

Chapter eight analyzes variation in threat identification by using the RBI approach. It studies the subjectively-defined constitutive rules of the three presidents and determines that they all defined America and Americans in substantially different manners, which this dissertation calls "American ways." Grover Cleveland held a legal view of America and believed that Americans were people who valued honesty, order, and justice through law. Later in the chapter, an analysis of his threat identification shows that he identified internationally illegal behavior as threatening, providing a clear bridge between his view of America and his threat identification.

Benjamin Harrison held an exceptional view of America and thought that Americans were unique because of their one-of-a-kind political history and their unparalleled prosperity. Because he believed that Americans were alone in the world, he argued that all states were potential threats and that, if given the capability, would steal away American prosperity. An examination of Harrison's threat identification and foreign policy shows that it was exactly this rationale he used to argue that Great Britain was the top threat to the United States.

William McKinley held the enlightened view of America; he believed that Americans were civilized, free, and human people. The last president studied maintained that to be an American was to respect and protect human dignity. A study of the historical record and McKinley's decision-making in 1897 reveals that he was most concerned with the growing inhumanity in Cuba, which led him to identify Spain as a threat by the end of the year and would ultimately advocate war as the only means available to sustain humanity on America's southern border.

The RBI hypothesis provides a powerful tool for understanding the relationship between American identity and threat identification and implicates current policy debates and the theoretical study of international politics and American foreign policy. Chapter nine concludes the dissertation with a discussion of these ramifications and this research's contribution to the field.

Returning to Rogue States

The results contained herein bring us back to the matter of the rogue state threat. In a world defined by myriad dangers, American foreign policymakers in the post-Cold War era have focused mostly on a motley crew of resistant states, all of whom are

asymmetrically weak. This dissertation proposes a solution to the puzzle presented previously. American foreign policymakers have focused on the rogue state threat in the post-Cold War era because there was an emerging consensus on American identity. After the triumphant end of the rivalry with the Soviet Union, after Eastern Europe embraced freedom and democracy, after Latin America and East Asia adopted the Washington prescription for economic management, and after the United States rolled back aggression in the Middle East, the enlightened view of America was front and center in the collective consciousness. Rogue states and the anti-enlightenment policies they practiced were a threat to the American way. The emergence of triumphalism in the 1990s, the magnitude of the enlightened view of America, and the anti-enlightened behavior of the rogue states all were related and continue to tell the story of American identity and threat identification today.

This dissertation is an attempt to bridge identity and threat in a constructivist manner. The chapters that follow are an attempt to test a hypothesis influenced by constructivist and social psychological concepts to see if there is, indeed, an ideational and identity-based influence on how foreign policymakers identify enemies beyond the water's edge.

1 Thinking about Threats

This chapter begins the dissertation by providing the rationale, both policy- and theory-specific, for the research undertaken. Specifically, it discusses the relevance of threat identification to American foreign policy today, the role of threat identification in the theoretical study of international politics, and the need to study the foreign policymaking of Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley. The chapter concludes with a summary of the primary issues discussed.

1.1 Why should we study threat identification?

Why do policymakers identify particular threats? As we teach and conceptualize international politics, some realist IR scholars work off the base assumption that the strongest state is the one policymakers should be the most worried about. Naturally, this assumption alone cannot explain the diverse myriad cases of threat identification where power does not equate identified threat. In the mid-twentieth century, theories of international politics added more assumptions to the realist conceptual framework in order to produce a more accurate explanation. Theories like those extended by Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer, and Stephen Walt claim that states that are strong and *menacing* are the ones that policymakers identify as threats.²²

Oddly enough, even a cursory read of history finds that policymakers sometimes fail to identify threats that lack a true capacity to harm national security.²³ The example most relevant to the twenty-first century is the Iraq/WMD crisis of 2002-2003. The Bush administration, the U.S. Congress, and a majority of the American public considered Iraq

²² Waltz 1959, Walt 1897, Mearsheimer 2001

²³ Here, national security is narrowly defined as the survival of the state.

to be a clear and present danger to the United States by January 2003.²⁴ In 2002, the Bush administration identified Iraq as an urgent threat to national security.²⁵ The public rationale it offered was that Iraq, by refusing to admit IAEA inspectors, was *prima facie* complicit in illegal WMD proliferation. Further, the White House publicly offered evidence that Iraq harbored other weapons of mass destruction (i.e. nerve agents,) actively sought weapons-grade plutonium, and was considering giving these weapons to al-Qaeda and other non-state actors who would then, presumably, use them against soft targets in the continental United States.²⁶ Critics were emboldened when American armed forces in Iraq did not find evidence of WMD in 2003. The Bush administration identified Iraq as a threat prior to the accumulation of evidence of WMD proliferation.²⁷ The proof that the administration offered to Americans and the international community was merely an *ex post facto* rationalization for threat identification; it had made its mind years prior.²⁸

It seems that Bush overstated the Iraq threat. No WMD were found after the U.S. preventive invasion of March 2003. One early conclusion among the public, analysts,

²⁴ A Gallup Poll conducted on January 13, 2003 determined that 53% of the voting population felt that the Iraq crisis was “worth going to war” while 46% disagreed and 5% proved indifferent. This seemed to be the stasis until the conduct of the war began in March of the same year, when support temporarily increased. In the same poll, over 90% of Americans agreed that their opinion of Iraq was unfavorable or worse, with only 5% having a favorable or better opinion.

²⁵ Richard Cheney, *Address to the National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars*, August 26, 2002.

²⁶ United States Department of State (Feb 5 2003). Secretary Powell at the UN: Iraq’s Failure to Disarm. Remarks to the United Nations Security Council. Accessed on July 15, 2008 at <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/disarm>

²⁷ Much of the evidence presented after the August 2002 accusations did not directly indicate Iraqi possession of WMD. See Richelson, J., ed. (Feb 11, 2004). *Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book 80* <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/index.htm>

²⁸ The 9/11 Commission Report notes that, on the day of the 9/11 attacks, one of Bush’s first questions to his advisors was whether or not Iraq was behind the atrocities. National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States (2004). *The 9/11 Commission Report*. (W.W. Norton) 326-338.

and political scientists was that it was intelligence failure, either cognitive or institutional, that led Americans to misidentify the Iraqi threat.²⁹ As Bush's popularity continued to decline through his second term, the locus of blame shifted from inefficiencies in the intelligence gathering process to the character of the chief executive and his closest advisors—Rice, Rumsfeld, Rove, et al.

The Iraq crisis was not the only moment when Americans disagreed on threat identification. Since the late eighteenth century, Americans have argued over what the government should defend against. Sometimes, these disputed threats never resulted in a war (i.e. the XYZ affair) and, at other times, translated into short (e.g. The Creek War and the Grenada Invasion) and protracted (i.e. Vietnam) armed conflicts. This gap between identified threat and the capacity to harm American national security is a theme throughout the history of American foreign relations.

The theme of disagreement over threat should encourage us to investigate why two people existing in the same world can identify different threats. Perhaps the problem is not that one policymaker identifies threat correctly while another does not. Instead, the problem might be that we do not understand why one policymaker identifies a threat differently than another. In 2002, some policymakers identified Iraq as a threat; some did not. If we understand why threat identifications vary between policymakers, we will have a better view of the sources of "misidentification."

This study focuses on the United States exclusively, but this approach does not preclude future studies of foreign decision-makers, states, and societies. In fact, there might be a high degree of generalizability attached to the theoretical basis of this

²⁹ Gormley, D.M. (2004). The Limits of Intelligence: Iraq's Lessons. *Survival* 46:3, 7-28, Powers, T. (April 29, 2004). The Failure. *New York Review of Books*, 4, Freedman, L. (2004). War in Iraq: Selling the Threat. *Survival* 46:2, 6-50.

research; any policymaker should identify threats according to the same basic process, whether a first-year FSO, the chief executive, or a member of the Chinese Communist Party. Additionally, there is nothing exceptional about the American experience; the British, Russians, and Sudanese all have to identify threat when making foreign policy. The benefit of limiting the scope of this study to the United States is the particular institutional characteristics of the American foreign policymaking process; a presidential system invests a large portion of foreign policymaking power in one individual. Accordingly, a theory relying on the leader level of analysis should look to the greatest impacting individuals.

This study focuses on the American president because he is the most influential foreign policymaker in the United States. There is a long and universally accepted assumption among scholars of American politics that the president is the single-most influential foreign policymaker. This claim stems from decades of prominent theoretical and empirical research among prominent presidential scholars.³⁰

The study of threat identification is a policy-relevant enterprise. Clearly, a better understanding of why threat identifications differ among presidents will help policymakers understand the motivations of individuals in foreign policymaking, illuminate the origins of differences in preferences among parties, branches of government, and influential leaders, and should generally inform policy debates. The results of this study may impact how policymakers identify threats or, minimally, give policymakers reason to pause and reflect on their identifications. If political science can

³⁰ Neustadt, R. (1960). *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. (Wiley), Wildavsky, A. (1966). *The Two Presidencies*. *Trans-action* 4, 7-14., Schlesinger, A.M. Jr. (1973). *The Imperial Presidency*. (Basic), Skowronek, S. (1993). *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*. (Belknap)

help understand why policymakers identify particular threats, then we can also predict which threats a presidential candidate will identify once he or she holds office.

The study of threat identification is also a theory-relevant enterprise. Threat is a central concept in the topic of international security. For example, where would the security dilemma be without the existence of threat? The following section discusses the prominent theories of threat identification, how they explain the research question, and the current opportunities to develop a new theory of threat identification.

1.2 The extant literature

Threat is a central concept to international relations theory and foreign policy analysis.³¹ Among the classic IR theorists, Kenneth Waltz offers one of the most prominent conceptualizations of threat and threat identification.³² Structural anarchy, according to Waltz, creates a world where all actors are potential threats to each other. As IR theorists and other international politics scholars developed their own research programs through the 20th century, they challenged Waltz's concept ontologically, theoretically and empirically. These challenges have clouded, not clarified, the role of threat in international politics. At the turn of the twenty-first century, our field has yet to settle on a conceptual framework for understanding the nature of threat and its role in international politics. This section highlights the most significant theories and research on threat

³¹ It is important to note that how the study of international politics is labeled carries certain ontological assumptions. The term "international relations" or "international relations theory" connotes a structural or systemic approach to the field. Those that use the term "foreign policy analysis" assume that agency of the state, society, or individuals best explains political events. In this study, I will avoid the issue by treating the field as open to all levels of analysis and ontologies and by calling it "international politics." This practice is consistent with social constructivism and the belief that agent and structure mutually constitute. For a discussion of the IR-FPA distinction, see Kubalkova (2001). For a discussion of agency and structure in the study of international politics, see Wendt (1987).

³² Waltz, K.N. (1959). *Man, the state, and war*. (Columbia)

identification organized by hypothesized causes of threat and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

It is important to note that this study is best understood as an endeavor in foreign policy analysis (FPA), which puts emphasis on agency over structure. Accordingly, one might consider a discussion of international relations theory, which is structural, as out-of-place. Any discussion of the extant answers to a research question should not limit itself to a particular ontology. Accordingly, this review begins with a short discussion of structural realism and Walt's variant, which contains some concepts sympathetic to the FPA approach.

Structural theories of international relations claim that all policymakers identify threats in the same objective manner. Structural realists maintain that threat is a product of anarchy.³³ These IR theorists claim that structural anarchy is a natural fact; its presence does not require recognition by individuals or states in order for it to exist or to interact with the world. The anarchic system creates a world defined by insecurity because the system does not provide security guarantees for states. An insecure world motivates all states, regardless of power or location, to have the same motivation: survival. With states having the same desires, behavior between them only differs according to their capabilities. What a state has, therefore, defines how it will behave in the international system. Structural realists claim that power, the ability of a state to influence the behavior of other states, is the greatest determinant of behavior. Since power deters threat and provides security when deterrence fails, power is seen as a means to attain security. The state system usually includes a stable balance-of-power when

³³ Waltz, K.N. (1959)., Waltz, K.N. (1979). *Theory of International Politics*. (Random House), Walt, S. (1987). *The Origin of Alliances*. (Cornell), Mearsheimer, J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. (Norton)

alliances form to counteract the threat posed by more powerful states.³⁴ When this system is in disequilibrium, threats are exacerbated and the potential for war increases. Simply put, *Waltz claims that the more powerful a state is, the greater threat it poses to all other states and all policymakers, who work on behalf of states, will identify threats accordingly.*

Although Waltz does not use the term, his notion of threat exists regardless of others' recognition of it; it is an *existential threat*.³⁵ Here, existential refers to the continued existence of the state and not to the continental philosophy of Nietzsche and Sartre. Existential threat is ontologically consistent with Waltz's definition of anarchy. Waltz conceptualizes threat as existential and material, meaning that threat is only relevant in terms of the actual physical capability to harm another state's survival. Therefore, threat is determined by another state's power and nothing else.³⁶ Waltz predicts that states with the most power will be identified by other states as the biggest threat and they will, therefore, react by forming their own counterbalancing alliance of equal or greater aggregate power. Waltz's view remains the dominant view of threat identification in the study of international politics.

Stephen Walt revisits Waltz's refinement of structural realism and focuses on alliance behavior.³⁷ In particular, Walt questions Waltz's assertion that states form alliances in order to balance against the most powerful states in the system. He disputes the notion that power alone leads policymakers to identify threats. Walt reads global history to reveal that there are many examples of great and lesser powers that fail to

³⁴ Waltz 1979.

³⁵ The term was popularized by Weldes, J. (1999). *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (Minnesota)

³⁶ See Weldes, Laffey, and Duvall, eds. (1999). *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities, and the Production of Danger*. (Minnesota)

³⁷ Walt 1987

balance against the most substantial power in the system. Instead, they opt to join forces with the greatest power in order to attain security and survive.

Walt claims that states form alliances based on threats. Threat identification, however, relies on four intrinsic characteristics of foreign states: power, proximity, offensive capacity, and offensive intentions. This expansion of threat is, ultimately, a move beyond *material sources of threat* to include *behavioral sources of threat*. In particular, Walt's fourth criterion—offensive intentions—is based on the identifying state's interpretation of the foreign state's motivations.³⁸ If a foreign state is understood to have hostile intentions, then the likelihood that it will be identified as a threat increases, and vice versa. Walt describes Soviet and American policy in the Middle East as a set of signals that informed Egypt's threat identification. If the USSR's policies signaled a willingness to cooperate, the likelihood that Egypt would identify the Soviet Union as a threat would decrease. The same holds true for American actions—if they were signals of hostile intentions, then the threat level would increase. The other three criteria (power, offensive capabilities, and geographic proximity) are a more elaborate and precise conceptualization of the capacity of a foreign state to jeopardize state survival than what Waltz offers. Walt claims that these four sources of threat identification determine how a policymaker will identify threats. If they change, then threat identification changes. He posits that this theory of threat identification is different from the one that Waltz offers and can account for bandwagoning and balancing behavior in alliance politics.

³⁸ The behavior of a foreign state cannot be explained by structure without an explicitly identified structural source, therefore signaled intentions are endogenous to the state. This reduces Walt's theory to an agent-based explanation. We can argue, therefore, that Walt's theory is not purely structural and is more compatible with FPA than Waltz's theory

Walt supports the structural realist view of threat by adding behavioral elements. All structural realists view threat identification as an objective matter; *they answer our core research question by explaining that presidents should only vary in threat identifications when something external to the American state changes.* Additionally, all have a narrow definition of what threat is—the capacity of other states to jeopardize state survival—and rest their analyses on rationalist and materialist assumptions. Walt responds to this inflexibility by adding intentions and signals to his theory.

Agency-based analyses of foreign policy argue that threat identification is a subjective matter and should vary between presidents. Neo-realists treat threat as a natural fact; it is inter-subjective. This is the vocal minority in the study of international politics and threat identification; from structural and institutional to agency-based theories, most scholars understand threat identification to be a product of a multitude of subjective factors. Thus, they claim that threat identification should differ between presidents. This notion of *subjective threat* associates threat identification with a process unique to an individual. Whether it is perceptual, heuristic, or cognitively limited, the process by which a decision-maker inputs facts determines how she recognizes their salience.³⁹ Unlike Walt's claim⁴⁰ that all people in all states will understand a foreign state's intentions in exactly the same way, political psychologists believe that there are myriad ways to understand the behavior of foreign states. If threats are identified subjectively, then we should see significant variance between presidents, *ceteris paribus*.

³⁹ Jervis, R. (1976). *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton) Kahneman, D., et al. (1982). *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. (Cambridge); Holsti, O. (1977). A Typology of 'Operational Code' Belief Systems, in *Decision-Making Research: Some Recent Developments*, pp. 31-130, (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) ; George, A.L. (1969). The Operational Code: A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making. *International Studies Quarterly* 13:2, 190

⁴⁰ Walt (1987:2) refers to policymakers as "statesmen" and assumes that they pursue the interests of the state. This model is similar to Allison's rational actor model (1969).

Robert Jervis develops a framework for understanding the role that perception plays in threat identification.⁴¹ He claims that a decision-maker's perception of threat relates to the premium that he or she puts on security.⁴² He works under the structural assumption of international anarchy but claims that the dynamic between actors in an anarchic world is not universal. For example, the prisoners' dilemma could have multiple outcomes; structural realists claim that only the Pareto sub-optimal Nash equilibrium is possible. Jervis claims that the difference in outcomes relates directly to how policymakers perceive their situation. Specifically, he theorizes that individuals understand a scenario defined by anarchy differently; perception is contingent on the premium one places on security. A policymaker that feels less secure, or who works within a political environment that places an elevated premium on security maximization, will view actors as greater threats than normal. Conversely, a policymaker that does not put a premium on security would not identify threats in the same way. In fact, he or she would lessen threat assessment across the board.

Jervis's theory of threat identification works in the individual level of analysis, although he does not account for other factors unique to individuals. Like Walt, he claims that policymakers are "statesmen," automatons that act only in what they consider to be the state's best interest. The "statesman" framework contradicts most subsequent individual-level analyses that incorporate the importance of personality, intelligence, personal beliefs and desires, and individual biases in decision-making and threat identification. The result is Jervis's conceptualization of the individual as a noble decision-maker is at odds with most of the political-psychological literature on decision-

⁴¹ Jervis 1976.

⁴² Jervis (1978:174) writes that "Decision makers act in terms of the vulnerabilities they feel, which can differ from the actual situation..." which he calls "subjective security."

making. Perhaps a more critical concern regarding Jervis's theory is the under-theorization of the origins of perception. Where, exactly, do perceptions come from? Both of his substantial works lack an etiological theorization.⁴³

A president's cognitive devices might determine his threat identification. Jervis made the powerful and lasting argument that threat is subjective; it is not an objective fact. Threat must be understood in order to be identified, and the process of understanding (perceiving) is highly subjective. The same existential threat can exist and be perceived differently by different individuals. Jervis provides a watershed moment in the study of threat and foreign policy.

While Jervis is an early student of the ideational causes of threat identification, some foreign policy analysts work precedes his theorization of threat identification within the individual level of analysis. Like Jervis, they seek to understand how the unique qualities of the individual can alter the identification of threat. What sets these prominent scholars apart from Jervis is both obvious and nuanced.

The prominent difference between early political psychology and Jervis's theory of perception is an account, at least theoretically, for the origin of ideational influences. Nathan Leites, Alexander George and Ole Holsti were three early pioneers in the operational code literature, which posits that a set of beliefs on universally salient issues accounted for differences in perception and, thus, different identification of threats.⁴⁴ A policymaker has an operational code that is based on his answers to hard core questions regarding existence and the nature of social relations. This operational code, in turn,

⁴³ Jervis 1976, 1978.

⁴⁴ Leites, N. (1951). *Operational Code of the Politburo*. (RAND Corporation); George, A.L. (1969). The Operational Code: A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making. *International Studies Quarterly* 13:2, 190; Holsti, O. (1977). A Typology of 'Operational Code' Belief Systems, in *Decision-Making Research: Some Recent Developments*, pp. 31-130, (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs)

gives the individual a set of unique beliefs about the world and about other actors. These beliefs shape the policymaker's identification of other actors as threats. While some of these operational code theorists rely on psycho-analytics and social psychology, they agree that this basic framework sets the perceptions, preferences, and behaviors (including threat identification) of individuals in foreign policymaking.⁴⁵

Other political psychologists move beyond the operational code to understand individuals' identifications of threat. Deborah Welch Larson uses schema theory to understand the influence that commonly held beliefs about the Cold War had on the identification of the Soviet Union as an imminent threat to U.S. national security.⁴⁶ She describes a schema as "a generic concept stored in memory, referring to object, situations, events, or people."⁴⁷ A schema is adopted by a policymaker as a way to mitigate cognitive overload—the action of oversimplifying reality in order to eliminate contradictory observations and experiences. In explaining the origins of the containment doctrine in the United States, Larson writes that the notion of a threatening Soviet Union grew among policymakers at the end of World War Two as the particular schema spread among cognitively dissonant individuals. Eventually, the Soviet Union was characterized in a particular way—menacing and anti-American—and was a consensus as a threat to the United States. From that schema came the corresponding policy alternative of containment.

Other political scientists focus on the representation of problems among foreign policymakers. This practice of framing can determine who is a threat to the United States and for what particular reasons. Schema theory and other psychological approaches argue

⁴⁵ Leites 1951 and Holsti 1962, respectively.

⁴⁶ Larson, D.W. (1985). *Origins of Containment* (Princeton)

⁴⁷ Larson 1985:51.

that problem representation ultimately stems from the matter of cognitive dissonance. If people tend to seek simplicity in their knowledge, then this “bounded rationality” creates a skewed view of reality. In altering reality, policymakers might identify threats that are not necessarily existential threats. Donald Sylvan has studied problem representation systematically for decades.⁴⁸ His work concludes that individuals frame their understanding of threats in us-them terms; the in-group and out-group concept from social psychology applies. If society demonizes a foreign society as an antithetical out-group, the probability is higher that policymakers will view their state as a threat. Further, the out-group is represented as an intractable problem.

Behavioral economists developed an alternate theory of decision-making that draws on subjective utility theory.⁴⁹ Kahneman argues that individuals assign different values to the same object based on their risk personalities. From this observation, Kahneman, et al. developed Prospect Theory, which maintains that unmotivated biases and heuristics, some of which stem from their assessment of their gains and losses, cause individuals to appraise situations differently. Whether a policymaker is risk acceptant or risk averse depends on her reference point, an arbitrary notion of what the individual’s status should or could be.⁵⁰

Prospect Theory and its focus on how individuals assess identical scenarios in various ways might shed light on the matter of variations in threat identification. McDermott employs Prospect Theory to understand how American foreign policymakers

⁴⁸ For a summary of his research, see Sylvan, D. and J. Voss, eds. (1998). *Problem Representation in Foreign Policy Decision-Making*. (Cambridge)

⁴⁹ Kahneman, D., et al. (1982). *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. (Cambridge)

⁵⁰ See Levy (1997) for a theoretical introduction to Prospect Theory and its application to foreign policy analysis.

act in crises.⁵¹ In particular, she posits that the risk personality of key decision-makers determines whether or not a state takes risky or safe policies during a crisis. If a policymaker determines that the state is vulnerable or has more to lose, he will be highly risk averse, and, thus, identify threat differently than one who uses different heuristics and biases. McDermott's analysis of Carter's behavior in the Iran hostage crisis of 1979-1980 underscores this point.

Three challenges prevail when considering the ability of the political psychological approach to explain and predict threat identification: etiology, levels of analysis, predictive capacity. The approach has particular strengths, as well. It accounts for the clear role that individuals, cognition, and personality play in determining foreign policy. We conclude that the political psychology approach offers an answer to the core research question that is more precise than the structural answer, but still does not provide clear explanatory or predictive capacity. It claims that *threat identifications vary among presidents when presidents possess different ideas or biases integral to the decision-making process.*

Different presidents might follow different social constructions that determine threat identification. Social constructivists argue that ideas, which emerge from the discourse, influence individuals' non-intentional behavior.⁵² The approach can help us understand why threat identifications differ between presidents.

Traditional security issues are a new domain for constructivists, although the two are not foreign to each other. Many constructivists, including Ted Hopf, David

⁵¹ McDermott, R. (1998). Risk-taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy. (Michigan)

⁵² The constructivist movement in international relations has many separate factions that are mistakenly confused with each other. In this discussion, I refer to conventional constructivism (also known as modern by Wendt 1999 and neo-classical by Ruggie 1998), which is minimally positivist (perhaps better described as scientific realist or pragmatist) and eschews post-structural and post-modern epistemological claims.

Rousseau, and Peter Katzenstein, are concerned with the role that identity plays in international politics and their work is closely tied to threat identification.⁵³

These three scholars employ elements of the relational identity approach to foreign policy and, by extension, the analysis of threat identification, depart from the core assumptions found in norm-based constructivism. At the same time, relational identity is conceptually similar to social psychology's Social Identity Theory, where prominent research claims that individuals use in-group/out-group templates for assessing the behavior of others.⁵⁴ This relational approach is widely understood and applied in international relations. These three international relations scholars analyze threat identification using a relational identity approach.

Ted Hopf's analysis of changing relative identity in the Soviet Union across the latter half of the twentieth century is a classic demonstration of the application of the relational approach.⁵⁵ Hopf posits that as the socially constructed definition of Soviet identity changed in the late twentieth century, so did Soviets' social construction of American identity. As a result of this particular shift, Soviet policymakers (and society) viewed America as less of a threat. Hopf concludes that Soviet policymakers changed their threat identification once their view of Soviet society and, thus, American society, was socially re-constructed. Hopf would answer this study's research question by claiming that as American society's view of itself changes, so does its view of foreign societies. This type of ideational change might explain why policymakers in general

⁵³ Hopf, T. (2002). *Social Construction of International Politics: Moscow 1955 and 1999*. (Cornell); Rousseau, D. (2006). *Identifying Threats and Threatening Identities: The Social Construction of Realism and Liberalism*. (Stanford); Katzenstein, P. (1996a.). *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan*. (Cornell)

⁵⁴ Tajfel, H. and J.C. Turner (1986). The Social Identity Theory of Group Behavior. In *The Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, S. Worchel and W.G. Austin, eds. (Nelson-Hall). A discussion of SIT follows in chapters two and three.

⁵⁵ Hopf 2002

change threat identifications, but does not necessarily explain why presidents would identify threats differently.

David Rousseau also employs the relational identity concept and might be able to explain why presidents identify threats differently. He builds a model of threat identification that is based on the process by which individuals use socially constructed ideas to develop their own images of other actors.⁵⁶ Relying heavily on concepts in social psychology and cognitive science, Rousseau works across levels of analysis, looking at individual identities, group identities, and societal identities and how they interact to form an individual's notion of her in-group. Rousseau posits that these socially constructed in-groups mutually constitute out-groups, specifically foreign governments and people. For example, he claims that in order to determine if a state is a threat, a decision-maker must rely on an *a priori* understanding of that state that is informed by the inter-group dynamic. Through experimentation and social network modeling, Rousseau finds that socially constructed understandings of foreign states are based on how they compare along salient issues (political or otherwise) of the home state and society. In other words, there is interplay between relational identity and salient political issues. If the most important cause at a certain point in time is human rights, then in-groups and out-groups will be shaped, in part, by how each group deals with human rights issues. It is not just a socially constructed identity and intergroup relations, as Hopf argues; the most prominent political issues will also shape in-group, out-group, and threat identification.

Rousseau concludes his work with an analysis of US-China relations and determines that a policymaker's assessment of Chinese threat relies on notions of

⁵⁶ Rousseau 2006

American society, Chinese society, and the most important differences therein. Rousseau might be able to explain why threat identifications vary between presidents; they might hold different notions of in-groups and out-groups or the most salient political issues might change over time. Therefore, the explanation for threat identification variance might be endogenous or exogenous to the agent.

Peter Katzenstein and Christopher Hemmer take a similar relational approach when he studies alliance formation. The authors compare the decisions made by American foreign policymakers to join NATO and SEATO.⁵⁷ They deftly observe that, while NATO was a multi-lateral organization based on collective defense, SEATO was a set of bilateral security arrangements with the United States. They posit that this difference stems in the disparity of trust between Europe and Asia. The authors point to a long public record of discussions on both alliances and the connection that policymakers made between the cultural similarities in the West and the differences between Americans and “Asiatic peoples.” They conclude that collective defense with Western Europe was acceptable because American policymakers viewed Westerners as less threatening, since they were part of a greater common civilization. Since France, Germany, Italy, Britain, and the smaller Western European states had more in common (regarding identity) with Americans than they did with the Slavic Eastern bloc, they were natural partners.⁵⁸ In Asia, however, there was no bond of common identity; Easterners were viewed as more threatening. American policymakers preferred the bilateral approach, which minimized risk (as opposed to collective defense) since no common

⁵⁷ Katzenstein, P. and C. Hemmer (2003). Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism. *International Organization* 56, 575-607.

⁵⁸ For a complimentary argument, see Jackson, P.T. (2006). *Civilizing the Enemy: German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West*. (Michigan)

identity-based bond was in place to facilitate trust and minimize the possibility of defection. The Asian partners, during the Cold War, were more threatening to the United States despite the fact that their interests, in retrospect, were closer to the American strategy than the Europeans. Relational identity influences threat identification and, subsequently, the form and function of alliances.⁵⁹ It is unclear, however, how this might explain the differences in threat identifications between presidents.

There are limits to the relational identity approach, especially when it focuses on the society level-of-analysis. Most significantly, empirical analysis is difficult to conduct; what is necessary to falsify the relational hypothesis is difficult to find, nevertheless conceptualize. Second, there are many cases of wide and deep cooperation among states with different identities (e.g. US-Japan and India-Russia.) How can this be? Third, understandings of identity and relational identity might be formed after threats are identified; there is a potential endogeneity problem. Finally, Katzenstein and Hemmer argue that the lasting and pervasive effect of socially constructed identity is slow to change and, therefore, is unlikely to account for sharp differences in threat identification between presidencies. While consecutive presidents might agree that they are American, they will certainly disagree on what American identity is. Katzenstein and Hemmer present a logically consistent argument, but their approach is less equipped to explain the minute details of identity and the likely range of social constructions that constitute it.

The bottom line is that the identity approach is a compelling one, but presents a unique set of conceptual and methodological challenges. Regardless of the challenges to researchers, the constructivist approach is an under-explored and potentially fruitful

⁵⁹ Without the relational identity component, this approach is similar to that espoused in Huntington, S. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. (Random House)

alternative to the traditional structural, agency-based, and institutional theories of foreign policy decision-making. This study's theory engages the relativist and rule-based constructivist approaches due to their potential for new and innovative explanations.⁶⁰ Before a discussion of theory, however, one last set of writings and research should be discussed: the exceptional (idiosyncratic) approach to understanding American foreign policy and threat identification.

The uniqueness of American politics might explain why threat identifications differ between presidents. Based on a longstanding tradition among a significant portion of political scientists, the exceptionalist literature is an intentionally idiosyncratic approach to studying foreign relations. If America is truly exceptional, as these authors claim, and if American foreign policymaking is truly unique, then there should also be exceptional arguments for threat identification. Embedded in the exceptional argument are plausible answers to this study's research question.

One of the most significant modern exceptionalists, Louis Hartz, claims that the unique trajectory of American political development caused American political behavior to be incomparable to other democracies.⁶¹ In other words, he posits that American politics is unique because the United States developed uniquely. Americans were influenced by the Anglo Enlightenment tradition of Locke and Mill but, due to its lack of a feudal experience, do not follow the same core traditions, values and habits that other Westerners do. If America is truly exceptional, as Hartz and other exceptionalists claim, and if American foreign policymaking is truly unique, then there should also be exceptional arguments for threat identification.

⁶⁰ See chapters two and three.

⁶¹ Hartz, L. (1955). *The Liberal Tradition in America: an Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution*. (Harcourt Brace)

An alternate exceptionalist argument offered by Huntington (2003) is that the United States cannot be compared to other advanced industrial and democratic societies because it is culturally unique. The mix of cultures, the significance of civic duty in American identity, and the constantly changing nature of society is unlike any other on the planet.⁶²

Colin Dueck presents an exceptional explanation for grand strategy and threat identification in U.S. foreign policymaking; he seeks to understand strategic adjustment.⁶³ In particular, he theorizes the causes of change in grand strategy, which he defines as “(1) national interests, goals, and objectives, (2) potential threats to such interests, and (3) resources and/or means with which to meet these threats and protect these interests.”⁶⁴ Understanding changes in grand strategy, therefore, requires the understanding of threat identification, since he asserts that what changes grand strategy also changes threat identification.

Dueck asserts that there are multiple American political subcultures that influence grand strategy.⁶⁵ These subcultures are the aggregation of four factors: international conditions, dominant strategic cultures, domestic politics, and political leadership. In short, he writes that threat identification is determined by grand strategy, which is determined by subculture, whose influence varies with international conditions, dominant strategic cultures, domestic politics, and political leadership.

⁶² A third and equally accepted argument is that, for institutional reasons, American foreign policy and the entire foreign policymaking process cannot be compared to foreign governments and processes. The institutionally weak American system is unlike all other democracies. The cause of this unique institutional construction is debated among the proponents of this approach.

⁶³ Dueck, C. (2006). *Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy*. (Princeton)

⁶⁴ Dueck 2006:11

⁶⁵ For a complimentary argument, see Johnson (2001)

American subculture → grand strategy → threat identification

The relationship between threat and subculture, according to Dueck, appears to be tautological. He writes, “Changes in the level of external threat can also trigger the rise or fall of particular subcultures. The appearance of sudden or dramatic threats tends to favor those schools of thought that advocate a vigorous response to such threats. The disappearance of threats tends to favor subcultures that downplay the need for costly or interventionist strategies.”⁶⁶

Dueck argues that the salience of a particular sub-culture ebbs and flows with empirical confirmation in the international system.⁶⁷ This, in effect, relegates ideational influences to a secondary role.⁶⁸ According to Dueck, *who* is in charge and *what* the world looks like matters more than culture. If a culture dominates policy discourse only when exogenous changes allow it to, then what is the real causal role of culture? If it is an intervening cause, it plays second fiddle to the realist-materialist-rationalist paradigm. It is unclear if Dueck is arguing that culture is an independent and deterministic cause of strategic adjustment or if it is merely a permissive condition of it.

Walter Russell Mead takes a similar view of American exceptionalism and falls into the same basic logic trap. In his landmark article and subsequent book, Mead makes the case for unique American political philosophies and their influence on grand strategy and threat identification.⁶⁹ Mead writes:

The many different failures of the American state to live up to the Continental models of what states should look like point to a basic difference between the American and European processes that Continentally oriented observers cannot

⁶⁶ Dueck 2006:34

⁶⁷ See Legro (2000) for a similar arrangement between exogenous shocks and idea transformation.

⁶⁸ For an elaboration on the material causes of ideational change, see Legro, J. (2000). *The Transformation of Policy Ideas. American Journal of Political Science.*

⁶⁹ Mead, W.R. (1999). *The Jacksonian Tradition. National Interest* (Winter); Mead, W.R. (2001). *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World.* (Knopf)

help but interpret as an American weakness. American foreign policy does not proceed out of a single, unified world view. There are vital differences over the definition of national interests, even at the heart of the American foreign policymaking process.⁷⁰

Mead writes that four basic schools of thought dominate American foreign policymaking. He names them, aptly, after prominent foreign policymakers: Jefferson, Hamilton, Jackson, and Wilson. The labels are both simple and richly complex, so it is best to reduce each tradition to its core normative statement:

1. Jeffersonian – Americans should maintain security through non-interference
2. Hamiltonian – Americans should use government policy to protect prosperity
3. Jacksonian – Americans should follow an honor code and use force to protect it
4. Wilsonian – Americans should pursue universal human goals

These four traditions each map onto an American sub-culture and corresponds with the subjectively-defined role that Americans should play in the international system. For example, we find that public opinion of most military members, families, and communities map onto the Jacksonian school, while the policymaking elite is currently dominated by the Wilsonian school. It is easy to notice that each of these schools of thought dominated the American policymaking apparatus at different and significant moments in American diplomatic history. This makes for a highly compelling case and can help explain threat identification.

Mead argues that each school of thought subsumes a world view that influences threat identification. Hamiltonians, for example, are the closest of the four exceptional American schools to what he calls continental realism (Henry Kissinger is the exemplar). For Hamiltonians, the world lacks security guarantees but power is respected. In an almost Lockean sense, cooperation can exist among competitive states if international regimes can provide stability and reliability. Further, the amassing of power is best

⁷⁰ Mead (2001:54)

achieved through peaceful means (commerce and industry). The greatest threats to America, therefore, are those that pose an immediate danger to commercial prosperity or a narrowly conceived national interest defined in terms of power.

Mead deflates his own theory by arguing that “The competition among four schools, affected in different ways and to different degrees by the philosophical doctrines of political idealism or realism, ensures that American foreign policy over the long term tends to be pragmatic rather than doctrinal.”⁷¹ He claims that the interaction of these different schools creates a unique brand of American pragmatism, where policymakers and public opinion gravitate towards the particular school that meets the particular needs of the world at the time being. In other words, a policymaker is influenced by all four traditions. If this is true, it is difficult to maintain that the four traditions might explain why threat identifications vary between presidents.

The utility of Mead’s argument lies in his identification of four distinct sub-cultures (traditions) unique to American foreign policymaking. Each is evident in multiple eras of American history and we can place presidents in each tradition. What if there is a relationship between Mead’s traditions and how presidents identify threat? He never fully addresses the issue, but one can intimate that presidents in a particular tradition would identify particular threats. If a Hamiltonian president is concerned with economic interests, then he should tend to identify threats to those economic interests. This is a concept that deserves further exploration.

While Mead and Dueck make cultural exceptional arguments, Peter Trubowitz does not deviate from the rational mainstream in his analysis of American foreign policymaking. As such, he relies on the uniqueness of American geography and

⁷¹ Mead (2001:312-2)

domestic political institutions to make the claim that the process by which American foreign policy and, subsequently threat identification, is made produces outcomes unlike any other political system. Trubowitz posits that a strong regional character to American politics contributes to a factionalized system and makes a consistent (and “existentially” accurate) identification of threat to the national interest difficult, if not impossible.

Trubowitz keenly observes that American politics cannot be understood without studying regional differences and rivalries, in the vein of some of the most prominent students of American diplomatic history.⁷² Over the short course of history, these regions enjoyed different paths of economic development. These disparities became the main markers of regional difference, even more than ethnic and religious difference, which are the most common identifiers between regions in modern nation-states. Since religious and ethnic identities differ on the most local (potentially by neighborhood) levels in American society, they are difficult to aggregate to regional interest. As such, regional economic interest, according to Trubowitz, has the greatest impact on American politics, American foreign policymaking, and even American national policy and threat identification.

Trubowitz argues that three regional characteristics factor into regional economic interests: export dependence, benefits from the military-industrial complex, and interregional trade. As a result, regions develop particular foreign policy goals that can run contrary to other regions or, potentially, irrelevant to the national interest. This includes threat identification; Trubowitz claims that, in the early 19th century, New England downplayed the British threat because of its dependence on exports to the

⁷² Toqueville, A. ([1835] 2001). *Democracy in America*. Translated by A. Goldhammer. (Penguin); Lippmann, W. (1955). *Essays in the Public Philosophy*. (Little, Brown)

United Kingdom. This argument could explain the administration of John Adams, which went to great length to appease Britain, in contrast to his successors from Virginia, who identified Britain as the preeminent threat to the United States.

Trubowitz's hypothesis is a compelling one; he posits that threats are identified regionally and not nationally. Further, he claims that policymakers, including presidents, seek to deliver benefits to their constituencies and winning coalitions (Riker 1970) in order to win elections and maintain power.⁷³ If this is true, then presidents might identify threats according to the interests of the regions most important to their continued political success. This is only possible due to the unique characteristics of American geography and the weak institutional designs of Congress and the Electoral College.⁷⁴ Not only can this thesis explain threat identification, it is an exceptional argument for explaining how American presidents identify threat.

What if the United States is not unique? Is it possible to generalize these theories and empirical findings? Of course, generalization is possible. It is difficult to extrapolate on the Mead theory, since it is inductively built from unique cases in American history. The notion that multiple ideational traditions compete for primacy in foreign policymaking is not unique to the United States. Dueck's theory is not concerned with comparison beyond the United States, but Trubowitz's theory is generalizable. This is due to two factors—regionalism can be measured in any democratic state and his rationalist assumptions lend to the mainstream approach.

⁷³ Trubowitz borrows this framework from Mayhew (1974). William Riker (1970) first used the term *winning coalition* in his analysis of Congressional politics.

⁷⁴ By weak, I specifically mean the characteristics of domestic political institutions that permit cooptation by pressure groups, special interests, or regional interests.

While threat is a central concept in the theoretical study of international politics, theory offers little explanation for the origin of, and variance between, threat identifications.. The literature on threat identification, strategic adjustment, and foreign policymaking is varied in concepts, levels-of-analysis, units-of-analysis, ontology, and even epistemology. This mixed bag is clearly a double-edged sword for this research project; the study of threat identification is central to a broad set of research questions, research programs, and theories of international relations and foreign policymaking but there is little direct research on threat identification. Accordingly, it is responsible for this study to proceed by testing multiple theories in addition to developing an original one. The following chapter will explore the theoretical basis of the four hypotheses that this study will empirically test. By comparing four separate answers to the research question, I aim to clarify the debates in this vast and diffuse literature on threat identification.

1.3 Theory Development, Case Studies, and Foreign Policymaking, 1885-1901

This dissertation develops a theory of threat identification and seeks to answer the question, “Why do threat identifications vary between presidents?” It proposes a new explanation and compares its findings to competing explanations by probing the decision-making of three presidents in the late nineteenth century. This sub-section provides the rationale for such an undertaking.

Why case studies? This dissertation relies on case studies in order to achieve the goal of proposing a new theory. Case studies are most effective when they are used to develop theoretical knowledge, not to verify a theory’s empirical validity in a general sense. Coppedge writes:

... usually the kind of generalization that one does in a case study is not *testing* generalizations, but *hypothesizing* them. It is true that the case must relate to the population to be relevant, but it relates by proposing a relationship that might be generally true. But a case study cannot tell us whether they really are generally true; that requires long-sample testing within the whole domain in which the theory applies.⁷⁵

This dissertation agrees with Coppedge's view of the utility of small-*n* approach. The strength of the case study approach is the ability to deeply investigate causal mechanisms and conditions. Accordingly, the case study is more appropriate for empirical research that is theory *developing* than it is for theory *testing*.⁷⁶ The fact that this study focuses on identity, which does not yield simple operational definitions, and proposes nascent hypotheses, reinforces the need for a case study approach.

A comparative case study can facilitate the understanding of new hypotheses and the concepts and functions therein. George and Bennett write that the findings of comparative case studies should:

1. Establish, strengthen, or weaken historical explanations of a case
2. Be generalized to the type or class of cases of which the case is a member
3. Be generalized to neighboring cells in a typology
4. Be generalized to the role of a variable in dissimilar cases⁷⁷

They warn, however, that the quasi-experimental nature of a comparative case study is difficult to achieve, in particular because controlled comparison is elusive.⁷⁸ The period that this dissertation studies fortunately yields a set of case studies to reach the "quasi-experimental" nature the case study approach seeks.

⁷⁵ Coppedge, M. (2007). Case Studies are for Intensive Testing and Theory Development, not Extensive Testing. *Qualitative Methods Newsletter* 5:2, 2

⁷⁶ For the distinction between the two and their place in political science dissertation research, see Van Evera (1998: 89-95).

⁷⁷ George, A.L. and A. Bennett. 2004). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 109

⁷⁸ George and Bennett, 2004:151.

Why the Gilded Age? The period of the late nineteenth century is one of interest to scholars of American foreign policy and international relations, although it has failed to produce a consensus on many key theoretical matters.⁷⁹ Part of the mystique of this period is the special case of the rise of American power in the shadow of British hegemony and the German ascendancy in Europe. It was a relatively peaceful period between the great powers, despite the clamor for empire in Africa and Asia and the potentially disruptive events that usually surround hegemonic transition. For these reasons, the period is a classic study in great power politics. It is also of interest of scholars of American political development, due to the vast economic expansion in the wake of the Civil War and its effect on American domestic policy and political institutions. Despite the *relatively* stable trends in domestic and international politics during the time, the presidents of the Gilded Age identified threats in substantially different ways.⁸⁰

There are additional benefits to studying the late nineteenth century. The two non-consecutive terms of Grover Cleveland, separated by Benjamin Harrison's four years, offers what resembles a natural experiment. With the exception of FDR, a wartime president, no other chief executive's service spanned a period longer than eight years. What makes the comparison of Cleveland and Harrison worthwhile is that their identifications of the British threat varied.

Finally, with the global distribution of power being approximately stable, I look to the differences between the winning coalitions of all three presidents to see if differences

⁷⁹ Zakaria (1999) and Ikenberry (2001) are notable offerings by political scientists.

⁸⁰ Selection on the dependent variable is a controversial undertaking. The argument that selection on the DV increased the potential for spurious correlation by failing to guarantee variation of outcomes applies to large-*n* studies but does not necessarily apply to small-*n* studies *if* cases are intentionally selected to include substantial variance. The cases proposed for this study (Cleveland, Harrison, Cleveland, and McKinley) provide sufficient variance. For a discussion of this approach, see Brady, H. and D. Collier, eds. (2006)

in sectional allies correspond with differences in threat identification. While Trubowitz would predict that a similar political base leads to a similar foreign policy and threat identification, I am skeptical.

Table 1.1: The Presidencies of the Gilded Age, 1885-1901

President	Time Frame
Grover Cleveland, 22 nd	1885-1889
Benjamin Harrison, 23 rd	1889-1893
Grover Cleveland, 24 th	1893-1897
William McKinley, 25 th	1897-1901

American foreign policy in the late nineteenth century focused mostly on the Western Hemisphere, although this was changing by the end of the 1890s. The history of American diplomacy in the late 19th century is largely defined by America's interest in preventing great powers from influencing the politics of the Western Hemisphere, from Canada to Brazil, Chile, and Argentina. The leading historical analyses claim that as American power increased during the 1890s, so did its ability to rebuke great power advances in North and Latin America.⁸¹

Several alternate cases were considered and, despite having much strength, were not selected for this study. They include the period of the early republic (1796-1816) and the emergence of the Cold War (1943-1961). The first case was particularly attractive due to the amount of data available on Presidents Adams, Jefferson, and Madison and the relevance that threat identification had on the War of 1812 and US-British relations until 1896.

A study of presidential foreign policymaking in the late nineteenth century is not only advantageous of research design, but has the potential to offer an alternate interpretation of diplomatic history between Reconstruction and World War I. The

⁸¹ May (1973), LaFeber (1970)

conventional wisdom of the period views American foreign policy as dominated by two ideas: isolationism and jingoism. The former gives way to the latter as time progresses. This, I contend, is not necessarily the case. Instead, American policymakers, most prominently the presidents, struggled with defining America's role in world politics with the emergence of American power. It was not as simple as the emergence of nationalism, the dominance of industrial and sectional interests, or the assimilation of great power practices. Instead, it was a period during which Americans searched for a role in the world in which they would be comfortable. These roles, as the next chapter suggests, were not as simple as "isolationist" or "nationalist." They were nuanced views of Americans and their purpose, which defined their mission to the world and informed their identification of threats to that interest.

This dissertation proposes a theory that relies on identity as a primary influence on threat identification. The next chapter extends a new theory of threat identification and foreign policymaking. It argues that there are multiple views of what it means to be American, which are crucial for helping individuals develop their social identity. These different views, otherwise known as *American Ways*, also constitute a unique vision of America's mission in world politics. Subsequently, enemies (identified threats) are identified according to the threat they pose to that mission.

1.4 Primary Issues

This chapter claims that the theoretical study of threat identification is a relevant enterprise. Further, it proposes that an investigation of presidential foreign policymaking at the end of the nineteenth century will help develop a theory of threat identification and

provide a new analysis of the period. The preceding pages yield the following primary issues for consideration:

1. One need not look further than the controversy over the Bush (43rd) administration's push for war in 2002-2003 to see how central threat identification is to foreign policymaking.
2. The theoretical study of international politics relies on the concept of threat, yet the theoretical underpinnings of threat identification are unclear.
3. Structural theories of international relations are elegant and compelling, yet it is unclear if they are empirically accurate.
4. Agent-based theories of foreign policymaking, such as those offered by social psychology, political psychology, and behavioral economics, do not satisfactorily explain why threat identifications vary.
5. Exceptionalist arguments for threat identification rely on the uniqueness of the American political system or political culture, which makes them difficult to generalize for the broader endeavor of foreign policy analysis.
6. Case studies are the most effective way to develop a new and integrative theory of threat identification.
7. The period of 1885-1901 produced three presidents, all of whom identified different threats.
8. A study of threat identification is policy-relevant and theory-relevant.

2 Rule-Based Identity and Threat Identification

This chapter proposes an original theory of threat identification that can answer the question, “Why do threat identifications vary between presidents?” The theory of rule-based identity relies on concepts from social psychology and social constructivism in order to make the case that a president’s view of American identity influences his identification of threat. The chapter begins with a theoretical overview and then progresses to a more elaborate exposition of the assumptions and concepts that compose the RBI theory. It concludes with a summary of the primary issues raised by these sections.

2.1 The American Way and Threat Identification

Identity is a central concept in the social and behavioral sciences. In political science and international relations, scholars give identity considerable attention. While identity is not the Rosetta Stone, understanding its role in social life is a potentially powerful tool for explaining myriad types of political behavior. This dissertation draws on identity research and attempts to build on it; it proposes that one’s identity influences one’s perceived role in international politics and, subsequently, one’s identification of threat.

Take the relationship between age and behavior as an example. When one is nine years old, she will follow a certain set of social norms appropriate for a child. When she turns sixteen, she will most likely follow another set appropriate for teenagers. At twenty-five, yet another set appropriate for young adults emerges. When she is sixty-eight, we can expect that her behavior will be similar to that of other seniors. Age is a powerful predictor of which norms an individual will follow, but age is *not the actual*

cause of behavior. If we were to study the behavior of ten twenty-five years olds, we would find that they do not all act in the same manner and do not all follow the same norms.

The reason why our equally-aged subjects would behave differently is because their age-identity, not as a year but as a social construct, has the potential to differ. While they all acknowledge that they are all twenty-five years old, not all would agree that a twenty-five year old should behave in the same way. While subject A might claim that “a twenty-five year old should buy a house and grow some roots,” subject B could say “a twenty-five year old doesn’t have to buy a house because she should travel while still young.” Subjects A and B disagree on what a twenty-five year old is; A argues that she is root-growing adult, while B argues that she is still young-at-heart. A would consider B to be immature for her age while B would consider A to be older than her years. Age, alone, does not determine identity and behavior. The meanings and normative rules that we place on age determine identity. The classic adage applies, “you are only as young as you feel.”

In a similar vein, one can argue that residency does not determine national identity. Not everyone living within the United States considers himself or herself to be an American. Even among those holding American passports, less than 100% would self-identity as Americans. The discord over American identity is a curious puzzle. Before we even approach the idea of meanings behind identity, however, we should concede that not all who are labeled with a particular identity self-categorize under that label.

Let us consider, for the sake of argument, that those living among us that fully consider themselves to be Americans. Never in the history of the American nation have Americans agreed on *what it means to be American*. Just like how the twenty-five year old women disagree on what it means to be twenty-five and how a twenty-five year old should act, the same holds true for Americans. Americans do not agree on what it means to be American nor do they agree on how Americans should behave.

In the twenty-first century, Americans disagree on what it means to be American. Pluralists argue that anyone can be an American as long as they pledge allegiance to the state. Extreme pluralists contend that an American does not even need to speak English or know who the founding fathers were; only a willingness to abide by American laws will qualify them for membership. Nativists, on the other hand, point to a long Anglo tradition in the United States and argue that only certain types of people (e.g. Protestant, Anglophonic) can be American. Another, more moderate variant of nativism argues that anyone can be an American if he or she assimilates into a particular way of behaving. This includes the adoption of a specific work ethic, the fully participation in civic life, English language fluency, and other “classically American” behaviors. The contemporary debate over American identity is referred to as the difference between the pluralist salad bowl and the traditional melting pot.

Constructions of what it means to be American, however, can be more meaningful than the salad-versus-melting pot distinction. For example, if one were to ask a subject what it means to be American, that person’s first instinct might not be to say that to be American is to be part of a salad. Instead, Americans will reply with a host of answers. To be American means to love freedom, to follow the American dream, to be democratic,

and to be an individualist are but a few likely answers. These answers all carry implicit meanings about how Americans should behave. If to be American is to follow the American dream, then such a view of American identity implies that all Americans should take advantage of the opportunity to prosper.⁸² If to be American is to be democratic, then that view implies that Americans should be civically engaged.

This view of American identity is, in fact, a normative statement on our way of life. When one makes a claim about what it means to be American, she is actually saying, “An American should live in this way; it is the American way.” We can reduce a notion of American identity, therefore, into an American way. Different identities disagree on what the American way actually is.

The American way, or for that matter, any identity based on a normative prescription, is a *raison d’être*. *The American way is a purpose, a mission, a rationale for existence.* It brings order to our social lives in ways that provide ontological security and, subsequently, happiness.⁸³ It greases the wheels of our society and provides the bedrock of expected behavior that eases social relations. Although it might not exist on the forefront of their consciousnesses, all Americans adhere to one type of American way as a means for understanding their nation and their place in society. The unusual development of the American nation only guarantees that there will be a plurality of American ways in the public and private discourses. There will always be competing American ways, they will always be prominent in our identity, and people will disagree over them.

⁸² There might even be different interpretations of the American dream.

⁸³ Giddens (1991) discusses ontological security and the meanings that we associate with identity in his landmark book.

The American way also serves as a device for placing America in the rest of the world. If a person believes that an American must behave a certain way, then that particular American way helps the individual understand the behavior of foreigners. The role that the American way plays in understanding the rest of the world cannot be understated. If to be American means to be democratic, then an advocate of that particular view would be suspicious of non-democratic nations. They are, after all, behaving in non-democratic ways. The American way, therefore, is not only a device for understanding one's identity but is also an effective means for ordering the rest of the world. Individuals with a particular American way will use their identity to judge the behavior of foreigners; identity is a highly salient heuristic device that helps us order our social world. It is a matter of fact that we always judge the behaviors of others relative to how we view ourselves.

What does this mean for the president and threat identification? Simply, if a president has a particular view of the American way, it influences his normative prescription for how Americans should interact with the rest of the world. In turn, he also uses his American way to assess the behavior of foreigners. The president's American way, therefore, can determine how he assesses threat. *If a foreign state behaves in ways that contradict his American way, they are a potential threat.* If they behave in ways that are amenable to the American way, they are benign.

The example of the rogue state label in American foreign policy is a recent example of the relationship between the American way and threat identification. Despite the scant power and unclear aggression that these states possess, they are disproportionately viewed as threats by most American foreign policymakers. Presidents

Clinton and Bush (43rd) have been the leading proponents of this threat identification.⁸⁴

When Bush justified his identification of the rogue state threat in the 2006 *National Security Strategy*, he wrote:

In the 1990s we witnessed the emergence of a small number of rogue states that, while different in important ways, share a number of attributes. These states brutalize their own people... display no regard for international law... are determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction, to be used as threats or offensively to achieve the aggressive designs of these regimes... sponsor terrorism around the globe, and reject basic human values and *hate the United States and everything for which it stands*.⁸⁵

Threats to America are often framed as being anti-American; Reagan argued that the international socialism would replace the American way with illiberal communism; Jimmy Carter believed that the Iranian Revolution was a counter-Enlightenment that challenged the American way of human rights and rationality. It is entirely possible to consider the fact that each president's notion of what it means to be American constitutes his American Way and, therefore, threat identification, especially when we often think of contemporary threats in the discourse as "anti-American," "hating our way of life," or "against everything we believe."

There might be a relationship between how a policymaker defines America and how she identifies threat. If presidents have different views of the American way, then they should identify threats differently. The presidencies of Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley yielded three different threat identifications. Those identifications relate to three distinct American ways. The following section explores the concepts and assumptions that constitute this theory, which I call the rule-based identity (RBI) theory

⁸⁴ I conclude that changing ideas of the American mission led to the development of the rogue state label (2007). The paper includes a thorough review of rogue state literature and an application of FSQCA methods to determine the accuracy of the label's application.

⁸⁵ *National Security Strategy*, 2006:13-14. Italics added for emphasis.

of threat identification, building on the argument made up to now. This theory will be the basis of the empirical test in chapter seven of this study.

2.2 Concepts and Assumptions of the Rule-Based Identity (RBI) Approach

This section discusses the concepts that form the RBI approach to understanding threat identification. In particular, it focuses on the role that social identity plays in our daily lives, the inter-group dynamic and its influence on threat identification, and the unique problem of identity salience and its impact on presidential decision-making. It concludes with a summary of the assumptions of the theory and an articulation of the RBI hypothesis to be used in chapter seven.

2.2.1 What is Social Identity?

Identity is a powerful tool for understanding foreign policy decision-making and international politics. For all intents and purposes, identity is a social matter and it originates in society. If identity is a strong predictor of threat identification, there lacks a framework for understanding the process behind it. The best accepted theory of identity and conflict, Social Identity Theory (SIT,) is extended by social psychologists. Its applications are found in foreign policy analysis, although it has yet to be applied to the particular topic of threat identification.⁸⁶ This sub-section explores the concept of social identity and posits two means by which it can influence threat identification.

What is identity and why should political scientists care about it? Scholars of politics from most traditions will agree that identity matters; even the realist archetype, Thucydides, mentions the “way of life” in the Melian Dialogue. Identity, however, has myriad definitions. Individuals rely on social identity in order to answer the question,

⁸⁶ See Levy (2003) for a summary of the political-psychological approaches to FPA.

“who am I?” In political science, however, it is most often associated with group definitions, answering the question, “who are we?” Of course, identity is relevant to the individual as well as the group. An individual’s identity is determined by the group and vice versa.⁸⁷

Henri Tajfel offers a theory of social identity that provides a clear definition and a framework for understanding the relationship between the individual and the group. Tajfel’s theory is relevant to this study’s focus and can answer its research question. Tajfel writes, “... social identity will be understood as that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.”⁸⁸ The concept of social identity requires social interaction; identity cannot be understood without its social context. A DNA analysis can tell us what a person’s unique identity is, but tells us nothing about that person’s place in society. Social identity is a useful and politically relevant conceptualization of identity because it relates the individual to the group through mutual constitution.

Individuals determine their social identity according to membership in a social group. At face value, this does not incorporate any notion of predisposed attributes, like socio-economic status (SES), skin color, or geographic location. If we were to take a walk through the Rutgers Student Center, we would certainly observe a wide array of students’ skin colors. Without interviewing the students we see, we could categorize them according to social identity, but would probably make mistakes. The reason that it is necessary to ask the students what their social identities are is because they self-

⁸⁷ For a concise theoretical summary of these uses of identity, see Tilly (2003).

⁸⁸ Tajfel 1978:63

categorize; only the students can determine what their social identities are. If we categorize them, *a priori*, we are likely to make substantial mistakes and, most likely, insult them. If we categorize the students according to race and use the color of their skin as the lead indicator, we will make mistakes. While skin color is a useful indicator, it is not the determinant of race as a social identity. An African-American woman can have a lighter shade of skin than a Caucasian or Hispanic. Pacific Islanders can have many different colors of skin. To complicate things further, a Philippine-American might call himself a Pacific Islander, an East Asian, or a Southeast Asian. The task of categorization can become complicated and ineffective rather quickly. The commonly accepted practice in social and behavioral research, to ask the student what his social identity is, is the best practice. Physical traits are not a determinant of social identity and are commonly misleading. Social identity is a social fact and requires interpretation by the individual.⁸⁹ Identity is, at the core, a subjective matter. Tajfel writes:

(Social identity) is a description of what is a group which may include a range of between one to three components: a cognitive component, in the sense of the knowledge that one belongs to a group; an evaluative one, in the sense that the notion of the group and/or of one's membership of it may have a positive or a negative value connotation; and an emotional component in the sense that the cognitive and evaluative aspects of the group and one's membership of it may be accompanied by emotions (such as love or hatred, like or dislike) directed towards one's own group and towards others which stand in certain relations to it.⁹⁰

Tajfel maintains that the individual does not determine her identity in a vacuum. Social identity is based on subjective meanings and not primordial or ideographic factors. *Through a social process, individuals are socialized into certain social groups and their associated identities.* The group agrees on core meanings about their shared identity and those meanings constitute the group. These core meanings are relative; they cannot be

⁸⁹ Searle 1969

⁹⁰ Tajfel 1978:28-9

understood without comparison. Just like how we cannot describe the color red without relating it to other colors or red objects, the shared subjective meanings in social identity that define the group cannot be understood without relating them to other groups or factors exogenous to the group.

Social identities exist all around us and they are not necessarily political. Take, for example, the fans of the Boston Red Sox. They have a name for their group—the *Red Sox Nation*. They have a common set of habits, values, norms, and customs. The terms “Red Sox fan” and “Red Sox Nation” are appropriate answers to the questions “who am I?” and “who are we?”, respectively. Further, to be a member of the Red Sox Nation, an individual must share certain subjective meanings of the individual and the group. The individual must cheer for the Red Sox, be knowledgeable about the team, and must detest the team’s archrival, the New York Yankees. While there are outliers, most members of the Red Sox Nation select to behave in ways that cohere with the group. They self-categorize as members of the Red Sox Nation and, if asked, would mention being a Red Sox fan when asked to describe themselves. An individual that is a Red Sox fan will identify himself as such, will consider himself a member of the Red Sox Nation, and will agree that being a Red Sox fan means to loathe the Yankees. All varieties of social identity categories and the individual-group relationship work in the same fundamental manner as the Red Sox Nation.

Not all examples of social identity are as simple as baseball analogies, but are equally valid. In the study of American politics and public opinion, prominent political psychologists claim that party identification is a significant variable and, potentially, the

most salient predictor of policy preferences and voting behavior.⁹¹ Whether one considers himself to be a Democrat or Republican is of great consequence for his political behavior. In fact, Converse, et al. note that party identification is the strongest predictor of voting patterns, regardless of exogenous environmental factors.⁹² If a voter considers himself to be a Republican, he will vote for a Republican, *ceteris paribus*.

Identity is a central concept in theories of politics, but definitions of identity do not always agree. The differences between these definitions are mostly ontological, but can also be understood in their applications. For example, Tajfel posits that social identity is an entirely subjective matter. He writes:

It is nearly impossible in most natural social situations to distinguish between discriminatory inter-group behavior based on real or perceived conflict of objective interests between the groups and discrimination based on attempts to establish a positively-valued distinctiveness for one's own group. However, as we have argued, the two can be distinguished theoretically, since the goals of actions aimed at the achievement of positively-valued in-group distinctiveness often retain no value outside of the context of inter-group comparisons.⁹³

The definition of social identity as a set of subjective meanings held by an individual and a group is the consensus among social psychologists, although alternate definitions exist.⁹⁴ Political scientists recognize the importance of identity as a potential cause in many landmark studies in recent decades.⁹⁵ While social constructivists dominate the research on this topic, it is not limited to a sociological approach. A team of researchers have created the *Identity as a Variable* project, synthesizing multiple approaches in order to improve the methodology and theorization of identity research in the discipline.⁹⁶

While identity has always been a focus of those studying ethnic conflict and identity

⁹¹ Converse, et al. 1960; Zaller 1992; Franklin and Johnson 1983; Bartels 2002

⁹² Converse, et al. 1960

⁹³ Tajfel 1986: 23-4

⁹⁴ Hogg 1995; DeRidder and Tripathi 1992

⁹⁵ Inglehart 1988; Wendt 1994; Herman 1996; Risse, et al. 1999; Hopf 2002

⁹⁶ Abdelal, et al. 2006

politics, identity as a causal factor has emerged as a theme in foreign policy analysis, international security, and international political economy in recent years.

Although many definitions and applications of identity exist, too many to mention here, a theory that employs identity must start with a parsimonious conceptualization. Social psychologists agree that social identity is the individual's answer to the questions, "Who am I?" and "Who are we?" The process of self-categorization, where individuals ascribe to social groups, determines an individual's social identity. *Social identity is relational, subjectively defined, and a social fact.* Further, social identity has an impact on how individuals interact with groups and how groups interact with each other, an elemental topic in the study of politics and of great importance to the study of foreign policy decision-making and threat identification.

2.2.2 The Inter-group Proposition

Social Identity Theory (SIT) posits that social identities create an inter-group delineation. When one individual self-categorizes into a group, his action constitutes his social identity. His group is his in-group, which is based on subjectively defined shared meanings and has boundaries on membership. Returning to our Red Sox example, a self-categorizing Red Sox fan will only consider others to share his social identity and to be a member of his in-group (the Red Sox Nation) if they exhibit certain behaviors or possess certain attributes. It is reasonable to hypothesize that the behaviors required for inclusion in the Red Sox Nation include rooting for the Red Sox when they play other teams, although other criteria exist. This subjective criterion for group membership, however, does not have to be inter-subjective; people might self-categorize as Red Sox fans for a

multitude of reasons, despite the fact that they might disagree on what a true Red Sox fan is.

An individual self-categorizes himself into the in-group and regards others as members based on his subjective understanding of the in-group. Where an in-group exists, so does an out-group. *The out-group is a defined group that, external to the in-group, is a target for bias, competition.*⁹⁷ Empirical research demonstrates that individuals are positively biased towards the in-group, thereby overlooking deficiencies and flaws, and negatively biased towards the out-group, overemphasizing weaknesses and focusing on prejudiced stereotypes.⁹⁸ Brewer uses the terms *in-group love* and *out-group hate* to describe the overall effects of groups on individual's relations with others.⁹⁹

While SIT posits that social identity will always create a level of bias, prejudice, and misunderstanding between groups, it does not maintain that inter-group relations will always lead to conflict. In fact, inter-group conflict is only one of three potential outcomes for an individual and her in-group.

Tajfel and Turner claim that particular behaviors result from an in-group's comparison with the out-group; individuals are always measuring their in-group against out-groups in order to claim positive feedback and to augment their self-esteem.¹⁰⁰ The consequences of comparison are relevant to the relationship between threat and identity. If the comparison is favorable to the in-group, it only reinforces a sense of self-esteem and the status quo is maintained. The individual and the group are satisfied with the state

⁹⁷ Another social psychological theory, RCT (Sharif 1967) adds contempt to this list.

⁹⁸ Summarized in Tajfel and Turner 1986

⁹⁹ Brewer 1999

¹⁰⁰ Tajfel and Turner 1986

of their group and the group identity derives positive benefits. If the comparison is unfavorable, however, individuals in the in-group make one of three adjustments.

First, the group might weaken due to *individual mobility*. Individuals, when faced with the reality that their in-group is weaker than the comparison out-group, might opt to disassociate with the group or even defect to another group. Cialdini, et al. describes this behavior as CORF (Cutting Off Reflected Failure).¹⁰¹ In order to maintain self-esteem and a positive regard for one's self, an individual will not longer ascribe to a group that suffers from a negative relative comparison. We can return to the Red Sox Nation as an illustration. Let us assume that the Red Sox win the World Series and demonstrate their superiority to all other baseball teams. Red Sox fans will compare themselves to other sports teams and their fans and will enjoy a positive return. Self-esteem is boosted and the status quo is maintained; members will stay in the Red Sox Nation. In fact, a winning team usually results in additional baseball fans self-categorizing with it. As pride increases as a result of winning, members of the group wear symbols of group membership (like Boston Red Sox hats), exhibit a strong in-group bias that favors potentially negative characteristics of the group (like how a weak pitching staff can be overlooked), and other forms of positive bias and in-group cohesiveness.

When the Red Sox begin to lose, however, the members of the "Red Sox Nation" will attempt to "cut off their reflected failure" by putting away their baseball caps, criticizing their weak pitching staff more frequently, and, most dramatically, by denouncing the team and beginning to root for a superior rival team that provides more self-esteem, like the New York Yankees. *The individual, the ultimate arbiter of her membership status, might abandon the group identity in favor of one that provides a*

¹⁰¹ Cialdini, et al. 1976

more positive benefit. The same can be said for an individual with an identity that is politically salient; in-group cohesiveness in a society that loses a war is typically weak. Some might even disassociate with the losing society altogether. An American that assesses her society relative to Canadian society and finds her group to be inferior is more likely to move to Canada or anywhere else, abandon her identity and citizenship, and join a new social group.

Second, the group might exhibit signs of *social creativity*. Social creativity is a simple process that requires members of the in-group to seek other ways to assess the in-group relative to the out-group that will produce a favorable comparison. A relatively weak in-group might dwell on a facet of its comparison with an out-group that is favorable, thus elevating that facet's salience in the overall network of meanings that constitutes group identity. In-groups that face a negative comparison with the out-group will find an alternate favorable comparison to focus on, which then redefines the in-group's most salient meanings that constitute their identity. Larson and Shevchenko contend that the "Soviet new thinking" of the 1980s is an example of social creativity; the Soviets compensated for their decline in hard power relative to the West by seeking to redefine Soviet identity as moral leaders, thus leading to changes in policy in order to maximize soft power and an unanticipated reformulation of grand strategy.¹⁰²

Third, the group might choose *social competition* in order to eliminate negative self-assessments and to win positive self-assessments. This, in essence, is the most likely source of threat identification and inter-group conflict. If enough members of the in-group assess the out-group as superior, it might choose to challenge the out-group's

¹⁰² Larson and Shevchenko 2003; on soft power, see Nye (2004) for a summary of the concept and its application.

dominance directly. A fun example of this is seen in the film *Revenge of the Nerds*, when the unpopular and awkward social outcasts of Adams College's student body realize their relative social standing is inferior to an out-group. The out-group, a fraternity of popular student-athletes, becomes their primary threat. The nerd in-group challenges the jock out-group; the nerds collectivize into their own fraternity, positive in-group and negative out-group biases intensify, and result in hostile behavior towards one another.

SIT is based on the idea that social identity creates inter-group conflict. A negative comparison to an out-group can lead to threat identification. Realistic Group Conflict Theory (RCT) reverses the causal arrow and maintains that inter-group conflict leads to the formation of group identity. Sharif established RCT after he conducted an experiment at boys' summer camp.¹⁰³ He split the camp into two groups and created a scenario where they had to compete with each other over scarce camp resources. Sharif observed that as the competition intensified, each group grew increasingly biased towards the other group. Negative stereotypes of the rival group increased but, unexpectedly, the use of positive stereotypes of the individual's group also intensified. Sharif claims that these biases were caused by the competition of scarce resources and, simultaneously, increased group cohesion and rival group contempt. The contending groups developed separate identities that relied, in part, on typecasting the rival group's identity. Thus, began a vicious cycle where competition begets bias, which begets intensified competition.

Sharif's research encouraged his elaboration of RCT in 1967.¹⁰⁴ Based on his experiments, he concludes that group identity and inter-group bias weakens when one

¹⁰³ Sharif 1962; Rabbie (1982) questions the external validity of Sharif's experiment.

¹⁰⁴ Sharif 1967

group can assert its domination over the other and institutionalizes the relationship. In other words, when one group wins the conflict and can institutionalize domination, the inter-group bias begins to die out. With the inter-group conflict decreasing, a group's cohesion, positive self-bias, and overall identity begin to weaken. RCT claims that this is true for dominant and dominating groups

The bottom line is that RCT predicts that groups will develop cohesive identities and view rival groups as enemies when a real (material) impetus for conflict exists. While RCT seems intuitive and has a wealth of anecdotal and empirical evidence to substantiate many of its causal claims, it was criticized by the next generation of social psychologists as treating groups as natural facts (objective, not subjective social groups) and for creating a tautological relationship between identity and conflict. Of course, RCT fails to explain why the groups existed in the first place. Concerning the relationship between identity and threat identification, it does not substantially answer this study's research questions. If RCT is correct, then an existing threat will intensify group identity. While this is empirically accurate and studied in the foreign policy analysis literature, it does not help us understand the sources of threat identification, only the consequences.¹⁰⁵

An individual assesses her in-group relative to an out-group in order to derive positive feelings and to garner improved self-esteem. When coupled with individuals' natural tendencies to be biased in favor of the in-group and against the out-group, the potential for inter-group conflict exists. The out-group, therefore, is more likely to be seen as a threat by individuals from the in-group. Negative bias, mistrust, and prejudices towards the out-group, reinforced by the in-group, make out-groups ideal candidates to be identified as threats.

¹⁰⁵ Levy (2003) summarizes the inter-group approach and its application to foreign policy analysis.

Out-groups are a prominent target for threat identification. Members of the out-group are potential enemies. If an answer to the question, “who are we?” is an in-group, then the answer to the question, “who aren’t we?” should be everyone outside of the in-group. While out-groups are specifically defined groups, we know that any actor not in the in-group is a potential candidate for the out-group. Further, SIT informs us that out-groups are defined by the nature of the in-group. They are mutually exclusive. Returning to our Red Sox Nation example, we know that the Yankees Universe is an important out-group for Red Sox fans. It is entirely possible that fans of Manchester United, an English soccer team, constitute another out-group, but it is doubtful that they come into contact with fans of the Red Sox and, more likely, have little to do with American professional baseball and those that are fanatical about it. The two groups have little basis for comparison. We can conclude, therefore, that the nature and scope of the in-group leads us to concentrate on particular out-groups that are relevant to the subjective meanings that hold the in-group together.

For example, if the Republicans are George W. Bush’s in-group, then anyone who is not a Republican must be a member of an out-group. If we think about the ideational glue that holds Republicans together (according to Bush), then we can safely assume that some out-groups will be more germane to Bush than others. Democrats are a natural out-group, but so are libertarians, radicals, progressives, socialists, and anarchists. All of these are groups defined by the particular scope of politics—which, we assume, also defines the subjective meanings shared by Republicans. So, when we look for the out-groups of Republicans, we first refer to what the Republicans are and then move away from the in-group to likely rivals. Other out-groups are likely to be important to Bush’s

social identity. British Conservatives are another out-group that, although they have considerable commonalities with Republicans, can be considered in Bush's out-group because Bush maintains that Republicans must be Americans.

We can look beyond the political meanings of categorization to find Bush's out-groups, but they are most likely to be irrelevant when Bush seeks to assess his in-group relative to out-groups. When Bush appraises his in-group, he would compare it to the Democrats. Indonesian liberals are not the first place he is going to look. If Bush's most salient category of social identity is Republican, then it is likely that the most salient out-groups are those logically relevant to Republican shared meanings of social identity (e.g. Democrats, radicals, socialists, progressives).

We know, therefore, that not all out-groups are of equal importance to the individual. The external environment makes relative appraisal more likely for some out-groups over others. First, if the out-group has a similar scope of shared subjective meanings, it is probably a significant out-group. Bush measures the Republicans against Democrats instead of against Indonesian liberals because it is a more relevant comparison.

For an individual, therefore, we can identify a set of significant out-groups if we know the most salient categories of social identity. If Bush's most salient categories of group identity are male, Republican, American, Christian, and teetotaler, and we know the *scope of the shared meanings* that constitute the group, then we can predict what his most significant out-groups are without asking him:

Table 2.1: Hypothesized Inter-group Dynamic of George W. Bush

In-group	Scope of shared meanings	Significant out-groups
Male	Gender	Female, trans-gender
Republican	Political values	Democrats, radicals
American	Macro-cultural	Mexicans, Canadians
Christian	Macro-religious	Jewish, Muslims
Teetotaler	Lifestyle habits	Drinkers

We know from SIT that the members of an out-group are treated with negative bias and stereotypes, mistrust, and prejudice while members of the in-group are regarded positively, even in the light of condemning evidence. From this fact, we can safely assume that a policymaker does not consider the members of her in-group to be threats. The answer to the question, “what threatens us” cannot conflict with “who are we?” *We* cannot be considered a threat to *us*. Even in situations where a threat is perceived to come from within, there is an expulsion of the threatening actors out of the in-group and into a new out-group. When Japanese-Americans were identified as a threat to American national security during the Second World War, they were not only separated from the population, but were also re-categorized by Americans as being non-American.¹⁰⁶ An identified threat cannot be a member of the in-group and, by default, are a member of an out-group.

An identified threat must be a member of a significant out-group. Whether the threat is identified due to expressed behavior, material capabilities, or something else, it must always hail from a significant out-group. After all, the function of an out-group is to provide a comparison to the in-group; it is the basis for the policymaker’s comprehension of inter-group relations. The policymaker focuses on the out-group when

¹⁰⁶ McWilliams 1971

considering the world outside of his social identity. As such, the only relevant external actors are in the significant out-groups.

While the existence of out-groups is a potential indicator of threat identification, it is not a deterministic cause. Instead, the out-group is best considered as a necessary but not sufficient condition for threat identification. It does have a causal influence, but it is a permissive cause, not a deterministic cause. This causal concept, known in international relations and epistemological discussions as possibilism, has a strong tradition in foreign policy analysis theorization and research.¹⁰⁷ *Knowing what conditions make threat identification possible, such as the out-group distinction, help us answer the question of why threat identifications differ between presidents.*

SIT reduces inter-group relations to in-groups and out-groups and foreign policymakers are not an exception. Since social identity is subjectively defined and determines the mix of in-groups and out-groups, the combinations therein should vary among policymakers if they possess different social identities. When we add the differences in identity salience, it becomes clear that policymakers emphasize different clusters of out-groups when considering potential threats. The following sub-section discusses the problems of identity multiplicity, salience, and their role in developing a theory of threat identification.

2.2.3 The Problems of Identity Multiplicity and Group Salience

Social identity theory (SIT) is a general theory of inter-group conflict; an accurate translation into political science must assume that all policymakers, whether the president

¹⁰⁷ On possibilism and the study of foreign policy, see Doty (1993). For an early example of the useful application of the possibilistic approach, see George (1969)

of France or an alderman from the Bronx, are fundamentally the same. SIT does not take into account the unique environmental differences that might influence a president's social identity. Accordingly, this sub-section considers the possibility that the American president exists in an inimitable social environment that significantly reduce the likelihood of multiple salient identity categorizations.

Social identity theory states that people acquire social identities that, for cognitive and affective reasons, divide the entire social world into in-groups and out-groups. Individuals, whether Presidents of the United States or Rutgers students, all behave in the same basic way. This in/out distinction is a major source for tension between groups without any consideration of material-environmental factors, such as resource scarcity. Further, we know that the social identities that an individual ascribes to are not plucked from thin air; they are based on subjective meanings that originate in society.¹⁰⁸ For subjective reasons, a policymaker will self-categorize in different ways.

The reality of inter-group relations is that, despite the conceptual clarity of the statements above, the inter-group aspect of social identity theory might not be a perfect fit for the study of presidential foreign policymaking. The most significant obstacle to feasibility is the matter of multiple identities. If a policymaker sees himself as a member of multiple in-groups, how can we discern between the ones that matter? More importantly, could a president truly consider himself as a member of alternate in-groups when he is the symbolic representative of the American nation? Being charged as the American head of state might be the ultimate environmental constraint on *identity salience*. If Bush is the American president, then how relevant is the fact that he is a

¹⁰⁸ These meanings and their diffusion are best understood through a sociological (constructivist) mode. Whether through a social network or, in a post-structural sense, via the discourse, ideas transfer from the ether to the mind; they are not endogenous to the individual.

Texan, after all? When he sleeps in the West Wing and stands behind the Seal of the United States, it is reasonable to posit that being American is the most salient identity. Before we consider the matter of the president and identity salience, however, let us consider the matter of multiple identities in detail.

We live in a world defined by a plurality of identities. More than 300 million people live in the United States, yet not all of them consider themselves to be Americans. Among the Americans, the picture becomes fractured. Not all Americans would describe themselves as Americans first. It is likely that gender, ancestry, country of origin, race, class, profession, and regional culture all could be a policymaker's first answer to the questions, "Who are you?" and "Who are we?" If identity multiplicity is the case, how can a researcher discern between identities when trying to attribute identity to threat?

The answer lies in identity salience. Haslam, et al. define identity salience as the importance of "the definition of the self in terms of group membership shared with other people."¹⁰⁹ In other words, identity salience is the importance that an individual's associates with a particular self-categorization. If we think of the epistemic community as an in-group, a first-year Ph.D. student's identity salience might be lower than that of a tenured full professor. The reason for this is that the student has not spent enough time in his new category of identity to consider it as important as others. The new student might identify with the group, but that identification will not be as prevalent in his description of self as we would expect to observe in the old professor. What makes identity salient?

According to SIT, two factors shape identity salience: comparative fit and normative fit. *Comparative fit* corresponds to how the policymaker's identity relates to her environment; she might consider herself a Westerner when in Taiwan, an American

¹⁰⁹ Haslam, et al. (1999:810)

when in Europe, and a Southerner when in the United States. Comparative fit is, therefore, a measure of how well an in-group corresponds to a social environment. Since being a Southerner has less meaning to Europeans, our policymaker considers herself an American while in Europe. While in Taiwan, Westerners have as much in common as Westerners as they differ with the Taiwanese, therefore the Western identity is the best comparative fit.

Normative fit is equally useful in understanding identity salience. How a policymaker understands her social identity influences her identity salience. If she believes that Americans are substantially different from Europeans, she will not identify herself as a Westerner while in Taiwan because the category of Westerner rests on the belief that Americans and Europeans share a common heritage. It is the *meaning* of in-group identity that matters here.¹¹⁰

Further complicating matters is the observation that that actors external to the individual and the group can influence identity salience. If the Taiwanese express their expectation to our visiting policymaker that she should behave as an American, she might be more likely to identify as an American.

We have three factors that can influence identity salience: comparative fit, normative fit, and the behavior of other actors. These are all, ultimately, environmental stimuli. Environment is not, however, the final arbiter of identity salience. A strong predisposition to one social identity category (i.e. American) can overcome a lack of comparative fit, normative fit, or environmental stimuli. If one has excessive pride in America, despite all other conditions, he will consider himself an American regardless of the circumstances. If our policymaker self-categorizes as a Southerner and is so

¹¹⁰ Turner (1985)

enamored with (biased in favor of) her in-group, it is reasonable to expect that she will continue to identify as a Southerner regardless of where she is, even if she is sitting in a room full of Taiwanese that do not understand the cultural differences between Texas and New York. In this regard, the social environment matters, although the strength of an individual's ties to the in-group will trump any exogenous factor.¹¹¹

What does this mean for the American president's social identity? It is reasonable to believe that, before we consider the president's exogenous factors that he behaves like any other policymaker and individual. SIT, as a general theory of inter-group relations, should apply equally to the president and anyone else. Unless he has severe cognitive limitations, the American president categorizes in multiple social identities and views himself as a member of many in-groups. A president might consider himself to be a Texan, a Yale alumnus, an aristocrat, a Southerner, a baseball fan, a Christian, a rancher, a teetotaler, an American, a Republican, and a Westerner. It is reasonable for him to use any of these titles to complete the sentence "I am..." during a speech, in a conversation, in his memoirs, and when justifying his decisions. Some, like being a baseball fan, are not nearly as salient as being an American when influencing national policy, but the point is still the same. The president commands multiple social identities.

When we consider the unique circumstances of the American presidency, we might suspect that being American is his most salient social identity. After all, the American president is a unique institution in American government—it is the only elected official that represents the entire American nation. Further, there are unique responsibilities both explicit and implicit in the Constitution, making the president the

¹¹¹ David Laitin (1998) develops a compatible framework for multiple identities and identity salience in his work on the politics of Russia and the "near abroad."

Head of State, a position akin to the Queen of the Netherlands. Not only does the president veto bills and enforce laws, but he also hugs earthquake victims on television in order to fulfill his unwritten duties as the national leader.

Social Identity Theory and the subsequent research by social psychologists informs us that the president's environment is so constricting that it should bind the president so that the American identity is always the most salient, from the moment he walks into the front door of the White House.¹¹² When the president travels abroad, he is the physical embodiment of the American nation. The comparative fit is too good to think otherwise. This is the n^{th} degree case of comparative fit, so strong that it must trump any notion of normative fit. Is there anyone more American than the leader of America? The president represents the American government and the American people. The president interacts with people who judge him on his performance as the commander-in-chief and lead policymaker in the United States. Foreigners must constantly think of him as an American and expect him to be an American. All signs indicate that the American identity must be the most salient to the president.

If this is the case, social identity theory is hindered in its ability to answer this study's core research question: what accounts for the difference between presidents' threat identifications? After all, there is no potential to explain variance if the independent variable remains constant. If all presidents are faced with the same social environment and comparative fit, then they should all possess nearly identical categorizations and salient social identities; they all should strongly identify as

¹¹² See Haslam, et al. 1999. The authors argue that environment determines comparative fit; the social environment elevates the importance of one identity over others simply based on proximity. If the president is the head of state, the chief diplomat, and is constantly referred to as the leader of America, it is most likely that the comparative fit will elevate "American" to his most salient identity.

Americans and have identical threat-views. When we consider the unique position of the president and its influence on identity salience, it is right to doubt the accuracy of our SIT hypothesis in explaining threat identification.

We should not, however, throw out the baby with the bathwater. Social identity theory has a strong empirical record in other experimental inquiries and applications to political science.¹¹³ Still, *we must find a way to account for the variance in threat identification with a set of cases where the most salient in-groups are likely to be the same*. If the SIT hypothesis is incorrect, then we must turn to alternatives. The first alternative is mostly compatible with SIT, with one significant change to how we conceptualize identity. The next sub-section explores a second hypothesis.

2.2.4 The RBI Hypothesis

If we assume that presidents will consider themselves to be Americans above all else and if we are trying to explain the variance in the dependent variable using identity as our lead predictor, then we must reconsider our operational definition of identity. Social Identity Theory maintains that, through the process of self-categorization, individuals ascribe to social groups and use shared meanings to define those groups. *SIT does not, however, pay further attention to the role that shared meanings plays in in-group and out-group formation*. Whatever shared meaning an individual uses to identify with the in-group matters only in that it leads the individual to the social group. One group of New Jerseyans, therefore, will function like a coherent in-group (with its accompanied out-groups), despite the fact that it is possible that they used different shared meanings to arrive at that point.

¹¹³ See summaries in Tajfel and Turner (1986), Huddy (2001)

While all presidents should hold American identity as the most salient, they might adhere to different shared meanings of the American in-group. *How one President defines Americans might differ from another president's definition.* This difference could be the defining factor in differences in threat identification; how a president defines “American” can account for the threats that he identifies. This final sub-section explores the concept, discusses shared meanings, proposes a notion of rule-based identity, and posits a novel hypothesis of threat identification

Social constructivists claim that the shared meanings that define group identity are *constitutive rules*.¹¹⁴ *Constitutive rules* define the acceptable behaviors necessary to be a member of a group identity. When we think of Searle's football example, we can identify a football player by how he acts (i.e. forming with a group at the line of scrimmage.)¹¹⁵ This rule constitutes identity and regulates behavior among those subsumed by the identity. We can identify socially constructed constitutive rules for all types of behavior. For example, if a young man studies (X) in the college library at night (C), then he is a college student (Y). The act of studying in a library constitutes what it means to be a college student, which then helps us identify college students. Of course, if we were survey members of the Rutgers community and ask them what it means to be a college student, not all would agree that studying in the library defines college students. We get the image of the college student in the library from, seemingly, common sense. Who else would study in the library, right? But, we also obtain this constitutive rule, this image, this understanding of college students from movies like *Back to School*, from art and music, from literature, from our friends' stories, and our own experiences in college.

¹¹⁴ Searle 1969; Kratochwil 1987; Ruggie 1997

¹¹⁵ Searle 1969

The identity of a college student is socially constructed. While it lacks inter-subjectivity, it is, nonetheless, a constitutive rule that helps us understand a construction of identity.

People use constitutive rules to define themselves and to identify people that are similar to them. We can posit that these constitutive rules apply to Westerners and Christians, respectively:

1. A Westerner is a person that practices liberal values in her daily life.
2. A Christian is a person that worships within an organized religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Of course, there are alternate constitutive rules for being a Christian that we can consider that not all might agree to:

1. A Christian attends church each week.
2. A Christian follows the Golden Rule (do unto others as they do unto you)
3. A Christian is dedicated to mission work.

There are also alternate constitutive rules for being a Westerner:

1. A Westerner is a person that resides in Europe, North America, or Australia.
2. A Westerner is a Christian, White, and of European descent.
3. A Westerner is a person that resides in a society that traces its heritage to Greek or Roman antiquity.

Not all of these constitutional rules are universally agreed upon and some (for example, including Australia in the West or defining Christians as attending church weekly) are particularly controversial. There are an infinite number of possible constitutional rules for a group identity; these rules are constantly changing meanings continually constructed and reconstructed by society. As such, the process of defining key constitutional rules can become unmanageable quickly, although some surface more often than others. For example, we can think of two classic constitutional rules in the discourse of American identity that resonate throughout American history:

1. The pluralist rule: An American resides in the space of the United States, supports the American constitution and the American government, and is committed to liberalism.
2. The nativist constitutional rule: An American is a Protestant and an Anglo.

What does this mean for threat identification? We just established that constitutive rules are the basis for group identity. In terms of ideas, *the constitutional rule is a shared meaning that gives identity personal relevance*. These meanings are observed by the individual; if all Americans must play baseball in order to be true Americans, then it is easy for the individual to discern between Americans and non-Americans. The potential for clearly defined in-groups and out-groups prevails and, returning to SIT, we know that the potential for conflict and threat identification exists.

Unlike SIT, the answer to “who are we” is not American but “baseball playing Americans.” This is an excluding social fact. Who “we” are and who “they” are relies on the constitutive rule employed by the individual. Presidents are not immune from this process; a president’s definition of what it takes to be American will determine what it takes to not be American, thus providing a clearly defined out-group. For who “we” are necessarily determines who “they” are.

What makes a group determines what can potentially threaten its existence. After all, if to be American means to play baseball, then if all Americans ceased playing baseball, then Americans would cease to exist as we know them. Why would Americans stop playing baseball? Well, the most practical guess would be that they started playing another sport, like the classically un-American soccer. If baseball constitutes American identity, then soccer playing can destroy American identity. Soccer, therefore, is the enemy of America.

What does not make us can destroy us. This is, perhaps, the elemental maxim of social existence. If following a constitutional rule is a necessary condition for group survival, then breaking that constitutional rule necessarily results in a failure of group survival. There is a clear axiomatic logic behind this argument.

The constitutional rule is the American way. As Americans, our way of life is our constitutional rule; it defines who we are. The American way is even more important to social identity than in other societies, due to the diversity of religions, languages, origins, and habits of Americans. The American way, in order to maintain ontological security, must be protected. What threatens the American way is behavior that is clearly contradictory to it.

What matters for the survival of group identity, and the identification of threat, depends on how a group identifies itself. If a group identifies itself according to a set of ideas, then any ideas outside of that set are potential successors and, therefore, potential threats. If an outside idea is adopted, then group definition and identity change accordingly. If we add the inter-group logic of SIT, we can additionally posit that how a group identifies itself will define the out-group. Beyond a simple category, then, in-groups and out-groups are clearer and more useful in understanding inter-group relations if we add the constitutive rule component.

Social Identity Theory maintains that individuals use shared meanings to visualize an in-group. Social constructivists maintain that a shared meaning is best understood as a constitutive rule, which sets a clear line between in-group and out-group by creating a condition for membership that also defines the groups. A constitutive rule is, therefore, an answer to the question “who are we” that extends beyond a categorical answer, i.e.

generically defined Americans. The constitutive rule is a useful device, since it also constitutes the out-group, answering the question, “who are they” beyond a similar categorical answer (i.e. “Mexicans.”) When we consider how all Presidents should consider the generic category of “American” to be their most salient identity, the addition of the constitutive rule helps us see identity as being different between presidents.

Constitutive rules also define the out-group. If living the Puritan lifestyle is the condition for being American, then not living the Puritan lifestyle makes one something other than American; he is a member of the out-group. If we return to the notion of the inter-group dynamics, we know that all members of the out-group constitute the population of potential threats. The new rule-based identity (RBI) explanation provides a narrower definition of that population. Further, it can explain why that population of threats and threat identification differs between presidents. If Ronald Reagan believes that to be American is to be classically liberal, then all who are classically illiberal constitute his out-group and threat-view. Accordingly, if Jimmy Carter saw America as a Christian nation, then his threat-view is all non-Christians.

The RBI approach to understanding differences in threat identification is a potentially powerful device when analyzing the president’s threat identification. Returning to Doty, we should recognize that this theories provides a “how possible” answer to the research question and not a deterministic answer. Still, it is sufficient for answering this study’s research question.¹¹⁶

The RBI approach is simple. A president’s constitutive rule for American identity defines the limits of the American in-group and the population of potential threats, or the

¹¹⁶ Doty (1993)

out-group. Since the president is charged as the leader of the American nation, we can safely assume that his American identity is the most salient while in office. Accordingly, an RBI variant of the threat-view hypothesis rests of the following assumptions:

1. Due to the unique social environment of the president, his most salient identity is American.
2. Constitutive rules (the American way) define American identity and vary between individuals.
3. Foreign behavior that contradicts a president's American way is deemed threatening.
4. All presidents do not use the same American way to define American identity

We can conclude, therefore, with the following hypothesis for empirical examination:

A president's American way defines the population of potential threats, which constrains his threat identification in a particular manner that differs between presidents.

The RBI hypothesis is the core hypothesis of this study. An empirical comparison with the traditional SIT hypothesis should yield some insight into the utility of this dissertation's theoretical innovation. In order to best understand the accuracy and usefulness of this theory, we turn to discuss and identify three alternate hypotheses for testing in subsequent chapters.

2.3 Primary Issues

This chapter serves as the primary theoretical focus of the dissertation. It identified six core issues to be considered throughout the rest of the manuscript:

1. Identity is a social fact; individuals attach socially constructed meanings to identity in order to make sense of their place in the world.
2. Social identity theory (SIT) provides a way of understanding inter-group dynamics and threat identification.
3. SIT predicts that individuals will always maintain multiple social identities, although the unique circumstances of the presidency make it likely that a president would focus exclusively on American identity.

4. Americans define what it means to be American differently; they have different versions of the American way.
5. The American way that a president uses defines what can threaten the American way.
6. Differences in the American way among presidents have the potential to account for differences in threat identification.

3 Alternate Explanations

This chapter discusses and elucidates three alternate answers to the question, “Why does threat identification vary between presidents?” By drawing on different levels of analysis, this study utilizes two rational-material and one behavioral-ideational approach for explaining why identified threats might vary among presidents.

The first explanation is offered by Walt’s notion of threat identification. Taken from his seminal work on the balance-of-threat, he proposes that policymakers operate rationally and identify threats to state survival based on four material-rational factors. The second explanation is taken, in part, from Peter Trubowitz’s sectional politics theory, which maintains that business interests influence members of Congress when making foreign policy decisions. An extension of Trubowitz’s logic might apply to presidential foreign policymaking and threat identification. This study explores the possibility that geographically-based interests originating in battleground states might sway the president’s threat identification.

The third explanation to be considered comes from Social Identity Theory (SIT), which provides a clear answer to the research question that is grounded in decades of related empirical research. If SIT holds true, we should expect to see that each president has different salient in-groups, which in turn, elevate certain out-groups as targets for negative bias. If these out-groups differ between presidents, then their threat identifications should similarly differ. It is unlikely, however, that the social identities—which SIT defines as categories of groups—will differ significantly between individuals living in the same society in the same era.

The following sub-sections briefly discuss the three contending alternate explanations to this study's core research question and reduce them to testable hypotheses. After, this chapter concludes with a summary of the three hypotheses and a discussion of the primary issues relevant to the scope of this dissertation.

3.1 Walt's Threat Identification Model

Stephen Walt's balance-of-threat theory is a landmark study on the topic of alliance formation.¹¹⁷ It rests on a particular conceptualization of threat identification; Walt argues that policymakers form alliances based on balancing against threat, not power. Although not the primary focus of his book, Walt's model is a useful proxy for the rational-material approach to understanding how decision-makers assess threats and offers an alternate answer to the question, "Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?"

Walt's model of threat identification contends that threat identification should only differ between presidents when they are faced with different exogenous factors, such as changes in the distribution of military capabilities of foreign states. He posits that power, offensive capability, geographic proximity, and offensive intentions are indicators of threat, which are recognized by agents of the state as the characteristics of a threatening state. This sub-section outlines Walt's model and applies it to this study, yielding a hypothesis for testing.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Walt (1987, 1988)

¹¹⁸ It is important to note that Walt, a structural (neo-) realist, utilizes a different approach to studying international politics than foreign policy analysis (FPA). Whereas the study of foreign policy is based on agency and choice, structural realism falls under international relations theory, which focuses on structural constraints for behavior. See Waltz (1967, 2000) for an elaboration of the distinction between FPA and IR. For the purposes of this study, however, a structural theory represents the prevailing wisdom of threat perception and serves, therefore, as a suitable theory for comparison. Walt's incorporation of behavioral factors (offensive intentions) relaxes the structural assumptions found in preceding theories (Waltz 1959,

Walt claims that all policymakers are agents of the state¹¹⁹, making him one of the realists that call policymakers *statesmen*, suggesting that they have no personal interests or cognitive particularities that would prevent them from acting on the state's behalf.¹²⁰ An identified threat, therefore, is a threat to state survival. Further, realists assert that the international structure is anarchic and, therefore, state survival (security) is the primary interest of all states and statesmen.

States... do not enjoy even an imperfect guarantee of their security unless they set out to provide it for themselves. If security is something the state wants, then this desire, together with the conditions in which all states exist, imposes certain requirements on a foreign policy that pretends to be rational. The requirements are imposed by an automatic sanction: Departure from the rational model imperils the survival of the state.¹²¹

Accordingly, structural realists maintain that states are the most important actors in the international system. This statement presumes that the policymakers at the helm of the ship are agents of the state and do not pursue their own interests.

We can infer from this basic view of realism that a president will seek to secure the state from all threats "foreign and domestic." Presidents, therefore, are charged with the responsibility of identifying threats to state security and state security only.

More importantly, however, statesmen are rational actors.¹²² This is a departure from the assumptions of the identity-based hypotheses discussed in this dissertation. Realists rely on the notion that all actors (including statesmen) are rational; they order their preferences over outcomes and pursue their highest preference. Preference ordering is based on expected utility. The rational decision-making process is atomistic and is

1979), only strengthening the Balance-of-Threat's application to this topic. See chapter one for a more elaborate discussion.

¹¹⁹ Walt (1987: 15)

¹²⁰ Morgenthau 1948; Waltz 1959; Mearsheimer 2001

¹²¹ Waltz (1959:201)

¹²² This dissertation defines rationality according to the standard set by Elster (1989) and practiced by Allison (1972) and Schelling (1966). For a concise summary, see Rhodes (1989:14-15)

based on the assumption that all behavior is intentional and purposive. Actions are made for a reason and any choice is based on a deliberation of facts, beliefs, and desires. Rationalism, also known as “rational choice theory” in political science, is an economic-like approach to understanding decision-making. Realists maintain that threat identification is best understood as a rational process, where the state and its agents collect available information¹²³, reference their own beliefs and desires, take into account their preferences over outcomes, and then derive the best possible choice (threat/not a threat.) Walt claims that statesmen collect information on the four factors of threat and deliberately consider them before identifying a threat.

With his theory firmly rooted in structural realism and rationalism, as defined by the assumptions above, Walt sets out in his early research to develop a theory that can explain why the most powerful states are not always identified as threats. Walt’s read of diplomatic history yields the observation that powerful states sometimes behave in ways that convince others that they do not intend to jeopardize state survival. As a result, weaker states will actually align with the most powerful state instead of aligning against it. This phenomenon is not predicted by Waltz, who posits that weaker states should form alliances that counteract the prevailing dominant state in order to maintain a balance-of-power.¹²⁴

In 1945, the United States was the world’s dominant power. If threat identification were based solely on relative power, then the relatively weak states of Western Europe should have aligned with the Soviet Union against the United States.

¹²³ There is a debate among rationalists regarding the extent to which decision-makers will collect information. See Keohane (1984) for a discussion of *satisficing* and the cost-effectiveness of information gathering and decision-making.

¹²⁴ Waltz 1979

Walt remarks that Britain, France, and Italy found the Soviet Union to be hostile *and* powerful and, thus, chose to align with the more powerful America since it communicated benign intentions.

In Walt's 1945 example, offensive intentions are of paramount importance. Italy aligned with the United States in the early Cold War because the Americans communicated a willingness to respect Italian sovereignty. The Soviets, on the other hand, showed its hostile hand when it disregarded Poland's quest for self-governance in 1945. Thus, the Italians aligned against the second-most powerful state because its expressed intentions were deemed to be hostile.

Walt explains this unexpected balancing behavior with his expanded model of threat identification. He claims that threat identification rests on a statesman's assessment of four factors: a foreign state's capacity (power defined as actual and latent), offensive capabilities, geographic proximity, and offensive intentions. If any of the four factors increases, then there is a greater likelihood that statesmen will identify the external state as a threat. The opposite is also true. If all the first three factors (power, proximity, offensive capability) are high but offensive intentions are negligible, then an alliance is an attractive option for a weaker state. Balancing against threat and not just power is not only possible, but from a materialist-rationalist perspective, beneficial and security-maximizing. Walt writes:

Other things being equal, states that are nearby are more dangerous than those that are far away. States with large offensive capabilities—defined as the capacity to threaten the sovereignty of other states—pose a greater threat than states whose capabilities are more suitable for defense. Lastly, states with aggressive intentions are more threatening than those who seek only to preserve the *status quo*. If balancing behavior is the norm, therefore, an increase in any of these factors—

power, proximity, offensive capabilities, or aggressive intentions—should encourage other states to ally against the most threatening power.¹²⁵

A turn to Walt's four factors of threat identification, as laid out in the Balance-of-Threat theory, should lead us to a testable proposition for this study. Power is the first factor.

Power is the ability to influence the politics of another state; Hobbes calls it “the capacity to induce an intended effect.”¹²⁶ In international relations, we study power because it is the nexus of material realities and rational processes. Intentional behavior between states is apt to produce conflict; the material capacity of states determines the power that states can use to resolve conflict. Accordingly, realists maintain that the distribution of power in the international system is the defining characteristic of international politics. Since power is viewed by statesmen in relative terms, the actual business of “who has what” matters most, especially when power is necessary to resolve disputes, further the desires of states, and preserve state survival.

Returning to Walt's classic view of international politics, we know that powerful states are *existential* threats because they possess the capacity (power) to destroy other states. This alone, according to realists, places state survival and the quest for power at the apex of state concerns. Accordingly, the more powerful a state is, the more of a threat it poses. Presidents, as agents of the state, should identify the most powerful states in the system as threats.

Walt writes that a state's proximity factors into threat identification; distance is not dead in a realist's view of international relations. He claims that a closer state, *ceteris paribus*, is more threatening than a distant state, since distance increases state security by requiring additional resources in order to influence, compel, or otherwise threaten. Walt

¹²⁵ Walt 1988: 281

¹²⁶ Hobbes [1651] 1992:45

is not alone in this assessment; fellow structural realist John Mearsheimer also argues that a state's ability to project its power factors into its ability to threaten security.¹²⁷ For this reason, a neighboring state is more of a threat than a state from another continent; a statesman must consider a foreign state's geographic proximity when appraising it as a potential threat.

Offensive capability is the third critical factor and, unfortunately, more difficult to measure than the first two. A threat must have offensive capabilities; otherwise it lacks the capacity to jeopardize state survival. Offensive weapons and the state's overall capabilities are more specific than the realist definition of power. Only a handful of states possess massive offensive power in the current era: Russia, Britain, the United States, and France. These states possess formidable nuclear arsenals, blue-water navies, and amphibious capabilities^{128 129} China, also a 21st century great power, lacks offensive capacity but is still considered among the international system's elite.¹³⁰ Walt claims that statesmen, such as the president, assess a foreign state's offensive capabilities when identifying threat. After all, a state that lacks the capacity to attack is less likely to be a threat to state survival.

The final and most controversial of the four factors of threat identification is offensive intentions. What exactly, however, constitutes an offensive intention? One can easily think of "offensive intentions" as a subjectively defined phenomenon, where

¹²⁷ Mearsheimer 2001

¹²⁸ Even among these, only the United States is able to launch an amphibious assault worldwide.

¹²⁹ Jack S. Levy (1984) notes that the distinction between an offensive and defensive weapon is difficult to make. Indeed, an aircraft carrier can be used for both offensive and defensive purposes. Still, some weapons (i.e. landmines) are by nature defensive only. If a weapon is both offensive and defensive, it suffices to say that it increases a state's offensive capability.

¹³⁰ The Chinese (PRC) government is currently moving to build a blue-water navy. It recently purchased two aircraft carriers from Russia, possibly a response to a similar move by India and the expansion of Japanese blue-water capacities (it recently built a large battle cruiser) in the past decade. Other mid-level powers have limited blue-water capabilities, such as Italy, Brazil, and India.

an action might be interpreted as offensive and hostile by one actor and not by another. Offensive intentions could be interpreted through social constructions, a function of heuristic devices, or both. Cultural biases could lead to different assessments of “offensive intentions.” Instead of relying on the subjective realm, however, Walt turns to a game theoretic and rationalist definition of offensive intentions.

Walt writes that statesmen assess the offensive intentions of foreign states by observing their behavior. In this regard, nothing else matters—not ideology or cheap talk. Foreign states know this and have an incentive to behave in ways that communicate the intentions they wish other states to acknowledge. Walt and his contemporaries call *signaling* the practice of communicating intentions through intentional behavior.¹³¹

Accordingly, a foreign state that wants to present itself as a non-threat to the United States will signal benign intentions. Still, talk is cheap. In order to convince American statesmen that it does not harbor offensive intentions, it can absorb costs to demonstrate friendliness. Often, these costs are opportunity costs. If an individual wishes to communicate to his friends that he intends on being healthy, he could pass on eating a doughnut. After all, talk is cheap but deeds are not. The same holds true for states. So, if a foreign state passes on a chance to gain a relative advantage over the United States, it is absorbing an opportunity cost, which is an effective and costly signal of benign intentions. On the other hand, if it capitalizes on the opportunity, it is a clear signal that it possesses offensive intentions.

Walt claims that statesmen look for expressed behavior and costly signals in particular to inform their threat identifications. If a state signals hostile intent, then it is more likely to be identified as a threat and *vice versa*. Returning to the early Cold War

¹³¹ See Fearon (1997) for a conceptual overview.

example, Walt writes, “(Western European states) chose to balance the Soviet Union by aligning with the United States, because the former’s proximity, its impressive military power, and its apparently aggressive aims made it appear more threatening.”¹³² All of this holds true, despite the fact that the United States possessed a military advantage over Europe and the Soviet Union and the presence of American troops within the sovereign territory of France, West Germany, and Italy. In 1945, the Americans were more powerful than the Soviets, were at least as geographically close as the Soviets, and possessed greater offensive capabilities (strategic air power, atomic weapons, and naval strength) than any other European state.¹³³ Walt argues that it was the signals sent by the Soviets and the Americans, which were dutifully received and analyzed by European statesmen that made the difference in threat identification. The Soviets treated their occupied states as vassals while the Americans passed on the opportunity, a costly act, and promoted home rule and sovereignty.

The American president, Walt maintains, as an American statesman, would look to four indicators before making identifying threat. Of these four, offensive intention appears to be the critical factor that helps him decided between threat and potential ally. All four, however, have an impact on threat identification.

From this sub-section’s discussion, we can derive a set of assumptions that frame a testable hypothesis for research:

1. Presidents are agents of the state, only represent state interests, and are rational actors.
2. Due to the anarchic structure of the international system, the primary interest of states is survival.

¹³² Walt (1988:280)

¹³³ Soviet development of atomic weapons and the ensuing arms race would negate the American advantage held in 1945.

3. Statesmen frame threats as foreign states and their likelihood of jeopardizing state security.
4. A foreign state's power, offensive capacity, geographic proximity and offensive intentions are the factors that a statesman takes into account when identifying threats.

Finally, this study proposes a hypothesis for empirical analysis:

1. Threat identification will change if a foreign state's relative power, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and offensive intentions change.

This explanation and hypothesis resides in the system level of analysis; the following competing hypothesis looks to the state level to uncover a possible causal variable.

3.2 Sub-national Interests Hypothesis

A turn to the state level-of-analysis yields a seemingly infinite number of variables and hypotheses. One of the most compelling domestic-level explanations for US foreign policymaking is Peter Trubowitz's theory of business interests and sectional politics.¹³⁴

An application of his logic to presidential foreign policymaking yields a compelling explanation: business interests, many of which are geographically-based in battleground states and sections, influence the president's identification of threat. This section explores Trubowitz's theory and applies his logic to presidential foreign policymaking and threat identification, yielding a testable hypothesis and alternate answer to this study's research question.

Peter Trubowitz argues that there is no such thing as the national interest in the United States and in American foreign policymaking.¹³⁵ He explains that the fragmented polity is due to divergent economic needs best understood through a historical economic approach. Sections, dominated by different economic sectors, tend to have different foreign policy interests. With the exception of times of national crisis, such as the intense

¹³⁴ Trubowitz 1992

¹³⁵ Trubowitz 1992, 1998

rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States in the early Cold War, he observes that these sectional rivalries are the norm.¹³⁶ They are most intense when decision-makers are uncertain of the future. He writes,

These moments of transition and flux in American foreign policy reveal a truth that is often obscured during times of stability and consensus: the national interest has a geographic dimension. During periods of consensus, when national leaders enjoy substantial latitude in conducting foreign policy, the domestic political circumstances that confer such authority on statesmen recede from view.¹³⁷

Except for atypical periods of war and national consensus, Trubowitz believes that sectional interests compete with each other for dominance in Congressional foreign policymaking. One particular period stands out among the rest—the rise of the modern American state at the end of the 19th century—the period on which this dissertation focuses. The dominant historical understanding of the period is one of unprecedented national security¹³⁸, a rising capacity to influence international politics¹³⁹, and a strengthening of federal institutions and the ability to govern.¹⁴⁰ Trubowitz interprets this history differently; he claims that that the debate over the national interest was as contentious as any point in American history. He writes,

Decisions over the nation's strategic goals, market orientation, and military posture are not geographically neutral. The late nineteenth century, for example, was marked by a struggle between the industrial heartland in the northeast and the agrarian hinterland of the South for political dominance and control over the national state. This regional conflict permeated both foreign and domestic policy issues.¹⁴¹

Trubowitz is eager to point out that Congressional Republicans sought to expand American influence in order to access new markets for products manufactured in the

¹³⁶ Kaplan and Trubowitz 2007

¹³⁷ Trubowitz 1992: 175

¹³⁸ LaFeber 1963

¹³⁹ May 1973

¹⁴⁰ Zakaria 1998

¹⁴¹ Trubowitz 1992: 176

northeast (its political base) while maintaining protective tariffs for the same constituency. Democrats, on the other hand, opposed empire and sought to eliminate tariffs, which would increase southern exports of agricultural products to Europe. Divergent economic interests between two politically dominant regions within the US related to two separate foreign policy interests. This contention resulted in the oscillation between a foreign policy based on empire and isolation in the 1880s and 1890s.

Trubowitz claims that there was no national interest during the debates over tariffs at the end of the nineteenth century. A parallel can be seen in the twenty-first century and the debate over free trade. While elements of the Midwest and the South are advocates of protection, the centers of global capital in New York and California are clear proponents of free trade. Trubowitz makes a similar case regarding foreign policy in the early nineteenth century.¹⁴²

Trubowitz's early research focuses on the American Congress to verify his theory. He finds ample confirmation, but his findings are more applicable to 19th century foreign policymaking.¹⁴³ In the 20th century, along with the rise of the presidency's relative power, the White House began to dominate the foreign policymaking process.¹⁴⁴ The president, coincidentally, is the only elected official that is responsible to a national constituency. At face value, Trubowitz's theory of sectional interests is not easily translated to this study's focus on presidential foreign policymaking. His underlying assumption—that in the absence of a national interest, sub-national business interests will play a disproportionate role in foreign policymaking— still has the potential to compose an answer to this study's research question. While it seems possible that the American

¹⁴² Trubowitz 1998

¹⁴³ Trubowitz 1992

¹⁴⁴ Wildavsky 1966; Schlesinger 1973; Neustadt 1960

president is unaffected by business interests, a closer look shows that they have the ability to influence presidential foreign policymaking.

The relationship between business interests and presidential foreign policymaking should operate in the same basic manner as Trubowitz's theory of Congressional foreign policymaking despite the fact that the American president is the only official elected by a national constituency. Notwithstanding his responsibility to represent the interests of the entire nation, the process by which the president is elected requires candidates to form coalitions among supporters from sub-national (state) constituencies. A victorious candidate, therefore, must form a winning coalition of states that provides a majority of delegates in the Electoral College. A president that wishes to remain in office, therefore, must strive to keep a minimum number of sub-national constituencies satisfied.

The relationship between the president and the winning coalition of sub-national constituencies works in the same basic manner as the member-constituency relationship seen in Congress. Both are electoral processes by which special interests, in particular business interests, are able to infiltrate the foreign policymaking process. A contemporary example of the relationship between geographic locations, sub-national interests, and presidential foreign policymaking is the relationship between George W. Bush and the steel industry in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

George W. Bush won the 2000 election by the slimmest of margins and battleground states, including West Virginia, were crucial for his victory. West Virginia and Pennsylvania, the latter being a state that he narrowly lost in the same election, had been suffering from high unemployment and low economic growth, partially due to the decaying steel industry. The steel mills in Pennsylvania and West Virginia were

struggling keep their share of the domestic market, which was being lost to foreign producers located in Northeast Asia and Eastern Europe. Business interests in West Virginia and Pennsylvania pressured the Bush administration to invoke Section 201 of the *1974 Trade Act*, which empowers the president to suspend free trade agreements and raise tariffs on imported goods (i.e. foreign steel) when the possibility of unfair trade exists.¹⁴⁵ In June 2001, Bush invoked Section 201, effectively protecting American steel, and satisfying a key business interest in two prominent battleground states, thus maintaining and possibly building his winning coalition and enhancing his chances for re-election in 2004.¹⁴⁶ Although Bush represents a national constituency, the importance of West Virginia and Pennsylvania in the Electoral College and to his re-election chances might have influenced his choice to protect the steel industry.

Trubowitz argues that the national interest is a myth that ignores the reality of sub-national interests.¹⁴⁷ We can extend Trubowitz's assumption to argue that geographically-based sub-national interests frame threat identification. While he studied Congress exclusively, we can apply his logic to presidential foreign policymaking. Trubowitz's argument that there is no national interest and that sub-national interests influence foreign policymaking is a curious proposition that can be applied to threat identification. Where there are interests, and where interests diverge among interacting actors, there must be the potential for threats. If there are threats to national interests, therefore, there must also be threats to sub-national interests.

¹⁴⁵ Kennedy School of Government (2003)

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* For more on this case, see Kahn, J. (June 6, 2001) "Bush Moves against Steel Imports; Tensions Likely to Rise" *The New York Times*, accessed online on August 16, 2008. It is important to note that Bush won West Virginia but lost Pennsylvania in 2004.

¹⁴⁷ Trubowitz's argument about the unimportance of the national interest resembles Wolfers's seminal article (1952) on the protean nature of "national interest."

An identified threat to a sub-national interest is an actor or behavior that has the capacity to jeopardize a sub-national actor's ability to pursue its interests. If we return to Trubowitz's example of the late 19th century, we know that a prominent foreign policy interest of most northeastern manufacturers in the 1890s was the maintenance of protective tariffs. Trubowitz explains that Congressional Republicans depended on the northeast their support base and the northeast relied on protection in order for its mills and factories to remain competitive with European (specifically, British) manufacturing firms. As a result, Congressional Republicans tended to support tariffs and opposed unfettered foreign access to American markets. Benjamin Harrison, the Republican candidate for president in 1888 and 1892, similarly relied on electors from the northeast in order to win his election and campaigned against free trade.

British foreign policy, which focused on free access to American markets, the gold standard, and free trade generally, jeopardized the interests of the Republican northeast. Great Britain, therefore, posed a sub-national threat to the northeast and northeastern Republicans would pressure members of Congress and the president to oppose free trade with Great Britain. It is equally likely that Benjamin Harrison, who needed the northeast to win re-election, would have been especially sensitive to the business interests of the northeast and particularly weary of potential threats to northeastern business interests. As a result, his need to placate his "electoral constituency" might cause him to identify British foreign policy as threatening. So, although Trubowitz does not explicitly define and focus on extant sub-national threats, they can exist and can impact threat identification.

How, then, does the presidency fit into all of this? If the president represents a national constituency, he does not necessarily acquire the power to retain his position from the entire nation. Instead, he draws on particular blocs of voters. Grover Cleveland won his two elections by promising civil service reform, a key interest of the *mugwump* center, which was strongest in the urban centers of the northeast. George W. Bush won his two elections by relying on solid support from a coalition of social conservatives and industrial interests. John Adams was our second president because of the votes of the New England states. Presidents throughout history ascend to the nation's highest office because they build successful coalitions of supporters and work to pursue their sub-national interests. The term *winning coalition*, made popular by congressional scholar and game theorist William Riker best describes the alliance of necessary supporters.¹⁴⁸ Presidents must assemble winning coalitions in order to win elections and maintain them in order to retain political power. While there is a clear moral hazard between the principal and agent in the president's second term, other contributing factors, such as legacy building, party interests, and classic quid-pro-quo politics lead one to believe that the president relies on his winning coalition from candidacy to his retirement.¹⁴⁹

The president's winning coalition, therefore, could be a mechanism for sectional influence. Trubowitz writes:

American party leaders have a long if inglorious record of playing on regional antipathies and sensitivities to mobilize electoral support and marginalize political opposition. The effects of federalism are compounded by the fragmented structure of the federal government itself. What some have defined as the inherent 'weakness' of the American state provides regional based groups and movements a large number of access points to exert political pressure and influence national policy-making. Such groups and movements help define,

¹⁴⁸ Riker 1962

¹⁴⁹ It is important to note that while there is no Constitutional restraint on a second presidential re-election, the precedent set by Washington was an informal institution that held until 1944.

shape, and articulate regional sentiments and mobilize regional interests for collection action.¹⁵⁰

A president's winning coalition is one of the access points of which Trubowitz writes. The president's need to form a winning coalition is an opportunity for sub-national interests to gain entrée to the president's decision-making calculus. If a president is beholden to a coalition that promotes a particular sub-national interest, then we can expect that the president might pursue that sub-national interest instead of representing a national constituency and pursuing a national interest. This line of thinking is wholly consistent with Trubowitz's assumptions. Additionally, if the president is sensitive to sub-national interests, he must also be sensitive to threats to sub-national interests.

It remains to be seen whether the president identifies these sub-national threats as a national threat. In the long run, however, the designation is meaningless; a threat is a threat. There are ample examples of sub-national threats, winning coalitions, and threat identifications. A classic case is John Adams's reaction to the XYZ Affair, the identification of a French threat, and the Quasi-war with France in 1798. Historians trace this to Adams's reliance on his winning coalition of New England states and southern federalists that relied on trade with Britain, France's arch-rival during the Napoleonic Era.¹⁵¹

There seems to be a considerable amount of anecdotal evidence that links sub-national interests, sub-national threats, winning coalitions, presidential foreign policymaking and threat identification. Whether this hypothesis holds up against the cases analyzed in this study, however, remains to be seen. Further, the question remains if the evidence brought to bear is more convincing than plausible alternate hypotheses.

¹⁵⁰ Trubowitz 1992: 176

¹⁵¹ Borneman 2004, Horsman 1969

Trubowitz's focus on sectional interests in foreign policymaking presents an opportunity to test a clearly defined hypothesis. With the addition of the notion of sub-national threats and Riker's concept of a winning coalition, we can deduce the following assumptions:

1. The entirety of American history is defined by a competition among sub-national interests.
2. Foreign actors, interests, and behavior can pose a threat to a sub-national interest.
3. A president's winning coalition serves as an access point by which sub-national interests can influence presidential foreign policymaking.

It follows that we can declare an empirically testable hypothesis to verify these causal inferences:

If a president relies on a particular location to maintain his winning coalition, then he might identify threats to its corresponding sub-national interests.

The two hypotheses elucidated thus far are based on rationalist and materialist assumptions. The third to be tested as a plausible alternate explanation in the empirical component of this dissertation, SIT, is an ideational and identity-based alternative to the theories discussed until now.

3.3 Social Identity Theory

This section exposes and elucidates a theory of threat identification that places social identity at the center. Social identity theory is based on the notion that individuals self-categorize into in-groups and the dynamic between social groups leads to bias and, subsequently, threat identification. Discussed in chapter two, SIT incorporates key concepts from social psychology in order to provide insight into what makes threat identification possible. In relation to this study's core research question, "why does threat identification differ between presidents," the answer lies in the most salient out-

groups. The most salient out-groups of a president are likely to be viewed with negative bias and as a threat. If one president's set of salient out-groups omits an actor present in another president's out-groups, then the possibility exists for different threat identifications.

SIT, as it applies to this study, is best summarized through the following list of assumptions:

1. Presidents possess a social identity in the same manner as any other policymaker or individual.
2. A president's social identity consists of multiple categorizations of identity.
3. When a president self-categorizes in multiple identities, some are more salient than others.
4. All social identities correspond with in-groups that consist of actual members that are bound by shared meanings of the group.
5. In-groups require out-groups to serve as references for comparison.
6. Comparison between groups creates a natural and pervasive tension between in-groups and out-groups that can result in biases favorable to the in-group and detrimental to the out-group.
7. A given president has a particular combination of salient in-groups and corresponding significant out-groups.
8. The sum of a president's significant out-groups constitutes his subjectively-defined population of potential threats.
9. In order to be identified as a threat, an actor must be included in the subjectively-defined population of potential threats.

Social identity theory, although compelling, is limited in what it can explain because it does not specify the roles that specific behavior and material play in threat identification. If we took SIT at face value, then we might suspect that a president would consider the most negatively viewed out-group to be the most urgent identified threat. While a policymaker might be most biased against a group, it is not necessarily a threat. If a secretary of state were dramatically skewed against an out-group of Pacific Islanders, it is still unlikely that he or she would consider them the most pressing threat due to their distance, small population, and lack of ability to harm Americans. We cannot look

merely at out-groups and deduce what actors will be identified threats; instead, we must consider other circumstances, such as material factors.

In threat identification, material realities are crucial. Walt is correct when he argues that offensive intentions will signal hostile intent and, subsequently, will be interpreted by statesmen as a threat.¹⁵² When the Chinese acquired Sunburn cruise missiles in 2000, it constituted a material reality that definitively altered Taiwanese and American assessments of Chinese threat. What interests the foreign policy analyst is *how* and *why* Bush elevated the Iraqi threat over the Chinese threat in 2002.

Ted Hopf, a constructivist, writes that material structure matters in social relations before ideational and constructed factors are introduced.¹⁵³ He is unequivocally correct. He cites the example of a theater on fire; it is a material structure that forces all agents in the theater to act in the same way. At the same time, he notes that there are socially constructed forces at play that influence how people, under the oppressive structure, interact. Hopf writes:

Even in a theater with just one door, while all run for that exit, who goes first? Are they the strongest or the disabled, the women or the children, the aged or the infirm, or is it just a mad dash? Determining the outcome will require knowing more about the situation than about the distribution of material power or the structure of authority. One will need to know about the culture, norms, institutions, procedures, rules, and social practices that constitute the actors and the structure alike.¹⁵⁴

Social and material realities interact to influence agent behavior, even in the most seemingly deterministic situations. Foreign policy analysis, which Waltz notes as

¹⁵² Walt 1987

¹⁵³ Hopf 1998

¹⁵⁴ Hopf 1998: 178

defined by choice and not by structure, should be relevant to a material-ideational approach, *a fortiori*.¹⁵⁵

Because an ideational theory of foreign policy only deals with ideas and regards material as exogenous, it is impossible to regard its explanations as deterministic. Instead, it is appropriate to claim that the explanations and predictions that we can deduce from this theory lead to a probabilistic view of threat identification, one that Roxanne Doty would call an answer to a *how possible* question.¹⁵⁶ She argues that foreign policy analysis incorrectly focuses on *why* questions that leads to deterministic answers that are only partially correct. Little concurs, arguing that when explanations focus on sufficient conditions, the only suggestions that result are based on probabilistic conclusions that offer less insight than theoretically anticipated.¹⁵⁷

The result is that this theory produces testable propositions that bridge the material-ideational gap, utilize social psychological theories, and can produce practical answers to practical questions. Social identity theory does not, however, provide a deterministic explanation to this dissertation's core research question, while the other theories used do.

We conclude with a summary of SIT's application to this study. A president's social identity is composed of multiple categorizations (in-groups.)

1. A president's most salient in-groups correspond with the most salient out-groups.
2. The president only identifies threats that are in his set of salient out-groups.

Further, they can be reduced to one hypothesis:

A president's salient in-groups define which out-groups he will be biased against, which constrain his threat identification.

¹⁵⁵ Waltz 2000

¹⁵⁶ Doty 1993:298

¹⁵⁷ Little 1991

The social identity theory is one of three theories that provide a plausible alternative to the RBI hypothesis. They are not an exhaustive list of explanations. Since threat is central to the theoretical study of international politics, many theories can be applied to explain why presidents identify threats differently. These three hypotheses are effective plausible alternates because they represent a diverse set of concepts and span different levels-of-analysis. Walt's threat identification model represents the core view of structural realists, the sectional politics hypothesis represents the domestic politics view, and the SIT hypothesis uses an alternate view of identity's role in foreign policymaking and represents the social psychological approach. Together, they provide a modest alternative to this study's preferred hypothesis. The next chapter outlines the research strategy that will guide the second half of this project.

3.4 Primary Issues

This chapter proposes three alternate hypotheses to test as part of the attempt to answer the question, "Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?" It raises the following primary issues:

1. Plausible alternate hypotheses will provide a basis for comparison as this study investigate the relationship between a president's notion of American identity and threat identification.
2. Walt's model of threat identification maintains that differences in threat identification are due to changes in foreign states' power, proximity, offensive capabilities, and offensive intentions.
3. An extension of Trubowitz's sectional politics theory argues that geographically-based sub-national interests will influence presidential foreign policymaking and threat identification if they originate in a battleground state.
4. Social identity theory maintains that differences in presidents' subjectively defined in-groups and out-groups will allow for the possibility of different threat identifications.

4 Investigating Threat Identification

This study seeks to empirically test the claim made in chapter two that a president's subjectively-defined notion of American identity influences threat identification. This chapter provides a research design for testing this claim and the three alternate hypotheses raised in chapter three. Chapter one proposes a comparative case study and this chapter provides the rationale for using Mill's method of difference and George's "structured, focused comparison" in order to make a causal inference.

4.1 Mill's Method of Difference and George's "structured, focused comparison"

I propose to test the four hypotheses against one cluster of three cases. The method of hypothesis testing is a combination of qualitative methods: Mill's method of difference and George's "structured, focused" comparison.

Mill's method of difference creates a causal inference from comparing cases that have identical relevant variables except for the hypothesized cause and effect.¹⁵⁸ In cases where the hypothesized cause is present, the predicted outcome should also be present. When the theorized cause is absent, *ceteris paribus*, the predicted outcome should also be absent. While holding all plausible alternate causes constant is nearly impossible outside of a controlled experiment, a researcher should only select cases where variation among variables is held to a minimum and cannot reasonably create the possibility for the verification of plausible alternate arguments.

Proper case selection is essential when using Mill's method. In choosing cases, I seek to find a temporally consecutive set where the predictive variables of hypotheses two, three, and four vary as little as possible.¹⁵⁹ To this end, chapter six establishes that

¹⁵⁸ Mill 1843

¹⁵⁹ Alternately, they may vary in ways that are not predicted by their theories yet produce the same result.

threat identifications vary between Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley and chapters seven and eight of this manuscript analyze the predicting variables of the four hypotheses studied. If the variables of the RBI hypothesis change between presidents while the independent variables of the alternate hypotheses do not, then it is likely that the RBI hypothesis has the greatest comparative explanatory capacity.¹⁶⁰ Clearly, it is difficult to claim that four consecutive presidencies (three presidents) are the same in every way except for presidents themselves, so this case selection relies on comparing presidencies that have plausible alternate causes as similar as possible. Additionally, the empirical research will focus on *disconfirming evidence* of all hypotheses, capitalizing on the falsifiability of their causal claims.

The case study (small-*n*) approach differs in substantial ways from the statistical (large-*n*) method. Lijphart notes that the comparative qualitative method is identical to statistical methods in all ways except the obvious fact that a comparative study does not offer the number of cases necessary for inference.¹⁶¹ King, Keohane, and Verba make a similar point in their call to apply the logic of quantitative inference to qualitative comparative studies.¹⁶² They both articulate what is commonly known as the “small-*n*” problem. Alexander George offers a way to overcome the “small-*n*” problem with structured, focused comparison. George writes:

From the statistical (and survey) research model, this method borrows the device of asking a set of standardized, general questions of each case. These standardized questions... must be carefully developed to reflect adequately the research objectives and theoretical focus of the inquiry. These questions must be of a general nature, not couched in overly specific terms relevant to only one or another case but applicable to all cases within the class of events in question. (Asking the same questions of each case does not prevent the investigator from

¹⁶⁰ H₁₋₃ are the plausible alternate hypotheses that are outlined in chapter three.

¹⁶¹ Lijphart 1971

¹⁶² King, Keohane, and Verba 1994.

asking specific questions of each case as well to bring out idiosyncratic features that are of possible interest in and of themselves, if not also for theory development.)¹⁶³

George proposes that, as part of the research design, social scientists employing the comparative method should define a set of general research questions, *a priori*. This approach augments the qualitative research process in two ways. First, it offers a mode to reduce observer bias in data collection. If a quantitative study discriminates in data collection, another researcher will discover this indiscretion when replicating her results. For qualitative research, replication is more difficult, time consuming, and less likely to occur. As a result, there is more opportunity for the researcher to distort the historical record (due to observer bias) when collecting data and writing a case for comparison. As George notes, the researcher may choose to emphasize data that support her hypothesis while deemphasizing data that disputes it. By developing a set of questions that focuses and limits data collection, the researcher has a template by which the risk to misrepresent the data decreases significantly.

The second strength of the structured, focused comparative method is that it encourages researchers to pay attention only to the most important data. Becoming distracted by data that piques intellectual curiosities but does not assist in hypothesis testing is a pitfall that all researchers, especially doctoral candidates, must avoid. For these two reasons, this study will employ George's method of structured, focused comparison.

4.2 Investigating Walt's Model

H₁: If a foreign state's relative power, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and offensive intentions change between presidents, then threat identification will also change between presidents.

¹⁶³ George 1979:62

Among this study's four hypotheses, the Walt (henceforth referred to as *BOT*) hypothesis is the clearest and easiest to operationally define. It requires the definition of four independent variables and one dependent variable. The first three are best operationalized as quantitative variables, while the fourth (offensive intentions) requires a qualitative measurement.

Relative Power. A state's capacity to influence the politics and behavior of foreign states is a central concept in international relations theory. Seminal studies on the causes of war focus on a set of quantitative indicators¹⁶⁴ known as the National Military Capabilities (NMC) used by the Correlates of War (COW) Project (Singer 1987).¹⁶⁵ The six indicators of power are:

1. Military expenditure
2. Military personnel
3. Energy consumption
4. Iron and steel production
5. Urban population
6. Total population

Of course, there are other plausible indicators of state power, e.g. gross domestic product. Still, the six indicators from the NMC data set are a reliable proxy for a broader definition. Counterfactually, we can reason that a state will not produce high values of these variables if it does not have a large GDP. We can also dismiss concerns about soft power, since its component factors (i.e. reputation) are unlikely to be seen as threatening. We can conclude, therefore, that these six indicators are a reliable conceptual definition

¹⁶⁴ John Gerring (2007) argues that quantitative data are not only appropriate, but invaluable to qualitative case studies.

¹⁶⁵ Singer 1987

of relative power. The COW Project condenses these variables into one index—the CINC score—which this study will use as a shortcut.¹⁶⁶

Geographic Proximity. Geographic proximity is more difficult to measure than relative power, but is still quantifiable. Most importantly, a foreign state’s proximity to a state’s homeland is the most critical measure. Of secondary importance is the distance between a state’s interests (colonies, bases, allies). In order to provide the simplest definition possible, we should assume that geographic proximity relates to the distance between a foreign state’s territory (homeland, bases, and colonies) and the state’s homeland.

There is, however, the possibility that geographic proximity changes if one considers the distance between a foreign state and locations that are deemed critical to the national interest. For example, the development of the Panama Canal might have changed American foreign policymakers’ understanding of proximity. While a foreign base in the South Pacific would have been seen as distant prior to the construction of the canal, after construction, it would be perilously close to canal shipping lanes. We can infer, therefore, that as interests change, so does the proximity of potential threats. Allowing for the possibility of proximity to change relative to interest complicates, but does not obfuscate, testing of Walt’s model of threat identification. An examination of geographic proximity will take into account proximity to interests as well as to the American homeland.

¹⁶⁶ The CINC index is not a perfect measure of power and omits many necessary components of a state’s ability to influence the politics of other states. For example, coercive force can originate in a state’s economic leverage over another (i.e. Russia’s use of natural gas exports to influence Ukrainian foreign policy in 2005.) CINC is, however, the standard measure used in studies of the causes of war and is a reliable “first cut” measure of power.

Offensive Capabilities. Quester writes, “offenses produce war and/or empire; defenses support independence and peace.”¹⁶⁷ Walt agrees to the degree that offensive-minded militaries are threats to the independence and peace of other states. He also recognizes that policymakers understand and differentiate between offensive and defensive militaries. Therefore, according to Walt, we should measure a foreign state’s offensive military capabilities. The difficult part of this task, therefore, is in operational definition and measurement. In the era between the American Civil War and the First World War, most military technologies appeared to be defensive by today’s standards: rifles, infantry, and littoral navies were not necessarily offensive weapons. By 1885, however, certain technologies increased the offensive capacity of the great powers, like coal-powered ships, railroads, and advance bases in Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

It is important to note that the most significant modern offensive weapons (e.g. strategic bombers, ballistic missiles¹⁶⁸, armor, and aircraft carriers) did not appear until the twentieth-century. These military capabilities can be measured according to quantity of material and tonnage.

Offensive Intentions. An offensive intention is a deliberate behavior by a foreign state that incurs a cost and has the potential to jeopardize state survival or state interests; it is a costly signal of a hostile disposition. A simple operational definition of an offensive intention is hostile behavior as conflict initiation. If a foreign state initiated a conflict with another state, then it is more hostile than one that does not. This study will

¹⁶⁷ Quester 1977: 208

¹⁶⁸ Levy (1984) summarizes the debate of nuclear weapons, their deterrent value, and its impact on the offense/defense distinction.

use the Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) 3.0 dataset to identify these events from 1885-1901.¹⁶⁹

Threat Identification. Threat identification is the dependent variable of all the hypotheses to be tested. It focuses on the president's subjective view and not the behavior of the state or the consequences of threat identification. At its core, threat identification is the answer to the question, "What does the president find threatening?" It does not have to be a threat to the state, although it does have to be foreign in order to fit the scope of this study.¹⁷⁰

Using George's method, we can identify questions for a structured, focused comparison of cases. Since the first three variables are quantitatively measured, their questions are easily phrased and answered:

¹⁶⁹ Ghosn, F., G. Palmer, and S. Bremer. (2004). The MID3 Data Set, 1993–2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 21:133-54.

¹⁷⁰ This is an important, yet unfortunate distinction. One can recall Reagan's fear of socialist revolution both from outside and within the American state and society. In order to provide a limit to the empirical research and maintain this study's focus on foreign policy, however, collection of threat identification data should only include foreign actors.

Table 4.1: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for BOT Hypothesis

Variable	Questions
Relative Power	1. According to CINC, what is the power of the United States relative to all relevant actors?
Geographic Proximity	1. What is the distance between a foreign state and a foreign state's military assets and the United States? 2. What is the distance between a foreign state / assets and interests deemed critical to the United States? 3. Which foreign state is closest?
Offensive Capabilities	1. What are the offensive capabilities of all relevant actors? 2. Which foreign state has the greatest offensive capabilities?
Offensive Intentions	1. According to MID, which states initiated hostile behavior in recent history? 2. Was the President aware of these signaled intentions?
Threat Identification	1. Did the President explicitly mention any state or actor as a threat? 2. Did the President prioritize defense (military or otherwise) against any particular states or actors?

Chapter nine will consider the results of these data as presented in chapter seven and discuss how they change over time, correspond with threat identification, and the implications for the BOT hypothesis.

4.3 Investigating the Sub-National Interests Hypothesis

H₂: If a president relies on a particular location to maintain his winning coalition, then he might identify threats to that location's corresponding sub-national interests.

This state-level hypothesis relies on three variables and, more importantly, their interaction. As such, this study will seek to operationally define the variables and offer additional questions for the structured, focused comparison. The data necessary for this task will come from mostly qualitative sources and will be discussed in section 4.7.

This state-level hypothesis relies on three variables and, more importantly, their interaction. As such, this study will seek to operationally define the variables and offer

additional questions for the structured, focused comparison. The data necessary for this task will come from mostly qualitative sources and will be discussed in section 4.7.

Sub-National Interests. Trubowitz posits that regions of the United States, mostly for economic reasons, have coherent interests. Leaders from these regions can be members of Congress, local party bosses, officials of state governments, and captains of localized industries. In the late 19th and early 20th century, sectional rivalries endured in American domestic politics. There were three basic factions—the Northeast, the South, and the West. When we consider sub-national interests, therefore, we have four possible types of actors along at least three constituencies. Of course, the number of constituencies and sub-national interests is much higher. Still, an analysis of these twelve actors and their interests during a given presidency will yield a full picture of the range of sectional interests.

Identification of the dominant sub-national interest, however, will rely on the president's winning coalition. The dominant interest is the one that the president pays the most attention to when maintaining his winning coalition.

Winning Coalition. A winning coalition consists of a minimum of the support (usually votes, but can be other types of resources) necessary for a leader to act. Riker writes that leaders build coalitions by attracting followers; followers only join coalitions if they can derive some benefit from the coalition or, more likely, the leader. Presidents build winning coalitions in order to win elections and maintain a political advantage for themselves, their party, or their agenda. As explained in chapter three, the maintenance of a winning coalition often requires the president to make concessions to sub-national interests. If one sub-national interest dominates a winning coalition (i.e. the Southeast in

Bush's (43rd) winning coalition), we might observe presidents accommodating it when making policy. This extends to foreign policy; a dominant sub-national interest in a winning coalition should have its threats considered by the president. As such, a sub-national interest must be a member of the winning coalition in order to influence the threat identification process.

Threats to Sub-national Interests. The dominant sectional threat is the agent identified by the sectional leadership to be the greatest threat to its well-being. For example, if the South's primary interest is exporting pork to Europe, then the greatest threat would be whatever it determines is most likely to jeopardize the South's ability to sell pork across the Atlantic. This study will treat the threat identification process for sectional leaders to be endogenous to them.¹⁷¹

Threat Identification. This test uses the same operational definition as in section 4.2

The following questions will serve to gather data for the structured, focused comparison:

¹⁷¹ In other words, this study is not concerned with how or why sectional leaders or sections define threats to their interests.

Table 4.2: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for Sub-national Interests Hypothesis

Variable	Questions
Sub-national Interests	1. What are the expressed sub-national interests of the West, South, and North?
Winning Coalition	1. What sections comprise the president's winning coalition? 2. Does the President consider sectional leaders' interests and threats when discussing foreign policy?
Threats to Sub-national Interests	1. What identified threat is mentioned most by leaders of the winning coalition's dominant section? 2. Does the President acknowledge that a threat is a particular danger to a particular section?
Threat Identification	1. Did the President explicitly mention any state or actor as a threat? 2. Did the President prioritize defense (military or otherwise) against any particular states or actors?

Chapter nine will consider the results of these data as presented in chapter seven and discuss how they change over time, correspond with threat identification, and the implications for the sub-national interest hypothesis

4.4 Investigating the SIT Hypothesis

H₃: A president's salient in-groups and out-groups influence his threat identification.

The SIT hypothesis presents a social psychological view of threat identification. It posits that presidents rely on categories of identity to separate the social world into simple *us* and *them* factions. Its application to foreign policymaking, threat identification, and this study, is predicated on the assumption that any actor included in "us" cannot be a threat to *us*, therefore, it is necessary for all identified threats to originate in a subjectively-defined out-group. Differences in out-groups between presidents might account for differences in threat-views between them.

Table 4.3: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for SIT Hypothesis

Variable	Questions
Salient In-Groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which in-groups does the president mention most frequently? 2. According to the president, what defines these in-groups?
Salient Out-Groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which out-groups does the president mention most frequently? 2. According to the president, what defines these out-groups?
Threat Identification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did the President explicitly mention any state or actor as a threat? 2. Did the President prioritize defense (military or otherwise) against any particular states or actors?

Salient In-Groups. An individual can ascribe to multiple salient in-groups; this research must identify and record the salience of these groups. An in-group is, at its most elemental level, a category of identity. A category of identity is an answer to the question, “who are we?” Salience is the *frequency* and *intensity* of the category in the individual’s thought and behavior. We can operationally define a salient in-group as a frequently utilized category of identity. We can observe salient in-groups by noting the times, contexts, and intensity of categories of identity in the historical record.

Salient Out-Groups. Like salient in-groups, salient out-groups are operationally defined as categories of identity. Out-groups, however, are identities of groups of which the individual is *not* a member. They are an individual’s answer to the question, “who are we not?” The most salient out-groups should correspond to the most salient in-groups; an example is Christian and non-Christian.

Threat Identification. This test uses the same operational definition as in section 4.2.

Chapter eight will consider the results of these data as presented in chapter seven and discuss how they change over time, correspond with threat identification, and the implications for the SIT hypothesis

4.5 Investigating the RBI Hypothesis

H₄: A president's American constitutive rule determines threat identification.

The RBI hypothesis offers a clear definition of identity that is, like the SIT hypothesis, subjectively defined. It focuses only on two variables and the relationship between them: the constitutive rule and threat identification.

Table 4.4: Structured, Focused Comparison Questions for RBI Hypothesis

Variable	Questions
Constitutive Rule	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to the president, what behaviors are distinctly American? 2. How frequently does the president mention particular constitutive rules?
Threat Identification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did the President explicitly mention any state or actor as a threat? 2. Did the President prioritize defense (military or otherwise) against any particular states or actors?

Constitutive Rule. Constitutive rules do not necessarily have to be articulated in order to be relevant; the same is true, to a lesser degree, for salient in-groups.¹⁷² This research focuses exclusively on constitutive rules that are communicated in written and spoken word. If an individual mentions a constitutional rule during a discussion of identity, it is a clear indicator that he has a definition of what it takes to be a member of a social group.

Operationally defined, a constitutive rule is an articulation of the behavior required to be a member of a social group. It should loosely follow the format, "Americans are people who X." For the purposes of this study, the RBI hypothesis focuses on American identity exclusively. Constitutive rules, therefore, exist when a president mentions the behavior that defines American identity. A weak example is:

¹⁷² Speech act theory (Searle 1969) and Wittgenstein contend that actions constitute speech as much as speech constitutes actions. Theoretically, an action can be an expression of a constitutive rule. See Duffy (forthcoming) and Fierke (2002) for a more elaborate discussion and application of this logic in foreign policy analysis.

America is a great place to live. A strong example is: Americans are a nation of risk-takers. Considering the high salience of the American category influenced by the unique environment of the American presidency, the president has the frequent opportunity to use constitutive rules in his speeches and writings on America and Americans. The salience of a constitutive rule is also important and should be measured. In particular, *how often* and *in what context* a constitutive rule is invoked will help us understand if there is a relationship between the constitutive rule and threat identification.

Threat Identification. This test uses the same operational definition as in section 4.2. We should expect, however, that the threats identified will be viewed as *constitutive rule violators*. For example, if we observe that Zachary Taylor consistently mentions that to be American is to speak English, then we should observe the identified threat to be a non-Anglophonic actor. A more relevant example would be the following:

Table 4.5: An Example of Constitutive Rule Violation

CONSTITUTIVE RULE	“Americans love liberty.”
CONSTITUTIVE RULE VIOLATORS	Illiberal societies Agents that promote authoritarianism

Chapter nine will consider the results of these data as presented in chapter eight and discuss how they change over time, correspond with threat identification, and the implications for the RBI hypothesis.

4.6 Data

The data necessary for this inquiry are qualitative, with the exception of what is required to test the BOT hypothesis. The quantitative data for the four indicators necessary to test the BOT hypothesis will come from the Correlates of War (COW) Project’s National Military Capabilities Database v3.1 and the Militarized Interstate Dispute Dataset v3.0.

This is easily obtainable with permission from the primary investigators at Penn State and the University of Illinois.

The qualitative data for the three latter hypotheses is qualitative and some variables (threat identification) and cases overlap. Data will come from a wide variety of archival and historical sources. Observing the subjects' notions of social identity, in-groups, out-groups, constitutive rules, threat identification, and their salience will require the use of personal writings, memoirs, diaries, correspondence, transcripts, speeches, and memoranda in addition to biographies. The analysis of salient groups requires the aforementioned sources plus a synthetic inspection of the mentioning of significant out-groups in the public and private records. Sifting through the wealth of information will require a strict use of George's methods.

Sites for data collection include local research libraries, New York-area archives (Gilder-Lerman, NYPL, NYHS) and government institutions (Library of Congress, National Archives, Smithsonian Institutions.)¹⁷³ Many documents, especially those held by the National Archives, are digitized and can be accessed without substantial travel.¹⁷⁴

This dissertation is a theory-building exercise and case studies are the most appropriate method available. The extensive use of qualitative data is necessary to verify the micro-foundations of the causal inferences therein. While the use of qualitative methods make the comparison of hypotheses are difficult than statistical methods, the benefits of

¹⁷³ Cleveland's growing archives are to be housed in a site located in Buffalo, NY (not administered by NARA) by 2009.

¹⁷⁴ Many public archival records for Benjamin Harrison are available at the Firestone Library at Princeton University. Supplemental records not found in the Presidential Papers of Grover Cleveland are housed at the Grover Cleveland Archive at Princeton University. McKinley's archives are available on microfilm, Library of Congress, and at the Manuscript Division of the National Archives. The papers of cabinet members are also indispensable in this investigation. This study will rely on the papers of James G. Blaine, Richard Olney, Benjamin Tracy, Walter Q. Gresham, John Day, John Hay, and Elihu Root.

“getting into the material” outweigh the potential ease of generalizability at this stage of theoretical development. Further, the benefit of an empirical investigation into a oft-ignored period in American diplomatic history and the application of multiple political science concepts and approaches can only enrich our discipline’s understanding of grand strategy formation at the time of America’s ascent to great power status.

4.7 Primary Issues

This chapter argues that the four hypotheses can be researched in a systematic manner that will provide useful inferences that can help answer the dissertation’s core research question. In particular, it raises four points that relate to the core concern of this study:

1. This study will use Mill’s method of difference to demonstrate how changes in the American way and not in the variables of the alternate hypotheses correspond with changes in threat identification.
2. This dissertation will employ George’s the method of “structured, focused comparison” in order to concentrate on the variables in question.
3. This research will focus on disconfirming as well as confirming evidence in order to make inferences on all four hypotheses.
4. Data will be culled from a variety of sources, including datasets, archives, and the published papers and speeches of the presidents and their closest advisors.

5 Presidents and Presidential Foreign Policymaking, 1885-1901

This section provides a basic background to the three cases studied and describes the presidency and foreign policy of each president. Understanding the president's personality, personal history, and ascent to the White House provides a deeper knowledge of his American way and his foreign policy decisions.

5.1 Grover Cleveland, 1885-1889 and 1893-1897

Stephen Grover Cleveland was a contradictory character: humble, hot-tempered, judgmental, and compassionate. In many ways, Cleveland was a product of his times; he embodied classic American values of fealty and industry but, at the same time, was highly skeptical America's ability to maintain those values during its boom. He opposed the moral decline he perceived in his public and private life with a visible and virtuous pursuit of modesty. Jesse Lynch Williams, an early biographer of Cleveland, writes:

He was the most immoderately modest of men, as nearly devoid of vanity as it is safe for a human to be. He took an honest pride in the work he had done for his country, but he knew he was not brilliant, and though he had no unusual gifts—he was right; there was nothing extraordinary about his qualities, except to the degree to which he had developed them, and perhaps the proportion in which he possessed them.¹⁷⁵

Biographers and historians attribute this grip on humility due to the president's simplicity.¹⁷⁶ “Cleveland was in no sense an intellectual in the Jeffersonian and Wilsonian mode; it was his character rather than his mind that informed his presidencies.”¹⁷⁷ Tugwell puts Cleveland's modesty in a less-flattering light. “Cleveland was careless of his image. By preference, he had lived by himself before his marriage. He would hardly have entertained at all, except for a few associates, if it had not been

¹⁷⁵ Williams, J.L. (1910:10)

¹⁷⁶ Gilder 1910, Brodsky 2000

¹⁷⁷ Brodsky 2000:5

required of him.”¹⁷⁸ Cleveland eschewed socializing because he felt that it was unproductive.

Many of Cleveland’s less admirable qualities are associated with his simplicity. The commander-in-chief was well-known for his fits of temper, from his early days¹⁷⁹ through his sunset years at Princeton. He was similarly judgmental; he took every opportunity to admonish his political rivals and very rarely sought compromise or reconciliation. Cleveland felt that Tammany Hall was the downfall of the Democratic Party and that the Republicans were tearing the social fabric of the American character; when Western Democrats and the Populists departed his personal coalition during his second term, he abandoned any desire to work or even communicate with them. They had broken their promise, and that was all he needed to know. Cleveland’s simplicity made admiring him either easy or difficult, depending on how the president judged the beholder. Williams writes, “He liked simple things because he was simple. He was of the soil. He had but few forms, through these he observed strictly and expected others to observe.”¹⁸⁰ Being judgmental and simple made Cleveland a dynamic and confrontational force in American politics during the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

*The Cleveland presidencies presided over a time of relative peace and security in the international system.*¹⁸¹ When Grover Cleveland assumed the office in 1885, the United States was as secure as at any point in its history. It emerged from the Civil War

¹⁷⁸ Tugwell (1968:146)

¹⁷⁹ Nevins 1928:23

¹⁸⁰ Williams (1909:27)

¹⁸¹ The conventional notation is that there were two Cleveland presidencies. The twenty-second was his first term and the twenty-fourth was his second term. Historians agree to refer to two separate presidencies, which is not the practice with the consecutive two-term presidencies. For example, George W. Bush is the forty-third president, despite having two terms, because they were consecutive. Cleveland was the only president to be elected to two non-consecutive terms.

without substantial foreign interference and its population and economy were booming. All signs indicated that the next century of world politics would belong to Americans and Cleveland's mission was to maintain the status quo. Despite this unique moment, historians tend to treat the foreign policies of Grover Cleveland as inconsequential—either the commander-in-chief was an ardent isolationist or shackled by a strong Congress. Neither is accurate, although we should note that the opposite is also false; the Cleveland administrations were not a hotbed of international structural change or radical revisions of grand strategy.

There is a lot we can learn, however, from the foreign policy of the Cleveland administrations. As the last Jeffersonian president and the first aggressive modern president, Cleveland presided over a period of significant institutional change in the United States. When he entered office in 1885, the presidency was still weak relative to the Congress. One of the president's most notable achievements during his terms was the repeal of the Tenure of Office Act. When he left in 1897, Cleveland's nation was ready for a more aggressive president and government.

It is no surprise that the Cleveland administrations were best remembered for changes in domestic policy, the president's battles with Congress, the Panic of 1893, and the Pullman Strike. Few think of sealing rights, the Nicaragua canal, or even the annexation of Hawaii when they recall the politics of the Cleveland presidencies. These latter events, however, give us a fuller picture of the deceptively placid times of the nation's twenty-second and twenty-fourth president.

Foreign policy was not a campaign theme for Cleveland, so little exists about threat identification before he took office. Cleveland won his first presidential election

by building a coalition among the solid Democratic south and the Mugwump reformers of the Northeast and West. He was the first post-Civil War Democrat to take the nation's highest office, and such a move was viewed with suspicion by the Republican Northeast.¹⁸² In fact, some of his earliest controversies involved residual Civil War issues, such as veterans' benefits and the repatriation of battle flags to the Southern states. Critics from the North disliked Cleveland's lack of military service and were skeptical of a Democratic president in general. As a result, Cleveland quickly distanced himself from the symbolic issues that the South pursued once he was in office.

Cleveland won the election of 1884 based on his reputation for being a no-nonsense executive; voters were attracted to his reputation and gave him a mandate on domestic reforms. He earned this reputation through his accomplishments in New York. In Buffalo, he was known as the "Veto Mayor" for his knack for opposing patronage spending. Daniel Lamont, Wilson "Shan" Bissell, and Thomas Bayard, his closest advisors in his early days, urged him to take fight against corruption to Albany, where he served only one term as governor before he was drafted by the Democratic Party to run for president. In his election against James Blaine, he successfully framed the choice as one between Republican excess and flamboyance and Democratic conservatism and humility. The image of a Spartan leader worked wonders and the voters gave Cleveland a mandate to clean up Washington and to check the power and spending of the Congress.¹⁸³

¹⁸² In fact, Cleveland holds the distinction of being the only Democrat elected president James Buchanan (1857) and Woodrow Wilson (1913).

¹⁸³ Blaine had tried, unsuccessfully, to tarnish Cleveland's "honest" image by drawing attention to his bachelorhood indiscretions in Buffalo, including Grover's alleged abandonment of an out-of-wedlock son. The move backfired and actually garnered additional support among centrists and Mugwumps in the weeks prior to the election.

Because of the public call for reform at home, Cleveland focused little on foreign policy during his campaign and his early political life. Additionally, there is evidence that Cleveland had little interest in the world beyond American shores. Unlike many contemporaries of his time, he never traveled outside of the United States (Blaine, by comparison, traveled to Paris with the Carnegies often) and never learned a foreign language. In fact, Cleveland was never college educated; he taught himself law and politics through a series of apprenticeships in Western New York. Cleveland was the salt of the Earth and not a man of the world.

Cleveland focused on domestic issues, including civil service reform, bimetallism, and tariff reduction. The president saw his mission as tackling these three persistent Washington problems. The matter of civil service reform was a Quixotian mission; Cleveland was so obsessed with eliminating patronage appointments from the federal government that he insisted on personally vetting every appointment and read every letter and application for a federal job. This was, potentially, the only way that he felt that he could succeed in stripping the spoils system. By legend, the president was known to sit by candlelight in his bedroom until three or four o'clock every morning, reviewing requests for work. If you delivered the mail in Western Indiana, chances were that Cleveland knew who you were. This practice fatigued him, distracted him from other matters of the state, and hindered his capacity for working with Congress in his early years.¹⁸⁴ By his second term, the president loosened his grip on federal appointments.

¹⁸⁴ Parker (1910) and Nevins (1928) write about Cleveland's secret surgery to remove a cancerous growth on his jaw in July of 1893. The crude operation took place on a boat in the Long Island Sound. Both biographers note that Cleveland spoke of civil service applicants immediately before he succumbed to

Cleveland began the process of building a modern navy. Early in Cleveland's first administration, he publicly acknowledged that the American navy was obsolete and in disrepair. Despite his preference for domestic issues, he kept an eye on defense and foreign policy throughout his presidencies. At first, there was little attention paid to defense, but towards the latter half of his second term, foreign affairs dominated his agenda.

Cleveland, as a good Jeffersonian, warned against involvement in European politics and deplored imperialism. Historians and history-minded political scientists brand Cleveland as an isolationist who resisted an active foreign policy.¹⁸⁵ This is not true; Mead writes that Cleveland was the last in a long line of Jeffersonian presidents, who followed the principle of non-interference in individuals' and sovereign states' affairs.¹⁸⁶ This principle was not, by any stretch of the imagination, indicative of an isolationist grand strategy.¹⁸⁷

Cleveland's foreign policy was based on the preservation of American autonomy and respect for sovereignty and international law. Much like the Jeffersonian presidents before him, he deplored involvement in European affairs and great power politics. What separates Cleveland from Jefferson, however, is the matter of capability—the American government could now intervene in European politics when before it could not; the United States possessed the wealth, population, and industrial base necessary to construct a great power army and navy. Cleveland's foreign policy paid close attention to British and German behaviors in the Western hemisphere and the Pacific Ocean, but little

anesthesia and immediately after he woke, such was his determination to rid the federal government of political patronage.

¹⁸⁵ May 1973, LaFeber 1970, Zakaria 1999

¹⁸⁶ Mead 2001

¹⁸⁷ Another historian who argues against the isolationist myth is Gaddis (2004), although he focuses on the tradition of pre-emption in American foreign policy.

elsewhere. When approached by Portugal about basing rights in Africa and by the Haitians and Dominicans about basing rights on Hispaniola, Cleveland dismissed the possibility immediately. When the Germans sought to colonize Samoa, however, the chief diplomat sprung into action. We should remember, however, that not all Jeffersonian presidents conducted foreign policy in the same mode. Zachary Taylor, a Jeffersonian president, was eager to seize Mexican territory in the antebellum period.

Grover Cleveland's strong personality and leadership marked his presidencies. The president was often unpopular as a result of his decisions; he would not be mistaken as a unifying figure in American politics. He had a strong sense of morality, tended to focus on domestic issues, and was arguably the last Jeffersonian president. The next subsection details the life of Benjamin Harrison, the man who defeated Cleveland in 1888 and then lost to him in 1892, a person whose presidency was markedly different in terms of personal character and policy focus.

5.2 Benjamin Harrison, 1889-1893

Benjamin Harrison seemed to be destined to be president since birth. Benjamin was the grandson of William Henry Harrison and the great-grandson of a signer of the Declaration of Independence of the same name. The 23rd president seemed destined for the nation's highest office in retrospect; he descended from a long line of prominent American leaders. His great-grandfather, the elder Benjamin Harrison, was governor of Virginia and signer of the Declaration of Independence. The elder Benjamin Harrison's father was a proprietor in colonial Maryland and amassed a fortune that catapulted his son to a place of prominence in American society. In 1776, the elder Benjamin Harrison

fathered William Henry Harrison, who became a military legend at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811. William became the ninth President of the United States and was the first to die in office, from natural causes, only thirty-one days into his term. He was also the oldest elected president, a record that would stand until Ronald Reagan's victory in 1979. William's son and the younger Benjamin's father, John Scott Harrison, lived a long life on the family homestead in southern Ohio and served in the House of Representatives. Half of Harrison's story is merely his ancestry.

Benjamin's character is best described as cool. His most extensive biographer, Harry J. Sievers, writes that Harrison was anything but warm, although what he lacked in charm he compensated with leadership. "Harrison was never, in any sense, a magnetic personality, though more than one friend bore witness that *his heart beat true to all the finer and nobler instincts of our nature.*"¹⁸⁸ Henry Adams agreed with this noble view of the 23rd president. "Mr. Harrison was an excellent President, a man of ability and force; perhaps the best President the Republican Party had put forward since Lincoln's death."¹⁸⁹

There is no doubt that the president's upbringing and experiences prior to the White House forged his regal personality. Foremost among these experiences were his religious training and rural home life; his parents, Elizabeth and John Scott, had a profound influence on Benjamin's world view. Sievers writes:

Presbyterianism flourished in southwestern Ohio during the first half of the nineteenth century... Poor roads and the long distance frequently made it impossible for any of the Harrisons to attend services, yet each member of the family knew that Sundays were days apart... Ben did not need to attend church services in order to be impressed with the importance of prayer. From his earliest

¹⁸⁸ Sievers 1960:9

¹⁸⁹ Quoted in Sievers 1960:xxiii

recollections until his devoted mother's untimely death in 1850, he heard her daily prayer.¹⁹⁰

The combination of Harrison's heritage, his legal and military training, his devotion to Presbyterianism, and the rural folkways of his family created a classically stoic personality. Harrison was not the most charismatic leader, but was widely admired for his leadership skills. While never charming, Benjamin was a principled man who was motivated to lead.

Harrison benefited from the support of others as much as his own efforts.

Harrison's detractors were eager to call him "Little Ben," a jab at his seemingly-inherited place in the White House. It is true that Harrison was groomed to be a national candidate; unlike Cleveland and McKinley, Harrison owed much of his success to the planning and support of James Blaine and Andrew Carnegie. Despite the Republican Party's strong support for his development, Harrison detested any intimation that he did not earn his place in American history. While campaigning for Frémont, he said "I want it understood that I am the grandson of nobody. I believe that every man should stand on his own merits."¹⁹¹ A cursory look at his early biography reveals a man who was more self-made than he needed to be, indicating Harrison's life-long drive to establish himself as his own person.

A graduate of Miami University (Ohio) which was, at the time, a hotbed of Presbyterian thought, Harrison apprenticed in law at a premier firm in Cincinnati and, in 1854, moved to Indianapolis to pursue opportunities in the booming town.¹⁹² The future president established his own practice, took on partners as work increased, and grew his

¹⁹⁰ Sievers 1960:28-9

¹⁹¹ Sievers 1960: 11.

¹⁹² Sievers writes "Although a state institution, Miami University was virtually a Presbyterian stronghold during the first fifty years of its existence." (1960:58)

reputation as a diligent and honest broker in his adopted community. He gained notoriety early in his work by successfully defending a man accused of murder in a high-profile trial and parlayed his victory into a trajectory towards a prominent career in politics.

Success quickly followed Harrison. His first foray into politics was motivated by financial gain; he was elected as Indiana Supreme Court Reporter based on his popularity among the city's elite. The job was lucrative and increased his prominence in state politics. At the same time, Benjamin grew roots in the city's religious community, becoming an elder of the First Presbyterian Church by the time that he was twenty-eight.

Until the Civil War, Harrison's life was best defined by his hard work and agreeable character in the community. His reputation was valuable in the recruitment of the Indiana militia in 1862, a group that he joined and commanded towards the end of the war. Harrison proved to be adept at strategy as well as raising troop morale and was brevetted to the rank of Brigadier General in the Army of the Cumberland in 1864. When he returned to Indiana after Appomattox, the local public hailed Harrison as a war hero and as a beloved native son.

Harrison's military service had a lasting impact on his image; it was the catalyst he needed to gain national prominence. He was known "General Harrison" before he was "Little Ben." Benjamin capitalized on his popularity in Indiana and was influential in state politics, culminating in his election to the U.S. Senate from 1881 to 1887. In 1868, Harrison joined the Republican Party, a departure from his family's tradition of Whig politicians. Although his time in Washington was mostly uneventful, Harrison developed his political skills and a keen interest in protectionism and defense policy during his tenure. Unable to gain reelection because of the Democrat majority in Indianapolis, the

General returned to his private practice in Indianapolis but remained active in his state and national party organizations.

While Cleveland got his start as a Democrat by opposing the Frémont candidacy, Harrison began his career and found his love for Republicans by campaigning for Frémont. In addition to his appeal as a war hero, Harrison earned a reputation as a plain dealer among Republicans and independents. He was an ardent party man; speeches before his campaign for president were often riddled with criticisms of the Democratic Party as much as they included policy discussions. On one occasion in 1888, he said “(The Democratic Party’s) history reminds me of the boulder in the stream of progress, impeding and resisting its onward flow and moving only by the force that it resists.”¹⁹³ Harrison’s public persona appeared to be as anti-Democrat as it was a Republican and his strategy helped him gain favor with the national party.

Harrison’s appeal as a war hero, his strong ethic, his reputation as an honest broker, and his independent stance within the Republican Party made him an attractive candidate for the presidency in 1888. His nomination succeeded when James G. Blaine was unable to unite the party four years after he lost to Cleveland. Harrison campaigned on a set of foreign and domestic issues that can loosely be understood as nationalistic and he was true to his promises when he set his agenda in 1889. From his humble beginnings in North Bend, to his victories in the courtroom and the battlefield, to his rising star in the Republican Party and aided by his pedigree, Harrison worked his way to the White House with a victory over the incumbent Grover Cleveland in 1888. Despite losing the popular

¹⁹³ *Address at the Michigan Club*, Detroit, MI, February 22, 1888 in Hedges ([1892] 1971:11)

vote, Harrison entered office with a head of steam after a long career defined by successive personal achievements.¹⁹⁴

An ambitious set of domestic and foreign policy goals defined Harrison's presidency. The candidate based his campaign on nine issues: protectionism, immigration reform, suffrage for blacks, admission of new states, trust-busting, veterans' entitlements, civil service reform, temperance, and a more aggressive foreign policy. These issues can be reduced to three basic themes: populism, Republican advantage, and nationalism.

Much of Harrison's politics were colored by populist sentiment. Although he could not match the fiery rhetoric and populism of William Jennings Bryan eight years later, his dogged pursuit of protectionism and his desire to limit immigration were intended to be policies that would benefit working class Americans. The president honestly believed that free trade, the gold standard, and unfettered immigration would drive down labor wages to the point that it would destroy the quality of life for ordinary Americans. To avoid this fate, Harrison viewed the federal government as the only agent capable of avoiding catastrophe. His intent was the preservation of the welfare of working class Americans and his means was the marshalling of the resources of the federal government.

Harrison campaigned on a few issues that only interested Republicans. Despite his focus on Party issues, he still won the presidency, highlighting the importance of party and sectional interests. His pursuit of immigration reform would damage the

¹⁹⁴ Harrison lost the popular vote in 1888 but won a majority in the Electoral College, a feat not to be repeated until the contested election of 2000.

Democratic voter base.¹⁹⁵ The issue of state admission was clearly a partisan issue; the Cleveland administration and the Democratic Congress blocked the admission of new states that had Republican majorities in order to preserve the status quo.¹⁹⁶ The issue of equal rights and protection for blacks in southern states was not exactly altruistic; emancipated former slaves voted consistently for Republicans when they were able in the Democrat-dominated south. All three issues and Harrison's position were thinly-veiled attempts to extend Republican interests in the federal government.

Nationalism was a prevalent theme in Harrison's politics and policymaking, both domestic and foreign. On the domestic front, it was no surprise that General Harrison would campaign on the issue of veterans' benefits. His justification struck a patriotic chord when he equated patriotic duty with the placement of veterans in civil service positions.¹⁹⁷ This contrasts with Cleveland, who pursued civil service reform based on merit placement, regardless of military service. Protectionism was also a nationalist policy; the candidate Harrison saw tariffs and the protection of American manufacturing as a patriotic duty.¹⁹⁸ In terms of nationalism and Harrison's campaign, foreign policy was clearly the strongest connection.

Harrison won the 1888 election on the basis of these three themes. Cleveland lost, despite the fact that he carried the entire South plus Missouri, the Delmarva states, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Harrison won the prize of Cleveland's home state, New

¹⁹⁵ With the notable exception of Irish-Americans, who voted with Republican candidates due to the perceived tendency of Republicans to be anti-British.

¹⁹⁶ For example, both parties had a stake in determining whether the Dakotas would be admitted as one or two states. Harrison's insistence that a united Republican government would lead to the admission of two GOP-dominated Dakotas was brazen but successful; an analog in today's campaigns would be a Democratic candidate campaigning for the admission of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, a highly unlikely scenario.

¹⁹⁷ Harrison's Letter of Acceptance to the Republican National Committee, September 11, 1888, in Hedges (1892 [1971]) 111.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 113.

York, signaling dissatisfaction with Cleveland's refusal to work with the Democratic leaders of Tammany Hall.

The rivalry between Blaine and Harrison was not as influential on foreign policy as some allude. While historians take note of the hostility between Secretary of State James G. Blaine and Harrison, the two agreed on all of the major foreign policy goals of the administration. In a letter to Blaine asking him to join his cabinet, Harrison wrote that he agreed with Blaine's diplomatic priorities during his service in the Arthur administration: increased influence in Latin America, the acquisition of coaling stations, and protection from the European powers.¹⁹⁹ Despite their aligned interests, the two had a rocky relationship and the "plumed knight" found himself marginalized by the end of the first year of Harrison's term. Volwiler writes that the president never respected Blaine because of his lack of military experience:

The union, the flag, and the uniform of the United States Army meant more to Harrison than to statesmen like Blaine who had not seen their country's uniform bathed in human blood. This difference in point of view between Harrison and Blaine came to the surface during the *Baltimore* incident in 1891 when war with Chile threatened because of mob attacks upon American sailors.²⁰⁰

An equally likely cause of their personal difficulties is their rivalry for the presidency in 1892; rumors circulated as early as 1889 that Blaine was preparing to contest Harrison for the Republican nomination at the end of his term. Volwiler cites Harrison's careful preservation of their correspondence as evidence of this rivalry. "A surprise political or literary attack upon him by Blaine's adherents was anticipated, and this was an added reason for preserving all correspondence."²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ *Harrison to Blaine*, January 18, 1889

²⁰⁰ Volwiler 1940:4-5.

²⁰¹ Blaine did indeed seek the nomination in 1892 but his health, age, and the incumbency of Harrison proved to be too much for him to handle. Volwiler (1940: ix-x)

Despite their similar view of foreign policy directives, it is safe to claim that Blaine had little influence on Harrison's threat identification. When their interests aligned, it was purely coincidence, since Harrison recruited Blaine in order to shore support among Northeasterners in the Republican Party.

American foreign relations from 1889-1893 were tranquil yet marked by an expansion of American influence. Harrison pursued an expansionist foreign policy during his one term in office. Expansionism is an unfortunately indistinct and protean term, but is best understood through Harrison's tangible goals: the transformation of the Navy, the extension of American influence in Central and South America, and the acquisition of coaling stations in the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Harrison's preferences concerning trade were clear and cogent; he sought to keep tariffs as high as possible on imported goods while exporting as much as possible. While this is commonly called protectionism, it is more accurately labeled as a mercantilist strategy; tariffs were only one part of Harrison's trade policy. The president wanted Americans to export as much as possible and sought to increase access to foreign markets in Latin America. Increasing exports was his solution to the economic instability of recent history.²⁰²

Apart from the goals of increased influence in the American near-abroad and mercantilism, Harrison was largely agnostic about American policies. When confronted with Europe's dash for colonies in Africa and Asia, the president seemed uninterested in the acquisition of American territory beyond North America. Unlike his predecessor, international law was not on the fore of Harrison's consciousness. Similarly,

²⁰² LaFeber 1963:102-120

humanitarian and classically liberal matters such as human rights and the indivisibility of peace were irrelevant to the president.

With these goals firmly set, Harrison's tenure in office was marked by four major events: the Behring Sea negotiations, Congressional authorization of a modern Navy, the pan-American conference, and the *U.S.S. Baltimore* incident. Otherwise, the four years of Harrison's stewardship were tranquil and marked a steady rise in American power and influence.

In 1890, the U.S. Congress authorized the construction of three battleships. This was a watershed moment in the history of American defense policy and marked the final departure from the wooden, littoral, and patchwork fleet of warships there were incapable of cruising blue water. Harrison's leadership was invaluable in this matter, as was the bureaucratic maneuvering of his Secretary of the Navy, Benjamin Tracy. Although these first three battleships were technically built for coastal defense, the Navy Department requested ships that were technically "littoral" but could operate on the open seas. In subsequent authorizations through the 1890s, Congress would warm up to the notion of a blue water fleet and eventually build the triumphant "Great White Fleet" championed by Theodore Roosevelt. The foreign policy implications of the naval modernization were immense; it gave the United States a chip to play in the game with the Great Powers of Europe and expanded American influence in Japan and China.²⁰³

The other three events were clear tests of American resolve in dealing with foreign powers. The Behring Sea question, which plagued Harrison throughout his administration, was a diplomatic row over the alleged poaching by Canadian fur sealers

²⁰³ Seager, R. II (1953) writes that an unexpected motivation for navy modernization in Congress in 1889 was China's construction of two battleships. Congressmen believed that it was unreasonable to believe that the US should claim a subjugating role over China when Chinese naval power outstripped its own.

near American territorial waters in Alaska. In 1891, the Harrison administration, with the organization and encouragement of its Secretary of State James G. Blaine, hosted the first Pan-American Conference. The intent behind the event was to use American leadership to settle minor boundary disputes between Latin American states officially, but more generally was viewed by American foreign policymakers as an attempt to assert American hegemony over the Western Hemisphere.²⁰⁴ The Pan-American Conference and the attempt to assert American hegemony were also a thinly veiled attempt to wrest control of a future isthmian canal in Nicaragua or Panama from the British. In fact, prior to the Conference, Harrison dispatched Blaine's son, Walker, to Nicaragua and Costa Rica to officially mediate a dispute between the two and, unofficially, to build ties with local leaders to cut the British out of the Nicaraguan canal enterprise. The U.S.S. *Baltimore* incident was the most notorious event in Harrison's four years as Commander-in-Chief. Tensions between the United States and Chile rose to a fever pitch when a Chilean mob attacked the crew of the *Baltimore* while on shore leave in Valparaíso. Harrison demanded reparations and an indignant Chilean response nearly brought the United States to war in 1891.

Other than these four events, foreign policy during the Harrison administration was relatively placid. Secretary Blaine and his successor, John W. Foster, spent most of their efforts on reciprocal trade agreements with Latin American states. Critics of reciprocity pointed out that they maintained the status quo of high tariffs and were opposed by America's greatest trading partner, Great Britain. Most of Harrison's reciprocal treaties died on the vine in the Democrat-controlled Senate.

²⁰⁴ May 1963

Benjamin Harrison's foreign policy was more aggressive than Cleveland's; the contrast between the two cannot be mistaken. On Cleveland's passivity with the British over the Behring Sea question, Harrison writes, "It seems very *Bayardish* for this Government to agree to take no further measures of protection in the Behring Sea 'pending the discussion of the general question' and then allow England to say when that discussion shall be reopened and for how long a time it shall be drawled along."²⁰⁵ Curiously, Harrison and Blaine often scapegoated Cleveland for the foreign policy troubles it faced.

The notion of expansionism as a necessary protective measure (opposed to Cleveland's perceived neglect of protecting American interests) is the global justification for Harrison's foreign policy. American labor needed new markets, so US foreign policy had to protect them; Latin American states needed protection from the vultures of Europe and it was America's duty to provide it; and American shores needed to be protected from foreign navies. Ernest May compares the Harrison and Roosevelt administrations for relying on the "big stick."²⁰⁶ What critics perceived as aggression and nationalism, Harrison viewed as a defensive necessity.

The death of Harrison's wife and his own illness contributed to his lost re-election in 1892. The General from Indiana only served one term in the White House. While the dynamic nature of the American electorate at the end of the 19th century and the changes therein are partially to blame, historian Charles Calhoun points out the role that Harrison's ailing wife played in his failed re-election.²⁰⁷ Carrie Harrison's health

²⁰⁵ *Harrison to Blaine*, August 25, 1889, in Volwiler 1940:79. Harrison accused Bayard of being overly passive with the British during his tenure as Secretary of State during the first Cleveland presidency.

²⁰⁶ May 1963

²⁰⁷ Calhoun 2005

declined throughout 1893 and Harrison opted to stay with her in Washington during her final days instead of campaigning. The result was a loss to Cleveland, who retook the decisive state of New York in the Electoral College. What supporters originally hoped was a restoration of the Republican hold on the executive branch wound up merely being an interruption of Cleveland's two terms in office.

Many of Harrison's foreign policy initiatives and even more of the challenges abroad that he faced were left unresolved and continued to dominate Cleveland's agenda until 1897. Cleveland did not resist the push to modernize the Navy nor was he able to mount a successful Goldbug rebuttal to the gaining dominance of the Silverites. Free trade continued to be a split issue as tariffs continued to be raised and lowered through the next three decades. Harrison's legacy was the foundation of the new navy and a renewed effort to assert American hegemony in Latin America. These themes would continue during the 24th presidency of Grover Cleveland.

The presidency of Benjamin Harrison saw the increased influence of the United States abroad. The controversy of the annexation of Hawaii and the efforts to contest British influence in Latin America indicate the strong desire of the president to protect Americans from the influence of the world's dominant power. It also spoke volumes about the personality and leadership of Harrison: both the person and the foreign policy were based on a certain dignity and entitlement. For these reasons, historians treat Harrison as an effective leader and his administration as a transitional moment in the study of American foreign policy. This transition from latent influence to actualized influence would complete during the presidency of William McKinley.

5.3 William McKinley, 1897-1901

Opinions differ on whether William McKinley was a political hack or a brilliant statesman. While the wife of a prominent Ohio politician once called him a man defined by “the many masks he wore,” Nobel laureate Elihu Root wrote to a friend that the twenty-fifth president “... had a way of handling men so that they thought his ideas were their own.”²⁰⁸ While the former opinion holds a pejorative view of his political abilities, the latter lauds them. Whether he was a political hack or an exemplary leader, historians agree that McKinley was gifted with extraordinary leadership abilities. Henry Adams wrote that McKinley was the “marvelous manager of men” and biographer Louis Gould claimed that his diplomacy was “tenacious, coherent, and courageous”²⁰⁹ Both men were less concerned about McKinley’s sincerity and more with his political abilities and acumen.

Most biographers of McKinley pay close attention to the president’s foresight and attention to detail. To McKinley, politics was simultaneously a game of chess and a war of attrition. Since his days in Congress, he would plan his goals, strategy, and tactics years ahead and then pursue them doggedly. The president was famous for what became known as the “McKinley grip” around Ohio and, later, Washington. No other idiosyncrasy encapsulates his performance as a leader better. The future president learned from his mentor, Rutherford B. Hayes, that shaking hands for hours on end was a presidential duty that led to torturous pain. McKinley, ever the innovator, developed a technique for shaking hands that mitigated soreness and increased his productivity; he could shake hands faster and with less stress on his hand by squeezing a greeter’s fingers,

²⁰⁸ Quoted in Gould 1980:6, 9

²⁰⁹ Morgan (2003), p. 364 for Adams quote and Gould 1980 (viii) for quote on McKinley’s diplomacy.

placing his hand on the greeter's arm, and gently pushing him aside. The McKinley grip was charming and efficient; it spoke volumes about how the president approached his work in the White House.

McKinley lived a typical childhood in antebellum Ohio. Born in 1843, William lived a care-free life in Ohio's Western Reserve. Being raised in the heart of the American industrial surge of the 19th century undoubtedly influenced his views on the economy and the virtues of protectionism. His family had lived in Ohio since his great-grandfather fought in the American Revolution and they lived a typical Midwestern life. His father, William McKinley Sr., managed a furnace for a local iron works and was rarely home. His mother, Nancy Allison McKinley, was a stern woman who stressed the importance of peace among her nine children. Her emphasis on consensus and group harmony, in addition to the family's strong opinions on abolition and the community's reliance on industry, were probably the greatest influences on McKinley's politics fifty years later.

McKinley was not always a straight-laced statesman. While his father cared little for intellectual self-gratification, William was an avid reader of Byron's romantic poetry. He would carry a volume of Byron's poems throughout the Civil War.²¹⁰ When McKinley enlisted as a volunteer in the Ohio 23rd Volunteer Regiment in 1861, at the age of eighteen, he was far from a serious soldier. He was once reprimanded for teasing an officer—intentionally within earshot—and was known by his comrades to seek convivial fun whenever possible.²¹¹ The future president's disposition changed, however, once he faced battle in 1862.

²¹⁰ Morgan (2003), p. 17.

²¹¹ Perry (2003:56)

McKinley's civil war experience was a springboard to his future success. The enlisted private was continually promoted during his career because the regiment commander, the future president Maj. Rutherford B. Hayes, admired William's attention to detail. McKinley was promoted to commissary sergeant, then to a lieutenant for recruiting, and then finally was the chief adjutant as a Brevet Major by 1865. McKinley gained notoriety among the regiment's officers and even back in Washington when he insisted on delivering hot coffee and food to an isolated group of infantry during the Battle of Antietam. McKinley's wagon was hit twice by artillery but he still kept the coffee hot; decades later, he would refuse the Medal of Honor for his service because he felt it did not meet the standards for the award.²¹² The fatherly advice and mentoring of Hayes placed William on a lifelong path of Republicanism and political success.

After the war, the future president returned to Canton, Ohio and pursued a career in law. By then, however, he had matured and planned his future. Whether it was exclusively his idea or that of Rutherford B. Hayes is argued by his biographers. It was not long, however, before McKinley was popular enough in northeastern Ohio to successfully run for Congress. When Hayes was elected governor of Ohio in 1875, McKinley left for Washington as a freshman representative. Hayes allegedly recommended that McKinley gain a specialty while in Congress as a means to further his career and suggested tariff policy; McKinley agreed and spent the next decade on the Hill as the symbol of protectionism.

McKinley transformed from being a carefree and risk-taking youth to being the careful and strategic master politician that would make his way to the White House. This metamorphosis had much to do with the tragedies he encountered in his personal life

²¹² Morgan 2003:19-20.

while in Congress. In 1871, William married Ida Saxton, the daughter of a banker in Canton. Biographers agree that one of the president's most admirable traits was his devotion to his wife, both early and late. When giving birth to their second daughter in 1875, Ida fell ill; there is no complete record of her illness, but possible explanations include seizure, stroke, phlebitis, and clinical depression. The truth is likely that all of these plagued Ida. After she became sick, Mrs. McKinley was a shut-in, living the life of an invalid that could only muster the strength to get out of bed for a few hours daily. By 1876, both of the McKinleys' daughters died from separate illnesses, compounding William's grief. Margaret Leech writes that this was a pivotal moment in McKinley's life and marked the end of his care-free days. Henceforth, "the chess game of politics distracted him from his personal sorrows."²¹³

From his early days practicing law to his time as governor, McKinley demonstrated a strong compassion for organized labor. As a lawyer, he defended a group of striking coal miners who were accused of violently protesting their work conditions. McKinley refused payment since his clients were unemployed.²¹⁴ Many Ohioans took notice of McKinley's zeal in defending the workers, including Cleveland's prominent industrialist and owner of the coal mine, Mark Hanna. Hanna, who would later become McKinley's staunchest supporter, commented that he was immensely impressed by McKinley's care and dedication to the destitute and disadvantaged.

McKinley's star ascended through the 1890s. Despite the gerrymandering efforts of the Democrats, he continued to win his reelection by protecting his reputation as a fair dealer. In addition, McKinley was gaining national prominence for his pursuit of

²¹³ Leech, M. (1986 [1922]). 22-3.

²¹⁴ In 1893, when McKinley was close to bankruptcy, the same miners would offer to pay their legal fees; the governor refused payment again.

protectionism. By 1890, McKinley was a major player in Congressional politics and only narrowly lost an election to his Republican rival, Thomas Reed of Maine, to become Speaker of the House.²¹⁵

In 1890, McKinley declined to run for re-election to Congress and returned to Canton in preparation for his run for governor in 1891. By this time, he was a star among Republicans in the Midwest; some were already linking his name to a run for the presidency. In fact, with the backing of prominent industrialists and the Ohio party, McKinley would come within half of a vote of tying Maine Senator and former presidential candidate James G. Blaine for second place on the first ballot for the GOP presidential nomination in 1892. Harrison, of course, would gain the nomination on the second ballot, but the point was well made—McKinley had arrived on the national stage. He gained this notoriety because of influential backers like Hayes and Hanna, his record as an effective protectionist legislator, and his reputation as a consensus-builder in Ohio politics. While McKinley appeared publicly to be an unwilling dark horse candidate, he personally orchestrated the entire campaign.

McKinley would serve for two terms as governor of Ohio. During his tenure, he fought for many progressive ideals, including limited suffrage for women and the fair treatment (but not equality) of African-Americans.²¹⁶ His four years as governor were placid with two notable exceptions that left a mark on his run for the nation's highest office. First, McKinley successfully quelled a rebellion within the Ohio GOP. Led by

²¹⁵ Ironically, Theodore Roosevelt backed Reed; it wouldn't be the last time that TR and McKinley disagreed, despite their ticket in 1900.

²¹⁶ McKinley helped secure the right for women to vote in local elections in Ohio in 1894. (Gould 1980: 123) During the same year, he told a black man that "I sympathize with you in the hope that the race problem will soon cease to cause you any political or social misunderstanding." (Gould 1980:28) In the era of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, a statement like this was as liberal as one could expect from a prominent elected official.

James Foraker, many Republicans split with McKinley over his close ties with business interests; the rebel faction represented the rural poor and those in the party that were more amenable to populist themes. Populist dissatisfaction with McKinley would resurface in the 1896 and 1900 presidential elections. He held the party together, learning two valuable lessons concerning the need for coalition building and the extent of his political vulnerabilities. The second mishap, however, almost cost him his campaign for the White House.

During the Panic of 1893, William Walker, a friend of McKinley, went bankrupt. A group of lenders holding over \$100,000 of Walker's debt called on McKinley, who co-signed his promissory notes. McKinley could not pay and immediately told his confidants that he would resign from the governor's office and resume his law practice until he repaid Walker's debts. McKinley's industrialist backers panicked and immediately organized a bail-out package. Ida McKinley signed her inheritance over to Hanna, who used it as collateral while he collected donations from a series of nationally prominent industrialists. Some of the wealthy men that donated, via Hanna, to McKinley's bail-out package were Philander Knox, Charles Taft, George Pullman, and Phillip Armour. Their actions prevented McKinley from abandoning public service, but gave his critics evidence that he was a puppet of wealthy elites.

One of those elites, Mark Hanna, helped manage McKinley's successful run for the presidency in 1896. An astronomical amount for the time, Hanna raised over 3.5 million dollars for McKinley's campaign. During the last of the front porch campaigns of the 19th century, McKinley spoke about protectionism, bi-metallism, and the need to revive the American economy after the recent depression. Most notable about his

campaign was how it signaled a realignment of the electoral map; McKinley won his election by capturing the Eastern vote (while eschewing the support of Pratt and the Republican Party machines in Eastern cities), the labor vote, and the urban vote.

McKinley's campaign theme was one of economic restoration. The Panic of 1893 was the country's worst economic crisis until the Great Depression and the Cleveland administration's unsympathetic tone struck a nerve with voters. McKinley's Democratic opponent, William Jennings Bryan, preached populism and free silver, while McKinley promised tariffs and protectionism. The latter was more popular with the public. While McKinley campaigned on other issues, economic revitalization through the use of tariffs was the dominant theme. In fact, McKinley tried his best to avoid discussing any other part of the Republican platform, most noticeably, Cuban independence. He knew that he could be elected by a pro-tariff coalition and stuck to it.

The election of 1900 was a repeat of the 1896 election. McKinley defeated Bryan by a wider margin than in 1896, capitalizing on his surge in popularity after the Spanish-American War. The most salient issue was still economic vitality, although the issue of the newly acquired territories in the Pacific and Caribbean were often discussed. Bryan attempted to portray himself as an anti-imperialist, but his strategy did not sell with enough of the electorate to overcome the high esteem that the public afforded McKinley.

The McKinley administration is best remembered for dramatic foreign policy moments and the modernization of the presidency. The domestic policy debates of the five years of McKinley's tenure received less attention. The two prominent domestic policy issues were the tariff issue and bi-metallism. Many progressive issues came to the foreground during McKinley's presidency, although he lacked the opportunity to sell

them to Congress; Roosevelt would pick up and be best remembered for the progressive mantle after the assassination of his predecessor.

Most importantly to the long view, McKinley modernized the presidency. He was the first to rely on the telephone and had the entire White House wired for electricity. Unlike Cleveland and Harrison, McKinley learned how to use the press to his advantage, crafting photo opportunities and strategically using news reporters to influence Congressional and public opinion. In a time when the president lacked speechwriters and spin doctors, McKinley figured out how to use the print media to his advantage. During the Spanish-American War, the president was the first to organize a war room, complete with telegraph lines to the battlefield. His communication center gave him the ability to manage the conflict (with a twenty minute lapse between Washington and Havana) like no president before could have conceived. McKinley used these same resources when dealing with Congress and the states; he harnessed these new technologies and used them to empower the presidency in new and innovative ways.

The Cuban crisis dominated McKinley's foreign policy record. During the 1896 election, McKinley claimed three foreign policy goals: the autonomy of Cuba, the annexation of Hawaii, and an international bi-metallist regime. Privately, however, he was less intent on Cuban autonomy and more interested in forging greater ties with Great Britain.²¹⁷ A year into his presidency, McKinley's agenda shifted as events beyond the water's edge demanded his attention. As the crisis in Cuba deepened, McKinley made it a top priority to stop the war—but not to emancipate Cuba from Spanish rule.

²¹⁷ The independence of Cuba was an element of the GOP platform in 1896, but McKinley purposely remained quiet on the issue. The same can be true of the gold standard, which he refused to publicly support until a week before the 1896 election. When the British discovered new gold reserves in southern Africa in 1897, the bi-metallic issue lost its urgency but the Cuban issue loomed large.

Before Spain was a priority, however, McKinley faced an early crisis in the Pacific. After the second Cleveland administration withdrew the Hawaii annexation treaty from the Senate in 1893, the islands were stuck in limbo. There was a consensus among policymakers that the archipelago was in the American sphere of influence, yet Democrats still considered Hawaii to be a sovereign state. The United States Navy had basing rights in Pearl Harbor and Americans dominated Hawaiian political, economic, and social life. Still, other great powers were actively engaging Japan as a sovereign state. When Japanese protests over immigration policy in Honolulu led to the landing of a Japanese cruiser in Honolulu in March 1897, McKinley and Congressional leaders feared that American influence in Hawaii was slipping.

McKinley stood for the annexation of Hawaii, as did most Republicans. The crisis in Hawaii only encouraged him to make annexation a priority. In a cabinet meeting on the issue, he told his staff that “Annexation is not a change; it is a matter of time.”²¹⁸ The president operated as if Hawaii was already a part of the United States when he took office. Even after his administration convinced the Japanese to back down in April, McKinley asked John W. Foster, the Republican specialist on Hawaii and Harrison’s former Secretary of State, to draft an annexation treaty. Despite the consensus on the importance of the islands in Washington, there were enough Senate Democrats willing to block the ratification of an annexation treaty, so the president and his Congressional allies approved a joint resolution instead. The president effectively annexed Hawaii without the Constitutional authority of the Senate. McKinley’s first test in foreign policy was the issue of Hawaii, encouraged suddenly by the display of Japanese power in the region.

²¹⁸ Gould 1982:12

As important as Hawaii was to the nation, the Spanish-American War and its aftermath were clearly the defining events of McKinley's presidency. Before his election in 1896, Cuban independence was already a top issue in the media and in public opinion. In 1895, the Spanish counter-insurgency began in earnest and a select group of Americans suffered, namely Cuban-Americans and those conducting business in Cuba. By McKinley's inauguration, the status of Cuba was the most pressing matter in foreign policy. The crisis ebbed in the second half of 1897, but roared back with the string of events that marked the first three months of 1898: Pickett's report to Congress, the de Lome letter, and the sinking of the *Maine*. McKinley sent an ultimatum to the Spanish government that it could only partially meet and war commenced after two Congressional declarations in April of the same year. The American Navy waged the war in the Caribbean and in Manila Bay and American troops wrested control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam from the Spanish by August. The Spanish sued for peace and they reached a final agreement with the United States in December. Jingoists hailed the "splendid little war" as the coming out party of the United States as a great power, yet also exposed many weaknesses in American war-fighting capacity.²¹⁹ The counter-insurgency operation in the Philippines that the Army would conduct over the next three years would be a deadly and costly consequence of the war as well. McKinley, while trying his best to avoid the conflict from the start, was hailed as an iconic wartime president and sailed to reelection in 1900.

²¹⁹ The misappropriation of funds, the difficulty of organizing troop transports in Tampa, and the fact that more American troops died of illness than battle casualties in Cuba were signs of bureaucratic ineptitude. McKinley responded to public criticism of the Department of War by replacing Secretary Russell Alger with Elihu Root and by cooperating with a Congressional inquiry. He escaped the investigation with his reputation intact.

While historians focus on the war and the consequential dealings with Cuba and the Philippines as the most prominent foreign policy issues of the McKinley administration, two other important developments defined his presidency: the marked improvement of relations with Great Britain and the development of a cohesive China policy.

McKinley focused on resolving many of the trans-national problems that jeopardized Anglo-American relations during his five years in office. These sticking points included the control of the isthmian canal, revising the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, the Behring Sea question, the rights of American fisheries in Canada, and defining the Yukon-Alaska border. Resolving these disputes and securing a mutually-agreeable solution was one of the president's top priorities. He surrounded himself with many Anglophile advisors, the most prominent being John Hay and Whitelaw Reid. Their goal was to improve relations with Britain after years of Harrison's anti-British behavior and Cleveland's bellicose handling of the Venezuela crisis. The climax of McKinley's efforts was the drafting and posthumous ratification of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, which provided for an American canal across the Central American isthmus.

McKinley also concentrated on the tumult and chaos enveloping China at the end of the century. The duality of increased economic opportunity in China and the destabilizing influence of the great powers was a major concern for the president. McKinley landed American troops in 1900 to join the Eight-Nation Alliance that suppressed the Boxer Rebellion. Fearing further instability, the president drafted the Open Door Policy, an effort to stop the expansion of the European and Japanese quasi-colonies in China and to buttress the sovereignty of the Chinese government. The

president was able to gain support from the British and Japanese, but found it to be more difficult to those benefiting the most from the spheres of influence arrangement, namely Germany and Russia. The Open Door Policy laid the foundation for Taft's Dollar Diplomacy, a prominent initiative between the Spanish-American and First World Wars.

The McKinley administration faced more challenges in world politics than his immediate predecessors; William McKinley was more active in guiding foreign relations than Harrison and Cleveland. These four developments in foreign policy during McKinley's five years represented a stark departure from the past and consumed the lion's share of the president's time and energy.

McKinley's presidency ended abruptly on February 1, 1901, when a Polish-American anarchist shot him during a speech in Buffalo. The president was initially expected to survive and the prognosis was optimistic enough that it encouraged Vice President Roosevelt to end his vigil and spend a short holiday in the Catskills. McKinley's condition deteriorated rapidly five days after he was shot and, on the sixth day, he died from infections caused by a bullet lodged in his stomach. Roosevelt provided a smooth transition, kept many of the key policymakers in his administration, and pursued many of the same policies as his predecessor. Roosevelt's charm and bravado, however, would lead historians to treat him as the first modern president and the model of progressivism. McKinley, however, laid the foundation for Roosevelt's successes.

5.4 Primary Issues

The presidencies of Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley indicate significant changes in foreign policy priorities over a short span of time. In sixteen years, these presidents

drafted and withdrew annexation treaties, proposed and scratched canal plans, loved and loathed the British, and respected and ignored international law. *The notion that American foreign policy was consistently tranquil until the surprise opportunity of the Spanish-American War is patently false.* The presidents of the Gilded Age were also distinct from each other; Cleveland was insensitive and candid, Harrison was regal and nationalistic, and McKinley was cunning and compassionate. The presidents and their times were even more complicated than a cursory overview, such as the one provided here, can demonstrate.

This chapter makes the following salient points that relate to the focus of this dissertation:

1. Grover Cleveland was a brutally honest man who focused on reforming the federal government and was committed to free trade. His conduct of foreign policy relied on the use of international law.
2. Benjamin Harrison was not a charismatic or compassionate man, but was a stable and central figure in the Republican leadership of the Gilded Age. His conduct of foreign policy focused on increasing American influence in the Western Hemisphere and the proliferation of reciprocal trade agreements.
3. William McKinley was an exceptionally skilled executive who modernized the presidency and stood at the helm of foreign policy during a turbulent period. McKinley's conduct of foreign policy concentrated on the imposition of tariffs, bi-metallism, the alleviation of Cuban suffering, and the pacification of the territories acquired by the Spanish-American War.
4. Foreign policy, beyond threat identification, varied noticeably between administrations, although the same external conditions and the potential for conflict (i.e. disputes with Britain) was relatively constant.

Chapter six describes and analyzes the dependent variable of this study—threat identification— in these three cases. Variation of threat identifications is crucial to this study; after all, it seeks to answer the question, “Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?”

6 Threat Identification, 1885-1901

This chapter describes and discusses the threat identifications of Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley. It presents two important conclusions. First, it determines that these policymakers identified threats differently. Second, it notes that these presidents routinely justified their threat identifications according to the types of behaviors exhibited by foreign states.

6.1 Cleveland's Threat Identification

Grover Cleveland never consistently identified an actor as a threat during his two presidencies. He identified threats, although they were seemingly ad hoc. An actor could be a grave threat in one year and a strategic partner in the next. His identifications did, however, fit a common theme: states that violated international law were threatening and those that abided by it were not. This sub-section describes Cleveland's threat identifications and how they varied over time.

Great Britain was sometimes a threat and sometimes a partner. Among the great powers, the Cleveland administration spent the most time interacting with the government of the United Kingdom. Between 1885 and 1897, the president was well aware of the possibility of conflict with the world's strongest military and most extensive empire. Issues in Anglo-American relations included trade disagreements, border negotiations, environmental problems, joint construction projects, and the sovereignty of the Latin and Caribbean states. This multiplicity of issues created a complex web of linked interests that further complicated Cleveland's relationship with the British.

Many of the issues that Cleveland and the British dealt with related to Canada. Early in his administration, he faced tense negotiations over the renewal of a treaty

governing areas of maritime cooperation in the north Atlantic. This was a crucial test of the two powers' ability to cooperate on matters that impacted trade, border sovereignty, and the freedom of citizens. The negotiations fell apart early and Cleveland spent most of his administration trying to find common ground with the Canadians and their British representatives. The lapsed treaty made cooperation with the Canadians difficult and sometimes impossible. Passions burned so brightly among Northeasterners that some in Congress called for war with Britain in 1887. Still, despite British recalcitrance, Cleveland argued for diplomacy.²²⁰

A similar situation arose regarding sealing rights in the Arctic Ocean. Canadian and British vessels were over-sealing with the distinct possibility of making seals extinct in the Arctic; American fishermen also claimed that the Canadians were crossing the poorly-defined Alaska-Yukon border to poach in US territory. Still, Cleveland considered the British to be a strategic partner and cited British willingness to arbitrate as a sign of friendship.²²¹

Anglo-American relations deteriorated, however, when a twenty-year-old disagreement over the Venezuela-Guyana border gained Cleveland's attention in 1895. Quickly, Cleveland's image of the British switched from a powerful but benign neighbor to a deceitful imperial power, bent on gaining territory in the Caribbean through chicanery and brute force. Almost at the drop of a hat, Britain became America's greatest enemy. Oddly enough, as quickly as that designation came, it also went. By the end of Cleveland's second term, the president was hailing British civilization as an

²²⁰ *Cleveland to George Steele, Esq., President, American Fishery Union, and Others*, Gloucester, Mass., Washington, DC, April 7, 1887, in Ellery (1909:101) and *Message Transmitting a Treaty between the United States and Great Britain Concerning the Interpretation of the Convention of October 20, 1818*, signed at Washington, February 15, 1888 in Gottsberger 1892:116

²²¹ Brodsky 2000:235

indelible part of American culture and a beacon of light for the rest of the world.²²² Cleveland viewed the British as a threat only in a particular situation.

Cleveland's identification of the German threat is equally ad hoc and based on situational factors. He gives no mention to Germany as a potential rival, enemy, or threat in the years prior to his presidencies. In fact, Cleveland's rivals were apt to highlight his bachelor beer hall days in Buffalo where he ate and drank (sometimes excessively) daily with German immigrants. A young Grover held much affection towards the Germans and his first foray into politics, as a Democratic ward leader, required him to work the beat in German neighborhoods. Cleveland was well known for loving the Germans and was an admirer of German culture.²²³

His affection makes the identification of the German threat in 1887 all the more curious. It was Bismarck's heavy-handed approach with the Samoan government that incensed Cleveland; when the Iron Chancellor used force to coerce the Samoans into signing a friendship treaty with Germany, Cleveland prepared for war against the Germans.²²⁴ When the rising power agreed to an international conference over the future of the archipelago, the president's fears began to subside. By the end of Cleveland's second term, he paid little attention to the German threat, even when his diplomatic staff warned against a Spanish-German war and invasion of Cuba.²²⁵

Despite the human atrocities and overall instability in Cuba, on America's southern border, Cleveland never identified the situation or the Spanish as threatening.

²²² *Cleveland to George W. Parker*, Birmingham, England, April 21, 1896 in Ellery 1909:381-2.

²²³ Nevins 1934:42-45.

²²⁴ Kennedy (1974:81-86) writes that Cleveland, encouraged by Bayard, sent a squadron of three vessels to Apia as a show of force to the Germans stationed there. The *U.S.S. Trenton, Nipsic, and Vandalia* were locked in a stalemate with three German ships from February to March 16, when "a hurricane of monumental proportions bore down upon the islands" and destroyed all of the vessels in the crowded harbor. Ryden (1933) offers a similar account.

²²⁵ *Bayard to Olney*, January 15, 1896, in James 1923:231

In Cleveland's second term, it seemed that no month would go by without some sort of incident involving the zealous Spanish navy and American freighters. Still, Cleveland never viewed the Spanish as a threat. In 1895, when the Cuba issue took center stage, Cleveland asserted that the situation was "gravely disturbed" and "deranged" in his annual address to Congress. He wrote, "Whatever may be the traditional sympathy of our countrymen as individuals with a people who seem to be struggling for larger autonomy and greater freedom... the plain duty of the Government is to observe in good faith the recognized obligation of international relationship."²²⁶ In an interview with Richard Gilder in 1909, the former president notes that he would not have gone to war with Spain had he been president in 1898. Gilder writes, "Cleveland then reconsidered and said that he definitely wouldn't have taken the Philippines, but might have gone to war had Americans been in danger (in 1898). But he maintained that this was not the case."²²⁷ The president's ardent claim that America was out of harm's way contrasts with his successor's argument for war in 1898.

Cleveland ignored the aggressive behavior of Latin American states and considered them to be "republican friends." While the Harrison administration had contentious relations with the Latin American states, Cleveland never wavered from his friendly position with them. A surging and aggressive Chilean republic was Cleveland's admired friend, not enemy. The Nicaraguans, Venezuelans, Columbians, Haitians, and Dominicans were fellow republicans, New World creations to be admired and supported, and never considered a possible liability or enemy.

²²⁶ Bergh 1909: 374-5

²²⁷ Gilder 1910:198

Cleveland's threat identification is seemingly contradictory. Not all of the powerful states were threats and, even when they were, it was seemingly situational. Historians attribute this “no worries” approach to diplomacy as a consequence of Cleveland’s alleged isolationism, despite the fact that he was active in hemispheric politics and great power relations. *When he identified a threat, it seemed to be focused on the behavior of that threat and not material factors.* For this reason, it is an curious case to study.

Cleveland shaped American foreign policy to focus on the preservation of international law. Historians treat Cleveland as ardently isolationist, anti-imperialist, ill-tempered, or just plain ignorant of foreign affairs.²²⁸ These characterizations ignore significant aspects of the commander-in-chief that shaped grand strategy at the end of the 19th century. George Parker, a close personal friend of Cleveland during his sunset years, writes, “It would be an insult to his memory to assert that Mr. Cleveland had anything in him of the Jingo; his whole career is an embodied refutation of a charge so idle as this; but he was essentially American, and he saw that, while we had been talking Monroe Doctrine for more than three quarters of a century, the time had come to act on it for at least one representation.”²²⁹ Cleveland’s defense of the Monroe Doctrine in 1895 is only one action in a larger scheme of his grand strategy; *he based American foreign policy on the preservation of international law.*

We can observe this overarching goal in his other threat identifications. When the German navy coerced the Samoan leadership into signing a treaty of friendship in 1887, Cleveland saw it as a precedent that challenged the sovereignty of small states and,

²²⁸ Some examples of this argument include Tugwell 1968:243 and Jeffers 2000:312

²²⁹ Parker 1909:196

therefore, the legitimacy of international law.²³⁰ Cleveland preferred to use the institutions created by international law instead of American power to pursue American interests. In multiple disputes with the British, some of which could have been easily resolved with assertive unilateral and extra-legal action, Cleveland sought international arbitration. Even in frustrating situations such as the sealing controversy or the disagreement over the Alaska-Yukon border, when both were accompanied by a strong mandate from Congress to use force, Cleveland preferred to refer to international legal precedents as long as the British intended to follow international law. When a legal interpretation of the Nicaragua crisis found Britain to have a legal right to invade the Mosquito Coast, Cleveland acquiesced. His rationale was to preserve a legal precedent, despite the fact that the aggressive British behavior asserted British hegemony on the American isthmus.

In fact, it seemed that the core American interest according to Cleveland was the preservation of international law, even when such a standard ran contrary to traditional “national security” goals. When following international law jeopardized American security, such as Cleveland’s passive reaction *to* the Cuban insurrection, Cleveland saw no threat. In his last annual message, Cleveland writes:

Deferring the choice of ways and methods until the time for action arrives, we should make them (Spain) depend upon the precise conditions then existing, and they should not be determined upon without giving careful heed to every consideration involving our honor and interests, or the international duty we owe Spain... we should continue in the line of conduct heretofore pursued, thus in all circumstances exhibiting our obedience to the requirements of public law and our regard for the duty enjoined upon us by the position we occupy in the family of nations.²³¹

²³⁰ McElroy 1923:182

²³¹ McElroy 1923: 248-9

Cleveland readily recognized that the situation on Cuba was devolving and increasingly violent, but the preservation of international law was a more pressing interest than national security. Cuba was a dangerous place, but not a threat. On the contrary, it was when international law was violated by a foreign power, even when the core conflict had little to do with American security (i.e. Samoa), that we see Cleveland identify a clear and present threat.

Cleveland focused on threats within America as much as foreign threats.

Cleveland saw America as a society torn between rule-followers and rule-breakers. Between his presidencies, Cleveland spoke often about the role of selfish rule-breakers and selfless rule-followers in the future of the country:

Our country is ours for the purpose of security, justice, happiness, and prosperity to all—not for the purpose of permitting the selfish and designing to be enriched at the expense of their confiding fellow countrymen. It is our duty, then, to defend and protect our country while it remains in the hands from that selfishness which, if permitted, will surely undermine it, as clearly as it is our duty to defend it against armed enemies.²³²

The selfish men of whom the president spoke were the Republicans and, specifically, the imperial and modernizing Harrison and Blaine. He saw their work as the emblem of an emerging sentiment in American society that disregarded the rule of law in favor of imperial conquest and the dissolution of domestic order.

Cleveland identified threats to international law and order, not to American national security. The bulk of international relations theory and foreign policy analysis would not expect to find such consistent behavior in an American president. Cleveland wrote to Congress in 1895 that “If the balance of power is justly a cause for jealous anxiety among the governments of the Old World and a subject for our absolute non-

²³² Quoted in Gottsberger 1892: 168-9

interference, none the less is the observance of the Monroe Doctrine of vital concern to our people and their government.”²³³ Cleveland’s claim that the Monroe Doctrine was international law demonstrates the centrality of law in his view of international politics and American interests. Cleveland wrote to Congress, ““The Monroe doctrine finds its recognition in those principles of international law which are based upon the theory that every nation shall have its rights protected and its just claims enforced.”²³⁴ If it is true that Cleveland’s threat identification is based on the preservation of international law, it raises two questions. First, what theory best explains this phenomenon? Second, is Cleveland an aberration or is his extra-national view of threat a trait that we find in other American presidents? The following two chapters address the first question and the concluding chapter will reconsider the second.

6.2 Harrison’s Threat Identification

Benjamin Harrison maintained that all states were potential threats; they would harm American interests if given the opportunity. The 23rd president maintained that all states were unlike the American state; they capitalized on weakness whenever possible. The great powers, however, were mentioned the most in discussions of threats to America. Harrison constantly referred to the four World Powers (Britain, Germany, France, and Italy) in his personal and public comments on international politics.²³⁵ The president,

²³³ Cleveland [1900] 1904

²³⁴ *Special Message on the Venezuela Boundary Dispute*, Washington DC, December 17, 1895 in Ellery 1909:378.

²³⁵ Harrison lists the world powers during a speech in 1894. See *The Great Mass Meeting, Speech at Carnegie Hall*, New York, October 31, 1894

astutely observing the competition for overseas possessions among these states, associated the scramble for empire with the opportunistic character of these actors.²³⁶

Harrison believed that power was the only currency that these states understood. He writes, “A world power seems, therefore, to be a power having the purpose to take over so much of the world as it can by any means possess, and having with this appetite for dominion military strength enough to compel other nations having the same appetite to allow or divide the spoils.”²³⁷ This simple view of the World Powers was what he feared the most.

The president believed that the rest of the world resembled a pack of wolves ready to devour America if given the chance. This was not due to any inherent rivalry but, instead, was due to the character he attributed to foreign states and nations. One example that was always accessible to Harrison was the conduct of British and French foreign policy during the American Civil War. In a meeting with republican supporters during his campaign in 1888, Harrison explained why the British should not be trusted during his administration:

England and France not only gave to the Confederacy belligerent rights, but threatened to extend recognition, and even armed intervention. There was scarcely a higher achievement in the long history of brilliant statesmanship which stands to the credit of our party than the matchless management of our diplomatic relations during the period of our war; dignified, yet reserved, masterful, yet patient. Those enemies of republican liberty were held at bay until we had accomplished perpetual peace at Appomattox. That grasping the distress of other nations which has so often characterized the English diplomacy naturally made the Government of England the ally of the Confederacy.²³⁸

²³⁶ It is curious that Harrison referred to the European powers as if they were one actor; he was consistent in using the term to describe Britain, France, Germany, and Italy as if they behaved identically and shared interests.

²³⁷ Harrison 1901: 235

²³⁸ *Address at the Marquette Club Banquet*, March 20, 1888. Hughes (1892 [1972]: 19)

The behavior that Britain and France exhibited (the French in Mexico, the British in the South) was proof positive to Harrison that if America showed weakness, the great powers would capitalize on it without hesitation. Even within Europe, Harrison claims that the weaker states only exist because of the balance-of-power present. This observation extends Harrison's view to include the danger that the World Powers posed to weak states, not just America. "What hinders that the small states of Europe are not taken over by one of the great powers? ... These small states stand, out of deference to the European equilibrium."²³⁹ Britain and France, the aggressors during the Civil War, were especially keen to the politics of power and focused on domination. Harrison remarked during the same address:

When 500,000 veterans found themselves without any pressing engagement, and Philip Sheridan sauntered down towards the borders of Mexico, French evacuation was expedited, and when General Grant advised the English government that our claims for the depredations committed by those rebel cruisers must be paid, but that we were not in a hurry about it—we could wait, but in the mean time the interest would accumulate—the Geneva arbitration was accepted and compensation made for these unfriendly invasions of our rights. It became fashionable again at the tables of the English nobility to speak of our common ancestry and our common tongue. Then again France began to remind us of Lafayette and DeGrasse. Five hundred thousand veteran troops and an unemployed navy did more for us than a common tongue and ancient friendships would do in the time of our distress.²⁴⁰

Harrison maintained that all states were potential wolves, regardless of their capabilities. While he believed that powerful states were the greatest threat, he also believed that weak states would also seize opportunities to steal American prosperity if given the chance. One such example that the president cited was the behavior of Canada. Although he recognized that Canada was nominally a British colony, the president argued that even without British intervention that Canadians would work against the Americans

²³⁹ Harrison 1901: 241

²⁴⁰ *Address at the Marquette Club Banquet*, March 20, 1888. Hughes (1892 [1972]: 19)

for their own gain. In 1891, he accused the Canadians of purposely failing to maintain the US-Canada border in order to allow Chinese and other illegal immigrants to enter American territory.²⁴¹ The Canadians, he alleged, used this as a ‘weapon of the weak’ to damage the American economy and to cripple American businesses competing with Canadian counterparts.

Harrison maintained that no state could be trusted and that all were potential threats. This belief required the president to be in a constant state of vigilance and colored his view of international law, the potential for cooperation, his stance on free trade, and his relations with the World Powers and Latin America. Harrison identified particular actors as threats consistently throughout his presidency.

Harrison identified Britain, the most aggressive state in the Western Hemisphere, as the paramount threat. If it were not for American protection, the president believed that the British would have colonized the Caribbean and South America. To this end, Harrison attributed the independence of the Latin American states to benign American hegemony. He wrote:

The Central and South American states have retained their autonomy only because the United States would neither herself infringe that autonomy nor allow other nations to do so. But for this, British Honduras might ere this have embraced the whole isthmus, British Guiana have included the Orinoco and Mexico have been subjected to the rule of a foreign king.²⁴²

Specifically, Harrison identified Britain as the greatest threat to the United States; he was convinced that the British were the only state with the capability to destroy the American economy and American influence in Latin America. Further, the president asserted to his

²⁴¹ *Harrison to Blaine*, September 29, 1891 in Volwiler 1940:200

²⁴² Harrison 1901:241

colleagues and political opponents that Britain would take the opportunity to re-colonize the Americas if given the opportunity.²⁴³

Harrison and Blaine developed a strategy to oppose British influence in the Western Hemisphere.²⁴⁴ James G. Blaine's Pan-American initiative was a thinly-veiled effort to supplant Britain as the most influential actor in South America and the *Baltimore* crisis of 1891 was a direct result of antagonisms raised by his efforts to rid Chile of British influence.²⁴⁵ The most significant result of each was the attempt to weaken the British position; the Conference asserted the role that arbitration would play in settling disputes between Latin states and the *Baltimore* affair humiliated British allies in the Chilean Congress.

Harrison even went as far as to claim that an Anglo-American alliance, a concept *en vogue* in the 1890s among elites, would threaten American interests.²⁴⁶ In his comments on the conclusion of the Venezuelan arbitration case, of which he prepared a brief on behalf of Venezuela, he wrote, "Are not the continuous good and close relations of the two great English-speaking nations—for which I pray—rather imperiled than promoted by this foolish talk of gratitude and of an alliance, which is often made to take on the appearance of a threat, or at least a prophecy, of an Anglo-Saxon paramountcy?"²⁴⁷

Overall, the president's opinion of Britain was that it was a typical great power with the greatest capacity for harm. In his private memoranda, Harrison would cite the

²⁴³ Harrison 1901:249

²⁴⁴ *Harrison to Blaine* January 17, 1889 in Volwiler 1940:44

²⁴⁵ Socolofsky and Spetter 1987:117.

²⁴⁶ See Carnegie's "A Look Ahead" (1999) in the *North American Review* for a classic example of the pro-British position. Although Carnegie and Blaine were close personal friends, the industrialist was at odds with Blaine and Harrison over the Anglo question.

²⁴⁷ Harrison 1901: 249

predatory nature of British foreign policy, Lord Salisbury's proclivity for war-making, British aggression against the Boers, and the long history of British dominance over American interests in the Western Hemisphere. He was convinced that the United States needed to modernize and expand its navy in order to check British power and was even more confident that a campaign to supplant British influence south of the border was an urgent matter. It was clear through Harrison's words and deeds that he identified Britain to be the paramount threat.

Harrison maintained that Britain was the most aggressive potential threat, yet he argued that there was no immediate threat to American well-being. In an address to Congress, he said:

Our situation is one of great favor. We are pretty widely separated from those who would hurt us, if there are any such. We are secure in our great isolation, and we are secure, too, in our great and patriotic people. We do not maintain armies; we do not need to extend the conscription list until it takes old age and youth. We maintain only the merest skeleton of an army, but we have already seen how speedily it may develop into gigantic proportions, and how, in a few months, it may take on the discipline that makes it the equal of any of the great armies of the world... God has greatly blessed us, and it happens that this season of our abundance is not only good for us, but for the world; for again, as many times before, the nations of Europe, must look to us to feed their people... Thus, I am sure, we all rejoice that it is, because these institutions of ours can have no danger except in a discontented citizenship.²⁴⁸

Harrison was convinced that the United States was secure by the virtue of its geographic isolation. He believed that protectionism would defend American business interests from foreign predators, that the Europeans would only scramble for empire in Asia and Africa as long as Americans remained strong, and that the United States retained the capacity to repel any aggressor, including Britain. For these reasons, the early push to modernize the

²⁴⁸ *Address* in Kingston, NY on August 18, 1891.

navy came from pivotal members of Congress (including Rep. William McAdoo, D-NJ) and his Secretary of the Navy, Gen. Benjamin Tracy.

Harrison's notion of invulnerability decayed throughout his term. By the fall of 1891, Harrison began actively seeking coaling bases for the United States Navy in the Caribbean. He took a harder line with British sympathizers in Latin America and became more aggressive in his negotiations over the Behring Sea question. Socolofsky and Spetter argue that October 1891 was a watershed moment, after which Harrison was no longer convinced that the United States existed in splendid isolation and was impregnable to foreign assaults.²⁴⁹ The reasons for this are unclear, but a closer look at the incremental elevation of Harrison's elevation of the British threat identification might reveal helpful themes.

As Britain became more aggressive, Harrison's threat identification increased.

The emergence of a more aggressive Great Britain might be to blame for Harrison's elevated threat identification during the second half of his term. Historians point to two conflicts with Great Britain and two Harrison administration initiatives as evidence for Harrison's increasing emphasis on the British threat.

The question of sealing in the Behring Sea was a nagging transnational issue that originated years before Harrison took office. The first and second Cleveland administrations considered the row over poaching a matter of international law and declined an aggressive stance with Britain; Harrison viewed the matter as a British attempt to steal American prosperity.

The matter in question centers on the legal status of a fur seal colony. The pelts of the fur seals on the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul (the Russians called them

²⁴⁹ Socolofsky and Spetter 1987: 126

the *Pribiloff* Islands) were the most coveted in the world. The colony of seals was exclusively in American territory in the Behring Sea, although the migratory practices of the females of the colony created an international incident. For eight months of the year, all of the seals lived on the islands, during which time the American firm operating there would club the males and sell the pelts on the international market. The clubbing of males was a practice that helped sustain the size of the herd and minimized waste. For four summer months, however, the females would wander into international waters in order to find food for their offspring. Canadian sealers made a habit of lurking in these international waters during this time, shooting the females from their boats (a wasteful practice that yielded only one of six killed seals) and making a tidy profit as a result. The American sealers and federal government claimed that this was illegal poaching; the Canadians and British cited international law to claim that they held the right to hunt the American seals. Harrison and Blaine sought an agreement with the Canadians (and the British that managed their foreign affairs) to stop the alleged poaching. The Canadians refused to stop their practices and the British stalled a meaningful discussion. Harrison viewed the British tactic as a direct challenge to American authority on the continent; he felt that allowing the British to put off a settlement was a direct threat to American prosperity. In fact, this view of British behavior fit Harrison's "greedy and opportunistic" profile of the British. Harrison asked Congress for a law to authorize the use of force against the Canadian sealers but backed down in the wake of a British threat to retaliate with military force in late 1890.²⁵⁰

The British response to Harrison's attempt to resolve the Behring Sea question appeared to influence his threat identification. As a result, he admitted to Blaine that he

²⁵⁰ Socolofsky and Spetter 1987:143-8

no longer trusted the British to honestly broker a settlement between the US and Canada.²⁵¹ In 1891, especially after the *Baltimore* incident, the deterrence of British influence was an urgent matter to the commander-in-chief.

The *Baltimore* incident is another example of Harrison's intensified identification of threat. In September 1891, a squadron of protected cruisers (including the abovementioned warship, ironically) seized the *Itata* off the Californian coast. The Chilean rebel craft was smuggling arms out of San Diego. After a failed escape attempt, the San Diego district court tried the crew of the *Itata* and found it guilty of violating American neutrality laws.

In the prior January, Chile broke into civil war. It was unclear if the United States was actually neutral in the months that followed. The war fought was between the pro-British supporters of the Chilean congress and the pro-United States supporters of President José Manuel Balmaceda. The congressional rebels earned a decisive victory and the ensuing rout forced the president to commit suicide by the end of the year. In August, the chief of the American mission in Valparaíso, Chile began to grant asylum to Balmaceda supporters. The culprit was Timothy Egan, who was a Harrison appointee, an Irish-American, and a staunch opponent of British authority worldwide. Egan was unwilling to temper his Anglophobia and failed to hide his support of Balmaceda. Between Egan's political activities, Balmaceda's preference for the United States, and the American seizure of the *Itata*, tensions between Chile and America were already tense before the *Baltimore* incident.

On October 17, 1891, the *USS Baltimore* landed in Valparaíso. The captain granted his crew shore leave and it immediately got caught in a fight at a local bar. The

²⁵¹ *Harrison to Blaine*, May 25, 1891. From Volwiler 1940:152

fight between the Chilean locals and the uniformed Baltimore crew quickly grew out of hand and became a riot; as a result, two American soldiers died and seven others were injured. Later, an American investigation would allege that the two seamen died of stab wounds in the back, likely from a bayonet. The incident outraged ordinary Americans and completely incensed Harrison.

Harrison immediately demanded reparations from Chile; the Chilean response was cool. Another exchange between the new Chilean ambassador in Washington and the president caused relations to deteriorate further. On December 11, an indignant reply to Harrison's latest demand was leaked to Congress. Harrison instructed Tracy to prepare California's torpedo defenses and to purchase ten-thousand dollars worth of coal from Peru for an anticipated attack on Valparaíso.

Harrison viewed the incident and the subsequent indignant behavior of Chile as a consequence of British influence and encouragement. The British were extremely active in South America after the conclusion of the War of the Pacific in 1883. The Chilean fleet was, qualitatively, comparable with the American Pacific fleet thanks to British sales. Chile was a regional hegemonic aspirant, in part, because of British support. Chile was flouting American authority and Harrison conflated Chilean arrogance with British support. Harrison argued that both had to be stopped immediately before the two would supplant the American presence in Latin America completely.

Harrison sent a message to Congress on December 7 that stopped sort of asking for a vote on war, but intimated that such a request would be coming shortly.²⁵² He wrote the message himself, without the assistance of Blaine, who opposed a further escalation of the crisis. Harrison described the riot in detail and aimed to inflame the passions of the

²⁵² *Special Message to Congress*, December 7, 1891 in Hedges 1892 [1971]:558.

legislature.²⁵³ It worked, but Blaine would allegedly leak news of a Chilean acquiescence as early as January 21.²⁵⁴

On January 25, Harrison sent another special message to Congress, this time notifying it that American honor had been restored and the crisis was averted. Chile had agreed to declare that it was completely at fault, offered to pay \$75,000 in reparations, and offered a full apology. Harrison was satisfied that American respect and influence had been restored through his brinkmanship.

In 1891, Harrison increased his interest in the transformation and expansion of the Navy. The president had always been a proponent of modernization, but only in the third year of his term did he make it a personal priority. The president viewed the Navy as a necessity in an uncertain world. He said in 1889 that “The construction of a sufficient number of modern war ships and of their necessary armament should progress as rapidly as is consistent with care and perfection in plans of workmanship... (Our naval officers) ought not, by premeditation or neglect, to be left to the risks and exigencies of an unequal combat.”²⁵⁵ Despite his favor of a modern navy, Harrison only threw his weight behind the idea after the political crises of 1890 and 1891. Congress, at the behest of Harrison and his closest advisor, Benjamin Tracy, approved the construction of three battleships in 1891. This was the second installment in the modernization and expansion of the navy.

Although the status of Americans traders on the islands was a salient issue for the past two decades and the politics of the Hawaiian court were uncertain for years, the president suppressed discussion of them until the fall of 1891, at the same time of the problems with Chile and the problems with Britain over sealing. The renewed attention

²⁵³ *Special Message to Congress*, January 25, 1892 in Hedges 1892 [1971]:565-6

²⁵⁴ LaFeber 1963.

²⁵⁵ *Inaugural address*, Washington DC, March 20, 1889. From Hedges (1892 [1972]: 201)

to Hawaii was not a coincidence; the British threat was clearly Harrison's motivation for his push to annex the archipelago. Harrison wrote to Blaine that "I have not yet considered the subject (of annexation) sufficiently to have an opinion as to how far we can go in extending our relations, but the necessity of maintaining and increasing our hold and influence in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) is very apparent and very pressing."²⁵⁶ Harrison maintained that if the United States did not annex Hawaii, the Canadians or their British patrons would do so. Despite the fact that he felt the British did not want Hawaii, they would have taken them on behalf of Canada.²⁵⁷ This was contrary to any evidence apparent to the president. Harrison and Blaine even discussed the possibility of Japan taking the islands in 1892.²⁵⁸ They were paranoid that any state would take them if America did not; they were most fearful of Britain because it was most capable of the action. Harrison's Hawaii policy was caused by, and evidence of, his elevated threat identification of the United Kingdom starting in 1891, although the Hawaii issue had been salient in prior years.

While Harrison focused intensely on the perceived British threat, he kept a watchful eye on the behavior of the other great powers. He often scrutinized the behavior of France, Italy, and Germany and spoke privately against their programs of colonization, but was clearly less threatened by their actions. For example, Harrison was inclined to protest the French encroachment on Liberia during its colonization of Western Africa in 1892. Although he approached the French through diplomatic channels and asked them to respect the sovereignty of the nation of former American slaves, Harrison conceded that the threat was too distant and Liberia was too weak to save. He wrote to Blaine, "It

²⁵⁶ *Harrison to Blaine*, October 14, 1891

²⁵⁷ *Harrison to Blaine*, September 18, 1891

²⁵⁸ Quoted in LaFeber 1963:143

seems to me that we should at least make protest against the absorption of Liberia; though our expectations, when the Liberian State was recognized, have been much disappointed by the lack of vigor and growth which are now so apparent.”²⁵⁹ The fact that Harrison saw French behavior as hostile but was unmotivated to defend against it was a sign that he viewed the French as less of a threat than Great Britain, although it was behaving in the same basic manner.

Harrison identified threats to American prosperity and influence. These threats were always characterized as threats to the independence and prosperity of America; they were not framed as threats to international law. While Britain was the chief focus, the president also was troubled by French actions in Africa and Brazilian cheating on trade matters.²⁶⁰ Harrison wanted to defend America against those actors that sought to pillage; he viewed the rest of the world as a pack of wolves and his role as the commander-in-chief was to protect his flock. Those wolves that were identified as most threatening were the most aggressive and the most powerful.

6.3 McKinley’s Threat Identification

President McKinley identified threats according to their inhumanity. The president was motivated to oppose Spanish policy in Cuba not because of economic or national security concerns but, instead, because of Spanish human rights abuses through their policy of *reconcentrado*. Evidence of McKinley’s focus on inhumanity as a threat exists in the timing of McKinley’s decisions, the information that influenced his call to arms, and his insistence to Congress that the United States intercede in Cuban affairs but not declare war on Spain. McKinley’s identification of a particular German threat in the aftermath of

²⁵⁹ Harrison to Blaine, April 30, 1892

²⁶⁰ The president wrote to Blaine that Brazilian dishonesty was not only harmful to American interests, but was encouraged by the British. See *Harrison to Blaine*, December 17, 1891 in Volwiler 1940

the Boxer Rebellion was similarly based on Germany's heavy-handed approach to its sphere of influence in China. Conspicuously absent from McKinley's identification of threat was the United Kingdom, who the president viewed as a partner in extending the humane Anglo-American Way to the rest of the world.

William McKinley never appeared too concerned about the threat that the great powers might pose; he certainly did not concentrate on them as a type of actor in international politics. Most importantly, *McKinley viewed Great Britain as a partner for the future and not as a threat.* His general opinion of the British was influenced by his view of a special Anglo-American cooperation based on respect for basic human values. As a result, McKinley intentionally appointed key members of his cabinet who were pro-British, including John Hay, Whitelaw Reid, and Stephen Choate. These three men were instrumental in extending McKinley's olive branch to the British after Cleveland's brash treatment of the Empire during the Venezuela crisis of 1895.

The president was fond of the British, but not necessarily an Anglophile; there were particular characteristics of the British government that he admired. McKinley often referred to how the British dealt with Canadian independence during the Cuban crisis in 1898. As early as May 1897, he referred to the Canadian example as a goal for Cuban autonomy in private conversations. The president found the dignity with which the British government treated the Canadians as the crucial aspect of their relationship.²⁶¹

McKinley clearly did not consider the British to be a threat. Since his inauguration, one of the goals of the McKinley administration and the Republican Congress was to renegotiate the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, which required Anglo-American cooperation on the construction of an isthmian canal. American businesses

²⁶¹ Morgan 2003:259

increasingly demanded a canal to link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, especially in light of increased trade with China and Japan. The British, however, were reluctant to commence the project, hence delaying American ambitions. Since the 1880s, the British opposed America's effort to build its own canal unilaterally. As the distribution of power favored the United States by the end of the century, however, the British were willing to concede to an American-constructed canal. British Foreign Minister Lord Salisbury, however, required a revision of Clayton-Bulwer to be linked to other Anglo-American issues in the Hemisphere, including the Alaska boundary issue, the Behring Sea question, and the status of American fisheries in Newfoundland. McKinley was a willing partner in the negotiations and demonstrated his readiness to give-and-take with the British.

The smoking gun that reveals McKinley's favorable view of the United Kingdom lies in the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty. McKinley sent the first version of the document to the Senate for ratification in 1900. According to the original draft, United States could not fortify its isthmian canal and guaranteed equal access to all nations. McKinley offered the "no fortification" to the British as a bargaining chip in the other North American discussions.²⁶² We can infer, then, that fortifying the canal was far less important to McKinley than, say, the resolution of the disputed border between the Canadian Yukon and the Alaskan frontier. The president did not view the fortification of the canal as necessary, despite the fact that the British navy was still enjoyed primacy on the seas and that Germany could also attack the canal once it secured a base in the Caribbean. Simply, McKinley could not have seen the British as a threat if he cared not to fortify the future canal.

²⁶² Morgan 2003:346 argues that McKinley did not want to link the Canadian and isthmian issues during the negotiations in 1900.

Congress, of course, had a different opinion. The Senate rejected Hay-Pauncefote on the grounds that the canal must be fortified to protect it against any great power that might seize it, during wartime or not. McKinley disagreed with the argument, but won the concession with the British.²⁶³ A revised version of Hay-Pauncefote included a reserved right for Americans to fortify the canal in case of war. Although McKinley didn't see it as necessary because he never considered the British to be a threat, he agreed to it in order to win the Senate's consent.

McKinley was torn on the issue of the Boer War, but we can safely assume that he never considered British counter-insurgency tactics to be an inhumane threat. This is a curious development, since many of the methods used by the British in 1900 resembled those used by the Spanish in 1897. Oddly enough, American public opinion was sympathetic to the Boer cause. Still, McKinley was not motivated to make an issue out of the Anglo-Boer war. One potential explanation, extended by Richard Mulanax, is that the McKinley administration saw the British actions in Africa in the same way that they saw American actions in the Philippines.²⁶⁴ Both were wars fought for the cause of civilization against the primitive tyranny of indigenous/Boer life.

We can conclude, therefore, that McKinley never saw the British as a threat. Whether it was in negotiations over the isthmian canal or the Boer War, he never considered that British power might jeopardize America's survival. While he clearly did not approve of the tactics used in the Boer War, he did not interpret British inhumanity as a danger. The president considered Britain to be a like-minded partner in world politics.

²⁶³ The ongoing Boer War might have had something to do with the British willingness to concede so many points on the canal to Hay and McKinley. See Mulanax (1994) and Ferguson (1939)

²⁶⁴ Mulanax, R.B. 1994

McKinley's threat assessment of the other great powers was minimal. Among the most powerful states of Europe, he showed the most concern with Germany, but only at certain times. It was the particular conduct that Germany signaled in dealing with China that indicated how McKinley would perceive the German potential threat. While he was merely curious about German inroads in the Caribbean²⁶⁵, the president was alarmed by the way the Germans conducted themselves in China in 1899.²⁶⁶ He found the Germany operating in the Caribbean to be benign and the Germany operating in East Asia to be a clear threat to Americans. The reason for the latter was the president's conviction that German aggression against the Chinese government would destabilize the region.²⁶⁷ Even more curious was McKinley's treatment of the explicit German threat in Manila Bay during the Spanish-American War. Overall, the president paid attention to the great powers when making his foreign policy, but rarely considered them to be a threat.

In the approach to war with Spain, McKinley worked diligently with his inexperienced diplomatic corps to avoid a broader conflict with the powers of Europe. Officially, the continental powers supported Spain's claim to Cuba. Behind the scenes, however, the president learned that they would stand aside and allow the United States to engage and defeat Spain in war. On April 6, 1898, only weeks before McKinley sent his war message to Congress, he received the European diplomatic corps in the Blue Room of the White House. There, he listened attentively for hours while the ambassadors from Germany, Italy, Russia, and France argued against war with Spain. Sir Julian Pauncefote of Britain, the most senior member of the delegation, spoke softest about the war and

²⁶⁵ Gould 1982:32-4

²⁶⁶ Dobson 1988:172

²⁶⁷ McKinley was worried about the dissolution of order in China and feared that hostile German behavior was expediting the process. Dobson writes that, after reading Lord Charles Beresford's *The Break-up of China*, McKinley argued that 1) exclusivity zones were tearing China apart and 2) free trade and open access were the only way to preserve China. See Dobson 1988:170-174.

previously and privately told McKinley that Great Britain would remain neutral.²⁶⁸ An article in the *New York World* recounted,

“We hope for humanity’s sake you will not go to war,” said the diplomats. “We hope if we do go to war you will understand that it is for humanity’s sake.” McKinley replied.²⁶⁹

As a result of the meeting, McKinley gained the impression that the great powers would remain neutral throughout the war, although he was less sure of Germany. John Dobson writes, “Beyond the real of inflated needs of the navy lay the persistent fear that another great power might seize all or part of Cuba. The most likely culprit in McKinley’s eyes was Germany, even though the Germans had done nothing specific to warrant this reputation.”²⁷⁰

At the beginning of the war, Germany communicated its neutrality to the White House and confirmed that, if the United States took the Philippines, it would not oppose it. In addition, Germany noted that it would prefer a transfer of the Philippines to German custody if America did not want to keep them.²⁷¹ The German position, including the offer of custody, was exactly the same as that of Britain, France, and Japan.²⁷² The Europeans were, in effect, pro-Spanish but non-interventionist.

The battle for the Philippines was short and simple.²⁷³ The Pacific navies of the great powers witnessed the battle from a distance; the two largest contingents of

²⁶⁸ Morgan 2003:283

²⁶⁹ *New York World*, April 7, 1897

²⁷⁰ Dobson 1988:133

²⁷¹ McKinley firmly believed that if the United States abandoned the Philippines, Japan or Germany would seize them. He did not find this threatening, however. He chose against transferring the islands to another great power because it was “bad business,” a nod to his belief that Americans had a particular role to fill in world politics. (Gould 1980:133, Gould 1982:169)

²⁷² Gould (1982: 84) Of all the great powers, the one most motivated to pacify the Philippines at any cost was Japan. Having recently won the island of Formosa (Taiwan) after the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, they were particularly concerned about creating a stable balance-of-power in East Asia. (Dobson 1988:105-6)

²⁷³ Upon entering Manila Bay, Admiral Dewey found that the mines that Spanish had lain lacked fuses and that the Spanish ships were moored in shallow water so, when sunk, the sailors could safely swim to shore. Dewey took the Spanish without losing one ship.

observers were from Britain and Germany. Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, ordered the Marine Corps to occupy Manila without the consent of McKinley.²⁷⁴ On May 25, the president wired to Commodore Dewey that “The powers of the military occupant are absolute and supreme” and characteristically added that “Our occupation should be as free from severity as possible.”²⁷⁵ By July 4, Dewey had eliminated the last elements of the Spanish resistance and established a blockade of Luzon, the main island of the archipelago.

After the word of the American victory reached Europe, the German government switched its mood. Less than two weeks later, the American minister in Berlin reported to McKinley that Germany wanted “a few coaling stations” out of the “final disposition in the Philippines.”²⁷⁶ Simultaneously, Commodore Dewey was having difficulty in maintaining friendly relations with the German observers in Manila Bay.

The German observers, commanded by Prince Heinrich of Prussia, had assembled a superior fleet in the Philippines by the end of July. While the British respected Dewey’s blockade and agreed to be searched when going to port, Heinrich flouted American authority and often ran the blockade. Dewey fired warning shots on the Germans and tensions continued to rise through the end of the month. When Heinrich dispatched an expedition to meet with the Filipinos, Dewey sent an alarming note to the Navy Department. McKinley, however, showed little concern.²⁷⁷ The story of the German persistence, however, got through to other key decision-makers in the administration. John Hay was infuriated by the German actions and recommended that

²⁷⁴ After the fact, McKinley conceded that Roosevelt made the right decision. It is possible, although unsubstantiated, that McKinley asked Roosevelt to make the decision in order to avoid the image of premeditation.

²⁷⁵ Morgan 2003:295

²⁷⁶ *Hay to Day*, July 14, 1898, *Foreign Relations*

²⁷⁷ Bailey 1939: 61

the Navy prepare for the defense of Cuba and the Philippines against German aggression.²⁷⁸ McKinley was unconvinced that Germany was preparing to steal American's newest possessions. Historian John Dobson writes:

Although President McKinley himself was not particularly concerned, others like John Hay exhibited an almost pathological hatred of Germany. The German naval maneuvers in Manila did not sit well with the Americans, nor did a German attempt to get England to help them guarantee the neutrality of the Philippines. The British government proved downright hostile to Germany's neutralization proposals, and the Kaiser's government found no other sponsors. The transparent eagerness of the Germans for some share in the control of the Philippines may well have made the islands all the more desirable in American eyes."²⁷⁹

Germany continued to play its best hand for the Philippines throughout the Paris negotiations, which included all of the great powers of Europe. In Paris, the German government proffered a deal to transfer the Philippines to German custody and insisted that the United States consider the issue until McKinley and the Congress agreed to keep the Philippines as an American territory in February of 1899.

It is odd, to say the least, that McKinley did not consider Germany to be a threat when it aggressively pursued the Philippines in 1898 and harassed Dewey's blockade in Manila Bay. The president was, however, weary of the German presence in China.

When Germany landed six-hundred troops and seized the Chinese port of Kiachow in November of 1897, it was the first serious attention he paid to the Middle Kingdom and Europe's involvement there. Initially, McKinley expressed his concern over Germany's aggression, but opted to exercise caution.²⁸⁰ The following March, the president indicated that the trend towards "spheres of influence" in China was a danger to its territorial integrity. Influenced by Lord Charles Beresford's book, *The Break-up of*

²⁷⁸ Dennis 1928:226-7; Dulles 1932:22; Griswold 1962:28

²⁷⁹ Dobson 1988:104-5

²⁸⁰ Dobson 1988:168

China, McKinley argued with Hay and Foster that the German precedent in Kiachow would lead to widespread anarchy and suffering for the Chinese. Despite his concerns, however, McKinley agreed with Britain that Hong Kong would be exempt from the Open Door Policy he would draft in the following year. Further, he consented to the British opening of its own sphere.²⁸¹ What is most remarkable about McKinley's view of Germany in China is that he held Germany responsible for the chaos that would ensue in 1900, although other great powers, including Great Britain, were equally complicit. Perhaps it was the German approach to its sphere, which relied heavily on the use of military force, bothered the president the most. After all, McKinley strongly opposed the German insistence on punishing the Boxers by death after the Rebellion was quelled in 1900 because he felt that the dignity of the Chinese was at stake.²⁸²

McKinley worried about the heavy-handed German approach to China but, at the same time, was not concerned about increased German activity (especially economic) in the Caribbean.²⁸³ This does not mean that he was ignorant of the growing German influence on the island of Hispaniola.²⁸⁴

Despite McKinley's fear of German inhumanity fomenting instability in China, he was willing to make Germany a partner in other matters; he was able to satisfactorily settle the Samoa question definitively without any major concessions to the Germans. A bi-lateral agreement (to which the United Kingdom informally conceded its interests in

²⁸¹ Dobson 1988:171

²⁸² Morgan 2003: 360

²⁸³ Dobson 1988:174

²⁸⁴ McKinley sent a naval officer, Arent Crowninshield, to Santo Domingo (later known as the Dominican Republic) to report on German "penetration" in November 1897. Crowninshield's report predicted that that Germany would obtain a Caribbean island in due time but not immediately and not by force. (Gould 1982:32-4)

Samoa but did not sign) effectively and peacefully split Samoa between the United States and Germany.

The bottom line is that McKinley felt that Germany was not a clear threat, but had the potential to be one. German conduct in China in 1898 and 1899 clearly unsettled the president, while the arrogance of the German Navy and its play for the Philippines concerned him less. We can conclude that when Germany was aggressive with the Chinese, McKinley considered it to be a threat. When the Germans were harassing Dewey's squadron in Manila Bay or inquiring about ports in the Caribbean, however, they were benign. When Germany disregarded human rights, it was a threat. When it respected human rights, even when it was an affront to American interests, it was not. The manner of German diplomacy, specifically the use of force against civilians, was the focal point of McKinley's threat identification.

McKinley considered Japan to be a threat only when it sent a protected cruiser to Honolulu to protest a change in Hawaiian policy. The Hawaiian government chose to limit Japanese immigrants to one-thousand per annum, a move that jeopardized the steady growth of Japanese influence on the islands.²⁸⁵ The Japanese government, instead of filing a grievance with the Hawaiian government, sent its warships to intimidate. McKinley interpreted the Japanese action as an urgent threat and pre-authorized the landing of American troops in Hawaii if the Japanese took further action.

The Honolulu incident took place after the president had decided to pursue an annexation treaty. McKinley made annexation a goal of his administration before he was elected and authorized John W. Foster to resume annexation talks with the Hawaiian

²⁸⁵ Bailey 1931:46

minister to the United States on April 3, 1897, not even a month after his inauguration.²⁸⁶

McKinley told George Frisbee Hoar that “If something be not done, there will be before long another Revolution and Japan will get control” a month before he took office.²⁸⁷

Only a month after he was sworn in, Japan started applying pressure on the Hawaiian government; it began its protest in April of the same year. McKinley told his private secretary, John Cortelyou, that “We need Hawaii just as much and a good deal more than we did California. It is manifest destiny” on June 1 and told his cabinet that “Annexation is not a change; it is a matter of time” in a cabinet meeting on June 16.²⁸⁸ McKinley saw Hawaii as a logical extension of the American homeland, but it seemed that his recognized threat of Japanese force gave him a new sense of urgency for annexation.²⁸⁹

Elsewhere in world politics and quickly after the Hawaii crisis ebbed, the president viewed Japan as a partner (along with the British) for the Open Door policy. McKinley admired the Japanese pursuit of regional stability. Dobson writes, “Certainly, the American desire to preserve commercial opportunity with a minimum of territorial and political involvement certainly squared with the wishes of both Great Britain and Japan. As early as 1895 (conclusion of Sino-Japanese War), there was a tacit consensus for open door and territorial validity of China.”²⁹⁰ It is important to note that Japan also

²⁸⁶ Gould 1982:12

²⁸⁷ Gould 1980:49, GFW Hollis Papers, *McKinley to H.W. Diedrich*, February 19, 1897

²⁸⁸ Courtelyou Papers, personal diary, Box 52; Gould 1982:12

²⁸⁹ Margaret Leech ([1922] 1986:149-50) argues that McKinley was reluctant to use force in Hawaii before it was a sovereign part of the United States. The American minister in Hawaii, Harold Sewall, urgently requested a protective force, but the president refused to land troops without a Japanese provocation until the annexation treaty was approved by Congress. Compounding the matter was the fact that the president insisted on a joint resolution instead of a treaty ratification in the Senate because he refused to concede points to the Democrats in order to secure the necessary super-majority.

²⁹⁰ Dobson 1988:164

had its sphere of influence in China, but McKinley viewed Japan as partner and not as a threat in East Asia.

The other great powers—Italy, France, and Russia—just were not in the foreground of McKinley’s consciousness. In the Spanish-American War, they pledged non-intervention and made good on their promises. In China, they held spheres of influence, but McKinley had no problem with their claims. McKinley did mention that Russian aggression on Port Arthur was an insult to Chinese integrity, but this was a minor point.²⁹¹ Simply, the powers of France, Russia, and Italy were not on McKinley’s map.

William McKinley considered Spain to be a threat. Not a threat in the sense that it might harm the American national security but, instead, Spain was a threat to the humanity of the Cuban people. There is a strong case for the argument that the president was motivated not by public opinion, the opportunity for empire, or was pushed by Congress into supporting war with Spain in 1898. On the contrary, McKinley’s sole interest in the conflict was to mitigate the suffering of the Cuban people. Morgan writes of McKinley’s decision to go to war that “If there was one single purpose to his intervention, it was to end the destruction of the island.”²⁹²

The historical record indicates that McKinley wanted to avoid war and was uninterested in the Cuban crisis during the election of 1896. The Republican National Committee adopted a free Cuba as part of its party platform, but the president intentionally sidestepped the issue during his porch-front campaign. It is doubtful that McKinley’s silence was only a strategic maneuver. Over dinner the night before he was

²⁹¹ *Foreign Relations* 1899, 561.

²⁹² Morgan 2003:293

to be inaugurated, the president-elect told Grover Cleveland in confidence that “if I can only go out of office, at the end of my term, with the knowledge that I have done what lay in my power to avert this terrible calamity (Cuba) with the success that has crowned your patience and persistence, I shall be the happiest man on earth.”²⁹³

During his inauguration, McKinley repeated his wishes publicly to avoid conflict with Spain over Cuba. He quoted George Washington’s farewell address (a popular event in presidential inaugurals in the 19th century,) called for “a dignified foreign policy” and proclaimed that “we want no wars of conquest.”²⁹⁴ McKinley had no intention of instigating a conflict over Cuba and, furthermore, did not see the situation as a threat as much as it was a nuisance. The president’s focus in 1897 was the restoration of many of the tariffs that were eliminated by the Democratic Congress of 1894.

Soon enough, however, the inhumanity in Cuba would be the most urgent threat in McKinley’s view. The president would change his mind as soon as reports from his trusted aids would filter into the White House. First was the visit of William Calhoun, who conducted a fact-finding mission on the president’s behalf in June. Until then, McKinley was concerned but skeptical of the reports from Fitzhugh Lee, a Cleveland holdover and ardent supporter of the Cuban *insurrectos* that claimed that the situation on the island was dire since the insurrection renewed in 1895. Calhoun, a fellow Midwestern Republican and a man whom McKinley deeply trusted, painted a bleak picture of the situation. Under the Spanish *reconcentrado* policy that forced rural Cubans to live in detention centers, Calhoun told McKinley that Cuba “was wrapped in the

²⁹³ Dawes 1950:115

²⁹⁴ Gould 1982:18

stillness of death and the silence of desolation.”²⁹⁵ The report had a clear impact on the president. Without any mention of the matters of autonomy, sovereignty, or ownership of Cuba, McKinley sent a message to the Spanish minister, Dupuy de Lôme, demanding that the Spanish counter-insurgency “shall at least be conducted according to the military codes of civilization.”²⁹⁶ After Calhoun’s first-hand report of the atrocities under *reconcentrado*, McKinley made the Cuban situation a top priority.

It was clear that McKinley was motivated by the threat that Spanish inhumanity posed just offshore the Florida peninsula. By October 1897, the president cemented his Cuba goal and strategy— stop the inhumane counter-insurgency through the incremental application of pressure. This difference tells much about McKinley’s priorities in 1897. He was threatened by the conduct of the war and feared for the fate of the Cubans; he was not necessarily threatened by Spanish power.

McKinley’s view of the Cuban crisis as a humanitarian disaster is one that is often overlooked by contemporary historians. Many Americans, even before 1898, identified with the Cubans in their struggle for independence because they drew parallels between the Cuban and American experiences.²⁹⁷ Much like Cuba, the American colonies were similarly motivated to seek independence and were forced to fight a war against an oppressive empire. Much of the public, including the president, empathized with the Cuban independence movement. Most importantly for the president, however, was his steadfast opposition to the Spanish techniques of suppression.

McKinley never held much hope for Spanish deference in the matter, even when the assassination of the Conservative Prime Minister in November forced a change in

²⁹⁵ quoted in Foner, 1972a:117

²⁹⁶ Sherman to de Lôme dispatch, 6/26/97, *Foreign Relations* 1897, 507-8

²⁹⁷ Hamilton 2006:109-111.

governments. The newly installed Liberal government was less militaristic than the outgoing Prime Minister, who promised to “fight to keep Cuba until the last drop of Spanish blood has dropped.”²⁹⁸ Although McKinley waited for the Liberal government to make good on its promises in December of 1897, he was still plagued with a fear and sense of urgency regarding the plight of the Cubans in *reconcentrado*.

The president was so worried about the Cuban suffering on the island that he convinced Congress to spend \$50000 on a mercy mission during the summer of 1897. Additionally, McKinley anonymously donated \$5000 to a Red Cross mission to the island on January 8, 1898 a fact kept private until Margaret Leech discovered it in 1922.²⁹⁹ The president wanted to do anything he could to alleviate the suffering on the island. It is safe to say that as early as four months before the USS Maine incident, during a lull in the war hysteria and yellow press, McKinley was worried about the violations of human rights on the island. So, *at a time when the public was less interested in the Cuba question, the president was beginning to consider his options available to mitigate that Spanish threat against the Cubans.* When McKinley quietly started to consider more drastic options for stopping the war in Cuba, public opinion had little to do with his motivations and threat identification. Despite the common misperception that the president was motivated solely by public opinion, he considered war at a time when the White House had received only three letters over six months from citizens regarding Cuba!³⁰⁰

The threat of Spanish oppression loomed large by the beginning of 1898. As more reports came to the White House about the plight of the Cubans, the president’s

²⁹⁸ May 1963:101

²⁹⁹ Leech 1986 [1922]: 150

³⁰⁰ Hilderbrand (1981:13)

sense of urgency intensified. He acquired the impression in January that immediate military action was the only way to stop the suffering of the Cuban people. On January 11, nearly three full months before the de Lome fiasco and the sinking of the USS *Maine*, the president quietly ordered the North Atlantic Squadron to practice maneuvers off the Florida coast.³⁰¹ This order was not a regularly scheduled part of the Navy's routine. When coupled with his instructions to Navy Secretary John Long to retain all sailors whose tours were ending, it was clear that McKinley saw war as a likely scenario.³⁰² It is important to note the timing; McKinley was preparing for war in January, nearly six weeks before the de Lôme letter, the sinking of the *Maine*, and the war frenzy whipped by the tabloids.

After riots in Havana were brutally repressed by the Spanish military on January 12, it seemed as if Cuba's fate was sealed. McKinley was certain that war was the only means available to prevent the further suffering of the Cubans. Over the next two months, the president engaged in coercive diplomacy, using the tacit threat of violence and the promise of equal cooperation in a settlement of the Cuba question, with Spain. Spain, however, was recalcitrant. On February 9, the *New York Herald* published an intercepted letter from de Lôme to a friend in Spain.³⁰³ It mocked the character of McKinley, who responded coolly to the imbroglio while the public was indignant.³⁰⁴ The Spanish Queen Regent's apology, on March 15, had no effect on the president's disposition, either. The destruction of the *USS Maine* provided the opportunity to propel the United States into war; jingoes and Jeffersonians in Congress agreed that something

³⁰¹ Gould 1980:71

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ *New York Herald*, February 9, 1898

³⁰⁴ Morgan (2003:271)

had to be done. While the public and Congress were solidly behind the war as a matter of national honor, the president had considered military force for the defense of the Cubans months prior.

Even in the approach to the conflict, McKinley paid more attention to the inhumanity on the ground than the antagonistic Spanish diplomacy. Morgan writes, “Basic to all his actions was a deep sense of humanitarianism in Cuba that made him look with horror on the savage events in Cuba. That they transpired elsewhere than in his own country did not lessen his shock or their importance to his policy.”³⁰⁵ It is no surprise then that he paid the most attention to Senator Proctor’s (R-VT) report to congress on March 17 that the atrocities being committed by the Spanish in Cuba were beyond belief. The Senator spoke of death in the streets, disease, the bloated stomachs of beggars, and implicated Spanish General Valeriano Weyler in all of it.³⁰⁶ Morgan writes that Proctor’s dispassionate and almost clinical appraisal of the horrors in Cuba had the biggest impact on the president’s decision to liberate Cuba from Spanish oppression by the end of the month.³⁰⁷

McKinley identified the Spanish as a threat to humanity. The constant reports of the suffering of the Spanish people due to the *reconcentrado* policy of Spain did more to motivate the commander-in-chief to war than the sinking of the *USS Maine* and the de Lome letter ever could have. The proof of this is in the timing of the decisions he made; McKinley prepared the Navy for war when hysteria was low and asked the Congress for

³⁰⁵ Morgan (2003:254)

³⁰⁶ *Congressional Record of the Senate*, March 17, 1898, 2916-19.

³⁰⁷ Morgan (2003: 255)

\$50 million for national defense two weeks before the destruction of the *Maine*.³⁰⁸ Hysteria and the *Maine* came after McKinley's maneuvers, but his focus on the atrocities in Cuba escalated along with his urgent need to defend the island against Spain.

McKinley identified inhumane behavior as threatening. Whether it was the German disregard for the Chinese in Kiachow or General Weyler's systematic killing of Cubans under *reconcentrado*, violations of human rights gained the president's attention and had the largest impact on his threat identification. There are a few inconsistencies, however, with this theme. McKinley was concerned with Japanese encroachment on Hawaiian sovereignty, although he confessed later that he had already considered Hawaii to be part of the United States. The president also cared little for the suffering of the Filipinos and the Boers, but this was because the perpetrators were the Anglo-Americans, who ultimately knew what was best for the native people. When McKinley did identify threat, he did so based on the foreign actor's disregard for the dignity and human security of individuals.

6.4 Analysis

Each president found a different type of behavior to be threatening. Grover Cleveland identified violations of international law as threats; this is evident in his concern with the German violation of Samoan sovereignty and British chicanery in the Orinoco. Meanwhile, Cleveland never viewed Spain as a threat because it followed international

³⁰⁸ On March 3, McKinley asked his allies in Congress (Cannon in the House and Allison in the Senate) to push through an appropriations bill for 50 million for national defense to be used at the president's sole discretion. He asked that it be done quickly and quietly, which they were able to do. The bill passed without debate on March 9 and a majority of the funds were used to purchase two cruisers from Britain before they could be bought by the Spanish. The president dedicated the rest of the appropriations to war preparations. (Morgan 2003: 274-5)

law perfectly. To Cleveland, therefore, violators of international law were threats to America.

Benjamin Harrison identified typically aggressive behavior as threatening. Any state that signaled the intentions to contest American wealth, prosperity, influence or power, was a threat. Because of this conception of threatening behavior, he was primarily concerned with British activities in the Western Hemisphere. The British were active in South and Central America, contesting American influence over the Latin American states. The United Kingdom, therefore, was his primary concern. Harrison viewed all states as potential threats, but actual threats were the ones that were most active in contesting American prosperity.

William McKinley identified inhumane behavior as threatening. He was compelled to defend the Cubans from the atrocious counter-insurgency of the Spanish because it was an affront to humanity. McKinley was unconcerned with the Spanish issue until he began to receive reports of the suffering and human rights violations on the island; at that point, he viewed Spain as a threat to civilization. To a lesser degree, he was threatened by Germany's disregard for the human rights of the Chinese and believed it would lead to the collapse of civilization in East Asia.

It appears that threat identifications among these three presidents varied due to the type of behavior that the assessed actor exhibited. Cleveland cared little about inhumane behavior, so he never considered Spain to be a threat. McKinley, on the other hand, never considered international law, only the natural law of human rights as his way of assessing the behavior of others. Spain behaved in the same manner between the

Cleveland and McKinley administrations, yet it was interpreted differently by the two men. Examples of these differences abound and will be explored further in chapter eight.

These three presidents identified threats differently. By placing their threat identifications in a truth table using a simple binary coding, we see the following result:³⁰⁹

*Table 6.1: Threat Identifications in a Truth Table*³¹⁰

	Cleveland	Harrison	McKinley
France	0	0	0
Germany	1	0	1
Italy	0	0	0
Japan	0	0	1
Spain	0	0	1
United Kingdom	1	1	0

There are clearly differences between the presidents' identifications of threat. While Cleveland and McKinley viewed Germany as a threat, Harrison did not. McKinley was concerned with Japanese designs on Hawaii, but Harrison and Cleveland were not. McKinley viewed Spain as an immediate threat and Harrison and Cleveland did not.

This truth table, however, can be misleading. For example, Spain was not even considered in the same breath as the great powers among American foreign policymakers until the outbreak of the second insurrection in Cuba in 1895, which extended only to the Cleveland and McKinley administrations. Harrison's negative identification of the Spanish threat, therefore, does not hold the same meaning as Cleveland's negative identification.

One can argue, however, that British behavior and presence was consistent throughout all of the presidencies studied. While crises ebbed and flowed, Britain

³⁰⁹ For more on truth tables and the comparative method, see Ragin, C. (1987). For an explanation of fuzzy set logic, see Ragin (2000)

³¹⁰ Where 1=true and 0=false

retained the same hegemonic role in global politics, and engaged the United States in some of the same transnational issues (e.g. the Behring Sea question) from 1885 to 1901. Still, McKinley did not identify the British as threatening during his entire presidency; instead he viewed them as a valuable partner in East Asia.

If we consider Cleveland as two separate presidencies, the truth table is considerably different:

*Table 6.2: Threat Identifications in a Truth Table with Two Cleveland Presidencies*³¹¹

	Cleveland (22)	Harrison	Cleveland (24)	McKinley
France	0	0	0	0
Germany	1	0	0	1
Italy	0	0	0	0
Japan	0	0	0	1
Spain	0	0	0	1
United Kingdom	0	1	1	0

Still, there are some inconsistencies with this representation. For example, it is unfair to claim that Harrison did not view Japan as a threat. In fact, Harrison feared that Japan was a candidate to claim Hawaii long before McKinley reacted to the Japanese cruiser visit in 1897. He did not, however, identify Japan as a grave danger or modify his foreign policy because of it. It is misleading, therefore, to assert that Harrison identified the United Kingdom and Japan as equal threats. If we abandon the binary coding and adopt a fuzzy-set approach (simply 0, .5, and 1) and apply it to all of the threat identifications, we find a different comparison of threat identifications:

³¹¹ Where 1=true and 0=false

Table 6.3: Threat Identifications in a Fuzzy-set Truth Table with Two Cleveland Presidencies³¹²

	Cleveland (22)	Harrison	Cleveland (24)	McKinley
France	0	0	0	0
Germany	.5	0	0	.5
Italy	0	0	0	0
Japan	0	.5	0	.5
Spain	0	0	0	1
United Kingdom	0	1	.5	0

All three tables elucidate an inconsistent application of the threat label during these presidencies, although the last one makes the best case. This chapter sought to answer the question, “Do threat identifications vary among presidents?” After all, if presidents identify threat in the same manner, then there is little point to this study. The evidence brought to bear on the question leads to an affirmative response—threat identification does vary among these presidents. In fact, they vary among the presidencies, as well. The next step, therefore, is to answer this dissertation’s core question, “Why does threat identification vary among presidents?” Chapter seven describes and analyzes the independent variables of the plausible alternate explanations outlined in chapter three to determine whether or not they can account for the aforementioned variance in threat identification.

6.5 Primary Issues

This chapter seeks to confirm that threat identification varied among Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley. It reveals, though an examination of the historical record, that there is an inconsistent application of the threat label between the chief foreign policymakers. This chapter raises the following issues for consideration:

1. Grover Cleveland identified violators of international law as threatening, thus he perceived Germany as a threat during his first term and Great Britain as a threat during his second term.

³¹² Where 1=true, .5=partially true, and 0=false

2. Benjamin Harrison identified aggressive and powerful states as threatening, thus he was primarily occupied with British attempts to gain influence in South America.
3. William McKinley identified inhumane behavior as threatening, thus he identified the Spanish *reconcentrado* policies of 1897-1898 in Cuba as a grave danger and German disregard for the Chinese in 1900 as threats.
4. Threat identifications vary among the presidents of 1885-1901. They disagree on who is a threat and why they identify threats. This presents a puzzle to be solved through the application of the theories discussed in chapters two and three.

7 Tests of the Alternate Explanations

Chapter six establishes the fact that presidential foreign policymaking and threat identification were inconsistent among presidents at the end of the nineteenth century. Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley found different actors to be threatening in different types of situations.

Grover Cleveland's first term was marked by a low level of activity concerning foreign policy, although his administration brought the nation perilously close to a naval conflict with Germany over the defense of Samoan sovereignty. The 1887 Samoa crisis would, in effect, be resolved twelve years later as an afterthought in McKinley's Pacific policy.

During the Harrison interruption of Cleveland's two terms, he surrounded himself with a set of policymakers who agreed with him that the most pressing issue facing the United States was the elimination of British influence in the Western Hemisphere. Harrison viewed all powerful states as threats, but focused intensely on Great Britain during his tenure.

Cleveland's return to the White House in 1893 brought a renewed interest in the defense of international law. In 1895, the president became convinced that British chicanery was a threat to law and order in Caribbean basin. Much like in 1887, Cleveland risked war with a great power in order to defend the legal rights of the Venezuelans. His ultimatum worked and he avoided war while winning arbitration for the South American republic.

William McKinley entered office in 1897 expecting to be able to steer clear of war with Spain. He did not consider the Cuban issue an urgent one until he began to

received reports of Spanish atrocities throughout the island; by January of 1898, Spanish domination of its crown colony was a distinct threat. In the lead-up to the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 and the Western suppression of it, McKinley viewed the inhumane treatment of the Chinese as a threat and worked with Great Britain and Japan to extend the Open Door Policy and to isolate the destabilizing and uncivil German influence in East Asia.

The presidents studied, therefore, identified different threats:

Table 7.1: Threats Identified, 1885-1901

	Threats Identified
Cleveland, 1885-1889	Germany (1887, regarding Samoa only)
Harrison, 1889-1893	All great powers but especially Great Britain Chile (1892, regarding <i>Baltimore</i> incident)
Cleveland, 1893-1897	Great Britain (1895, regarding Venezuela only)
McKinley, 1897-1901	Spain (through 1898 war, regarding Cuba only) Germany (1898-9, regarding China only)

In all, threat identifications were widely varied. The Cuban issue was as pressing in 1896 as it was in 1898, although Cleveland did not concern himself with the inhumanity on the island. The British were selling arms and gaining influence throughout Latin America since the War of the Pacific, but only Harrison viewed it as a threat. While Cleveland was willing to fight to defend the independence of Samoa, McKinley annexed and partitioned it in the name of the national interest. Many of these potential threats existed during all of the administrations, yet individual presidents identified some of them as threats while others did not. Why?

Three alternate hypotheses are applicable to this study's research question. Each, however, fails to offer a clear and empirically substantiated explanation. Walt's model of threat identification maintains that presidents should have considered Great Britain to be less threatening towards the end of the period studied, yet Cleveland's assessment of the

British threat actually intensified in his second term. Similar difficulties exist with the application of the sub-national interests hypothesis; Cleveland ignored economic interests when he viewed the Spanish as benign in 1896. An application of SIT is also problematic; Harrison positively views British culture but identifies Great Britain as a threat. The evidence revealed in this chapter leads one to believe that the alternate hypotheses are disconfirmed as plausible solutions to the puzzle of changing threat identifications in the late 19th century.

7.1 The Balance-of-Threat Explanation

The balance-of-threat hypothesis posits that a policymaker will identify threats according to her assessment of four factor inputs: a foreign state's power, proximity, offensive capacity, and offensive intentions. Walt's classic theory is often referred to as the basis for rationalist foreign policy analysis; it combines structural (i.e. realist) concepts with agency-based concepts (i.e. behavior, decision-making).³¹³ Any discussion of alternate explanations of threat identification must start with the balance-of-threat hypothesis.

As a state's power increases, it is more likely to be identified as a threat.

Thucydides' truest maxim comes to mind when we think of power and the powerful: "the powerful take what they want and the weak yield what they must." If this rule holds true in international relations, then we can expect a policymaker to consider the most powerful state as the greatest threat.

The state with the closest proximity to the United States and American interests is likely to be identified as a threat. Distance is not dead now, nor was it dead during the Gilded Age. The closer a state is to a policymaker's state, the more likely she will

³¹³ Walt's theory is dubious on the matter of choice. While he claims that policymakers have the ability to choose different policies, he presents the variables in his theory as if they structurally determine policymakers' behavior.

consider it a threat. Distance removes threats while proximity intensifies them. The identified threats, or at least their assets, should be close to the American homeland and American interests.

The state with the greatest offensive capacity is likely to be identified as a threat.

Not all elements of power are equal in terms of the threat that they pose to a state and policymaker. Some weapons, especially naval capabilities, have a greater potential to harm national security. The same is true for forward-deployed forces; they eliminate problem of proximity. The identified threats should possess the greatest offensive capacity of any foreign state.

The state with the most hostile behavior is likely to be identified as a threat. In all social relations, interacting units read and interpret each other's behavior to seek indicators of future behavior. In fact, behavioral sciences hold true that prior behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. The states that were identified as threats should exhibit hostile behavior, expressed as costly signals that convinced the presidents that they intended to harm American interests. Further, if many of the identified threats were only for short periods of time, then we should observe that the identified threats signaled hostile intentions immediately preceding the president's identifications. In fact, if we only see hostile signals immediately preceding the origin of threat identifications, then BOT can explain the ad hoc nature of Cleveland's and McKinley's threat identifications.

7.1.1 Applying the BOT Hypothesis

Military capacity (power) does not correspond with threat identification. The most powerful states in the system were Great Britain, Germany, France, and Russia. Among the great powers, Great Britain was clearly the most powerful. During the period

studied, Great Britain and France lost significant relative power while Germany and Russia narrowed their gaps with the United States. It is important to remember, however, that the power of the United States during this time increased the most among all of the states for which data are available.

Table 7.2: US Military Capacity

United States Military Capacity ³¹⁴	
YEAR	CINC
1885	0.131
1886	0.146
1887	0.151
1888	0.152
1889	0.155
1890	0.165
1891	0.166
1892	0.173
1893	0.166
1894	0.154
1895	0.168
1896	0.160
1897	0.169
1898	0.197
1899	0.185
1900	0.188
1901	0.203

The American CINC score increased by sixty-four percent over sixteen years. The ascent was a steady one; American power increased every year until the Panic of 1893, after which growth continued but was less predictable.

British relative power was at its height at the start of the Cleveland administration, when it accounted for 166% of American power. In retrospect it was clear, however, that

³¹⁴ All CINC scores on this and subsequent tables are rounded to the nearest thousandth

the British were in decline by 1893. At the start of the twentieth century, British power accounted for only eighty-six percent of American power. A power transition occurred.

Table 7.3: UK Military Capacity

United Kingdom Military Capacity		
YEAR	CINC	% of US
1885	0.215737	1.644
1886	0.200533	1.372
1887	0.194657	1.288
1888	0.188651	1.238
1889	0.189298	1.223
1890	0.179475	1.085
1891	0.178375	1.077
1892	0.172999	0.998
1893	0.170393	1.028
1894	0.177926	1.152
1895	0.171924	1.023
1896	0.173657	1.085
1897	0.165821	0.981
1898	0.157431	0.799
1899	0.168645	0.909
1900	0.177528	0.944
1901	0.174211	0.860

German power during the same time frame increased and kept pace with American growth until the last half of the 1890s. Despite the German ability to keep pace with American growth, the United States held an advantage throughout the period studied.

Table 7.4: Germany Military Capacity

Germany Military Capacity		
YEAR	CINC	% of US
1885	0.114633	0.873
1886	0.113604	0.777
1887	0.123104	0.815
1888	0.127287	0.836
1889	0.118893	0.768
1890	0.125959	0.762
1891	0.122722	0.741
1892	0.126655	0.731
1893	0.134195	0.810
1894	0.132109	0.856
1895	0.125571	0.747
1896	0.129733	0.811
1897	0.13223	0.782
1898	0.124934	0.634
1899	0.126722	0.683
1900	0.131525	0.700
1901	0.12784	0.631

French and Russian power were similar to each other, in magnitude and growth, during the period studied. French power declined quicker towards the end of the century, although this trend is less significant than others.

Table 7.5: France Military Capacity

France Military Capacity		
YEAR	CINC	% of US
1885	0.101031	0.770
1886	0.099006	0.677
1887	0.096357	0.638
1888	0.093499	0.614
1889	0.09554	0.617
1890	0.095302	0.576
1891	0.096424	0.582
1892	0.093824	0.541
1893	0.094615	0.571
1894	0.093133	0.603
1895	0.088578	0.527
1896	0.090413	0.565
1897	0.086936	0.514
1898	0.082132	0.417
1899	0.081703	0.441
1900	0.074714	0.397
1901	0.073028	0.360

Table 7.6: Russia Military Capacity

Russia Military Capacity		
YEAR	CINC	% of US
1885	0.094084	0.717
1886	0.094627	0.648
1887	0.09242	0.612
1888	0.09027	0.593
1889	0.093668	0.605
1890	0.095078	0.575
1891	0.100715	0.608
1892	0.098251	0.567
1893	0.100262	0.605
1894	0.104338	0.676
1895	0.107218	0.638
1896	0.108783	0.680
1897	0.107471	0.636
1898	0.102787	0.522
1899	0.107504	0.580
1900	0.109239	0.581
1901	0.109645	0.541

Italy and Austria-Hungary never exceeded a third of American power and declined slowly against the United States towards 1901. Spain, which some political scientists contend was a rival of the United States at the turn of the century, was even less impressive.³¹⁵

³¹⁵ Diehl and Goertz 2000; Lemke and Reed 2001

Table 7.7: Spain Military Capacity

Spain Military Capacity		
YEAR	CINC	% of US
1885	0.023436	0.179
1886	0.022502	0.154
1887	0.021838	0.145
1888	0.020375	0.134
1889	0.020328	0.131
1890	0.019774	0.120
1891	0.019666	0.119
1892	0.01883	0.109
1893	0.019203	0.116
1894	0.018441	0.119
1895	0.018095	0.108
1896	0.018368	0.115
1897	0.018031	0.107
1898	0.017012	0.086
1899	0.016422	0.089
1900	0.014751	0.078
1901	0.014291	0.071

Finally, Japan is a distant candidate for great power status. Assessed on military capacity alone, it is hardly a contender with Britain, the United States, Germany, France, and Russia.³¹⁶

³¹⁶ China's CINC score presents an anomaly, especially when presented with the additional fact that Japan routed it in the 1894-5 Sino-Japanese war. From 1885 to 1889, China's CINC score exceeds that of the United States; from 1890 to 1895 it is above 90%, and then declines to 57% by 1901. China's vast population is to blame for the distorted score; it lacked the industrial production and territorial integrity during the entire period studied necessary to independently sustain a war effort against any Western state and Japan.

Table 7.8: Japan Military Capacity

Japan Military Capacity		
YEAR	CINC	% of US
1885	0.020383	0.155
1886	0.021501	0.147
1887	0.021494	0.142
1888	0.020884	0.137
1889	0.021367	0.138
1890	0.0214	0.129
1891	0.021731	0.131
1892	0.020432	0.118
1893	0.019762	0.119
1894	0.028258	0.183
1895	0.031203	0.186
1896	0.024673	0.154
1897	0.027723	0.164
1898	0.028358	0.144
1899	0.028255	0.152
1900	0.028886	0.154
1901	0.028882	0.143

The states of Latin America were woefully weak compared to the United States. The strongest among these was Brazil, which never exceeded five per cent of the American score. Mexico, Argentina, Peru, and Chile were between five and one per cent.³¹⁷ The other states of the Western Hemisphere were less than one per cent.

When we treat the foreign states of the world independently, using their military capacity as a proxy for their overall political power, we must conclude that only the United Kingdom rivaled the United States from 1885 to 1901. The rapid decline of British power, however, is a story in itself. Germany is a strong challenger to British and American power throughout the period, and France and Russia are on the third tier. Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Japan round out the great powers at rates between 10-20% of

³¹⁷ When Harrison confronted Chile about the treatment of the crew of the *Baltimore*, its CINC was 1.2% of the American CINC.

American power and no Latin American state approached six per cent. Great Britain and Germany were the powerful states of the system from the 22nd to the 25th presidencies.

If we were to look at the CINC only, we would predict that all of the presidents would identify Great Britain as the biggest threat to the United States, with the urgency of the threat decreasing into the 1890s.³¹⁸ This, of course, does not match the historical record; the British threat is identified in the middle of the period described and is virtually ignored during Cleveland's first term and McKinley's five years. The British threat was taken the most seriously by Harrison, although the British advantage fell from 122% of American power in 1889 to near-parity (99.8%) in 1892.

German power was the most consistent relative to American power from 1885 to 1901. Despite its steadiness in power, Germany is only a threat at two particular times—in 1887 and in 1899. Neither indicates a spike in German power or a drop in American power. The other states, such as France or Japan, offer little insight into the threat identifications of the presidents. Oddly, McKinley's identification of the Spanish threat in Cuba occurred during a precipitous drop in Spanish power—in 1898 it was less than half of its relative score in 1885. In 1896, when the second Cuban insurrection began under Cleveland's second term, Spanish power was 11.5% of American power. When McKinley saw the defense of Cubans as an urgent national matter in 1898, Spanish power dropped to 8.6% of American power. Clearly, power alone cannot help us understand why presidents identified the threats that they did.

There is no consistent relationship between proximity and threat. Walt writes that geographic proximity is also a crucial factor in threat identification; the closer a state is,

³¹⁸ Of course, looking exclusively at CINC scores is not a complete representation of power, nonetheless Walt's threat identification matrix.

the more of a threat it poses. The presidents, therefore, should have considered closer states to be more threatening. America's geographic isolation continued at the end of the 19th century. The advent of steam ships and the trans-Atlantic cable were only starting to impact America's isolation as the president took office in 1885; the world was still anything but global. The closest states, therefore, were the ones that abutted American territory: Canada and México. We can also include Cuba due to its closeness over grey water (90 miles) to Florida. México, which two decades prior to 1885 had to resist French re-colonization, was a sovereign state while Canada was a British dominion and Cuba was a Spanish colony. We can assume, therefore, that Britain and Spain were, by proxy, immediate neighbors of the United States.³¹⁹

The United States was, for all intents and purposes, geographically isolated. The distance between New York and the European capitals of Britain, Germany, Italy, and France were all close to 6000 kilometers. Among these, the closest was clearly London, which still remained 5585 kilometers away from the East Coast. Clearly, the United States was far enough from the homelands of the great powers to feel safe and secure.

At the same time, some of the great powers controlled interests on the American periphery. Great Britain controlled Canada's foreign affairs into the twentieth century and stationed a small contingent of troops in Toronto (York), Ottawa, and Québec. Spain positioned a sizable force on the island of Cuba, its lone pearl among its few remaining territories in the Western hemisphere. Spain's other notable possession in the Caribbean

³¹⁹ Spanish capacity to use Cuba as a station for attacking the United States at the end of the 19th century was minimal; it lacked the ships and army to launch an amphibious attack against the American East Coast.

was Puerto Rico. Colonies of the United Kingdom south of the border included British Honduras (Belize) and British Guyana.³²⁰

México was the closest independent state to the US homeland, with a common border extending from California to Texas. Russia's eastern frontier was only across the Behring Strait from Alaska, which was sovereign American territory but not considered to be part of the American homeland.

The major Latin American states—Columbia, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile—were all a continent away from the US. The distance between Columbia and the Florida Keys is approximately 2400 kilometers and between Valparaíso and San Diego is over 8000 kilometers. None of the American states, save México, were significantly close to the American homeland.

Limiting geographic proximity to distance to the American homeland is misleading, since one can argue that no foreign state had the capacity to invade the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, we can expand the meaning of geographic proximity to include vial American interests. One such interest was the trans-Atlantic shipping lanes, of which the British were the closest and most capable of jeopardizing. On the West Coast, no great power held colonies anywhere near trans-Pacific routes. Hawaii and Samoa, independent throughout the Cleveland administrations, were along the Western shipping lanes. Of course, most of those

³²⁰ The United Kingdom held considerable influence over other parts of the Western Hemisphere, including the states of Patagonia, the Lesser Antilles, and the Mosquito Coast in Nicaragua. In none of these areas, however, did the British station troops or military assets. None (Nicaragua, Chile, and Argentina) were formal allies of the UK, either.

shipping lanes were dominated or owned by the British due to the meager American merchant marine, which made the United States potentially more vulnerable.³²¹

We can conclude, therefore, that México, Spain, and Great Britain were the “closest” to the United States. Canada and México abutted the United States, although the frontiers were still substantially remote. Cuba was just offshore; the crisis on the island that commenced in 1895 would demonstrate that the insurrection was close enough to trouble the American Gulf coast.³²² The other states considered, without taking offensive capabilities into consideration, were too far to be a potential contributor to positive threat identification.

Geographic proximity did not change during the span studied. Alone, it cannot, account for the changes in threat identification that we observe between the three presidents. Britain’s small defensive force and Canada’s meager population did not possess the capacity to jeopardize national security, despite being the closest to the major American cities. The Spanish threat, however, has the potential to relate to the issue of geographic proximity—Spanish war vessels routinely harassed innocent Americans after 1895.

The issue of Cuba and Spain notwithstanding, the matter of proximity would lead us to believe that Great Britain was most likely to be identified as a threat, consistently, from 1885 to 1901, but it was not. On the contrary, it seems that the proximity of Britain

³²¹ If we consider the meager American Diaspora to be a vital interest, we still find no great or mid-level powers in close proximity. During Cleveland’s tenure, Americans were settling in the American west, the Pacific islands, and in smaller numbers in South America. In this regard, we might consider the Latin American states to be potential threats to the American missionaries they hosted. We could also regard the British, Chinese, Japanese, Dutch, and Germans to be close to the Pacific and East Asian travelers. Terming these small numbers as vital American interests, however, is too far of a stretch of the spirit of Walt’s core hypothesis.

³²² Southern shipping, both legitimate and illegitimate (the latter consisting mostly of arms dealers,) was routinely seized and harassed by Spanish vessels in the Florida Straits and the Gulf of Mexico. See May 1963:83-4.

had little to do with the infrequent times it was identified as a threat; Harrison never mentioned the possibility of a British invasion via Canada and Cleveland's fear was that the United Kingdom would flout international law and set a precedent for other land grabs in Latin America. Neither mentioned proximity in their discussions of a British threat.

Foreign offensive capacity was sparse and did not relate to threat identification.

Germany and Britain had the greatest offensive capacity, although no state had the ability to catastrophically damage American national security. Walt's model tells us that offensive capacity contributes to threat identification; military power is only threatening when it can be used to harm outside its homeland. In the late nineteenth century, few states possessed the ability to project offensive capabilities to North America. Railways were one material factor, since they could be used to quickly mobilize armies to contested frontiers.³²³ The geographic isolation of the United States, however, made trains irrelevant.

Two looming offensive weapons were the British and German navies, which enabled them to project their power to the American shores and, more likely, into the Caribbean basin. Even Chile had a few ships-of-the-line that were capable of harassing American harbors in California.³²⁴

The offensive advantage that Britain, et al. held over the United States Navy might not have been as dramatic as one would expect. Edward Rhodes notes:

... somewhat ironically, the European naval arms competition had the effect of rapidly reducing the scale of any potential threat to the United States. European navies were becoming specialized to compete with each other, with the

³²³ See Van Evera 1984.

³²⁴ One member of Congress noted that China had two battle cruisers before the United States did. See Seager 1953.

consequence that their ability to threaten American interests was greatly diminished... the move from wind to coal limited the range and endurance of enemy warships. At the same time, increasing cost and sophistication limited European navies' numbers, while the quickening pace of technological change further reduced the size of any aggressor's force by reducing the life-span of warships. The danger of attack or close blockade was not simply remote; it was vanishing.³²⁵

During the period studied, the American navy was mostly littoral. It was based primarily on coastal defenses, permanent guns and fortifications, and smaller commerce-raiding vessels. While this changed as the American navy approached the new century, until 1891, the navy was designed to defend the American coastline. This contrasted with the vessel-to-vessel fighting arrangements of the British, French, and German fleets; the littoral strategy might have provided a better defense against the great powers. This buttresses Rhodes's claims about American naval security in the late 19th century.

Forward-deployed forces are another offensive capability that the great powers enjoyed throughout the world. In the Western Hemisphere, however, few states had formidable armed forces that could strike the American homeland. The British kept troops in Canada during the last two decades of the 19th century, although they could hardly be considered offensive weapons. Soldiers were stationed at defensive installations at the Rideau Canal (near Montréal), at La Citadelle (Québec City), in Kingston (Ontario) and other, smaller fortifications. The British constructed these forts after War of 1812, when colonial authorities feared a third American invasion. The Spanish army commanded at least fifteen thousand troops in Cuba, although they were all committed to counter-insurgency and unable to attack the United States.³²⁶ The British

³²⁵ Rhodes 1995:85

³²⁶ At least 15,000 Spanish troops evacuated the island after Spain signed the 1898 armistice with the United States. *The New York Times*, October 20, 1898, 4.

forward-deployed troops constituted the only significant offensive capability held by a European state.

Many states signaled offensive intentions, although presidents ignored some of them. Spain, Great Britain, and Germany all demonstrated offensive intentions at points throughout the period studied. France, Chile, and Japan were involved in escalated incidents with the United States that were clearly costly signals, but these appeared to be isolated incidents. Spain, Britain, and Germany, however, demonstrated a pattern of hostility from 1885 to 1901.

A review of the militarized interstate disputes from 1875 to 1901 shows that the most aggressive state in the international system was Great Britain. A simple analysis of states' instigation of armed conflict yields the following results:

Table 7.9: Incidence of Instigated MIDs, 1875-1901^{327 328 329}

	1875-85	1886-89	1890-93	1894-97	1898-01	1875-1901
China	7	1	1	2	3	14
France	4	1	2	7	4	18
Germany	1	4	0	5	1	10
Italy	5	2	1	3	3	14
Russia	6	2	1	3	4	16
UK	11	6	3	7	5	32
USA	9	3	3	1	3	19

The United Kingdom was clearly more active in using or threatening to use force during the period studied. Of course, as the global hegemon, the British government had more opportunity to initiate conflict than Italy or China.

³²⁷ Incidents included the threat of force or more violent behavior.

³²⁸ States with less than ten total incidents were omitted. Notable omissions include: Austria-Hungary, Japan, Spain, and Ottoman Empire.

³²⁹ Ghosn, F., G. Palmer, and S.A. Bremer (2004). The MID3 Data Set, 1993-2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. 21:2, 133-54

Spanish harassment of American merchants in Cuba was clearly a hostile action that signaled offensive intentions, although they did not indicate anything as drastic as an invasion of the homeland. Even before the commencement of the second insurrection in 1896, illegal searches of American vessels traveling and from Cuba were routine. The Spanish military claimed that these were necessary since many Cuban-Americans were supporting the *insurrectos* by smuggling goods and arms across the Florida Strait. Spanish activity did not go unnoticed; Cleveland responded by using the American navy to stop private ships from sailing to Cuba. It is odd, but fits Cleveland's *modus operandi*, to observe an American president using military power to restrain American actions abroad, but this was the case in 1896 and 1897.

The British government behaved in ways that appeared to be hostile *and* benign during the Cleveland administrations. While the British worked closely with the United States to settle the contentious issues that separated them (i.e. the Alaska-Yukon border ambiguity), there were also times when the British clearly signaled hostile intentions, especially in the gunboat diplomacy of the Caribbean basin.

Perhaps the best example of British aggressive behavior is its challenge to American hegemony in the Caribbean basin. In 1893, the British government sent a military expedition to the Mosquito Coast (the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua and a former British colony) as retribution for violence against British nationals in a rural settlement near Bluefields. When the British invaded to reassert its dominance over the region and to extract revenge for Nicaraguans' murdering of British nationals, Cleveland regarded it as unthreatening. Nicaragua pleaded unsuccessfully to the Cleveland administration to intervene, invoking the Monroe Doctrine and arguing that it was solely

America's role to arbitrate the dispute between an American republic and a European state. Cleveland disagreed with Nicaragua's argument. In fact, the president regarded the act of British aggression as acceptable behavior and within the bounds of international law. Two years later, however, Cleveland would interpret Britain's attempt to claim Venezuelan territory as a direct threat to the United States. Both were hostile behaviors that challenged American hegemony in the Caribbean basin, although one was dismissed as benign while the other was so threatening that the president asked Congress to consider war with the United Kingdom.

A similar inconsistency arises when we consider the ebb and flow of the German threat. German behavior regarding the Samoan islands was extremely aggressive in 1886; the German navy in Apia forced a change in Samoan government by gunpoint. When Cleveland contested the change as a violation of the tripartite agreement, Bismarck sent additional warships to Apia. This act was both costly and intimidating; it was clear that Germany would intend to keep the islands (including the American-dominated port of Pago Pago) by force, if necessary. After a hurricane destroyed the American and German squadrons stationed in Samoa in 1887, tensions subsided. Germany continued to signal its intentions to take Samoa, although no longer by force or insurrection, up to the final agreement in 1899. The 1887 crisis brought America closer to a great power war than at any point since 1814, but six months later, the Germans were no longer a threat—despite the fact that the justification for war remained.

German offensive intentions were signaled again after Dewey took Manila from the Spanish in July of 1898. The overwhelming German presence, quantitatively stronger than Dewey's squadron that annihilated the Spanish fleet, was an intimidating factor in

the days that followed the American victory. German ships refused to respect Dewey's blockade and overtly attempted to force an alliance with the Filipinos before the Americans could establish military law on Luzon. Even when Dewey threatened to use force against the German ships, they disregarded American authority. German behavior in the Philippines was exceedingly hostile. Yet, McKinley did not consider Germany to be a threat and paid scant attention to it when making foreign policy for the next eighteen months.

Spanish behavior in the Caribbean was a clear case of costly signals. Spain, a declining power with little hope of retaining its empire, was the last state that needed to pick a fight with a rising American power; harassing American freighters was as costly a signal as one could reasonably conceive. Despite the high stakes, the Spanish risked involving the United States in its counter-insurgency war in Cuba by deliberately boarding and seizing American vessels in the Caribbean. Spanish aggression was a highly costly signal that Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley all should have seen as threatening. After all, French harassment of American shipping led to the Quasi-war of 1798, British impressments of American sailors precipitated the War of 1812, and the German interference with Atlantic trade brought the United States into both world wars. The high risk of harassing American shipping in the Caribbean was Spain's constant and costly signal.

French, Chilean, and Japanese behavior all contained costly signals, although they were seemingly isolated incidents. The Harrison administration noticed the French encroachment on Liberia during its quest for imperial control of western Africa; after Blaine formally requested that the French respect the sovereignty of the state, the French

continued on their conquest without apology. Such action could be easily construed as costly, hostile, and escalatory. The Chilean treatment of the *Baltimore* crisis—dismissive and insensitive—is also best interpreted as a costly signal. The diplomatic note of December 1891, which mocked the authority of the President of the United States, was hostile and escalatory. Finally, the Japanese move in 1897 to send a cruiser in order to compel a change in Hawaiian immigration policy was a classic costly signal. These signals, however important they were at the time, were not indicators of any trend of hostility or offensive intentions. We cannot, therefore, assert that Japan, Chile, and France sustained any long-term offensive intentions that might have influenced presidents' conceptualization of threat.

Spain's continued harassment of American ships, Germany's competitiveness for influence in the South and Western Pacific, and Great Britain's gunboat diplomacy in the Caribbean were all sustained instances of offensive intentions expressed as costly signals. From a rationalist view, all three communicated that these powers intended on aggressively influencing American power. What then, does this mean for the identification of threat? If we can ascertain the Germany intended to take possessions in the South Pacific by force, then we should also expect all three of our presidents studied to identify Germany as a threat, from 1886 through 1899. Finally, Great Britain should have been a concern to Cleveland during both terms and McKinley as well, since British military force flouted the Monroe Doctrine and challenged American hegemony, especially on the Central American isthmus.

We do not see such consistent threat identification in the historical record. Harrison was largely uninterested in Germany and McKinley only paid scant attention,

and then only concerning private German activities in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic.) Even when Dewey reported the troubles with the German squadron in Manila Bay, the president did not bother to discuss the matter with his top advisors (or the German ambassador) subsequently. Quite simply, threat identifications do not match the offensive intentions signaled during this time period.

There is as much disproving evidence as there is not; it is unlikely that Walt's model alone can explain the variation between threats identified. Power does not seem to relate to threat; the disconfirming case is inverse relationship between British power and Cleveland's identification of a British threat. Cleveland identified the United Kingdom as a threat when it was at its weakest, but viewed it as a benign power when it was strongest. Proximity, which never changed during the sixteen years studied, clearly cannot help us understand the many changes in threat identifications of the three presidents. Offensive capabilities changed little during this time, with the exception of the construction of the German fleet. The British were still the clear offensive power from start to finish, yet did not register as a threat except to Harrison (1889-1893) and for a short period of time for Cleveland (followed by a quick retraction in 1896).

Even when considered together, there is too much disconfirming evidence to stop at Walt's matrix. Why did Cleveland consider Great Britain benign during his first term, when British power dominated American power? Clearly power had no relationship with Cleveland's threat identification; Britain was only a threat after its relative military capacity declined by over fifty per cent. The Cuban crisis and the Spanish threat also disconfirm the hypothesis—the Spanish military was harassing Americans and American shipping off of the Florida coast, yet never raised the thought of defense in any of the

presidents. How could Germany go from being an enemy of international law to a virtually ignored between Cleveland's two terms? These are only a slice of the data that disconfirm Walt's argument that a combination of power, proximity, intentions, and offensive capacity influence a policymaker's threat identification.

Two of the factor inputs studied were resistant to change (proximity and offensive capabilities) but identified threats changed often. The other factor inputs in BOT (relative power and offensive intentions) changed significantly over the period, but did not change in ways that could explain threat identifications. The evidence collected to support the BOT hypothesis disconfirms that claim that power, proximity, offensive capabilities, and offensive intentions influence threat identification; there are simply as many incorrect predictions as there are correct ones. BOT is not a reliable explanation.

7.2 The Sub-National Interests Explanation

A plausible alternate argument is that domestic politics shapes foreign policy and, specifically, threat identification. An extension of Trubowitz's theory to include presidential foreign policymaking might provide an answer to the question, "Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?"

The sub-national interests hypothesis argues that, when the president makes foreign policy, his decisions are influenced by geographically-based interests. A threat identified, therefore, might be a threat to a particular sub-national interest. At a minimum, we should be able to observe a correlation between the threat that a president identified and a threat to an influential sub-national interest that would help a president maintain his winning coalition in order for the sub-national interest hypothesis to be

correct. The null hypothesis would be valid if the president identifies a threat that runs contrary to a sub-national interest critically important to his winning coalition.

The threatened section must have been a member of the president's winning coalition. An extension of Trubowitz's logic leads one to believe that presidents respond to sectional interests when making foreign policy because they rely on them for political support.³³⁰ During and after their elections, presidents maintain a winning coalition in order to command a mandate or political cache.³³¹ When we examine each president's administration, we should see an alignment between his winning coalition, sectional threats, and his identified threat.

We should observe some discussion of the importance of the section in the president's threat identification. This may or may not be a private discussion; it is feasible for the president to justify, *post hoc*, his threat identification as a threat to a particular section or domestic interest. If the president defends the threat identification as anything other than a threat to a section, it casts a reasonable doubt on the accuracy of the sectional threat explanation.

If the sub-national interests hypothesis is correct, we should find evidence in the historical record that each president had a clear winning coalition, that a foreign agent posed a threat to a critically important sub-national interest, and that the president responded to that sectional threat by identifying it. The remainder of this section analyzed the three presidents, in order, against these three criteria.

³³⁰ See Trubowitz 1998 for his assumptions about member-constituency relations and how sub-national interests can infiltrate the Congressional foreign policymaking process.

³³¹ Riker 1960

7.3.1 Applying the Sub-national Interests Hypothesis

Cleveland's winning coalition was based on the support of the South and, more importantly, the support of centrists from both political parties. Ford writes that the election of Cleveland in 1885 was due to the support from the solidly Democratic South and Republican defectors in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.³³² Although the Reconstruction period had passed, the American South continued to vote for Democratic candidates as it did in the years immediately following the Civil War; the North voted for Republicans and the South voted for Democrats. Cleveland, the first post-Civil War Democratic president, relied on the entire South to form the base of his coalition. No Democrat would ever win the presidency, even after the Dixiecrat defections of the twentieth century, without the support of the South. Cleveland was in the middle of this long tradition; the south formed the foundation of his winning coalition and he knew it.³³³

The Republican Northeast was not as solid as it had been in prior decades, mostly due to the advent of the Gilded Age and the rise of a type of Republican that was disillusioned by the excesses of the Radical Republicans in Congress and the pro-industry positions of James G. Blaine. As a result, a group of moderate Republicans hailing mostly from New England (a notable exception was Walter Q. Gresham's faction in Indiana), pledged their support to Cleveland. Called the Mugwumps, they formed a domestic policy agenda based on fiscal conservatism and resembled shades of the populist and progressive themes that would rise in the West (along with William Jennings Bryan) and the Northeast (with the progressive Theodore Roosevelt) in the next decade.

³³² Ford 1922

³³³ Cleveland's cozy relationship with the South was often a political liability when dealing with the Republican Senate. With his lack of military service and strong preference for civil service reform, Union veterans' groups like the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) made life difficult for the 22nd and 24th president. Southern leaders played down their traditional legacy issues, like war flag repatriation, in order to lower the profile of the Cleveland-South coalition. See Ford (1922).

In the 1880s, however, the political center was focused on domestic issues and cast its lot with the reform governor of New York. Olson writes that Mugwump support gave Cleveland the state of New York in 1885 and was decisive in his quest for the presidency.³³⁴

In the following eight years, during which Cleveland would lose to Benjamin Harrison and then defeat him, swing states such as New York held a dictating position; they controlled the balance-of-power in the Electoral College. As long as New York was split between Republicans and Democrats, Cleveland's South-Mugwump coalition would remain sufficient for retaining his mandate. The West, largely but not completely Republican, was gaining influence in national politics. It was the West's coalescence around populist issues, namely the Free Silver movement (due to its dissatisfaction with Cleveland's bi-metallism) that would give the presidency to Harrison in 1889, but was not as influential as New York in the 1885 and 1889 elections.

The Northeast remained divided between Democrats, Republicans, and Mugwumps at the end of the nineteenth century. The Republicans were strongest in the major cities of the Northeast (New York, Boston, Philadelphia) and among immigrant groups (especially the Irish-Americans.) Cleveland never made an effort to bring these groups or this section into his winning coalition.³³⁵ The relationship between Cleveland and the non-Mugwump Northeast was cold at best and nasty at worst. The key to Cleveland's electoral victories, therefore, was for the Mugwumps to carry the Northeastern swing states.

³³⁴ Olson 1942

³³⁵ Ford 1922

The Mugwumps did not have a prominent foreign policy agenda and no foreign threat. Prominent Mugwumps defected from the Republican Party because they were dissatisfied with the nation's economic policies. Many Mugwumps were Presbyterian New Englanders, a group with which Cleveland had much in common. They hailed from New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and were strong in two Western outposts—Milwaukee and Seattle.³³⁶ Mugwump values of honest and transparent government and non-interference are common between the president and his supporters.

McFarland confirms that the Mugwumps were diverse except for their interests in domestic policy.

The Mugwumps' program was limited to economy in government, civil service reform, tariff reduction, the gold standard, and honesty in politics. Their political hero was Grover Cleveland, an honest man although less than an ardent reformer, and the height of their reform crusade came in 1884 when they bolted the Republican Party and its nominee, James G. Blaine, to support Cleveland's successful candidacy for the presidency.³³⁷

The influence of the Mugwump lasted as long as Cleveland was in office; the growth of Western Mugwumps and their merger with the populist movement caused some Mugwumps to support Bryan and "free silver" in the election of 1896, while others sided with McKinley. The Mugwump movement lived and died with the Cleveland presidencies. On the Mugwump, Peterson writes:

The Mugwump is the one who belongs to an organization that intervenes in government. Through the organization, he keeps track of what officials are doing, inquires into the problems they face, frequently dishes out criticism, sometimes offers solutions, and periodically berates his fellow citizens for their indifference to these matters.³³⁸

³³⁶ Peterson 1961:17

³³⁷ McFarland 1963:40

³³⁸ Peterson 1961:16

Mugwumps had no foreign policy interests as long as foreign policy did not interfere with their fight against corruption and for good governance. Only tariff reduction tangentially resembled a foreign policy agenda, although the reductions were sought to benefit consumers and take money out of the coffers of corrupt governments, not to encourage trade and reciprocity agreements with the European powers. Even these foreign policy issues were rooted in domestic political concerns. It is safe to claim that the Mugwumps only agreed that foreign policy was not a major concern to their cause. In fact, the preferred foreign policies of prominent Mugwumps differed significantly; For example, Mark Twain favored more interaction with Europe while Henry Adams sought to minimize it.³³⁹

The South had two core foreign policy interests during the Cleveland presidencies—tariff reduction and frontier security. Unlike the Mugwumps, Southern farmers sought tariff reduction because of its potential effects; they wanted reciprocal tariff reduction with key markets in Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. Target products and markets included exporting pork products to Italy and sugar to Germany. By unilaterally reducing tariffs that protected the booming manufacturing sector in the northeast, the south would potentially benefit from increased trade. The South, however, cast its lot with the Democratic Party; Southern states were not battleground states nor were they critically vulnerable parts of Cleveland's winning coalition.

The South had foreign policy interests, but Cleveland did not oblige when it solidly favored the pacification of Cuba. The emerging Cuban insurrection was a common concern for the southern states, especially Florida and Gulf States. Many Cubans and Cuban-Americans were using the unmonitored Gulf coast as an opportunity

³³⁹ Twain 1907, Adams 1909

for sending support to the Cuban *insurrectos* that were waging war in the Cuban countryside. Spanish vessels constantly harassed and raided southerners traveling out of the country and were eager to stop and inspect foreign trade with the South. Cuba was an unstable area that threatened the regional tranquility and border security of the south; it was a clear sectional threat. In 1895, Southern Democrats aligned with the GOP in the House to pass a resolution urging Cleveland to restore order in Cuba.³⁴⁰ Still, the president did not budge and was even eager to use naval power to keep Americans from interfering with the Spanish control of the island.³⁴¹ This Southern concern about Spanish harassment was less of an issue to the West and the Northeast and, most importantly, never surfaced as a concern in the White House.

The evidence necessary to substantiate the sectional threat hypothesis is missing and alternate evidence serves to disprove it. We know that the South would continue to vote for Cleveland, regardless of his actions; their solid support was based on decades of antagonism with the Republican Party and less on Cleveland's support of their interests. In fact, Cleveland never traveled farther south than Virginia during his presidency, a clear signal that he cared little about placating his most significant constituency.³⁴² Cleveland rarely worked with Southern Congressmen (the Georgian Senator Blount being one exception) and had no Southerners on his cabinet, despite the fact that Southern Democrats had been shut out of the White House since 1850. Simply put, there was no real relationship between Cleveland and the South.

³⁴⁰ Morgan 2003: 251

³⁴¹ Dulebohn 1941

³⁴² Benjamin Harrison, on the other hand, would spend an entire summer traveling through the South in order to garner support for his 1893 reelection.

The critical sub-national interest that Cleveland needed to satisfy in order to maintain his winning coalition was the Mugwumps of the Northeast. The Mugwumps, however, had no foreign policy agenda. If they had one, we might have seen Cleveland identify threats differently, but only if the sub-national interests hypothesis were correct. Counterfactually and hypothetically, if Cleveland waged a war for empire, it would surely have upset the Mugwumps. Concerning core sectional interests, however, we can confidently conclude that there was no influence from Mugwumps on Cleveland's threat identification.

The bottom line is that the South would have voted for Ulysses S. Grant in 1885 if he were a Democrat. We know that the Mugwumps were completely agnostic on foreign policy issues when they voted for Cleveland in droves in 1884, 1888, and 1892. Cleveland's winning coalition and the maintenance of it did not require any foreign policy decisions, especially threat identifications, which give him a free hand to do what he felt was in the national interest. Of course, Cleveland had to focus obsessively on reform issues to satisfy his supporters, but this domestic issue does not relate to the focus of this study.

We also know that Cleveland was honest to a fault; he refused to play politics throughout both of his terms. If there were ever a personality that would not strive to satisfy his coalition—especially when satisfaction contradicted what he thought was right—it would be Grover Cleveland. Honest, insensitive, and stubborn are qualities that do not make a master tactician, and Cleveland was not one at all.

Benjamin Harrison built a coalition of Northeastern and Midwestern industry, veterans' groups, Western farmers, and Irish-Americans. Socolofsky and Spetter write

that “Benjamin Harrison had bet his political career on nationalism, tariff protection, sound currency, and fair benefits for veterans; and the year 1888 was his for the taking.”³⁴³ These were issues that interested the Northeast and the American West, although not exclusively. The matter of tariffs was a serious one for growing industries in the industrial heartland of the Midwest; makers of iron and locomotives both benefited from protective tariffs. Fair competition with British goods in particular was a threat to the economies of the Northeast and the Midwest; they pushed all Republicans hard for a revocation of the tariff reductions that the Congress and Cleveland approved in 1887. Tariffs were the most important issue of the day and the glue that held Midwesterners and northeasterners together in their coalition.

Other Midwesterners, not just industrialists and the towns they employed benefited from a Harrison presidency. The twenty-third president campaigned on the issue of sound money—a vague and gentle jab at Cleveland and the “goldbugs” for their insistence on a gold standard that Midwestern farmers perceived as a threat to their financial stability. Gold was the preferred currency of Northeastern banks and advocates of free trade, but holding currency in gold was a liability to farmers. Since the price of gold was escalating at the end of the 19th century, farmers borrowing money on the gold standard took unbearable risks (and the banks reaped enormous rewards.) The populist movement in the Midwest and West occurred, in part, because farmers wanted the free and unlimited coinage of silver, making the dollar resistant to market volatility (and thus protecting them from spiraling debt.) Harrison campaigned on the issue of bi-metallism and promised that he would push Congress away from the gold standard. This promise

³⁴³ Socolofsky and Spetter 1987:12

placed elements of the Midwest and the Northeast in his coalition; they were decisive in delivering swings states like Ohio, New York, and Illinois.

Irish-Americans were clearly anti-British and sought to oppose British interests wherever possible. While Cleveland still enjoyed the support of the Mugwumps and immigrants in major urban centers, one dominant immigrant group sided with Republicans in elections throughout the 1880s: the Irish-Americans. These voters sympathized with their homeland's struggle for autonomy and sought a president who would oppose the protracted British occupation of the Emerald Isle. Harrison—who campaigned on anti-British themes—was a natural fit for Irish-American voters. The Irish vote proved to be critical in the Northeast and Chicago, where Mugwumps continued to hold sway. In return for their vote, the Irish wanted to see a shift away from Cleveland's pro-British foreign policy (free trade, gold standard, and concessions on Canadian relations) during the Harrison administration.³⁴⁴

Two smaller groups proved to be pivotal to Harrison's election. Veterans' groups like the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) were geographically bound to the north and west of the nation and were a part of the president's winning coalition. Veterans' rights and entitlements were one of Harrison's major focuses in 1888, promising veterans preferential treatment in civil service jobs and ensuring that all of the men that served received benefit payments. Veterans and the Grand Army of the Republic mobilized *en masse* during the campaign for General Harrison.

The other group that represented a sub-national interest but was not geographically specific was the jingoes. Jingoism, also known during the period as "spread-eagleism," was a nascent nationalist sentiment that emerged in the 1870s. The

³⁴⁴ Knoles 1971:146

rise of jingoism coincided with the growth of American power and the capacity of the American state; jingoes had in common the belief that America should aggressively pursue its goals (on goals they disagreed) through the use of force.³⁴⁵ Harrison did not campaign on an aggressive American foreign policy, although he did often speak of the need to protect the Western Hemisphere against the great powers of Europe. In his deeds, Harrison seemed to satisfy the jingoes during his four years in the White House, by working with Congress to modernize the navy and his ill-fated attempt to annex the Hawaiian Islands in 1893.

Benjamin Harrison built a coalition of Northeastern and Midwestern industry, Irish-Americans, Western farmers, and nationalists, but did they bear on his identification of threat? It seems that they were perfect partners and, indeed, much of Harrison's policies satisfied the wants of his coalition. The president pressured Congress into supporting reciprocity treaties and raising tariffs on imports. Harrison and his Navy Secretary, Benjamin Tracy, gave the support necessary to begin the modernization of the USN in earnest. The administration returned to the bi-metal standard, but did not agree to the "free silver" initiative as the West had hoped. Most importantly for this study, however, was the hard line that Harrison took against the British and his efforts to defend American influence against British soft power in Latin America during the second half of his term.

Can we reasonably believe, then, that the Irish-American vote was so important that Harrison was willing to provoke the global hegemon in North and South America? It is possible, but a true stretch of the imagination. The Pan-American Conference, aimed

³⁴⁵ W.A. Williams (1961:55) claims that George Holyoake invented the term jingoism in a letter to the *New York Daily News* on March 13, 1878. The term "jingo" was a substitute for Jesus in popular British songs in the 19th century; instead of "by Jesus," one might say, "by Jingo," as in "by Jingo, we will take Hawaii."

at reasserting American hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, was a Blaine initiative during the Arthur administration that was never fully realized. To claim that Harrison's anti-British campaign was a reaction to the coalitions he put together in 1888 and 1892 would ignore the long tradition of anti-British sentiment by the Chief Executive as well as most in the Republican Party. The bottom line is that there is ample evidence that demonstrates that Harrison and those that surrounded him were anti-British long before the Irish and industrial votes could have asserted themselves in 1889.

Still, one can make a case that the president was beholden to all members of his winning coalition. Harrison won the election of 1888 by the slimmest of margins; he lost the popular vote to Cleveland but won the Electoral College (a feat not repeated until 2000.) A small group in a winning coalition, therefore, could wield enormous and disproportionate power; the Irish vote could be a dictator. A large group, such as the industrial interests of the Northeast, had the potential for monumental interest in shaping Harrison's foreign policy.

We should see some sort of indicator that Harrison was concerned with the Irish vote but, unfortunately, do not. At the same time, we seek to uncover disconfirming evidence—that he was *unconcerned* with the Irish—and come up empty. As such, we cannot negate the null hypothesis. It is entirely possible that Harrison did identify the British threat as a response to his need placate the Irish vote in his winning coalition.

Harrison's threat identification matched that of the key members of his winning coalition. Those that supported the Hoosier statesman in 1888 and 1892 were a league of Anglophobes: the Irish, northeastern industries, and opponents of the gold standard.

There is no evidence to confirm that Harrison was motivated by domestic politics to identify the British threat, but there is no disconfirming, either.

William McKinley's electoral strength was in the cities of the Midwest and Northeast. Between Reconstruction and the election of 1896, the Republican Party dominated the Northeast and Midwest, while the Democrats controlled the southern states. Republican support came from a motley crew: industry, Protestant evangelicals, Civil War veterans, and western farmers. Democrats relied on an alliance between the solid South, northern Republicans disaffected by their party's occasional radicalism, immigrant groups, and financial interests. The rise of William Jennings Bryan and the opportunism of William McKinley changed this dynamic during the election of 1896. Bryan claimed the Western and Protestant votes with his populism and fiery rhetoric; McKinley won the support of organized labor and immigrant groups. Unlike his Republican predecessors, the twenty-fifth president relied on the urban vote to sustain his advantage in the East and to win the elections of 1896 and 1900.³⁴⁶

William McKinley commanded a coalition similar, although not identical, to Benjamin Harrison. Louis Gould writes:

McKinley had constructed a winning coalition of urban residents in the North, prosperous farmers, industrial workers, and most ethnic groups except the Irish. Electoral trends now favored the GOP as they had appeared to help the Democrats four years earlier... It became to political task of the new president to bring the prosperity that he had promised and to see that the Republican victory was not transitory.³⁴⁷

McKinley's national prominence as the lead crusader for protective tariffs in Congress cemented his support among industrial leaders and the working class; both had a vested interest in avoiding fair competition with imported British goods. His grasp on the

³⁴⁶ See Phillips (2003:2-12) for a discussion of the election of 1896 and shifts in the electorate.

³⁴⁷ Gould 1980: 11-12

immigrant vote, however, was more remarkable. The future president refused to work with those Republicans that controlled the bosses and city organizations in the northeastern states (i.e. Thomas Platt) and was still able to gain the vote of most ethnic groups. The exception was the Irish vote, who were most integrated with the party machines of Boston and New York.

McKinley's coalition of 1896, which included the more successful and industrial agricultural interests in the Midwest, was simply built on his promise of prosperity. After the Panic of 1893 and the Democrats' insistence on government non-intervention (the Wilson-Gorley Tariff Act of 1890 was an emblem of *laissez-faire* and a rallying cry for Republicans,) there was a clear mandate among a majority of the nation for government intervention and protection. McKinley was the ideal candidate with his protectionist record in Congress; it was a match made in heaven.

McKinley's coalition relied more on sectors than sections; he drew his support from sectors of each section. It was the financial centers and labor of the urban northeast and the prosperous farmers and industries of the Midwest that catapulted him to the White House.

Historians are quick to point out the influence of Mark Hanna and other prominent industrialists in the McKinley White House. Among the supporters in his coalition, many believed that McKinley depended heavily on Midwestern industry. McKinley's strongest supporters were the steel-producing Western Reserve. He had a long-standing and strong relationship with the dominant industrialists of Ohio that is often discussed by those that study McKinley. Foremost among these men with *entrée* was Marcus Hanna.

President McKinley was careful not to keep written records of his relationship with Mark Hanna and rarely let his advisors observe their meetings. We do know, however, that the two had a deeply meaningful personal relationship; it was common for the two to spend their evening hours smoking a dozen cigars on the South Portico. One can make a compelling case for the industrialists' domination of McKinley's policymaking. Men like Pullman, Armour, Taft, and Hanna were responsible for helping the McKinleys avoid financial catastrophe in 1893. Mark Hanna, who managed McKinley's campaign in 1896, raised a staggering \$3.5 million in donations and was the architect of the 1896 victory. Gould writes that McKinley rewarded Hanna by John Sherman Secretary of State so that Hanna could take his vacant seat in the U.S. Senate.³⁴⁸ Historians Leech and Ford point to the cozy relationship between McKinley and the prominent businessmen of the Midwest as proof positive that the president was beholden to these commercial interests.³⁴⁹ The truth, however, is far less compelling.

McKinley consistently and flagrantly worked against the wishes of his industrial backers throughout his five years in office. Kevin Phillips writes that Hanna "almost worshiped him" and that the close relationship was an indicator of Hanna's servitude.³⁵⁰ There is ample evidence to suggest that McKinley operated independently. While Gould, Morgan, and Leech made much about the Sherman appointment to State (in order to make a Senate seat available for Hanna) as evidence of McKinley's need to satisfy his industrial backers, a careful reading of the historical records indicates otherwise. Sherman was not the president-elect's first choice; Charles Dawes's diary notes that McKinley's first choice was Senator Joe Allison of Iowa, a man whom the president

³⁴⁸ Gould 1980:17

³⁴⁹ Leech 1922, Ford 1922.

³⁵⁰ Phillips 2003:58

deeply respected and saw as a moderate voice in matters of diplomacy. Only when Allison rejected McKinley's offer did he turn to Sherman.³⁵¹

More importantly, one should note that McKinley was friendly and reliant on the support of only a select group of Midwestern industrialists; all hailed from Ohio, Illinois, or Pittsburgh. The products of the industrial Midwest were different—and had different interests—than the more powerful men of the industrial northeast. In fact, some prominent Midwestern entrepreneurs, namely Andrew Carnegie, were constantly at odds with the president. Hamilton writes:

The McKinley-Hanna history reviewed here indicates the need for significant modifications of that imagery. Hanna, the businessman, was not the dominant figure in the coterie. As attested by several sources, McKinley gave the order and Hanna, the businessman, assented. The businessmen active in the Hanna coterie, moreover, were not the leaders of the nation's largest railroads, manufacturing firms, or banks. The members of the coterie were leaders of sizable enterprises, most of these located in the Midwest, many of them in the City of Cleveland. The 'biggest names' in banking and industry from the period appear only in secondary roles. JP Morgan was consulted about the choice of McKinley, but even this came after the fact, after the basic work for the nomination had been done. Carnegie, Rockefeller, and J.J. Hill also appear but in ancillary roles. *The McKinley group operated with remarkable independence, giving little attention to the concerns of those 'top level capitalists.'* Systematic contact was made only when campaign funds were needed. And the leading capitalists responded generously, along with their less prominent peers across the land³⁵²

McKinley defied industrial interests and the men behind them when making foreign policy. One shocking exchange between Carnegie and McKinley, during the aftermath of Spanish-American War, brings the rift to light. Carnegie implored McKinley to abandon the Philippines and the president refused. Indignant, Carnegie would sign his letter to him with "your bitterest opponent" starting in 1899 and once threatened, "You have brains and I have dollars. I can devote some of my dollars to

³⁵¹ Dawes 1950: 108-10. Gould 1982:8 also claims that Allison, a close friend of McKinley, was the president-elect's first choice, but offers no evidence.

³⁵² Hamilton 2006: 67. Italics added for emphasis.

spreading your brains.”³⁵³ There was clearly no Hanna-like friendship among the most prominent industry leaders and McKinley, despite the fact that the president won re-election along the same lines (and more) than he did in 1896.

Many industrial interests viewed the defeat of Spain as a threat to their livelihood and actually opposed war with Spain from the onset.³⁵⁴ The threat to McKinley’s backers, therefore, was an annexed Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba and nothing more. Hamilton writes that American investors, who had over \$30 million invested in the island by 1898, favored anything *but* freedom for Cuba. The Wilson-Gorman Act of 1894 encouraged investment in Cuba because it reduced or eliminated tariffs on Cuban goods headed to the American mainland. Americans, including many of McKinley’s backers, were investing in Cuban sugar and profiting from it; they feared that the independence that would clearly result from war with Spain would cause them to lose their investments to a sovereign Cuba. The threat to industrialists, therefore, was a free Cuba, not a menacing Spain. The only business interests in favor of independence in the United States were sugar plantations who feared competition with Cuba. The rest, however, felt that some Spanish sovereignty was the best way to guarantee American investments on the island.³⁵⁵

William McKinley was mindful but not beholden to his winning coalition. We can conclude that McKinley was mindful to his winning coalition—the master tactician was mindful of everyone—but was never a slave to it. McKinley demonstrated a consistent

³⁵³ Morgan 2003:318, quoted Carnegie to Schurz, Carnegie Papers , Library of Congress Manuscript Division, December 27, 1898

³⁵⁴ Public opinion incorrectly associated McKinley’s resistance to the defense of Cuba with his tight connections to Hanna’s group. On the contrary, McKinley resisted Hanna’s call to neutrality. See Morgan 2003:277

³⁵⁵ Hamilton 2006:107

pattern of defying the wishes of the most important elements of his winning coalition when he identified the Spanish threat in 1897.

The domestic politics and the winning coalitions of 1885-1901 do not match the predictions of the sub-national interests approach. Simply, the domestic political landscape was shifting so radically from 1885-1901 that it is difficult to view American foreign policymaking as a matter of sectional rivalry. In fact, Cleveland began and McKinley finished the process of completely rewriting the electoral map in the United States; it was no longer north versus south. Instead, there were myriad competing interests, from urban labor to rural labor, from small farmers to large farms, from the eastern industrialists of Carnegie to the western industrialists of Hanna. The American political landscape, booming and realizing its potential, was too fluid for any president at the end of the 19th century to build a lasting coalition based on parochial, general, and large sectional interests.

Further, there is too much disconfirming evidence to ignore. Cleveland represented the interests of the pro-British capitalists of the northeast, but brought the nation close to war with the United Kingdom over what many conceived to be a frivolous issue. William McKinley, the president who most early historians believed to be merely a pawn of Mark Hanna and the steel men of the Midwest, had no problem in defying their wishes when he became concerned with the grave threat that the Spanish posed to the human security of the Cubans. President Harrison's anti-British alliance was a strong one, but there is still an endogeneity problem—where they partners because they both wanted to protect American influence from British hegemony, long before Harrison was a candidate? There is not enough evidence to suggest that this is the case.

The sectional politics hypothesis appears to work better with the economic interests of sections, but not always. Considering the fact that most of the 19th century was dominated by intense party rivalry along sectional lines, we should expect to see more of a winning coalition dynamic play out in presidential foreign policymaking. It does not appear in the historical record. The ultimate reason may be that by 1885, sections were not as important as more local interests and group interests that were not bound by geography. Despite this, however, presidents Cleveland and McKinley defied their winning coalitions when identifying threat.

7.3 The Social Identity Explanation

Social identity theory posits that an individual will order his social world according to in-groups and out-groups, which are viewed through positive and negative biases, respectively. Threat identification, therefore, could be a product of a decision-maker's in-group/out-group dynamic. If this is true, and if the presidents of this study adhere to different in-groups, then it is possible that SIT can explain why threat identifications vary between presidents.

The president must show negative bias toward the out-groups that constitute an identified threat. According to social identity theory, an out-group is identified as a threat when it is defined with a negative bias. At this point, the out-group transitions from being simply “the other” to being “the threatening other.” If SIT can explain why a president identified a particular threat, therefore, we should be able to observe a pattern of negative bias that corresponds with his determination of threat. Without evidence of negative bias, the SIT explanation fails to hold water.

The threatening out-groups must be mutually exclusive with the president's strongest in-groups. Secondly, there must be a clear distinction between the out-groups in which the threats reside and president's most salient in-groups. This could occur in many forms. For example, British and Germans are both members of a "northern European" group that the president might be biased against. Northern European is a group mutually exclusive with Southern Europeans or "other Europeans." We should be able to observe some biased behavior against northern Europeans in this historical record. There are too many possible group categorizations that Britain and Germany (or the other identified threats) fall into, so we will look for any potential biases and then inductively conceptualize the possible categories.

The president should also demonstrate a positive in-group bias. We know from SIT and RCT that when inter-group relations become salient, a positive in-group bias coincides with a negative out-group bias. While theorists disagree on which comes first, all suspect that a relationship between the two is causally significant. Accordingly, when we identify Cleveland's out-groups, we should also observe an in-group with which he is positively biased. This "in-group love" is the origin point of out-group hatred and the identification of threat, according to SIT.³⁵⁶

7.3.1 Applying the SIT Hypothesis

Grover Cleveland identified Germany as a threat during his first term and Great Britain as a threat during his second term. Temporarily ignoring temporal inconsistencies, we should at least be able to see Cleveland be biased against Germans and British.

³⁵⁶ Brewer 1999

Grover Cleveland shows negative bias towards the British government but not British society. At first light, it seems that Cleveland has it in for the British. Contemporary biographer Rexford Tugwell writes that Cleveland hated the British due to his upbringing:

Cleveland had learned antipathy toward the British from Tim Mahoney and his other Irish friends and supporters and his isolationism came from his inland breeding. All his attitudes about other nations were consistent with his attitudes about the United States itself. The (American) government had only to do honestly and competently the work immediately before it. So far as he was concerned he would not take on any more; and he judged British imperialism with a natively hostile mind. He had no view of a nation extending its influence, much less its territory, into the far places. True, it must take care that foreign influences did not encroach on close-by territory and become a threat. Those, however, were consistent attitudes.³⁵⁷

It is true that Cleveland held company with a few Irish-Americans that had an ax to grind with the British over the autonomy of their ancestral home. Tim Mahoney was one of the few New York City allies Cleveland could rely on during his presidencies and he rewarded him for his loyalty with a position in the State Department.

It seemed, however, that Cleveland was more concerned with the British government than with the entire British society as an out-group. We cannot confuse a government with an out-group; the latter is a social identity while the former is not. Even at the height of the Venezuela crisis, Cleveland fondly spoke volumes about the shared Anglo-American identity.

I am, nevertheless, firm in my conviction that while it is a grievous thing to contemplate the two great English-speaking peoples of the world as being otherwise than friendly competitors in the onward march of civilization and strenuous and worthy rivals in all the arts of peace, there is no calamity which a great nation can invite which equals that which follows a supine submission to wrong and injustice and that consequent loss of national self-respect and honor, beneath which are shielded and defended a people's safety and greatness.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁷ Tugwell 1908:243

³⁵⁸ quoted in Bergh 1909:381

Cleveland maintained, even after the resolution of the crisis, that British civilization is inseparable with American civilization.

Finally, we should note that beyond the scope of the 1895-6 crisis, Cleveland held the Anglo-American relationship as a mutually beneficial one. Rarely did he show negative bias towards British society.³⁵⁹ When addressing the American Fishery Union, a consortium of commercial interests that were particularly worried about Anglo-American disagreement over navigation rights near Canada, Cleveland assured that “an immense volume of population, manufacturer, and agricultural productions, and the marine tonnage and railways to which these have given activity, are all largely the result of intercourse between the United States and British America, and the natural growth of a full half-century of good neighborhood and friendly communication... I fully appreciate these things.”³⁶⁰ When discussing the relations between the British and American private sectors, the president consistently referred to terms such as friendship and good neighborhood. Less than a year after the climax of the Venezuela crisis, Cleveland wrote to an English colleague:

There is much to be said and written these days concerning the relations that should exist, bound close by the strongest ties, between English-speaking peoples, and concerning the high destiny that awaits them in concerted effort. I hope we shall never know the time when these ennobling sentiments will be less often expressed or in the least lose their potency and influence. Surely if English speech supplies the token of united effort for the good of mankind and the impulse of an exalted international mission, we do well to honor fittingly the name and memory of William Shakespeare.³⁶¹

³⁵⁹ One example concerning financial relations comes to mind, see Bergh 1909:263-4

³⁶⁰ quoted in Bergh 1909:101

³⁶¹ quoted in Bergh 1909:381-2

These positive feelings towards the British were curious when we consider how Cleveland cooperated often with the British on matters that ceded American influence in areas close to the American homeland. If it were true that Cleveland was biased against an aggressive and imperialist British government and society, then it would also hold true that he saw the British as a threat whenever they came into close proximity with American territory or interests. At a minimum, we should see signs of Anglophobic behavior. This is not, however, indicated in the historical record.

The president shows little negative bias towards the Germans. It was no secret that Cleveland greatly admired the German people, a relationship with whom he had since his earliest bachelor days. He took every opportunity to meet with German-American groups, whether he was campaigning or not, and even snuck out of the White House (before he married) to dine at a German boarding house on occasion.³⁶² While Cleveland did not spend much time extolling the virtues of foreigners, he often made addresses like this one:

On behalf of the American people I am inclined, also, to claim tonight that the German character... is so interwoven with all the growth and progress of our country that we have a right to include it among the factors which make up a sturdy and thrifty Americanism. With our early settlers came the Germans... many of them fought for American independence and, many, who dealt in the trade of war, came to fight against us, afterward settled on our soil, and contributed greatly to the hardihood and stubborn endurance which our young nation so much needed.³⁶³

His oft-repeated view of the German people in America does not separate the Germans into an out-group at all and, curiously, binds the German experience to American identity. SIT predicts that we should see Cleveland articulating a clear “us-them”

³⁶² Allan Nevins (1933) claims that Cleveland’s beer hall days were the greatest influence on his political views and his decision to become a Democrat.

³⁶³ quoted in Bergh 1909:301

division between the social groups if he views them as threatening, but he does not. If Cleveland identifies Germany as a threat, then he should also have Germans in his population of out-groups. There is no substantiating evidence that this is the case. On the contrary, Cleveland's long-expressed admiration of the German people in public and private falsifies any possibility of an inter/group explanation of threat identification.

One commonality Cleveland saw between Germans and Americans was the Protestant connection through Martin Luther. He often spoke of American values in terms of the Lutheran tradition "As the great German Reformer, insisting upon his religious convictions, in the presence of his accusers, exclaimed, 'I can do nought else. Here I stand. God help me.' So, however, do the poor and frugal men and women of our land, we will stand further in our defense of their simple Americanism, defiantly proclaiming, 'We can do nought [sic] else. Here we stand.'"³⁶⁴ Cleveland could not see Germans as a threat if he intertwined American and German identity in meaningful ways.

The president's out-groups are not exclusive enough to separate from Cleveland's in-groups. According to SIT, we should be able to see a clear scope and dividing line that separates the in-group and out-group. For example, if one policymaker focuses religious groups, we should see a clear in-group (Presbyterians) and out-group (other Christians) that inform views of inter-group relations. From the historical record, no clear division exists. Further, an answer to the question "who are the president's out-groups?" does not lead to a definitive answer.

The president's out-groups are a nebulous concept, regardless of any evidence of bias against the British and Germans. There is no clear sign that Cleveland had any us-them view of the world based on categories of identity, such as Christian, Westerner, or

³⁶⁴ Cleveland 1890, quoted in Bergh 1909:259

nation. Certainly, on some level, he regarded Americans as being different from other nation. Such a distinction, however, fails to be useful for understanding threat identification.

Cleveland's strongest in-group is Americans, which makes all other nationalities potential out-groups. Before his presidencies, we see consistent evidence that Cleveland's most salient in-group was Americans. This self-categorization continued and intensified throughout his presidency. When asked, who am I? Grover Cleveland's answer was almost always American.

After his presidencies, Cleveland published two books. The first, *Presidential Problems* (1898) was a volume of four addresses he gave at Princeton on major policy issues during his tenure. The second, *The Self-Made Man* (1906), was a long exposition of Cleveland's view of American identity.³⁶⁵ It speaks to Cleveland's world view that one of his two books reflecting on his professional life is a long discussion on the characteristics of American society.

Cleveland loved to speak about what it meant to be an American.³⁶⁶ When he referred to himself, it was often as an American. Mentions of his regional affiliations were few and sometimes contradictory.³⁶⁷

Cleveland rarely referred to himself as a Puritan or as a Presbyterian. His father was a Presbyterian minister and his early life was dominated by religious traditions. "He

³⁶⁵ Cleveland 1898; Cleveland 1906

³⁶⁶ It is reasonable to believe that Cleveland chose his own topics and words and was not a product of speechwriters or the demands of his audiences. Gilder (1909:44) confirms that Cleveland wrote all of his own documents and speeches, including diplomatic communiqués, veto messages, and addresses to Congress. Williams (1909:55) observes that Cleveland agonized over the minute details of his public addresses, and the most important ones took days of revisions before he would send them out for copy.

³⁶⁷ Despite the fact that he only lived in New Jersey for the first year of his life, Cleveland was willing to call himself a "true New Jerseyan" and to extol the shared values of his home state during a campaign stop in Newark in 1884. In his southernmost visit during his presidency, Cleveland told Virginians that "he was a Southerner like them". See Bergh (1909) and McElroy (1923).

was obliged to comply with the biblical commandments, commit to memory the Westminster Catechism and comport himself in a manner consonant with Puritan conviction.”³⁶⁸ Still, Brodsky claims that the president rarely associated with Presbyterians after leaving his family’s home in Holland Patent; he even attended Catholic mass while he was the bachelor governor in Albany.³⁶⁹ Even when he was president, Cleveland was not a member of a local church; religious life was not a salient matter for him. “The marriage arrangements to Frances Folsom troubled him. He was not a member of any church, although he had kept up his Presbyterian preference and went often to services.”³⁷⁰ Cleveland lacked any strong self-categorization beyond Americans; the evidence is contradictory and insufficient.

There is ample evidence that Cleveland admired British and German culture and society, despite the fact that he viewed their governments as threats. The empirical record confirms that, during heightened tensions between the United States, Britain, and Germany, Cleveland was less than genial in his assessment of those foreign governments. His behavior is not, in any manner, indicative of a prior negative bias against British and German societies based on Cleveland’s identification as an American. In fact, *there is more evidence available to support the claim that Cleveland was a great admirer of British and German people and was able to separate difficulties with their governments and their people.* Even then, the president was quick to forgive and forget the governments for the types of behavior that he viewed as threatening. Cleveland’s only salient in-group was Americans, making out-groups and threat-views too broad to yield insight into his threat identification.

³⁶⁸ Brodsky 2000:15

³⁶⁹ Nevins 1932:20

³⁷⁰ Tugwell 1968:143

Benjamin Harrison viewed all states as potential threats, but acted on one particular threat identification consistently during his administration: Great Britain. His identification of the British threat stemmed from a strong distrust of British intentions in the Western Hemisphere; he expected the British to steal as much as they could in what Harrison considered to be the American sphere of influence. SIT predicts that this fear of British intentions is a result of out-group bias. We turn, therefore, to the president's view of the British for evidence of negative bias or evidence to the contrary.

President Harrison held a complimentary view of English society and its role in American culture and politics. Harrison often mentioned the English heritage as a central component of American life. After the death of Queen Victoria, the president wrote in the *North American Review* that “The universal sorrow (of the death of Victoria)... silenced those who have been saying that America hated Britain. It is not so. But will it not be wise to allow the friendship between the nations to rest upon deep and permanent things, and to allow dissent and criticism as to transient things? Irritations of the cuticle must not be confounded with heart failure.”³⁷¹ Harrison spoke of the Anglo-American relationship often after he left office; it was a popular and contentious topic in intellectual and public circles after the conclusion of the Venezuela crisis. Although it appeared not to be his favorite topic, Harrison agreed with the notion that the two nations had a special relationship based on a shared culture. Such behavior does not indicate any negative bias. On the contrary, it demonstrates that Harrison actually had a favorable opinion of British society.

³⁷¹ “Musings on Current Topics” Second Paper, *North American Review*, March 1901

The president believed that Americans were fundamentally of English stock, even after the waves of immigration of the late 19th century. “The American is a give-and-take product. But thy speech betrayeth thee and our speech is wholly, and our derived institutions are chiefly, English. We have pride in the great poets, philosophers, jurists, historians, and story-writers who have used the tongue we use, and we are grateful to them. It is a personal debt.”³⁷² If the president felt that Americans were English, then it is impossible to argue that he exhibited out-group bias against the British when identifying the British threat during his term.

Harrison maintained that Americans and British, as Anglo-Saxons, hold an elevated place in the world. He wove this story into other arguments, including a lecture on the status of the Philippines. “But, what has that (US independence from Britain) to do with the Philippine situation? There are so many points of difference. We were Anglo-Saxons! We were capable of self-government.”³⁷³

Contrary to the predictions of SIT, Harrison demonstrated a positive in-group bias for what he considered to be an “Anglo-Saxon primacy in the world.” In his book on civics, Harrison wrote that Americans’ Anglo heritage separated them from the rest of the Western Hemisphere, making them more apt to govern:

Our Spanish-American neighbors on the south are lovers of liberty; they are brave and spirited; but they have not learned to value civil institutions. They follow a cockade rather than a constitution; and the sad result is that revolution succeeds revolution, and their great resources lie undeveloped. Not so the Anglo-Saxon; for here, men may come and men may go, but they can not break the fast hold of the citizen upon the established civil status³⁷⁴

³⁷² Harrison 1901: 247 “Musings on Current Topics” Second Paper, North American Review, March 1901

³⁷³ “The Status of Annexed Territory and of Its Free Civilized Inhabitants” Address at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, December 1900 and Printed in North American Review, January 1901

³⁷⁴ Harrison 1901:11-2

This is an odd and unexpected combination of in-group and out-group bias. It seems that Harrison viewed Americans, due to their English heritage, to be fundamentally different from those of Spanish heritage in Latin America. His low opinion of the Spanish-American governments and the societies therein is a clear example of negative out-group bias. With the exception of Chile, however, he never gave serious thought to a threat originating south of the border. In fact, the *Baltimore* crisis with Chile originated with the president's concern over British influence in South America more than it was about Chilean abuse of American sailors; if it were not for his insistence on appointing an anti-British crusader as consul in Valparaíso, the entire crisis could have been avoided. If we can find evidence of positive in-group bias for the British (a threat) and negative out-group bias of the Spanish peoples of Latin American (not a threat,) it disconfirms the SIT hypothesis in this case.

When asked about the Boer War, Harrison had nothing positive to say about the Boers:

These Boers are not out kind of people; they are not polished; they neglect the bath; they are rude and primitive; their government is patriarchal and, in some things, arbitrary. To be sure, they like these habits and these institutions; they abandoned old homes, and made new homes in the wilderness, that they might enjoy them; but the homes are not such as we should have made; the Anglo-Saxon model has not been nicely followed.³⁷⁵

Despite his low opinion of the Boers, Harrison blamed the United Kingdom for the atrocities of the Boer War. He wrote:

The Boers did not seek war with Great Britain. They retreated to the wall. Like the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock, they did not seek, in the great trek of 1835, an Eldorado, but barrenness and remoteness—a region which, as Mr. Prentiss said, ‘would hold out no temptation to cupidity, no inducement to persecution.’ The Pilgrims found, but the Boers missed, their quest. What seemed a barren veldt, on

³⁷⁵ Harrison 1901: 263

which freemen might live unmolested, was but the lid of a vast treasure-box. Riches are the destruction of the weak.³⁷⁶

Harrison had a low, nearly inhumane view of the Boers. It was the essence of a negative out-group bias. At the same time, however, he sympathized with the Boers in their struggle with Great Britain. In the preceding quote, the theme of the British government as a thief resurfaces; it is clear that the president understood the British government to be a predator and the Boers were prey. Still, when we think of inter-group bias, it is completely unrelated. Harrison gives glowing praise of British society and chides the Boers for poor hygiene. There is a gap between theory and reality that SIT cannot account for.

President Harrison was not reluctant to giving glowing appraisals of the other “great power societies.” He said the following of the Germans: “Your people are industrious, thrifty, and provident. To pay by something is one of life’s earliest lessons in a German home. These national traits naturally drew your people to the support of the Republican party when it declared from freedom and free homes in the Territories.”³⁷⁷

There is no meaningful relationship between out-group bias and threat identification. On the contrary, the scant out-group bias we can observe on behalf of Harrison fails to correspond with threat identification. Contrary to the precepts of SIT, Harrison views British society positively, sometimes grossly exhibiting in-group bias. He compares British culture to the rest of the world in a most complimentary way. What the record yields disconfirms the SIT hypothesis.

³⁷⁶ Harrison 1901: 259

³⁷⁷ Indianapolis, October 13, 1888, Address to German-American organizations from Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana. Hedges 1892:173

Benjamin Harrison was a devout Presbyterian. Did this mean, however, that he considered himself to be a Presbyterian before he was an American? Calhoun writes, “In the White House, he had striven to maintain his religious values even while the crush of duties encroached on formal observances.”³⁷⁸ Additionally, the president’s biographers claim that he looked to God for guidance in decision-making. Sievers writes that Harrison intentionally placed his hand on the 121st Psalm during his inauguration. It read, “I will lift up mine eyes upon the hills from whence cometh my help.”³⁷⁹

Religion was always a central facet of Harrison’s life. He was raised by two devoted Presbyterian parents. His father was deeply religious and insisted on managing a pious household. His upbringing clearly made an impression; Harrison continued to walk the narrow path after his move to Indianapolis. There, he was a deacon in the First Presbyterian Church and an elder only a month before he departed for war in 1861.

The president often associated religion and governance in the same breath. He once said, “The religious faith and practices of the people also exercised a strong influence in developing the American love of institutions, and in freeing men from subserviency [sic] to leaders... That every man is possessed of an immortal spirit of equal value in the sight of God is a leveling doctrine as well as an elevating one.”³⁸⁰ It is possible that he viewed himself as an agent of God while in the White House.

Harrison did use one other category of identity often; *he spoke regularly as a veteran soldier.* The president reveled in his memories of the battlefield and the camaraderie of his fellow veterans. In fact, his friends and supporters, at his behest, still called him General Harrison while in the White House. Harrison spoke more at

³⁷⁸ Calhoun 2005:158

³⁷⁹ Sievers 1960:34

³⁸⁰ Harrison 1901:13

gatherings of the Grand Army of the Republic than any other group. It seemed that he was at his most comfortable in this element; only with veterans' groups did the cold public personality of the president melt. With veterans, the president would joke and reminisce. He did nothing of the sort with any other group, including religious and sectional groups (apart from the GAR, which was geographically based) with which he might identify. Volwiler claims that Harrison's visceral reaction to the killing of American seamen in Valparaiso was due to his personal identification with servicemen.³⁸¹ Perhaps his most comfortable element, the president was always at home with veterans' groups. It is clear that the war had a large impact on his life, but it is also likely that his life as a soldier had a large impact on his identity.

There is reason to believe that the president strongly identified as a Presbyterian and as a veteran, but there is no evidence to support that these categories were more salient than his identity as an American. The vast majority of the president's writings and records of his personal discussions refer to American identity more than any other category, thus we cannot reasonably believe that he had a salient identity and dominant in-group that might give us a clue regarding his threat identification. Like Cleveland, if we conclude that his dominant identification was as an American, it gives us no reason to make a precise prediction regarding threat; the out-group to the American in-group is all foreigners.

The dual biases of a positive British society and a negative British government do not fit the SIT paradigm. This development leads one to believe that the most pressing threat—Great Britain—cannot be a consequence of Harrison's salient in-group and out-

³⁸¹ Volwiler, A.T. 1938:637-9

group bias. In fact, the president's positive view of British society would lead SIT to predict that the president would NOT identify Great Britain as a threat.

William McKinley identified Spanish violence in Cuba as a threat in 1897 and Germany as a mild threat in 1900. We should observe, therefore, that the president was negatively biased against Spanish and German out-groups.³⁸² Both of these threats should not be included in his in-groups and his most salient in-group should correspond with the out-groups of which Spain and Germany are members. Any evidence to the contrary would cast doubt on the effectiveness of the SIT hypothesis.

*President McKinley seems to have held a negative view of the Spanish government and people. In particular, he focused on the illiberal nature of Spanish governance and believed that Spanish leaders were incapable of forming an enlightened form of government.*³⁸³ The president wrote to one of his advisors, "I doubt whether the Spanish official could comprehend real autonomy as Englishmen and Americans would understand autonomy. I doubt whether Spain would give in theory or enforce in fact such autonomy as Canada has."³⁸⁴

It is likely that the president had low expectations for the Spanish and doubted their civility. After the news of the de Lôme letter broke, in which the Spanish

³⁸² Primary documents do not yield much about the personal nature and conduct of William McKinley. Unlike Harrison and completely opposite of Cleveland, he purposely avoided a written record of his innermost thoughts. Although he gave more access to the press than any preceding president, he convinced them not to record material off-the-record. This presents a problem for historians and scholars studying his presidency and, in particular, his foreign policy. What evidence follows makes the most of the scant record McKinley left behind.

³⁸³ In the summer of 1897, McKinley's first inclination was to purchase Cuba from Spain and to immediately emancipate it. When his offer was immediately rejected by the Spanish, he considered approaching Spain with a plan to amend Spanish sovereignty over the island; he envisioned a limited autonomy arrangement akin to the Ottoman Empire's weak rule over Egypt or the British arrangement with Canada. As the following quote indicates, however, he believed that the Spanish were incapable of granting autonomy because they were inherently illiberal and ignorant people.

³⁸⁴ McKinley to Woodford, *Foreign Relations* 1897, 581, 616-7. It was a rare occurrence when McKinley committed his private thoughts to paper, like he did here.

ambassador mocked the habits and character of the president, McKinley acted with restraint but was privately disgusted by the development. Leech writes that his greatest concern was that the *World* received a copy of the intercepted letter before he did, but also notes that he expected such behavior from a Spaniard.³⁸⁵

McKinley did not, however, believe that the Spanish were a lost cause, indicating that his negative opinion did not completely bias his view of the developing crisis. After the assassination of the conservative Prime Minister in November 1897, the Queen Regent installed a liberal government. McKinley held hope that the Liberals would be more amenable to the autonomy of Cuba. He was, in effect, optimistic that the Spanish were capable of change. The president took an escalatory approach, turning the screw on Spain as they resisted American pressure to end *reconcentrado*, most likely because he remained unconvinced that Spain was completely barbarian.

McKinley held a negative view of the Spanish, but this stems only from the illiberal behavior of the Spanish government in Cuba. There is no evidence of any bias against Spanish society. Instead, any animosity came as a result of the Spanish government's repressive and inhumane treatment of Cubans during the second insurrection.

McKinley exhibited no negative bias toward Germany or Great Britain. While he suspected Germany to be a threat at times (especially after German atrocities in China,) he did not exhibit any prejudice against the German people or society. He viewed Great Britain, on the other hand, as a strategic partner in world affairs and, expectedly, there is no record of negative out-group bias towards the British. Oddly, however, there is no significant positive bias towards the British either. It is unexpected to observe more

³⁸⁵ Gould 1980:70

positive bias towards the British from Harrison than from McKinley. After all, it was Harrison who identified the British as a threat and then developed a grand strategy around it. McKinley was the policymaker who insisted—in defiance of Congress—that the isthmian canal not be fortified to protect against the British. One would expect McKinley to have a more positive outlook towards the British. While he might have held positive bias, there is no record of it.

The president was severely biased against the “uncivilized world,” although he never considered it to be a threat. Curiously, McKinley demonstrated a strong bias against the non-Western world, which he considered to be savage and ignorant. The president viewed Africans as people who were practically meaningless without the mercy of American missionaries:

The noble, self-effacing, willing ministers of peace and good will should be classed with the world’s heroes. Wielding the sword of the Spirit, they have conquered ignorance and prejudice. They have been the pioneers of civilization. They have illumined the darkness of idolatry and superstition with the light of intelligence and truth... They are placing in the hands of their brothers, less fortunate than themselves, the keys which unlock the treasures of knowledge and open the mind to noble aspirations for better conditions.³⁸⁶

The view of the enlightened American missionary and the savage native is commonplace in the 19th century discourse. It is likely that the other presidents and policymakers held the same belief, but is remarkable in the breadth and depth of the extent that McKinley often shows his bias.

McKinley saw himself as a member of many in-groups, but none of them bore a large impact on his social identity. The president was a Methodist but did not always attend church while president. Still, some of the most memorable images of McKinley’s tenure in the White House are mixed with religion. The president allegedly prayed to

³⁸⁶ Address at the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, New York, April 21, 1900

God for guidance on the issue of the Philippines in 1898. McKinley referred to religious icons in his rhetoric. McKinley was as pious as any other public intellectual during his time, but his poor church attendance in Washington and his lack of involvement in organized religion at other points of his life lead one to believe that he did not think of himself as a Methodist or as a Christian before other categories of salient identity.

McKinley, like Harrison, was always eager to identify with veterans. When once asked by an old comrade-in-arms how he should address the president, McKinley replied that “I suppose that you should call me Major; it is the only title I feel that I earned.”³⁸⁷ There is no indication, however, that the president considered himself to be a Veteran more than he self-categorized as an American.

McKinley was proud of his Ohio heritage and his regional upbringing, without a doubt, influenced his views on protectionism. Niles and Canton, two towns in the Western Reserve, lived and died by industrial production. This is not necessarily, however, an indication that the president’s most salient in-group identity was an Ohioan or a Midwesterner. The president would, however, often make remarks about his sectional heritage:

I am an Ohioan. There is a bond of close fellowship which unites Ohio people. Whithersoever they journey or wherever they dwell, they cherish the tenderest [sic] memories of their mother State, and she in turn never fails of affectionate interest in her widely scattered children. The statement which has so often been made is not far from the truth, ‘Once an Ohioan always an Ohioan.’”³⁸⁸

Reference to a home state, especially when in front of a friendly audience, is nothing out of the ordinary for a national politician. We cannot assume that McKinley held any extraordinary identification with Ohio and the Midwest because of intermittent speeches.

³⁸⁷ Armstrong, W.H. 2000:55

³⁸⁸ Speech at Banquet of the Ohio Society of New York, New York, March 3, 1900. McKinley 1901:361

McKinley spoke and wrote the most about being American. Before he was president, either as a Congressman from Canton or as the governor of Ohio, he rarely mentioned any category of identity. As president, however, the theme of being American was one of his most popular topics. This was apparent after the 1898 war, when nearly one out of every two speeches McKinley delivered was on the theme of America. A similar pattern developed in the other presidents studied—the longer they were president, the more they spoke and wrote on the theme of America. While we cannot verify with certainty what McKinley’s most salient in-group was, we can confidently claim that being American was evident as much as any other in-group early in McKinley’s tenure and a dominant theme by the end.

William McKinley did not demonstrate any out-group or in-group biases in the historical record. This conclusion is probably the product of his unwillingness to reveal his true self to journalists, colleagues, or the written word. Still, there are a few revealing data to consider when assessing the accuracy of the SIT hypothesis. We know that McKinley had a low opinion of the Spanish, although it is unclear if it existed independently of the Cuban crisis. If it did exist independently, then we can consider the validity of the SIT hypothesis. If McKinley’s negative bias existed only during the Cuban crisis, then an explanation rivaling SIT—RCT—holds water.³⁸⁹ We certainly know that there is no disconfirming evidence available, for example an indication that McKinley was positively biased towards the Spanish.

McKinley had little to say or write about other nationalities. Perhaps, if he had lived beyond his second term, we would have revealed his hand. With what is available, however, we only can conclude that he was biased against what he considered to be

³⁸⁹ Chapter three discusses Realistic Conflict Theory (Sharif 1967)

“uncivilized” people in the colonized world, had a poor opinion of the Spanish during the Cuban crisis, and considered himself to be an American above other categories of identity. This does not indicate a resounding endorsement of the SIT hypothesis, but does not validate it, either. It is unclear if identity, as SIT conceptualizes it, can explain McKinley’s identification of threat.

There is too much disconfirming data to claim that SIT can explain the variation in identified threats. Apart from temporal considerations, we cannot conclude that SIT is an effective explanation of threat identification based on the information presented. Two glaring problems exist in the empirical record. First, SIT predicts that Grover Cleveland would have been biased against Germans as some type of out-group. German culture and German immigrants were mainstays throughout the president’s life, from walking the German-American beat as a ward heeler in Buffalo to sneaking out of the White House to eat *schnitzel* and drink beer with his German friends. If threat identification were based on negative out-group bias, then Cleveland should not have been cozy with Germans throughout his life.

Harrison’s kind words for British society and his strong belief that Americans were inherently Englishmen run contrary to what SIT expects to find in the historical record. The 23rd president identified the British threat strongly throughout his presidency, yet harbored no ill-will towards the British people. SIT claims that a policymaker cannot demonstrate positive bias towards an out-group while simultaneously identifying it as a threat.

Temporality plays an important part in making the case against the SIT hypothesis. Categorization of identity does not change at the drop of a hat. While it is

capable of change, this process is infrequent and rarely without some sort of exogenous shock.³⁹⁰ Cleveland always self-categorized as an American primarily, but his threat identification changed quickly. His opinion of Great Britain as threatening (1895) and non-threatening (1896) does not correspond with his constant view of his social identity.

These observations cast a long shadow of doubt on the validity of SIT to predict and explain threat identification. If it shows no pattern between a president's threat identification and social identity, it cannot possibly explain the variance in threat identifications between 1885 and 1901.

7.4 Results

This chapter offers a brief test of three hypotheses that resemble plausible alternatives to the RBI hypothesis. They represent, although not exhaustively, three potential sources of threat identification: the international system, domestic politics, and international society. After a careful examination of the evidence available, this study concludes that there is too much disconfirming evidence to consider these three hypotheses to be accurate answers to the study's core research question.

Grover Cleveland ignored the British when they were most powerful and most aggressive. The balance-of-power theory extended by Walt asserts that threat identification should vary not because of characteristics of the policymaker or the state but, instead, factors specific to the international system. These inputs—relative power, proximity, offensive capabilities, and offensive intentions—changed over the course of the sixteen years studied. They did not, however, change in a manner that corresponded with changes in threat identification. Each president identified threats differently, yet

³⁹⁰ See the discussion of inter-group comparison in chapter three.

they did not correlate with changes in the international system; this disconfirms the BOT hypothesis.

The most accessible example of this gap between evidence and BOT predictions rests in the foreign policymaking of Grover Cleveland. While American power was rising toward the end of the nineteenth century, it still did not come close to British power in 1885. The gap between British and American power narrowed to the point that by Cleveland's second term, the two were at near-parity. It was at this time that Cleveland determined that Britain was a threat and the United States needed to defend its interests. BOT predicts that Cleveland would have done exactly the opposite and had identified the British threat early in his term and then eased (despite continued British aggression in the Caribbean basin) his identification as he approached 1897. Such evidence cannot be ignored and we must conclude that BOT cannot explain the differences in threat identification studied.

Cleveland and McKinley ignored critically important sub-national interests when identifying threats at least once. Peter Trubowitz writes that sub-national interests infiltrate the American foreign policymaking apparatus and influence decision-making processes, including threat identification. All presidents gather and retain their political power through the assembly of winning coalitions, which serve as an entry point for sectional interests. If a sub-national interest has the possibility of delivering a winning coalition and is threatened by a foreign actor, the president should identify that threat accordingly. Each of the presidents, however, ignored these sub-national interests when identifying threats.

William McKinley resisted not only the key members of his winning coalition, but practically the entire nation when he painstakingly avoided conflict with Spain in 1898. The difference between him and most of his coalition was in the nature of the threat identified. McKinley viewed Spanish inhumanity in Cuba as the true threat, while some of his most substantial backers (farmers and corporate interests) viewed Cuban independence as a major liability due to their investments there. McKinley identified the Spanish threat and then acted on it, despite the wishes of some of his most important backers.

Cleveland's actions produced a similar result. Cleveland relied on two groups, the Mugwumps and the American South, for the vast majority of his political support. Theoretically, both possessed the ability to influence presidential decision-making. In 1896, the second insurrection in Cuba led to a call in the South for armed intervention—it viewed the instability on its southern border as a direct threat to its economy and well-being. Cleveland, however, ignored the pleas of the Southerners despite their place of prominence in the president's coalition.

The actions of McKinley and Cleveland force us to reject the sectional interest hypothesis. If the president identifies (or fails to identify) a threat that is contrary to the identification of a key member of the winning coalition, then the hypothesis fails.

Presidents Cleveland and Harrison identified threats that corresponded with societies that they admired. Social identity theory asserts that in-group/out-group behavior is what causes an individual to identify threats. All threats are members of an out-group and evidence of the conceptualized out-group exists in the form of negative bias. If a president identifies a threat, therefore, he must exhibit negative bias against that

out-group identity. Despite the fact that Presidents Cleveland and Harrison identified the United Kingdom as a threat, both held British (and especially English) culture in high regard. The on-and-off relationship between Cleveland and the British can be excused, but this observation is truly unexpected for Harrison. Harrison's identification of the British threat was not only the most consistent among the three presidents studied, but it was also formed the core of his grand strategy. The president demonstrated no negative bias towards British culture or society, as SIT would expect. On the contrary, Harrison spoke occasionally about the shared culture of America and Britain. If negative bias is proof-positive of a relationship between social identity and threat identification, then positive bias must be disconfirmation.

None of the three theories and their applied hypothesis can explain threat identification. If they had, they would possess the ability to account for changes in threat identification between presidents. Now that we have established that the competing explanations cannot satisfactorily answer this study's research question, we turn to the RBI hypothesis as a final alternative.

7.5 Primary Issues

This chapter seeks to use the three alternate hypotheses discussed in chapter two to determine why threat identifications varied among Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley. It concludes that the evidence available disconfirms these hypotheses and raises the following primary issues for consideration:

1. There is ample evidence available that disconfirms the alternate hypotheses studied in this chapter.
2. Power and offensive intentions do not necessarily correspond with threat identification, as Walt's model suggests.

3. Grover Cleveland did not identify the United Kingdom as a threat when it was most powerful and aggressive. British when they were most powerful and most aggressive.
4. Grover Cleveland and William McKinley ignored the sub-national interests of their winning coalitions when identifying threats at least once.
5. Negative out-group bias does not accompany threat identifications, as SIT predicts.
6. Presidents Cleveland and Harrison identified threats that corresponded with societies that they admired.
7. Substantial disconfirming evidence exists to doubt the accuracy of the rational-material, sub-national interests, and SIT answers to the research question, as discussed in chapter three.

8 **The RBI Explanation**

This dissertation extends a novel approach to studying identity and its relationship to threat. The preceding chapter established that contending approaches to understanding presidential threat identification during the Gilded Age are unreliable. This chapter, therefore, takes up the task of answering the question, “Why do threat identifications vary between presidents?” using the RBI hypothesis discussed in chapter two. This chapter presents data from the historical record that indicate that the presidents studied expressed distinct and different definitions of what it means to be American and that there is a logical relationship between the constitutional rule and threat. Before the data are revealed and discussed, however, we briefly return to the RBI hypothesis and what observations it predicts.

The president should articulate a clear and consistent definition of what it means to be an American. The RBI theory relies on a clearly defined constitutive rule that forms the basis of group identity. This rule is subjectively constructed; it can differ from one individual to another. Nevertheless, we should be able to look at the historical record and find an easily comprehensible rule for membership in the American social group.

What makes us Americans is what can be potentially threatened. There should be a relationship between what constitutes Americans as a social group and what can be threatened. In terms of threat, we should expect identified threats that relate to a particular view of what can be threatened. We are accustomed to think of threat in international politics the potential to jeopardize state survival although foreign policymakers are capable of identifying threats to other entities of which they are a

part.³⁹¹ The constitutive rule that each president articulates should also identify what can be threatened by non-American actors.

The president should identify actors that violate the constitutional rule as threats first and foremost. We should see threat identifications that are based on the constitutional rules (the American Way) used by the presidents studied. If Cleveland believes that taking daily showers makes an American, then he should identify those that would try to convince Americans or prevent Americans from showering as threatening. Further, we expect to find *pre-* and *post-hoc* justifications for threat identifications that relate to the constitutional rule (i.e., they hate showers, so we had to defend ourselves.)

8.1 Grover Cleveland

Grover Cleveland viewed Americans as a unique group of lawful people; he believed that his nation was exceptionally humble, self-reliant, and moral. In short, Cleveland's American Way was that Americans were lawful people. Accordingly, he viewed international law as an extension of his American Way; he expected foreign states to behave justly and respect law in the same manner that Americans do at home. When states broke international law, such as Great Britain's seizure of sovereign Venezuelan territory in 1895, they were clear and present threats to his American Way.

8.1.1 Cleveland's American Way

Cleveland believed that Americans were humble. The president consistently held the opinion that Americans were a humble people. In public and private, he spoke of how Americans were people unmotivated by personal gain and, on the contrary,

³⁹¹ The "catch-all" term for this notion of security is *national security*, although Wolfers (1952) notes that the term is protean and diffuse.

worked for work's sake and not for selfish purposes. Acting in any other manner was distinctly un-American.

The president believed that humility meant that an American should use his resources for the public good and not for personal benefit. He wrote that an American would never be “one having educational acquirements and fitness for beneficial work, (but does) no more than exploit their acquirements in the false and unhealthy sociability of habitual club life, or only utilize them as aids to the selfish pleasure of constantly restless foreign travel, or as accessories to other profitless enjoyment”³⁹² Cleveland believed that Americans, with their humble emphasis on vocational education, were different from the arrogance of Europeans, who sought knowledge for personal gratification. He cited the spread of atheism and anarchism in France as proof of this distinctly un-American view of learning and knowledge.³⁹³

Acting with hubris, therefore, made someone un-American. This is a trait that he attaches to many of his political opponents. When asked why he became a Democrat in the first place, Grover told Richard Watson Gilder “Perhaps it had something to do with (1872 Radical Republican presidential candidate) Frémont, who had been flamboyant and artificial.”³⁹⁴ He held the same contempt for imperialist Americans, claiming that an active campaign for bases and colonies abroad is due to the un-American qualities of greed and indulgence.

This belief that Americans are a humble people is not Cleveland's alone; Thomas Jefferson wrote often about the unique quality of the American as a frugal household and considerate of others. The similarities between Jefferson's view of America and

³⁹² Cleveland 1897:17-8

³⁹³ Cleveland 1897:20-1

³⁹⁴ Quoted in Tugwell 1968:31

Cleveland's view do not go unnoticed by historians and biographers; Cleveland was the last Jeffersonian president. The president's notion of Americans as a humble people is based on centuries of American political culture and is a notable trait in the long view of the American discourse on identity.

Cleveland also preached often that frugality was an inseparable element of the common American trait of humility. The president once told a gathering of supporters, "I have spoken of frugality and economy as important factors in American life... Here our patriotism is born and entwines itself with the growth of filial love... but above all, here in the bracing and wholesome atmosphere of uncompromising frugality and economy, the mental and moral attributes of our people have been firmly knit and invigorated."³⁹⁵

Finally, Cleveland associated humility with fealty to the American state. Early biographer Williams writes, "He believed the homely virtues by which individuals rise to better things to be not inapplicable to the government of communities and of nations, and that the affairs of the United States should be managed with the same industry, honesty, frugality, and thrift that private citizens use in the management of their own affairs."³⁹⁶

Henry Loomis Nelson and Daniel Lamont, two long-time advisors and close friends of Cleveland, wrote about Cleveland's fealty to the American state in his early life. They claimed that he had always believed that to be American was to sacrifice for the common good in their written eulogy to Cleveland. "He was... a patriot who believed profoundly in the responsibilities and duties of everyone who enjoys the blessings and privileges of American citizenship."³⁹⁷

³⁹⁵ Quoted in Bergh 1909:258, *Address at the Thurman Birthday Banquet*, Columbus, Ohio, November 13, 1890

³⁹⁶ Williams 1909:317

³⁹⁷ Nelson and Lamont 1908:163

The humility trait is an American myth long associated with Puritanism. Assuredly, Cleveland's religious and Presbyterian upbringing bore a strong influence on his view of America and Americans. Cleveland often spoke of Americans in terms that were analogous with Puritan ideals. In his first inaugural address, he said "We should never be ashamed of the simplicity and prudential economies which are best suited to the operation of a republican form of government and most compatible with the mission of the American people."³⁹⁸

We can conclude, therefore, that Cleveland's first normative prescription—his subjectively defined constitutive rule—for being American was to defer their own interests to those of society. He believed that Americans were special among the world's civilizations because their people were humble, not greedy, and endeavored to build society instead of working toward their own interests. He separated Americans from others based on humility. George Parker, a friend of Cleveland's during his final years in Princeton, writes of Cleveland's view of American humility and how his own ancestry was arch-typically American:

When I assisted Mr. Cleveland in the work of house-cleaning, after his first run for the White House... he insisted that the traditions which somehow drift down in American households until they take their place in this histories of families, had already shown him that each generation of his ancestors had been made up of God-fearing, industrious men and good women, who—like most of our American progenitors long settled here—had done their duty as best they could, and that he neither knew nor cared to know more than this... He often expressed the opinion that a really good family is one in which the members have tried so honestly and earnestly, in successive generations, to do useful things that their success had been assured, and he was satisfied that, so for pride or vanity of birth or for undue humility, and no serious danger of that degeneracy of which so much is heard from time to time.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁸ Quoted in Bergh 1909:62, *First Inaugural Address*, Washington DC, March 4, 1885

³⁹⁹ Parker 1909:13-4

There was a clear role for humility in Cleveland's constitutive view of America. He believed that Americans were humble people, unlike those in Europe and elsewhere, and that to be truly American meant to be selfless and reserved. He detested flamboyance and arrogance and viewed them as traits that would undo the foundations of American civilization.

Cleveland believed that Americans were self-made. This notion of the rugged individualist was a common thread in the discourse on American identity in the 19th century; it was the belief that anyone could become an American through industry and determination.⁴⁰⁰ It was a widely, but not universally, held belief. The president maintained that Americans were “rugged, self-reliant, and independent men, and cultivate that product which, more than all others, ennobles a State.”⁴⁰¹ He believed that the self-made man defined Americans and influenced their expectations of government and policy.

Cleveland's notion of Americans as a self-made people originates with his own experience. He was raised in a humble household, the fifth of nine children of a rural Presbyterian minister; Cleveland struggled to support his mother and sisters while pursuing a career as a lawyer. He attributed the string of successes that followed, which elevated from poverty to the presidency, to his determination and industry. Nevins writes, “The future President's home life and training tended to produce a keen sense of personal responsibility, to make trustworthy character, for its ethical basis was absolute...

⁴⁰⁰ Of course, this myth was not equally applicable; only people of a certain disposition (male, white, Christian, and heterosexual) could be self-made.

⁴⁰¹ Quoted in Bergh 1909:88, *Address at the Virginia State Fair*, Richmond, October 12, 1886.

his intimates never ceased to be amazed by the gulf which separated the exuberant, jovial, sociable Grover and the stern, unbending, socially responsible Grover.”⁴⁰²

As president, Cleveland’s speeches routinely referred to the American way as one that is based on self-reliance and the success of individual industry. When he accepted his first nomination for president, he wrote, “A true American sentiment recognizes the dignity of labor and the fact that honor lies in honest toil.”⁴⁰³ Hard work and determination were American traits and virtues. In fact, many of Cleveland’s descriptions of American virtue touched on the self-reliance that came from honest and productive work.

In 1898, Cleveland wrote his third book, “The Self-made Man.” The book was a long lecture, delivered at Princeton shortly after the conclusion of his second term that was a paean to the virtues of Americans. He focused on two themes, education and industry, and made the case that a true American was one that used public resources (i.e. education) to improve his status (through industrious behavior) for the sake of virtue and not for personal gain. Here, the notion of self-made intersects with humility in a meaningful way; they are both central to being American.

Cleveland’s ideal American is self-made, much like he considered himself to be self-made. The underlying concepts of the self-made man are honesty, industry, and a sense of morality. Unlike his contemporaries in politics, young Grover had none of their advantages. Instead of attending school at Hamilton College, like he had his heart set on since he moved to Holland Patent with his family, he moved to New York City to find work to support his widowed mother and younger four siblings (his older four were also

⁴⁰² Nevins 1933:57-8

⁴⁰³ Quoted in Bergh 1909:52, *Letter Accepting Nomination for President*, Albany, NY, August 18, 1884

working to support the family.) When his mother's household was financially stable, he took a chance and planned a move to Cleveland, Ohio.⁴⁰⁴ On his way, he stopped in Buffalo to visit his uncle, Louis Allen, and remained there until he was elected governor of New York. While in Buffalo, the future president apprenticed at a law firm, worked odd jobs, and slept in a closet. He began his political career by serving as a "ward heeler" in some of Buffalo's roughest and poorest neighborhoods, making friends and building alliances with immigrant groups for the local Democratic Party. His determination and hard work, not his rough and sometimes off-putting personality, were what gained the attention of Buffalo's elites. Within two decades, Cleveland was one of Buffalo's most successful mayors, but still a bachelor and who worked 18-hour-days without complaint. Cleveland attributed his rise from rural poverty to political stardom as a matter of hard work and determination, two virtues that comprised the "self-made man" and whom he viewed as the ideal American.

Cleveland's notion of the self-made man aligns with the Puritan view of work's role in society. Williams writes, "Cleveland had a Puritan work ethic. Here was still another reason why he was glad to do this work- it was because it was work. He believed in wholesome activity, exerting one's own God-given faculties; in work for work's sake, aside from the other normal satisfaction of profiting by one's own labor—not that of others."⁴⁰⁵ The view that work itself was spiritual redemption, a cornerstone of Puritan and Presbyterian tradition, matches Cleveland's view of the self-made man. Further, it

⁴⁰⁴ Nevins (1933:41) quotes Grover as saying, "There was something about the name that struck me as destiny." The northern Ohio city is named after Moses Cleveland, Grover's first American ancestor who was a pilgrim and an early settler in Boston.

⁴⁰⁵ Williams 1909:70-1

was this relationship between man and labor that he believed made the American exceptional.

The American, the president maintained, was unique in the world because of his need to work for his own benefit and his ability to improve himself by his own labor. Benefiting from title, inheritance, or from the fruits of others' labor was distinctly un-American because it meant that the man was made by others, not himself. For this reason, Cleveland drew a strong distinction between America and other societies based on aristocracy or strict class hierarchies.

Cleveland believed that the "self-made" qualities of Americans separated them from Europe. While Americans developed vocations from their education, for example, it led the French and Germans to indulge in socially irresponsible philosophies. In the *Self-made Man*, he wrote that the promotion of atheism and the arrogance of education led to the current anarchic chaos of the once-strong French state and polity.⁴⁰⁶

Interestingly enough, Cleveland precluded the classic American ideals, such as liberty and freedom, from his constitutive rules. The fact that his preferred view of America, which included industry and humility, was mutually exclusive with freedom and runs counterintuitive to today's view of American civilization. In a discussion of the life of Daniel Webster, Cleveland said the elder statesman embodied true Americanism because "though he loved freedom and hated slavery, never consented to the infringement of constitutional rights, even for the sake of freedom... that his patriotism and his love for the Union were so great that he constantly sought to check the first sign of estrangement among our people."⁴⁰⁷ This is a remarkable statement that he repeated

⁴⁰⁶ Cleveland 1897:20, 21

⁴⁰⁷ Quoted in Bergh 1909:252, *Address in Tremont Temple*, Boston, MA, October 31, 1891

often in his public life; Cleveland maintained that a true American sacrifices personal freedom for the benefit of the public good. He viewed this as just and moral; it is a sentiment that is compatible with his constitutive rules: humility, fealty, and industry. Next we will explore the most salient constitutive rule in Cleveland's view of Americans—justice.

Most importantly, Cleveland believed that Americans were a just people. In *The Self-Made Man*, the president describes Americans as a just people. He wrote:

Americans are a just people, willing to concede equal rights and privileges to every citizen, would enforce justice and equality in their government, a frugal and economic people would command frugality and economy in public administration; a people who valued integrity and morality would exact them in high places; a people who held sacred the honor of their country would insist upon its scrupulous protection and defense; and a people who love peace would not again suffer the humiliation of seeing dashed from their proud grasp the almost ripened hope of leadership among the nations of the earth; in the high mission of driving out the cruel barbarities of war by the advent of the pacific methods of international arbitration.⁴⁰⁸

Cleveland believed that the unique qualities that made Americans, like humility, industry, and justice, gave America an unusual character. They meant that American society was based on a social contract, one that all bought into by being Americans. This was a domino effect of virtue that Cleveland believed to originate in the home, in the schools, in the churches, and in the hearts of each and every true American.

To be just and American was to defer one's impulses to the order of the greater good. Elihu Root, an admirer of Cleveland, wrote of him that "He inherited traditions from the earlier days, not so very far remote, when it was considered every man's business to do his part towards maintaining the peace and order of the community. He

⁴⁰⁸ Cleveland 1897:31

accepted that as part of normal American life.”⁴⁰⁹ Justice was a matter of supporting law and order, from which came other core elements of American identity, including equality, classlessness, and humility.

Cleveland’s notion of justice commands a particular meaning; he viewed justice as the pursuit of law and order. The president, even in his earlier days, maintained that the duty of an American was to remain loyal to the state. This requirement to be American integrates his other views of America, especially honesty. Cleveland believed that what made Americans just was their honesty, their fealty to the state, their support of law and order. To be American, therefore, was to support the American state and the law.

Cleveland believed that the American way was to support law and order. This rule ties together the other constitutive rules. The American way, according to Grover Cleveland, is to act justly. In his second inaugural address, Cleveland summarizes his view of the American way the best:

None of us can be ignorant of the ideas which constitute the sentiment underlying our national structure. We know that they are a reverent belief in God, a sincere recognition of the value and power of moral principle and those qualities of heart which make a noble manhood, devotion to reserved patriotism, love for man’s equality, unquestioning trust in popular rule, the exaction of civic virtue and honesty, faith in the saving quality of universal education, protection of a free and un-perverted expression of the popular will, and an insistence upon a strict accountability of public officers and servants of the people. These are the elements of American sentiment; and all these should be found deeply imbedded in the minds and hearts of our countrymen.⁴¹⁰

The president immediately continued his discussion of American sentiment to explain his government’s role in the world, based on the mandate put forth by the American way:

⁴⁰⁹ Quoted in McElroy 1923:x

⁴¹⁰ Quoted in Bergh 1909:323, *Address before the Students of the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, MI, February 22, 1892*

When any one of (these sentiments) is displaced, the time has come when a danger signal should be raised. Their lack among the people of other nations—however great and powerful they may be—can afford us not comfort [sic] nor reassurance. We must work out our destiny unaided and alone in full view that the truth that nowhere, so directly and surely as here, does the destruction or degeneracy of the people’s sentiment underline the foundations of governmental rule.⁴¹¹

In the heart of one of his most significant public addresses, Cleveland confesses that the role of government and the guiding principle of foreign relations is based solely on the American way—the just and moral principles that define American life.

Grover Cleveland believed that an American was a just and lawful person. He came to this conclusion based on his other constitutive views of America: self-made, industrious, honest, and obedient to the state. When considered together, there is a strong sense of how the president’s subjectively defined view of America related to his personal behavior and his politics. It explains why he was the “Veto Mayor,” why he refused to support the annexation of Hawaii, and why he identified law-breaking states as aggressive threats. The next sub-section discusses the relationship between Cleveland’s view of Americans as “justice-loving people” and his threat identification.

8.1.2 Explaining Threat Identification, 1885-1889, 1893-1897

Grover Cleveland held a view of Americans that was consistent with his perception of threats. This section establishes the relationship between Cleveland’s notion of Americans as a just people and his view of states that act unjustly as threats.

Cleveland distrusted societies and behaviors that violated international law or were dishonest in their foreign relations. States that disregarded international law or

⁴¹¹ Quoted in Bergh 1909:324, *Address before the Students of the University of Michigan*, at Ann Arbor, MI, February 22, 1892

dishonest were considered unjust, much like how he considered the unjust use of personal advantage to neglect the common good to be an affront to the American way.

At the start of his second term, Cleveland saw no pressing threats to his American way. He said, “While our foreign relations have not at all times during the past year been entirely free from perplexity, no embarrassing situation remains that will not yield to the spirit of fairness and love of justice which, joined with consistent firmness, characterize a truly American foreign policy.”⁴¹² Here, Cleveland explicitly remarked that a threat to America was based on the behavior of foreign elements that obfuscate the American “spirit of fairness and love of justice.” Absent in his address was any discussion of homeland security, the balance-of-power, the proliferation of democracy, or the entanglements of foreign alliances. None of the common wisdom “threat inputs” were present in Cleveland’s view of American security, but instead, only his constant effort to ensure that the American pursuit of justice at home and abroad was defended against unjust elements. Unjust behavior was the crux of his threat identifications.

The president believed that there was an international morality, institutionalized as international law that was completely compatible with the American way. McElroy quotes him in an interview when the two discussed international law. “I mistake the American people if they favor the odious doctrine that there is no such thing as international morality; that there is one law for a strong nation and another for a weak one.”⁴¹³ Cleveland preferred to operate within the dictum of international law completely; this included the deferring of diplomatic relations to international

⁴¹² Quoted in Bergh 1909:355, *First Annual Message* (2nd Presidential Term), Washington, DC, December 4, 1893

⁴¹³ McElroy 1923:45

arbitrators.⁴¹⁴ According to Cleveland, there was a direct and permanent relationship between the American way of justice, international morality, and international law. He believed that his role as the American head of state and government was to obey all three always. It is no surprise, then, that he viewed transgressors of international law as threats to the American way. It was these actions and these actors that he identified as threats and these cases that preoccupied his focus on foreign policy.

Cleveland identified internationally illegal behavior as threatening. The best way to understand the relationship between Cleveland's American way and Cleveland's threat identification is through unjust behavior, understood as internationally illegal. Brodsky quotes Cleveland as often uttering the maxim, "I do not believe that nations any more than individuals can safely violate the rules of honesty and fair dealing."⁴¹⁵ Whether it was British chicanery in its negotiations with Venezuela over the Orinoco or the Harrison administration's support for a pro-American coup in Hawaii, the president viewed any internationally illegal behavior as a direct threat to America.

The British role in the Venezuela crisis was an affront to the American way. Cleveland simply viewed the conflict between Venezuela and Great Britain as one between a good neighbor and a bad one. Whereas the fence keeps an aggressive and unjust neighbor from harming a benign one, international law kept Britain from taking the Orinoco from Venezuela. When Britain began to ignore international law and encouraged British citizens to settle in eastern Venezuela, Cleveland believed that there was more at stake than just Venezuelan land; British behavior was a threat to justice, international law, the American way, and existed in America's own backyard.

⁴¹⁴ May 1963

⁴¹⁵ Brodsky 2000:241

The president argued that the British government was not acting with honest intentions. Reflecting on the British behavior, he wrote, “A continual profession on the part of Great Britain of her present readiness to make benevolent concessions and of her willingness to cooperate in a speedy adjustment, while at the same time neither reducing her pretensions, nor attempting in a conspicuous manner to hasten negotiations to a conclusion, is an affront to decency.”⁴¹⁶

The situation was particularly threatening to Cleveland because of Britain’s history of bullying Venezuela and circumventing international law. He often referred to Britain’s use of naval power to force Venezuela to pay reparations without any legal recourse; he does not fault Britain for demanding reparations for Venezuelan transgressions, but sees the pattern of coercion outside international law as particularly troubling.⁴¹⁷

At the start of his second term, Cleveland saw British behavior in South America as threatening but some in his cabinet did not. His Secretary of State, Walter Gresham, wrote to Bayard:

The President is inspired by a desire for a peaceable and honorable adjustment of the existing difficulties between an American state and a powerful transatlantic nation, and would be glad to see the reestablishment of such diplomatic relations between them that would promote that end... this government will gladly do what it can to further a determination in that sense.⁴¹⁸

Bayard was the strongest dissenter with Cleveland’s threat identification; the president surrounded himself with similarly self-made, humble, and legalistic thinkers, like Richard

⁴¹⁶ Cleveland [1900] 1904:191

⁴¹⁷ Cleveland [1900] 1904:238-42

⁴¹⁸ Cleveland [1900] 1904:249-50

Olney, Daniel Lamont, and Walter Gresham.⁴¹⁹ Despite the dissent of one of Cleveland's oldest supporters and confidants, the president pushed through his identification of threat by 1895.

The Venezuelan situation became an urgent matter and a clear and present danger to America by 1895. Cleveland recognized that Britain was intent on annexing the contested Orinoco after it had settled the area⁴²⁰ and held the urgent conviction that the matter was an immediate danger to the American view of the world. He wrote:

If the ultimatum of Great Britain as to her claim of territory had appeared to us so thoroughly supported upon the facts as to admit of small legal doubt, we might have escaped the responsibility of insisting on an observance of the Monroe Doctrine... On the contrary, we believe that the effects of our acquiescence in Great Britain's pretensions would amount to *a failure to uphold and maintain a principle universally accepted by our Government and our people as vitally essential to our national integrity and welfare.* (Italics added for emphasis)⁴²¹

To Cleveland, jingoism and the use of power for personal gain was contrary to the American way. It incensed him, naturally, when his defense of the Monroe Doctrine and Venezuelan sovereignty was conflated with jingoism by his critics. In an interview with Cleveland, Gilder writes that

We talked a good deal about jingoism and both of us with a great contempt for the hectoring attitude toward foreign countries. Knowing his sentiments on the subject, I felt assured when I heard, later abroad, of the message concerning Venezuela, that it was not dictated by the jingo spirit, but that his action was honestly arrived at, and all the more sincerely on account of the President's general sentiment against jingoism.⁴²²

Cleveland believed that those Americans, particularly but not exclusively the imperialists, were anti-American. Reflecting on the crisis and those that opposed him, he wrote:

⁴¹⁹ Bayard's sympathy for the British while he was Ambassador led to his censure in the Senate in 1897; his critics (Cleveland not among them) argued that Bayard was practically a British agent.

⁴²⁰ Cleveland [1900] 1904:231

⁴²¹ Cleveland [1900] 1904:256

⁴²² Gilder 1909:136

I know that occasionally, some Americans of a certain sort, who were quite un-American when the difficulty was pending, have been very fond of lauding the extreme forbearance and kindness of England toward us in our so-called belligerent and ill-advised assertion of American principle... But, those among us who most loudly reprehended and bewailed our vigorous assertion of the Monroe Doctrine were the timid ones who feared personal financial loss, or engaged in speculation and stock-gambling... the patriotism of such people traverses exclusively the pocket nerve.⁴²³

The Venezuelan case was emblematic of Cleveland's view of Great Britain. He was weary of a powerful state that disregarded international law and the principles of an international morality that resonated deeply with his view of the American way. Cleveland considered the use of power for selfish gain as threatening to the American Way to the Commander-in-chief as a flag burning might be to an American in 2008. Both acts were deeply offensive and threaten the constitutive traits that define group identity.

The Venezuelan crisis was not the only example of threat identification based on the conflict between foreign actors' behavior and Cleveland's American way. Even concerning Britain, the alleged British interference in the failed Brazilian insurrection of 1893 deeply concerned him—so much that he woke the British ambassador in the middle of the night to deliver an ultimatum. Until that moment, Great Britain and the Cleveland administration had the best possible relationship. Shortly after Gresham and Cleveland gained assurances that the United Kingdom was not breaking international law by violating Brazilian sovereignty, Cleveland restored the relationship to its previous friendliness.⁴²⁴ A second case, concerning German behavior in Samoa, highlights a similar relationship between constitutive identity and threat identification.

⁴²³ Cleveland [1900] 1904:278-80

⁴²⁴ Gresham 1919:780-1

Cleveland viewed the German role in the Samoa crisis as an affront to the American way. In the Samoa debacle, Cleveland's viewed the best possible outcome as neutrality and sovereignty for the Samoan people because international law required it to be so. He recognized, however, that there was a fierce competition among the three Pacific powers (Germany, Britain, and United States) over Samoa. He saw that the American position was one of equal access and protection of Samoan independence; when Germany and Britain worked contrary to this interest, it was a clear threat. In 1886, before the German policy became increasingly aggressive, Cleveland wrote to Congress:

Civil perturbations in the Samoan Islands have during the past few years been a source of considerable embarrassment to the three governments, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, whose relations and extraterritorial rights in that important group are guaranteed by treaties... In May last Mailetoa offered to place Samoa under the protection of the United States, and the late consul, without authority, assumed to grant it. The proceeding was promptly disavowed and the overzealous official recalled... With a change in the representation of all three powers, and a harmonious understanding between them, the peace, prosperity, autonomous administration, and neutrality of Samoa can hardly fail to be secured.⁴²⁵

When German interference with the Samoan monarchy violated Cleveland's call for "peace, prosperity, and autonomous administration," the president became concerned. When he was convinced that the Germans were behaving in a manner that flouted international law, he saw the actions as a direct challenge to the American way. In an urgent message to Congress, shortly after the Germans engineered a coup in Apia, Cleveland wrote, "I have insisted that the autonomy and independence of Samoa should be scrupulously preserved, according to the treaties made with Samoa by the powers named [United States, Britain, and Germany] and their undertakings and agreements with

⁴²⁵ Cleveland's message to Congress, State 1886:x

each other.”⁴²⁶ The German actions in 1886 were seen by Cleveland as a direct threat to the treaties and obligations of the tripartite powers.

Cleveland was so threatened by the German disregard for the tripartite treaty that he was willing to risk war with Germany. A war, in fact, the United States had no ability to win—Bismarck purposely sent a quantitatively and qualitatively overwhelming force to Samoa. Cleveland could not have expected the American forces to survive a battle over the Samoan archipelago. Still, he was willing to participate in a game of brinkmanship in order to preserve the tripartite agreement and the rule of law. Count Bismarck was willing to call his bluff and, with the German and American navies poised to raise flags and battle in less than twenty-four hours, they avoided war only when a hurricane blew through Apia and Pago-Pago and destroyed every sea-faring vessel. Later, cooler heads prevailed. Bismarck agreed to arbitrate the matter, most likely because the German coup failed anyway. Regardless, Cleveland sent his message to the German government: disregard for the sovereignty of Samoa and of international law was an affront to America and would not be tolerated.

Still, Germany was not always a threat. During the bulk of his first term, Cleveland’s communications with Germany were dominated by negotiations of the rights of Americans living in Germany and vice versa. These discussions were guided by the *Naturalization Treaty between the United States and Bavaria* (1868), treated as a legal matter even when large sums of money and corporate interests were concerned, and pleased the president greatly. The ability of the Germans to work within the boundaries of international law to settle a dispute was not lost on Cleveland. The issue of Samoa, however, was treated separately.

⁴²⁶ *Foreign Relations of the United States, Dispatch to Bayard*

Despite the aggressive behavior of the Spanish starting in 1894, Cleveland never viewed Spain as a threat. He regarded them as benign simply because Spanish behavior was within the confines of international law. When the Spanish navy illegally seized the American ship, *Allianca*, the Spanish government admitted to its mistake and furnished reparations to the American government, according to international law. Spain sent the costly signal that it would use force, even against American citizens, in order to maintain its grip on Cuba. This did not bother Cleveland in the least. On the contrary, Cleveland used American power to assist Spain in its efforts when he ordered the U.S. Navy to enforce American neutrality. Arresting Americans traveling to Cuba was, in fact, internationally legal and supported Spain's rights as sovereign over its colony. Cleveland never considered Spain to be a threat, despite the harm that Spain would do to Americans, American business, and the violations of human rights that would transpire there through the end of his term.

There was a strong relationship between the threats that Cleveland identified, the behavior that the threatening actors exhibited, and the constitutive rules the president used to define American identity. To act contrary to the American way was to threaten Americans; Cleveland identified threats according to how he viewed America. In his dealings with Germany, Britain, and Spain, he judged their behavior as threatening only if it violated international law; this unjust behavior threatened the American way.

Cleveland viewed the Venezuela crisis as a British affront to good neighborliness; it was a threat to justice and the American way. Reflecting on the origins of the crisis, Cleveland wrote:

(The year 1893) closed a period in this dispute, fifty-two years in duration, vexed with agitation, and perturbed by irritating and repeated failures to reach a peaceful

adjustment. Instead of progress in the direction of a settlement of their boundaries, the results of their (Venezuelan) action were increased obstacles to fair discussion, intensified feelings of injury, extended assertion of title, ruthless appropriation of the territory in controversy, and an unhealed breach in diplomatic relations.⁴²⁷

Further, Cleveland indicated that the strong American response to the British threat had nothing to do with power and national security. On the contrary, Cleveland admitted that the illegal maneuverings and chicanery of the British in South American provoked him.

He wrote:

If the ultimatum of Great Britain as to her claim of territory had appeared to us so thoroughly supported upon the facts as to admit of small doubt, we might have escaped the responsibility of insisting upon an observance of the Monroe Doctrine in these premises, on our own account, and have still remained the disinterested friend of both countries, merely contenting ourselves with benevolent attempts to reconcile the disputants. We were, however, far from discovering such satisfactory support in the evidence within our reach. On the contrary, *we believe that the effects of our acquiescence in Great Britain's pretensions would amount to a failure to uphold and maintain a principle universally accepted by our Government and our people as vitally essential to our national integrity and welfare.*⁴²⁸

Cleveland's notion of national integrity concerns the principle of the Monroe Doctrine (which he considered to be international law) and not national security. The president focused on the threat to justice and not the threat to American national security, further indicating that he did not rely on assessments of power or hostility to the state as the rationale for threat identification. McElroy quotes Cleveland in 1894: "Great Britain has just now her hands very full in other quarters of the globe. The United States is the last nation on Earth with whom the British people or their rulers desire to quarrel... The other European nations are watching each other like pugilists in the ring."⁴²⁹ Cleveland recognized that the British had no intention of attacking the United States or challenging

⁴²⁷ Cleveland 1909:227

⁴²⁸ Cleveland [1900] 1904:254, italics added for emphasis

⁴²⁹ McElroy 1923:178

it in the Western Hemisphere. He knew that the United Kingdom was not a threat as defined by Walt's BOT theory.

The SIT hypothesis is imprecise to the point of uselessness. Cleveland doesn't trust any powerful state, but he only views those powerful ones that work against the "American way" as threats. What makes this most interesting is that fact that he is quick to forgive and forget; the same actors can be seen as non-threatening as long as they act in manners that are compatible with American values. Germany was a threat when it attempted to circumvent international law and take the Samoan islands by force and subversion. Cleveland responded with a mobilization of the Pacific squadron in order to defend the sanctity of international law. When Germany proposed a revision of the tripartite agreement in Berlin, in accordance with international law, Cleveland was willing to partition the islands with Germany. As soon as Bismarck and the Germans showed that they were willing to observe international law and behave in a "neighborly fashion," Cleveland no longer felt threatened. How can this sudden change in threat identification exist in a framework where we should see dependable and lasting divisions between the enemy out-group and the friend in-group?

This "forgive and forget" behavior that Cleveland exhibits leads us to believe that the SIT hypothesis cannot hold water; his identifications are not based on biases that come from self-categorizations but, instead, from a deeper but conceptually simple way of thinking about "us and them."

Cleveland should have pursued the foreign policy interests of the south, but instead viewed threats with a national lens. Cleveland's two core constituencies during his presidencies were the South, a geographic entity aligned with the Democratic Party

since the antebellum period, and the Mugwumps, a loose alliance of centrists and pragmatists focused on reform issues. The Mugwumps were the rock of his winning coalition and nearly all of the president's domestic policy satisfied their goals. The South, on the other hand, was not as central to the president's platforms. While his strong pursuit of bimetallism and tariff reduction benefited the South, there is no indication in the historical record that Cleveland recognized threats to the South as his identified threats.

Power and proximity played a role, but were not necessary conditions for threat identification. British chicanery existed throughout the globe; this was a product of the role of a declining hegemon and the extent of British holdings. We can deduce that power and proximity played an important role in threat identification, but not a necessary and sufficient role therein.

British dishonesty and international illegality was pervasive in the Kingdom's relations with the independent states of southern Africa; tacit British support for the Jameson Raid of the Transvaal in 1895-6 was a clear violation of state sovereignty. South Africa was, however, thousands of miles away from the American heartland. It was not part of the purview of the Monroe Doctrine. We can assume that this instance of dishonesty and chicanery was intentionally ignored by Cleveland due to its lack of geographic proximity.

Less powerful states that ignore the rules of justice, international law, and the American way were equally apt to be ignored by Cleveland, especially if their actions were beyond the American hemisphere. Counterfactually, we can hypothesize a French transgression in Africa. Before the Berlin Conference of 1895, the French were engaged

in a mad scramble for colonies in Africa. If their behavior flouted international law, would it be likely that Cleveland would have seen France as a threat? No. If the French were implicated in the Brazilian insurrection of 1893, thus violating the sovereignty of the recognized Brazilian government in order to gain influence in South America, would Cleveland then be worried? Possibly yes, but he would not be as concerned as he was with the Germans and British in the area. The lesson learned is that power and proximity are factors in Cleveland's threat identification, although the most significant predictor appears to be related to his definition of American identity.

Counterfactually, however, we can deduce that a less powerful state that violates the American way in close proximity to the United States would have been seen as a threat. The Spanish management of the Cuban insurrection, as early as 1885, was deplorable and contrary to even the most pluralistic view of human rights. As Spaniards ghettoized the Cuban countryside, Americans like Grover Cleveland took notice; they were appalled by the repression of the Cubans. Cleveland did not, however, consider the Spanish to be a threat to the United States because it was a domestic matter in a sovereign state. Spanish actions were protected by international law. When the Spanish did violate international law, however, Cleveland was quick to act. He never identified the Spanish as a threat because each time the Spanish violated the codes of international justice, they returned to international law to settle their disputes with the United States. Cleveland noticed the Spanish willingness to redress grievances through arbitration or routines dictated by international law. For this reason, Spain was never considered a threat, despite the instability they brought to the Caribbean. In his 1895 annual address to

Congress, Cleveland calls the situation in Cuba as “deranged” and “gravely disturbed” but never a threat to the United States or America.⁴³⁰ He writes:

Whatever may be the traditional sympathy of our countrymen as individuals with a people who seem to be struggling for larger autonomy and greater freedom, deepened, as such sympathy naturally must be, in behalf of our neighbors, yet the plain duty of the Government is to observe in good faith the recognized obligation (respect for sovereignty) despite the fact that Americans align with the insurgency.⁴³¹

Cleveland also mentions that US ships have been harassed by the Spanish in Cuba, citing the March 8, 1894 *Allianca* incident, but points out that the Spanish avowed and paid reparations in accordance with international law. There was no reason, therefore, to be worried about a Spanish threat. Counterfactually, if the Spanish were resistant to arbitration to settle their differences with America and the Cleveland administration, we can reasonably assume that Cleveland would have seen Spain as a clear threat and would have acted on it promptly.⁴³²

It seems, therefore, that power and proximity were a factor in Cleveland’s threat identification, but were not independently sufficient for a positive identification. In other words, a powerful and close state was not a threat without exhibiting behavior that ran contrary to Cleveland’s American way.

Does this evidence provide the smoking gun necessary to assert that the RBI hypothesis explains Cleveland’s threat identifications most effectively? To Cleveland, the American way was more important than any other rationale that we attribute to

⁴³⁰ Quoted in Bergh (1909:374) *Third Annual Message* (Second Presidential Term), Washington DC, December 2, 1895

⁴³¹ Quoted in Bergh (1909:374-5) *Third Annual Message* (Second Presidential Term), Washington DC, December 2, 1895

⁴³² We can look to Cleveland’s view of the British conflict on the Mosquito Coast as verification of this counterfactual claim. The British acted unjustly, but within the norms of international law. British aggression was just in Cleveland’s eyes because it followed international law.

foreign policy decision-making. Reflecting on his decision to make the defense of Venezuela against the British his top foreign policy priority, the president wrote:

The Monroe Doctrine may be abandoned; we may forfeit it by taking our lot with nations that expand by following un-American ways; we may outgrow it, as we seem to be outgrowing other things we once valued; or it may forever stand as a guaranty of protection and safety in our enjoyment of free institutions; but in no even will this American principle ever be better defended, or more bravely asserted, than was done by Mr. Olney in this dispatch.⁴³³

Was Cleveland special among the presidents of the late nineteenth century? Was his view of the American way unique? Or, if the constitutive rules differ between presidents, will we observe different threat identification? We now turn to the American way of Benjamin Harrison to see if a rule-based identity approach can account for differences in threat identification between presidents.

8.2 Benjamin Harrison

Two sets of constitutive rules emerge from Benjamin Harrison's descriptions of Americans. First, he was convinced that Americans were exceptional people with a unique form of governance. Secondly, he believed that Americans were the most prosperous of all people. Together, they formed an American way that is an analog for the nationalism that swept the country towards the end of the Gilded Age. This exceptionalism caused the president to believe that all other states, especially ones that were non-democratic or ambitious, were potential threats and jeopardized American governance and prosperity.

8.2.1 Harrison's American Way

Benjamin Harrison held an exceptional view of Americans. The 23rd president maintained that Americans were unlike any other people in this history of humanity and,

⁴³³ Cleveland [1900] 1904:259

therefore, could not be compared with foreign societies. He believed that Americans were exceptional because of their one-of-a-kind mode of governance and because of their recent and unparalleled prosperity.

The exceptional view stems from Harrison's two modalities of American identity: polity and prosperity. Together, they constitute a notion of an America that is alone in a world where conflict is inevitable. This is the crux of Harrison's constitutive view of America and how it relates to his identification of threats during his presidency.

Harrison believed that Americans were exceptional because of their unique polity. Polity means more than simply the form of government; it is the mode of governance. Harrison looked at how Americans governed themselves and their individual relationships with government and concluded that it was a defining characteristic of American identity. He described the American polity in three separate contexts: a shared political history, an emphasis on home rule, and a common civic-mindedness. All point to his deeply held belief that Americans were people that shared a unique form of governance.

First, Harrison defined Americans according to their shared political history. This is a remarkable indicator; it means that Harrison believed that politics defined Americans as much as any competing trait. The elevated importance of the shared political experience of Americans is evident throughout the president's early and late writings and speeches.

The people of the United States were a nation before they were aware of the fact, and before they ratified the compact of government. There were diversities of race, of religion, of pursuit, of interests, but the colonists had ceased to be Englishmen, in the island sense, before the new oaths of allegiance were taken. The American antedates Concord and Lexington... All of these men had the habit of thinking for themselves, and who valued themselves—two essential traits of

republican citizenship. Not parallels of latitude or longitude, not the channels of commerce, not bays, or lakes, or rivers, or mountain passes, determined the area and configuration of the new nation. The lines were run to include Anglo-Saxon freemen, and their allies from France and Holland and other lands, who had felt the hard hand of oppressions, received the new gospel of liberty, and now waited in faith for the institution of a free state in which religion should be a matter of conscience and not of legal degree, and the value of a man no longer a matter of ante-natal assignment.⁴³⁴

Harrison believed that America was a nation of people who chose freely to be Americans because they were oppressed at the hand of foreign societies. In the preceding quote alone, Harrison cites political and social oppression, either in the state's illiberal policies or the yoke of class conflict. Harrison views all Americans as those who suffered these injustices and sought membership as an American as an opportunity to escape them. This myth of origin is a common one that permeates American identity and politics currently; it clearly has staying power.⁴³⁵ Harrison took this constitutive rule most seriously; an American chooses to be one because he shares a common history of escaping despotic societies.

Second, Harrison believed that the frontier experience of the first Americans henceforth made the society amenable to local governance. Americans were, therefore, the only people in the world who preferred and succeeded in locally governing. He believed that this separated liberal Americans from liberal Europeans. Americans were unique compared to the rest of the world because they emphasized the autonomy and independence of local rule. Harrison wrote, "Nearness to the savage and remoteness from England were both favoring conditions in the development of a hardy citizenship

⁴³⁴ Harrison 1901:10, *Lecture at Stanford University*, "The Development of the National Constitution"

and of the great republic... Necessity, rather than philosophy, was their instructor in civics. In the absence of anointed rule, a count of hands was a natural suggestion.”⁴³⁶

Even when compared to other democratic societies, such as Victorian Britain, Harrison saw Americans as different. Americans were able to manage their local and private affairs without the interference of national government. The president viewed this as a unique brand of American self-governance, which he called “home rule” in his discussions on the exceptionalism of Americans.

Harrison was convinced that American home rule was a unique characteristic despite the fact that in other Western societies (Switzerland and Germany are two examples that come to mind) local government was fully autonomous in the late 19th century. When campaigning for president in 1888, Harrison likened the American polity to the one that the Irish sought during its conflict with Britain. “We... hope that the cause of Irish home rule, progressing under the leadership of Gladstone and Parnell upon the peaceful and lawful lines, may yet secure for Ireland that which as Americans we so much value—local home rule.”⁴³⁷

The ideal of town councils working democratically to provide public goods and to solve local problems dominated Harrison’s notion of America. He also believed that home rule, the basis of American polity, was tied to the preceding characteristic of common political history and the following criterion for being a good American, civic-mindedness.

Harrison believed that Americans were unique because their relationship with government was more than a legal obligation. The president believed that they were

⁴³⁶ Harrison 1901:19

⁴³⁷ Harrison, B. (September 15, 1888). Address to the Irish-American Club of Cook County., IL in Indianapolis, Indiana (Hughes 1892: 125)

civic-minded; they acted politically because they loved and were engaged in American society. Accordingly, Harrison often spoke about how Americans love their government, not just align with it. Reflecting on the topic, he once said “My fellow-citizens, we have a country not simply under a bond of constitution that demands the fealty of every man, but we have much more—a country to which the hearts of all people of the states are given.”⁴³⁸

Harrison believed that it was this love for American society constituted the common bonds between Americans and set them apart from the rest of the world. At the national centennial celebration, he said:

Have we not learned that no stocks and bonds, nor land, is our country? America is a spiritual thought that is in our minds—it is the flag and what it stands for; it is the fireside and the home; it is the thoughts that are in our hearts, born of the inspiration which comes with the story of the flag, of martyrs to liberty. It is the graveyard into which a common country has gathered the conscious deeds of those who died that the thing might live which we love and call our country, rather than anything that can be touched or seen.⁴³⁹

The president thought that to be an American was to love America. He often spoke of the innate quality of Americans to serve in government or locally because of their patriotism and love of America itself; the president viewed this as a unique quality of Americans that was incomparable to other parts of the world. American love for America was a one-of-a-kind phenomenon.

Whether on the campaign trail, in private, or in front of a large audience, Harrison was often happy to favorably compare the American polity to foreign polities. It was one of his favorite topics. Often, the president would compare American politics to British politics (a popular topic of the day) or explain why the American polity was different

⁴³⁸ Harrison, B. (February 22, 1898) *At the Banquet of the Union League Club, Chicago IL* (1901:480)

⁴³⁹ Hedges (1892:216). *Address at the Nation's Centennial*, New York City, April 30, 1889

from the rest of the Americas. Concerning the latter, he wrote in his memoirs “If the (American) colonists had been of Spain, (the polity) would possibly have been resolved by the choice of a captain, with arbitrary powers or by some bold spirit seizing the leadership; but they were Englishmen and protestant Christians, and so the compact of government was democratic.”⁴⁴⁰

While Americans had some commonalities with the rest of the world, their own brand of civic-mindedness, when combined with their love of home rule and shared political history, made them truly unique to Harrison. Americans were exceptional; for these three characteristics of policy, they were alone in the world.

When we consider these three constitutive rules (history, home rule, and civic-mindedness) together, we can conclude that to be an American does not require any particular native cultural disposition. Any immigrant can become an American if he engages American politics, participates in home rule, and contributes to society. This is, for all intents and purposes, the model of the pluralist view of American identity that lies at the heart of current debate over immigration policy. Harrison in 1889 and pluralists in 2008 would agree that one can be an American almost instantly if he or she meets these criteria. In fact, the words of Harrison at his inauguration could just as easily be uttered by an activist in 2008. Harrison was concerned that the federal government was granting citizenship to those who were unwilling or unaware of the duties of being an American. He said “We accept the man as a citizen without any knowledge of his fitness, and he assumes the duties of citizenship without any knowledge as to what they are. The privileges of American citizenship are so great and its duties so grave that we may well insist upon a good knowledge of every person applying for citizenship and a good

⁴⁴⁰ Harrison (1901:20) *Lecture at Stanford University, “The Development of the National Constitution”*

knowledge by him of our institutions.”⁴⁴¹ Here, President Harrison argued that the one requirement for American citizenship should be to buy into the civic myth—to support their country and to love American society. “It is pleasant to know that as against all enemies of this country we are one, that we have great pride, just pride in our birthright as American citizens, just pride in the country of our adoption as to those who have found a home here with us. It is the people’s land more than any other country in the world.”⁴⁴²

Harrison believed that Americans were exceptional because of their unprecedented prosperity. A second set of constitutive rules is prominent in Harrison’s writings and speeches, where he constantly described Americans as wealthy and opportunistic. American prosperity was unlike other in the world. Prosperity set Americans apart from foreigners because the quality of life that they enjoy surpassed any other society. In his typical fashion, Harrison once said:

I am sure that we Americans rejoice in the evidences of prosperity which are spread over this good land of ours. We rejoice in the freedom and happiness and contentment that are in our communities and in our homes. We rejoice to know that no cloud is over our horizon; that we are at peace with the world and at peace among ourselves.⁴⁴³

The president firmly believed that the quality of life in America—American prosperity—defined who Americans were. Accordingly, he saw the United States as a place inhabited by people uniquely fortunate compared to the rest of the world.

Harrison described Americans as wealthy. In fact, he believed that the homestead life of Americans and their capacity to homes separated them from other Anglo societies. When campaigning in 1888, he told a group of supporters that “If it is one of the best evidences of our prosperity of our cites that so large a proportion of the men who work

⁴⁴¹ Hedges (1892). *Inaugural Address*, Washington DC, March 4, 1889. (199)

⁴⁴² Hedges (1892:278) *Speech at Knox College*, Galesburg, Illinois on October 6, 1890

⁴⁴³ Hedges (1892:495-6). *Speech in Kingston, NY* on August 18, 1891

are covered by their own rooftrees... God grant that it may be long before we have in this country a [sic] tenantry that is hopelessly of things which makes Ireland a land of tenants...”⁴⁴⁴ The president was convinced that the wealth that came with the unprecedented spike in economic growth after the American Civil War made all Americans prosperous, which in turn, made them unique. Further, Harrison recognized that the wealth that defined Americans was a new development but saw them as a natural extension of American life. In his inaugural, Harrison said “The masses of our people are better fed, clothed, and housed than their fathers were... The courage and patriotism have given proof of their continued presence and increasing power in the hearts and over the lives of our people.”⁴⁴⁵

When considering prosperity, Harrison believed that the equality of opportunity that American society enjoyed was tantamount to wealth. Again, the notion of American egalitarianism (limited to the equality of opportunity) existed before and well after the 1880s. Harrison would often mention in his speeches that Americans were people that revered the individual’s ability to make his own fate. In particular, Harrison believed that the American emphasis on equal opportunity defined Americans. When traveling to the Midwest, the president remarked that “We all ‘live and let live’ in this country. Our strength, our promise for the future, (and) our security for social happiness are in the contentment of the great masses who toil.”⁴⁴⁶ At the end of his term, the president still viewed Americans as a special people defined by opportunity. “As long as men have a free and equal chance, as long as the labor of their hands may bring the needed supplies

⁴⁴⁴ Hedges (1892: 73). *Address to Clinton County Volunteers* in Indianapolis, Indiana on August 3, 1888.

⁴⁴⁵ Socolofsky, H.E. and Spetter, A.B. (1987:7) quote of Harrison’s inaugural address, WDC, March 4, 1889

⁴⁴⁶ Hedges (1892:282). *Speech at the Train Station in Massillion, Ohio* on October 13, 1890.

into the household, as long as there are open avenues of hope and advancement to the children they love, men are contented—they are good, loyal Americans.”⁴⁴⁷ Here, the president connects Americans to wealth, egalitarianism, and prosperity. There was a clear connection between the three.

To Harrison, prosperity defined Americans. Prosperity was a result of the American emphasis on equal opportunity. In this regard, Americans were unlike foreigners. This view of American prosperity as unique encouraged the president to pursue protectionist policies, in part due to his belief that free trade would lower American wages and jeopardize the tranquility, opportunity, and wealth of ordinary Americans. It also led him to believe that Americans and the American life would be coveted by foreigners—a theme that will be discussed later in this chapter.

An analysis of Harrison reveals two consistently mentioned rules that constitute an exceptional view of Americans. President Benjamin Harrison maintained that Americans were exceptional, unlike the rest of the world and incapable of comparison, because of two defining characteristics:

- Americans share a unique polity
- Americans benefit from unparalleled prosperity and opportunity

In 1891, Harrison summed his view of Americans. “Americans love (America) because it is a land of liberty; because the web and woof of its institutions are designed to promote and secure individual liberty and general prosperity. We love it not only because it does not create, but because it does not tolerate, any distinction between men

⁴⁴⁷ Hedges (1892:496) *Speech in Kingston, NY on August 18, 1891*

other than merit.”⁴⁴⁸ Simply, America was a special place that was a product of American egalitarianism and the envy of the rest of the world.

Many Americans define their national identity as something special, but Harrison was one who truly believed that Americans were unique in the world. The best way to understand this uniqueness is by comparison; Harrison believed that Americans could not be fairly compared to other societies and people. The president often compared Americans to Latin Americans and found that they had the same honor but did not share in prosperity or polity. He compared Americans to Europeans and concluded that they shared a level of wealth (although Americans had more) and nothing else—not polity, egalitarianism, or especially honor. This does not mean that Harrison’s comparisons were accurate or verified; it was merely his way of understanding Americans and defining them constitutively.

Benjamin Harrison’s exceptional view of America best explains his nationalism. Nationalism, however, was not tantamount to jingoism. The two were markedly different; the former expressed a love for a united nation while the latter was a preference for a more aggressive foreign policy. The two are not synonymous, yet are also not mutually exclusive. For example, one of Harrison’s lesser initiatives while president was to place an American flag in every classroom. Inspired by the 1889 Centennial celebration in New York, he returned to the White House and worked on a public-private program to increase civic pride in the American government. Harrison did this out of his deep association with his American way, which relied on the notion of a civically engaged society; the flags were an effort to reinforce his view of America. Such an effort had nothing to do with an aggressive foreign policy. It was, however, one of many

⁴⁴⁸ Hedges (1892:511-2). *Speech at a Train Station in Saratoga Springs, NY* on August 21, 1891.

examples of Harrison's intense nationalism, which was fully compatible with his exceptionalism.

When we think about Harrison's answer to the question, "Who are we?" there is one clear answer in two parts. We (Americans) are prosperous and we are a unique polity. President Harrison believed that Americans were an exception to the course of human history and, as the next section suggests, the American role in the world was to protect itself against those that were envious of America's exceptional position.

8.2.2 Explaining Threat Identification, 1889-1893

Benjamin Harrison viewed Americans as a target for covetous and dishonorable actors. Because he saw America and Americans as being politically unique and prosperous, the president was convinced that the rest of the world would envy and covet American society. Americans were like sheep in a world of wolves. Because they were prosperous, they were a natural target of the greedy. Because they were unique, they were alone in the world. The conventional wisdom regarding Harrison was that he was a nationalist and, therefore, sought an aggressive campaign to dominate the world.⁴⁴⁹ The historical record indicates something entirely different; the Hoosier president was convinced beyond a doubt that America was so perfect that it could not peacefully exist in a world so diametrically different from it. The RBI approach can explain the relationship between the exceptional American way and Harrison's threat identification.

Harrison feared that America was alone among the world's states and societies; its isolated position was a consequence of America's exceptionalism. We can see evidence of this view in myriad ways; one is the observation that the foreign policy of the Harrison

⁴⁴⁹ One example of this is May 1961. Also look at Zakaria 1999, who maintained that all Americans during this period wanted to dominate the world if given the chance and the domestic political environment.

administration made no mention of allies or alliances. While this was typical of 19th century foreign policy in general, what was remarkable about Harrison was that he assumed that other states, whether powerful or weak, would not align with American interests. He assumed that conflict between the United States and the rest of the world was inevitable because he understood all other states as potential enemies.

Harrison was afraid that the states powerful enough to steal away America's prosperity would do so unless they were stopped. The World Powers, he maintained, were so unlike America that they worked only to expand and conquer. The only way to prevent World Power aggression was through America's maintenance of deterrent force. Harrison's fear of the World Powers is exactly why he was such a strong supporter of the construction of a blue water fleet; it was the means for deterring the great powers from coercing Americans. In his inaugural address, the 23rd president made the case for a modern navy. "The construction of a sufficient number of modern war ships and of their necessary armament should progress as rapidly as is consistent with care and perfection in plans of workmanship... (Our naval officers) ought not, by premeditation or neglect, to be left to the risks and exigencies of an unequal combat."⁴⁵⁰ The use of the term unequal combat was curious—he conceded the notion that a war with another blue-water navy (of which only the World Powers possessed) was within the realm of possibility. So, while the president had no particular threat on his mind, he was deeply concerned that a war with any state was possible at any time. Harrison viewed all states as potential threats; in such a chaotic world, the only defense is to be the strongest state.

Harrison's quest for naval bases abroad reinforces the notion that he was preparing for a war against an unspecified enemy. Harrison's "strategic bases" plan

⁴⁵⁰ *Inaugural Address*, March 4, 1889, Washington, DC

indicated the relationship between threat and his American way. In 1891, he instructed Blaine to seek bases for acquisition that would provide coaling stations for a blue water navy and would provide refuge for American steam liners when threatened by the World Power navies. Harrison made a short list of potential bases that he would consider acquiring by mutual agreement and not by force. While he would only secure one during his presidency, his strategy was based on the need to create a defensive perimeter around North America that would enable a modern American navy to bar entry to blue water fleets.⁴⁵¹

Table 8.1: Foreign Ports Considered by the Harrison Administration

Ports Considered, 1891-1893
Hawaii ⁴⁵²
Cuba
Puerto Rico
Danish West Indies
Samaná Bay, Santo Domingo (DR)
Môle St. Nicholas, Haiti
Chimbote, Peru

Harrison rejected the possibility of acquiring these bases through colonization or the annexation of another state's colonies. Such was the case with Portugal's proposal to submit its Atlantic-African bases to American protection, which Harrison soundly rejected in 1891. Harrison sought an expansion of the American navy and the development of naval bases abroad not as a jingoist measure but, instead, to protect against what he understood to be the insatiable lust for power among the other capable states of the international system.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ LaFeber 1963:110.

⁴⁵² The United States Navy had exclusive use of Pearl Harbor as a coaling station in 1885, but did not control the port.

⁴⁵³ LaFeber 1963:111. LaFeber claims that the Portuguese approached Whitelaw Reid in 1891 with an offer to use its bases and ports in Africa and the Indian Ocean in return for American protection of

Alternately, Harrison believed that America would be safe if the World Powers would continue to keep each other in check. He wrote, “What hinders that the small states of Europe are not taken over by one of the great powers? ...These small states stand, out of deference to the European equilibrium.”⁴⁵⁴ In fact, the president thought that the only way to deter a World Power was through force. Without the deterring influence of American power and the good fortune of a balance-of-power in Europe, Harrison believed that the Europeans would have re-colonized the Western Hemisphere, including the United States.

Harrison feared that the World Powers’ scramble for empire would steal away American prosperity if the United States did not respond with a deterrent force. In 1894, he said:

We are not under a few disadvantages in this strive with the markets of the world. We are not a colonizing nation. England, France, Germany, and Italy are engaged now in a mad struggle to take up every part of the earth that is not already in the possession of one of the great powers. They have carved up Africa and Asia, and are seizing the islands of the sea and establishing their armed hosts and the governor and their steamship communications with such places, and it gives them an advantage. We are not on equal terms. We can not enter into this ruthless struggle to seize the lands of other people. Thank God, American diplomacy has always been a sentimental diplomacy, and every one of the young South American republics has found a cheer and helping hand from this great republic. We do not push our commerce upon unwilling people at the bayonet’s point. We do not fire our cotton and our wool and our opium from the mouths of great guns. We are at a disadvantage.⁴⁵⁵

President Harrison viewed the commercial interests of foreign states as threats, since they bore the potential to undo American prosperity.

Portuguese colonies. Harrison immediately rejected the offer, claiming that it wasn’t morally permissible for Americans to sustain the colonial system.

⁴⁵⁴ Harrison, B. (1901:241).

⁴⁵⁵ Harrison, B. (1894) *Speech at the Great Mass Gathering*.

The World Powers were the paramount threats to America because they were the most capable. Otherwise, all states were potential threats. Harrison made a point to refer to the major players in international politics as the “four World Powers” in his notes, memoranda, and public documents. The term carried a slight pejorative meaning when Harrison used it. He wrote, “A world power seems, therefore, to be a power having the purpose to take over so much of the world as it can by any means possess, and having with this appetite for dominion military strength enough to compel other nations having the same appetite to allow or divide the spoils...”⁴⁵⁶ Apart from the actual capacity of each, Harrison made no distinction between Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. His predisposed notion of their *modus operandi* was informed by his view of America. Americans were exceptionally democratic and prosperous, therefore less prosperous and less democratic states would challenge the American way. The World Powers had the greatest capacity to challenge his constitutive view of America, therefore they were the greatest threats.

Harrison considered Great Britain to be the most covetous, therefore, the president considered it to be the most threatening and the most un-American of the four powers. There is a strong relationship between Harrison’s opinion of Britain as dishonorable and his identification of Britain as the most threatening power in the world.

Harrison’s poor regard for Britain stems, without doubt, from his experiences in the Civil War. He often reminded his colleagues in internal debates of the contentious history between Britain and America. He once wrote, “Will not the argument for a friendly spirit toward Great Britain be stronger, if the plea of gratitude is made less of? For gratitude takes account, not of one incident, but of all; and the average between 1774

⁴⁵⁶ Harrison, B. (1901: 235).

and 1889 had better not be struck. There may be found more things that it would be pleasant to forget than to remember!”⁴⁵⁷ The president’s constant references to Britain’s conduct in the Civil War, a time when it considered openly siding with the Confederacy, indicates that he was unwilling to budge from his opinion that Britain could not be trusted. The Civil War was, after all, three decades in the past. Harrison saw all of the World Powers as a threat all of the time, but he worried about the British the most of all because they were the most aggressive and had the most interaction with the United States. The three crises of the Harrison administration—when Harrison felt most threatened—all centered on the conflict between perceived British greed and the defense of American prosperity. The instances of Hawaii, the *Baltimore* incident, and the Behring Sea negotiations bear witness to this relationship.

The attempted annexation of Hawaii in 1893 is a case in point. Harrison supported the annexation not because it was an opportunity, but because of his deep-seeded fear that the Hawaiian Islands, in its strategic location in the Pacific and the sizable American expatriate community, would fall into the hands of a Great Power. The president told his cabinet that the problem of “foreign interests” would never disappear in Hawaii and that a failed revolution by Americans would be an opportunity for a foreign power to steal the islands’ sovereignty. The president remarked that Hawaii was already a “protectorate” of the United States due to the basing agreement of 1890, but even still did not deter foreign agents from influencing Queen Liliuokalani. The only way to protect against the possible annexation by Britain, Canada, Germany, or Japan, therefore, was for American government to annex it.⁴⁵⁸ Even when the United States had a lock on

⁴⁵⁷ Harrison (1901:247). Gratitude is a common 19th century synonym for cooperation and reciprocity.

⁴⁵⁸ *Harrison to Foster and Tracy*, circa January 1893, quoted in LaFeber (1963:134-5)

Hawaiian influence and it seemed that Americans would control the Hawaiian government, Harrison still feared that Britain—or any great power that had the opportunity, including Japan—would strive to displace the United States. In a letter to Blaine, Harrison wrote, “I feel sure that American interests there are in jeopardy; but just how far we can go and what action we can take to thwart the schemes of those who are seeking to bring the islands under the control of European powers I do not yet see.”⁴⁵⁹ He would eventually come around to annexation as the only way to mitigate threat. The president was convinced that Hawaii and the US by extension was permanently threatened and that annexation was the only way to reduce threat.

The controversy over the Behring Sea case, which was never a matter of elevated national pride or a contest over immense wealth and opportunity, was nonetheless a watershed moment in Harrison’s foreign policy because it illustrates brilliantly the way that the president understood America, international politics, and the rest of the world. The diplomatic row over poaching was not a legal matter to Harrison but, instead, an urgent defense against British attempts to steal American prosperity. He privately wrote to Blaine at the height of the negotiations: “We have been pressing (British Ambassador) Sir Julian for some response... My belief is that Canada is again interposing... My opinion is that they will not come to terms with us—even if we agreed to stop all killing.”⁴⁶⁰ The president clearly did not trust the British; he felt that if his administration caved on all points, the British would negotiate for even more concessions! There was no way for him to appease the greedy British government. Only the use of force could stop Britain and their Canadian subjects from stealing American wealth. Switch Britain with

⁴⁵⁹ *Harrison to Blaine*, September 18, 1891.

⁴⁶⁰ *Harrison to Blaine*, May 25, 1891.

another great power and the story would be the same; there was nothing particular about Britain that Harrison detested; he just expected all states to steal from Americans when they had the chance.

Harrison's distaste for free trade was yet another example of the relationship between his exceptional view of America and his unflattering view of the rest of the globe. The president was convinced, although not alone in the idea, that free trade would ruin the characteristics of the American economy that made them exceptional—high wages, increased opportunities, and prosperity for workers and capitalists alike. Britain, which had sought free trade agreements with the Cleveland administration, was the most aggressive in this initiative, but Harrison also warned against deals that would allow German, Italian, and French goods into the domestic market. Again, the president relied on the farmhouse metaphor—allowing foreign goods in the United States was akin to ruining the farm. He said:

Out on the range beyond these fences of ours I am sure the grass is not so good. The range is already overcrowded, and the angry and horned cattle that browse upon it are coming up to our fences and putting their heads through the cracks to get some of our grass. I think it is quite better that, instead of tearing the fences down and making everything common, we should have some convenient gates that we can let in what we want to and get out what we want to.⁴⁶¹

Harrison viewed the United Kingdom as the most threatening of the great powers. This is difficult to explain beyond the simple observation that Britain was the most visible and most powerful among the four states of Europe. This did not mean that Harrison did not find the others threatening. In fact, Harrison felt that all states except the American state were enemies; only he focused on the ones that had the capacity to harm immediately.

⁴⁶¹ Harrison, B. (1901: 409-10). *Speech at the Great Mass Gathering*, New York, NY, October 31, 1894.

The President's opinions of the other World Powers as being opportunistic and dishonorable were less frequent but nearly identical. One could replace France with Germany, Britain, or Italy in any of his speeches and they would provide some semblance of sense. Any of these, he believed, would conquer the Western Hemisphere if America let down its guard:

Now, it happens that all of the Central and South American states are weak states. There is not a harbor so defended as to bar the entrance of a squadron of modern battle ships... If the cabinets of the four great powers of Europe were to combine in a propaganda of colonization in this hemisphere, as they did in Africa—using the new doctrine of “equivalents”—the Spanish American states, south of Mexico, would, unless the US gave its powerful aid, inevitably pass under European control. The Central and South American states have retained their autonomy only because the US would neither herself infringe that autonomy nor allow other nations to do so. But for this, British Honduras might ere this have embraced the whole isthmus, British Guiana have included the Orinoco and Mexico have been subjected to the rule of a foreign king.⁴⁶²

The World Powers were threats, in the president's opinion, because they were anti-American. He argued that it was no accident that Americans were exceptionally different from their powerful European counterparts. In fact, as America grew more powerful towards the turn of the twentieth-century, Harrison feared that power would fundamentally change Americans—they would become dishonorable and covetous. He viewed the American annexation of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico as a step in this direction. Speaking out against the annexations, Harrison drew a parallel with the great powers. He said, “If to be a world power is to do as the world powers do, then we must disclaim this new degree which the European College of Applied Force has conferred upon us.”⁴⁶³ Harrison feared those who sought to conduct American foreign policy in an “un-American way.”

⁴⁶² Harrison, B. (1901: 241) Musing on Current Topics, *North American Review*

⁴⁶³ Harrison, B. (1901: 243). Musing on Current Topics, Second Paper, *North American Review*

The crisis surrounding the *USS Baltimore* incident did not directly involve the British or any other great power, yet still illustrates the point that Harrison saw all other states—even the weak ones—as hungry wolves. The Harrison administration took a special interest in Chilean politics because of Chile's elevated regional status at the conclusion of the War of the Pacific and, more importantly, because of Chile's cozy relationship with Britain. Britain and Chile had a mutually beneficial relationship, with the former supplying military material and the former providing trade deals and a strong ally in South America. Harrison expected the worst from the Anglo-Chilean relationship and sought diplomatic means to undermine the potential threat. His support for anti-British Chilean President Balmaceda and the seizure of the *Itata* were intended as means to contest British influence in South America.

Historians tend to view Harrison's reaction to the Valparaíso mob as indignant; he wanted only to defend the honor of the American servicemen who were dishonorably attacked (allegedly stabbed in the back, in fact) and nothing more. This is only partially true. Yes, Harrison viewed Chilean behavior as dishonorable and dangerous. Of course, he expected this type of behavior of all actors; they were, after all, not Americans. What makes the conflict with Chile stand out was Harrison's fear that, if unchecked, other states would attack Americans in other ports of call. If he let this one incident slide, it would open the floodgates of incivility around the world.

Harrison viewed Americans as fundamentally unique and, therefore, alone in the world. All other states were threats because what made Americans unique also made them vulnerable; the uniqueness of Americans was something that motivated the rest of the world to threaten Americans. If all foreign agents were threats, then those that were

the most capable (World Powers) were the most threatening. Among the World Powers, Great Britain was the dominant threat because of its elevated position in the international system and its proximity to American interests.

Harrison maintained that the conflict between America and the Great Powers was inevitable. There was no way to avoid this conflict; the great powers would not change nor would America. This is because, at the end of the day, the great powers were not like Americans. The president believed that Americans were a unique people because of their shared and substantially different political history and their unmatched prosperity. Harrison believed that the constitutive features of Americans were so enviable that they caused the rest of the world to covet them. For this reason alone, Harrison felt that Americans were alone in the world and identified all other states as threats, elevating the ones that had the highest capacity to steal away America's politics, prosperity, and morals to the foreground of his consciousness.

8.3 William McKinley

President William McKinley believed that Americans were an inspirational people; an American was a person who was civilized, humane, and free. He believed that the American way was a shining example for the rest of the world. McKinley's American way related to the threats that he identified in the international system; he was most concerned with illiberal and inhumane behaviors on the American periphery. His identification of the Spanish threat in 1897 was due to the Spanish military's complete disregard for human dignity in Cuba. McKinley would have a similar reaction to the German massacre at Kiachow in 1899, although his not as agitated by the event in China.

8.3.1 McKinley's American Way

McKinley's view of Americans as an enlightened people stems from three sets of constitutive rules. The president believes that an American is civilized, humane, and free. This section discusses these constitutive rules and their place in his subjectively-defined notion of what it means to be American.

McKinley believed that Americans were civilized. He held that Americans were special among the nations of the world because they were democratic and peaceful, which is how he defined civilization. Civilization, at the end of the nineteenth century, had a particular meaning—it intimated the Darwinist belief that Western society (McKinley focused on Anglo-American society) was superior to the less-civilized world. McKinley viewed Americans as the zenith of civilization, a nation of people who live by an enlightened social code.

Foremost among that code was American democracy. McKinley believed that to be an American was to be a democrat. Not only did Americans support their democracy, but he maintained that they possessed the political power in their government. The result was that American government was an agent of goodwill and a servant of humanity. On a trip to the Midwest, the president said “This government of ours is safe in the hands of its people, because they have no other aim but the public good, and no other purpose but to attain for the government the highest destiny and the greatest prosperity.”⁴⁶⁴ Americans focus on providing the common good, an indicator of altruism that appears in his discussion of humanity. “What (the American people) want, no matter what may be your party alinements [sic] – what you all want for your nation is the greatest good for

⁴⁶⁴ *Speech at Missouri Valley, Iowa on October 11, 1898*

the greatest number.”⁴⁶⁵ McKinley held the belief that Americans were not only democratic, but that democracy meshed with other characteristics of American identity in order to create the enlightened society.

Because Americans were people of conviction, and because the American democracy responded to the will of the American people, McKinley viewed American democracy as a force for positive change in the world. “Americans have grown to have convictions, and we have come to know how to put these convictions into public law and public administration.”⁴⁶⁶ Democracy was a core component of McKinley’s American way and relates to his view of an enlightened people. He once told a group of supporters that “With an increasing love for our institutions and an abiding faith in their stability, we have made the triumphs of our system of government in the progress and the prosperity of our people an inspiration to the whole human race.”⁴⁶⁷

He maintained that the American democracy was superior, distinct, and, therefore, was a constitutive element in American identity. McKinley best summarized his view thusly, “We cannot have too much patriotism in a country like ours, that rests upon the people and all the people alike; and so long as we have with patriotism the virtue and vigilance of the citizen, so long will our free institutions be safe and secure. The American people can always be trusted.”⁴⁶⁸

McKinley believed that to be civilized was to love peace. Americans were people that loved peace. In speeches before, but especially after 1898, the president would often

⁴⁶⁵ *Speech at Aitkin, Minnesota on October 13, 1899* (McKinley 1900:278)

⁴⁶⁶ *Speech at Boone, Iowa on October 11, 1898* (McKinley 1900:95)

⁴⁶⁷ McKinley, W. (1890). *Address t the Trans-Mississippi Exposition at Omaha, Nebraska on October 12, 1898*

⁴⁶⁸ *Speech at Yankton, South Dakota on October 14, 1899*

say that “peace is the national desire and the goal of every American aspiration.”⁴⁶⁹ McKinley saw Americans as an inherently peaceful people, unlike Europeans or Asians. His view peacefulness is based on his assumption that Americans are cut from a different cloth, fundamentally different down to their Jeffersonian pioneer ways. In 1899, after the conclusion of the Cuban campaign and while sustaining the counter-insurgency in the Philippines, McKinley said:

We are not a military people. We love peace. We love the pursuits of peace. We are not a military government, and never will become one; it is against the genius of our government and the spirit of the people... Our people become soldiers of the republic to defend with their lives what they love; but the moment the emergency is over, that moment they rush back to the peaceful walks of American citizenship.⁴⁷⁰

Not only did McKinley define Americans as a peace-loving people, but he maintained that Americans were special in this regard. “It has been said by some one that the normal condition of nations is war. That is not true of America. We never enter upon a war until every effort for peace without it has been exhausted.”⁴⁷¹ The notion of Americans as peace-lovers was not specific to the Spanish-American War; a year after he signed the armistice, McKinley told a crowd that “We Americans, as a people, never go to war because we love war. Our chief glory is not in the triumphs of arms, but in the triumphs of peace. We love peace; we abhor war.”⁴⁷²

Not coincidentally, McKinley’s belief that Americans avoided war at all costs mirrored his own approach to the Cuban crisis, where he attempted multiple means (a proposed purchase of Cuba, proposed limited autonomy, and the incremental use of

⁴⁶⁹ McKinley, W. (1891). *Bits of Wisdom, Or Daily Thoughts: William McKinley*. (New York and Boston: H.M. Caldwell Co.)

⁴⁷⁰ *Speech at Hoopston, Illinois on October 11, 1899* (McKinley 1900: 259)

⁴⁷¹ *Address at the Trans-Mississippi Exposition at Omaha, Nebraska on October 12, 1898*

⁴⁷² *Speech at Egan, South Dakota, on October 14, 1899*

American coercive force) to alleviate the suffering of the population there. McKinley resisted Congress and public opinion in March of 1898 until he was certain that all other options were lost. This was, in his opinion, the distinctly American mode of diplomacy because it placed a premium on peace.

McKinley's first constitutional rule for Americans is that they are civilized people. To be civilized had a particular meaning; it associated American behavior with democracy and peace. To this extent, the president believed that Americans were more progressive and enlightened than the rest of the world, giving them what he considered to be a unique status among the community of nations. In 1897 in Pittsburgh, he spoke of Americans as being more civilized than other nationalities:

Europe and the Orient have, to be sure, their great libraries, rich galleries, wonderful museums, historical collections, and rare and ancient buildings of imposing grandeur, exquisite in architectural beauty and rejoicing in an ample financial endowment... But none of them had such an advanced beginning as this. It is ever to the West, and more especially to our own wonderful country, that we must turn with amazement and increasing pride to witness the most rapid and triumphant march of progress, not only in the development of material resources, but in the comparative advancement and appreciation of the arts.⁴⁷³

To be civilized is to adhere to a form of government where ennobled people command their representatives, to enjoy universal education, and to pursue and love peace at every convenience. This civilization is what McKinley used to set apart Americans from the rest of the world.

McKinley believed that the American Way was to be civilized. Through civilization, Americans fulfilled their mission to be a model for the rest of the world. Their progress and happiness were all due to the democratic and peaceful American way of life.

⁴⁷³ *Address at the Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, PA on November 3, 1897* (McKinley 1900:59)

The president believed that Americans were humane. Humanity can be a protean term, but McKinley defined it as the dignity and preservation of individual rights. It was closely associated, however, with the ideas of honor, morality, and the dignity of the individual. McKinley, therefore, associated the American propensity for humanity with a high moral stance on all issues, either local or foreign. If the president believed that Americans were people who were humane, then he meant that they were for the dignity and protection of the individual.⁴⁷⁴ The president held that to be American was to be humane.

Not only did Americans stand for a higher set of morals than other peoples, but they always defended those morals, even in adverse situations. To be American was not only to value humanity, but to defend it. To defend humanity is an American behavior. McKinley wrote, “The American people have never failed, no matter how great the emergency, no matter how grave the crisis, to measure up to the highest responsibilities of honor and duty.”⁴⁷⁵ He characterized Americans as people that are sympathetic and altruistic; they take opportunities to help those in need. On helpfulness, McKinley once said “Not only are we a nation of benevolence, but we are a nation that is helpful to our people—helpful to all the people.”⁴⁷⁶ McKinley believed that Americans were people who helped others in need; they were not just humane, but they were humanitarians.

Even in war, McKinley was eager to point out that Americans were excessively humane. He cited examples of American humanity amidst the fog of war:

There have been touches of humanity in this recent war that will impress mankind for all time. In the words of the commander of the ship who said to his crew,

⁴⁷⁴ Although the term would surface a century later, McKinley’s conceptualization of “humanity” is strongly reminiscent of the idea of “human security.”

⁴⁷⁵ McKinley (1900:93) *Speech at Ames, Iowa on October 11, 1898*

⁴⁷⁶ McKinley (1900:313) *Speech at Ipswich, WI on November 16, 1899*

‘Don’t cheer, the poor fellows are dying,’ when the commander of that other ship said to his crew, ‘Don’t fire, the flag has done down,’ in the command of the colonel of the Rough Riders, ‘Don’t swear; fight!’ we seem almost to get a glance of the divine spark in the nobility of the American men who participated in our war.⁴⁷⁷

The president was keen to mention and illustrate American humanity in his speeches and writings. The use of humanity was a strong justification for the Spanish-American War as well as the Open Door Policy; the next section will discuss the relationship between humanity and McKinley’s foreign policy.

The president believed that the political ideals of liberty and equality defined Americans. Liberty, the freedom of the individual to act as he pleases, is the cornerstone of American political thought. McKinley believed that the American belief in liberty, along with the ideal of equality, formed the basis for American identity. Curiously, his frequent mentions of equality in public and private alluded to the notion that liberty was a unique American idea. On liberty, the president once said:

I believe in the American idea of liberty. I believe in American independence—not only political independence, but industrial independence as well; and if I were asked in a single sentence what constitutes the strength of the American Republic, I would say it was the American home, and whatever makes the American home the best, the purest, and the most exalted of all in the world. It is our homes which exalts the country and its citizenship above those of any other land.⁴⁷⁸

The twenty-fifth president often said that “we are a nation of generous freemen,”⁴⁷⁹ meaning that Americans were free and were motivated by that freedom to improve the lives of others. McKinley believed that liberty (synonymous with freedom)

⁴⁷⁷ McKinley (1900:90) (*Maybe at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 11, 1898*)

⁴⁷⁸ McKinley (1891:535-6) *Speech at Woodstock, Connecticut on July 4, 1891*

⁴⁷⁹ The earliest record of this I found was during his years in Congress. *Address at the Metropolitan Opera I New York, May 30, 1889*. Another prominent example is in his discussion of civic duty during a memorial to U.S. Grant in 1893. See *Address at the Celebration of the 71st Anniversary of Ulysses S. Grant’s Birth, at Galena, Illinois on April 27, 1893*. (McKinley 1893:358, 444)

was a two-fold characteristic of Americans. Americans were people that were free and, simultaneously, held closely the value of being free.

Valuing freedom is the more distinct constitutive rule. To a group of youths in 1892, McKinley explained how Americans, in the world's minority, are people who are willing to die for liberty's sake:

American history illustrates how the few can triumph over the many, when the few are moved by the love of justice and liberty, carrying the banner of righteousness in the interest of mankind. It recalls a race of men who hated oppression and who loved liberty, who were willing to give up all, even life, that they might do their own thinking, do their own ruling, and worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.⁴⁸⁰

McKinley's view of the American myth of origin is intertwined with the political ideals of liberty and freedom. More importantly, he views this myth as an exceptional one; Americans are the "few among mankind" that "loved liberty" and were "willing to give up all for it." This notion of Americans as liberty-loving people is not unique to McKinley. The record of Americans espousing liberty and using it as a constitutive rule dates back to the framers and the earliest presidents. What is remarkable, however, is the frequency with which McKinley uses these ideals in describing Americans.

The second political ideal, equality, was also commonly held among Americans in McKinley's day. The president, from his earliest days as a lawyer in Ohio, made a point of treating all people as equals. He maintained that this was a unique American trait; Americans were classless people. McKinley argued that equality was a unique trait that made Americans exceptional in the world. Three examples from his life illustrate how seriously he took the equality of people and the place it held in his vision of American identity.

⁴⁸⁰ *Address before the Baptist Young People's Assembly, at Lakeside, Ohio on July 4, 1892.* (McKinley 1893:583)

For a politician who was often accused of being in the pocket of prominent capitalists, McKinley had a long history of supporting the cause of labor. In fact, he won his presidential elections of 1896 and 1900 on the support of organized labor in major American cities.⁴⁸¹ Mark Hanna, his greatest supporter among the Midwestern capitalists, met McKinley when the latter defended a group of striking workers that attempted to destroy one of his mining facilities in southeastern Ohio. McKinley defended seven striking workers, *pro bono*, because he felt a deep need to reconcile labor and capital in a manner that satisfied both. McKinley was not a labor sympathizer as much as he was a labor relations reconciler. Hanna was impressed with William's principled defense, which made a lasting impression on him. McKinley spoke of how he was morally obliged to defend labor, since they had equal rights under the Constitution and God.⁴⁸²

McKinley often spoke of how the amicable relationship between labor and capital represented the unique classless American society. The president went even farther, claiming that to be American was to transcend class altogether. He often said, "Americans are not a nation of classes but of sturdy, free, independent, and honorable people, despising the demagogue and never capitulating to dishonor."⁴⁸³ This was not just an observation of Americans but his own normative prescription for what constituted true Americanism. "Every attempt to array class against class is opposed to the national instinct and interest and should be resisted by every citizen."⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸¹ Gould 1980:12-3

⁴⁸² Gould 1982:3-4

⁴⁸³ McKinley 1891:40

⁴⁸⁴ McKinley 1891:105

McKinley believed that Americans were equal among themselves, not just according to class, but also according to gender and race. He believed that this was, in fact, an American trait. McKinley was nationally famous during his terms as Governor of Ohio for his work for women's suffrage. Through his efforts, the state allowed for women to vote in local elections in 1894.^{485 486}

Not as popular was McKinley's argument that African-Americans were equal. The President took an unnecessary risk when he argued against lynching during his first inaugural address. He argued that lynching— a type of violence clearly based on racial inequity-- was a distinctly un-American behavior. He said, "Lynchings must not be tolerated in a great and civilized country like the United States."⁴⁸⁷

President McKinley believed that liberty, freedom, and equality were inherently defining American characteristics. To be American was to be free and to support freedom, wherever necessary. The same held true for equality; Americans were classless equals and strove for equality.

McKinley's American way was a principled view of Americans. William McKinley believed that Americans were enlightened and inspiration to the world because of their principles.

Founded upon right principles, and ever faithful to them, we have nothing to fear from the vicissitudes which may lie across or pathway. The nation, founded by the fathers upon the principles of virtue, morality, education, freedom, and human rights, molded by the great discussions which established its sovereignty, tried in the crucible of civil war, its integrity confirmed by the results of reconstruction,

⁴⁸⁵ Morgan 2003:123.

⁴⁸⁶ McKinley's biographers (including but not limited to Leech 1922, Gould 1980, Morgan 2003) agree that one of his most prominent characteristics was his need for reconciliation. Morgan attributes this to his mother, who was a notorious peacemaker in her community and church. Wherever the need originated, William always emphasized the need to treat all people as equals. Morgan writes "His sense of tolerance and his genuine unwillingness to quarrel or engage in strife, made him popular and respected long before he entered politics. (32-3)

⁴⁸⁷ McKinley (1900:9) *First Inaugural Address, Washington, DC, March 4, 1897*

with a Union stronger and mightier and better than ever before, stands to-day, not upon shifting sands, but upon immovable foundations.⁴⁸⁸

The twenty-fifth president held the deep conviction that Americans were people that valued freedom, human rights, and civilization. Not only were these values unique to Americans, but the people also enjoyed them. The result was a society of people that were highly civilized—a hundred years before Ronald Reagan’s “city on the hill,” McKinley similarly viewed Americans as people that practiced an enlightened way of life.

We have had more than a hundred years of national existence. Those years have been blessed ones for liberty and civilizations. No other peoples anywhere on the globe have enjoyed such marvelous prosperity and have made such gigantic progress as the people of the United States... and one thing can be said of this nation, for which we should all give thanksgiving and praise, is that it never raised its arm against humanity, never struck a blow against liberty, never struck a blow except for civilization and mankind.⁴⁸⁹

McKinley was convinced, far more than other presidents of his time, that Americans were a special people because of their commitment to civilization.

All of this leads one to believe that McKinley’s American way produced a *raison d’être* that was distinct, dynamic, and potentially dangerous. He believed that Americans were an enlightened people and that their mission, and the mission of the American government by extension, was to protect civilization, humanity, and liberty. Anything less would be an affront to the American way. This is the president, after all, who said that “wherever our flag floats, wherever we raise that standard of liberty, it is always for the sake of humanity and the advancement of civilization.”⁴⁹⁰ In the next section, we will

⁴⁸⁸ McKinley (1900:68) *Speech at the Banquet of the National Association of Manufacturers of the United States, at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, January 27, 1898.*

⁴⁸⁹ *Speech at Manchester, Iowa on October 16, 1899* (McKinley 1900:308-9)

⁴⁹⁰ *Speech at Chariton, Iowa on October 13, 1898* (McKinley 1900:114)

explore the enlightened view of Americans as a potential means to explain McKinley's threat identification.

8.3.2 Explaining Threat Identification, 1897-1901

President McKinley's American way was based on the notion that Americans were an enlightened people. "Enlightenment" came in multiple forms, but mostly it meant that Americans were democratic, humane, and free. When McKinley viewed foreign actors, he focused on those that were behaving in "unenlightened" ways. This led him to identify Spanish behavior in the Caribbean as threatening and to become gravely concerned with German inhumanity in China.

McKinley identified inhumane behavior as threatening. The twenty-fifth president identified the inhumanity in Cuba and German aggression against the Chinese government as prominent threats, while he identified Great Britain as a valuable ally. He was less concerned with traditional national security threats like German and British influence in the Caribbean basin and Canadian attempts to seize land on the Alaskan frontier. Why would a policymaker be more concerned with the suffering of people in another sovereign nation-state than the clear and present dangers associated with challenges to American hegemony in North America? The answer lies in how the twenty-fifth president viewed American identity.

President McKinley was convinced that Americans were a principled people. The American way was to live a humane, civilized, and liberated life. Living in any other manner than his American way, he believed, was downright un-American. The same can be true for the behaviors he witnessed throughout the world. When McKinley heard of the inhumanity of the Cuban *reconcentrados*, it revolted him, scared him, and spurred

him to action. This section explores the relationship between McKinley's American way and the Spanish and German threats that he identified during his administration.

William McKinley identified Spanish behavior in Cuba as a threat before it became an urgent matter in public opinion and the U.S. Congress. McKinley did not find the Cuban situation to be an urgent crisis until he began to receive reports of human rights violations during the summer of 1897. Until then, his threat identification was similar to that of his predecessor, Grover Cleveland. Both believed that the Cuban insurrection, due to Spanish sovereignty over the island, it was an internal matter that did not matter to the United States.⁴⁹¹ When Americans were arrested or harassed by the Spanish colonial authority, it was a matter between Americans that broke the neutrality code and the Spanish. The United States, both maintained, would remain neutral regarding the conflict.

Three months into his presidency, however, McKinley began to understand the inhumanity of the Spanish *reconcentrado* policy. In an effort to quell the Cuban insurgency in the countryside, General Weyler ordered the Spanish military to force rural Cubans into the cities in 1896. The military believed that by moving potential insurgents into an area where they could monitor their behavior, they would suffocate the insurgency. The opposite effect materialized. Many of the rural Cubans, already living humbly, were relocated without any concern for their basic needs, including food, clothes and shelter. Soon, the Cuban cities were flooded with beggars and urban life ground to a halt. Starvation and disease spread among the cities, but the recalcitrant Spanish military

⁴⁹¹ McKinley tried to remain silent on the Cuba issue during the first three months of his presidency. The Republican platform of 1896 called for the liberation of Cuba by any means, which the president clearly disagreed with. He was strategically quiet throughout the spring, in order to avoid fracturing his coalition of supporters, many of whom adhered to the GOP platform.

refused to buckle. The *reconcentrado* policy, coupled with the overall brutality of Spanish violence against the Cubans, created a humanitarian disaster.

In May of 1897, three months after the president's inauguration, McKinley became concerned about the Cuban situation. He received an alarming dispatch from Fitzhugh Lee, the American Consul-General in Havana. McKinley did not trust Lee much, since he was a Cleveland holdover and an ardent supporter of Cuban autonomy.⁴⁹² On May 17, Lee told McKinley that the brutal counter-insurgency in Cuba would exist indefinitely or until the Spanish ran out of money.⁴⁹³

McKinley was immediately moved. He asked Congress for \$50,000 for humanitarian relief in Cuba, which it approved. From May until January of 1897, the president remained concerned with the human suffering on the Caribbean island as reports continued to trickle into the White House. This, despite the fact that public attention to Cuba waned during the second half of the year. Historians and the historical record indicate that McKinley sustained his concern for the Cuban people during this time due to the intelligence he was accumulating. Many of these reports, which became increasingly graphic, were offered on behalf of men that the president trusted dearly. It became clear during this time to the president that the suffering of the Cuban people was enormous and that it would not stop without an intervening power to defend them. Historian Ernest May writes:

McKinley might have concerned himself with Cuba for moral reasons. He did give the appearance of being a devout Methodist... Even if his piety was mostly outward, he could still have been moved by the suffering and brutality reported in

⁴⁹² Morgan 2003:255. Cleveland did not trust Fitz Lee, either. He was not considered to be much of a credible source among foreign policy-makers. The fact that his reports—later confirmed independently—still held weight speaks volumes to McKinley's acute attention to humanitarian issues.

⁴⁹³ It was widely believed in the 1890s that the Spanish government was on the verge of economic collapse. Doubling this risk was the fact that nearly half of all government expenditures in 1896 were dedicated to the Cuban campaign.

Cuba. The consul general in Havana wrote, for example, of men hacked by machetes and dragged through the village streets, of Spanish troops appropriating hospitals and churches as barracks, and of disease and starvation everywhere. And similar tales came almost daily from other consular agents, newspaper reporters, and tourists. It is possible that even without economic and political considerations McKinley would have felt in his heart a need to do something about Cuba.⁴⁹⁴

McKinley identified Spanish behavior in Cuba as threatening before the yellow journalism of the tabloids and jingoism reached their apogee in March of 1898. In fact, the President was so motivated to help the Cubans that he *anonymously* donated \$5000 of his own money to the Red Cross on January 8, 1898.⁴⁹⁵ Months before the *U.S.S. Maine* exploded in Havana's harbor, the president took measures to defend the Cuban people's humanity. On January 11, he instructed his Navy Secretary, John D. Long, to prepare for war. Long instructed the Navy to retain all sailors and to ordered the North Atlantic Squadron to conduct training exercises near Key West. The unusual practice would allow the Navy to strike the Spanish squadron in Cuba—and allow the United States to force its way onto the island for whatever reason—with only a few days' notice.⁴⁹⁶ The timing of this step is important to note, since it occurred six weeks before the de Lôme and *Maine* incidents. McKinley was motivated to defend Cuba before the storm of jingoism swept the Congress.

McKinley applied the “turn of the screw” on the Spanish in an effort to relieve Cuban suffering. From mid-1897, he escalated the use of American power in an effort to end the humanitarian crisis. He first offered to purchase (and then liberate) Cuba from the Spanish, which failed. Henceforth, he intensified his diplomatic efforts. Only when a change in the Spanish government hinted at the possibility of an end to *reconcentrado*,

⁴⁹⁴ May 1961:117

⁴⁹⁵ Gould 1980:70.

⁴⁹⁶ Gould 1980:71.

did McKinley ease his diplomatic pressure. When the liberal government signaled its intent to continue its inhumane practices in Cuba, McKinley resumed and upped the ante on the Spanish. J.W. Pratt writes, “Thus McKinley held out encouragement to Spain with one hand and a threat with the other. He hoped to avoid intervention. But if Spain’s new policy failed to bring peace and order to Cuba, he had no doubt of the right and duty of the United States to intervene by force and no doubt that such an intervention would merit and receive the approval of the civilized world.”⁴⁹⁷

Margaret Leech echoes the consensus among historians that McKinley was motivated by a deep-seeded obligation to defend the human dignity of the Cubans by any means possible:

McKinley fully shared the outrage and pity of his countrymen. The official protests to Spain were not solely based on the legitimate grounds of financial loss, the imprisonment of US citizens in Cuba, and the burden and expense of maintaining neutrality. They were eloquent in condemnation of the conduct of the war, and the violation of ‘human rights’ by the concentration of the Cuban noncombatants. Diplomatic exchanges were at cross-purposes between the moralistic Washington administration, naively convinced of the legally binding provisions of the civilized code of war, and the reactionary ministry at Madrid, which resented the appeal to sentiment as an impudent and hypocritical interference in its desperate colonial difficulties.⁴⁹⁸

Charles G. Dawes, one of McKinley’s closest confidants, kept a diary of his observations during the McKinley years. He paid special attention to the Cuban crisis and the events after the sinking of the *Maine*, when the president was convinced that war was the only way to defend against Spanish inhumanity. Dawes goes as far as to make the claim that McKinley made defense against the Spanish a priority long before the *Maine*; the *Maine* only served McKinley’s interests. On March 22, he wrote:

⁴⁹⁷ Pratt 1970

⁴⁹⁸ Leech, M. [1922] 1986:148

The President talked again of the Cuban situation. *His policy is being assisted by events.* He had hoped and still hopes, to stop the suffering in Cuba without war. But he expects that it will be stopped. He does not expect to send a long message or recommendations to Congress on Monday with the report of the Naval Commission. Intervention will be on broader grounds than the question of responsibility for the disaster of the Maine.⁴⁹⁹

Less than two weeks later, with the drumbeat of war audible throughout Washington,

Dawes wrote of the president:

Neither the President nor (Spanish Prime Minister) Sagasta desire war. But the president proposes to intervene to stop the suffering. His purpose is in accord with the dictates of humanity. If this purpose of relieving suffering is interfered with, he will use force and his conscience and the world will justify it. He is making a magnificent fight for peace and God grant he may succeed. He will have won a greater victory for peace and God grant he may succeed.⁵⁰⁰

Dawes observed that the president identified the suffering of the Cubans at the hands of the Spanish—and nothing else—was a threat. It was a threat to peace and humanity, which are clearly two important facets of McKinley's American way.

The words of the president himself, at the conclusion of the war, explain why he identified the Cuban suffering as the most urgent threat to America. He said, "We went to war for civilization and humanity, to relieve our oppressed neighbors in Cuba. I was one of those who held back until the last moment, hoping that war might be averted. I did not want to involve my country in bloodshed."⁵⁰¹ Despite a national mood that was routinely characterized by contemporary historians as jingoistic, President McKinley—a man whose most claim was motivated by creating political consensus—did not fear to go against the grain by viewing the Cuban crisis as a threat to humanity. At a time when most in America viewed Cuba as conquest, McKinley identified Spanish inhumanity as

⁴⁹⁹ Dawes 1950:147. Italics added for emphasis.

⁵⁰⁰ Dawes 1950:149

⁵⁰¹ McKinley 1900:319. *Speech at Madison, Wisconsin on October 16, 1899*

the most pressing issue. The president best summed his identification of the Spanish threat and its relationship to his American way thusly:

I do not mistake the temper of the people when I say that wherever that starry banner of the free is raised it stands for liberty and humanity; and whoever assails it and wherever it is assailed, the assailants will be met with the strong, mighty arm of the government and the people of the United States of America.⁵⁰²

Spanish behavior, in particular the *reconcentrado* policy in Cuba and the inhumanity that the counter-insurgency created, was a threat to McKinley's American way. The president's strong association with civilization, humanity, and liberty to his notion of being American was what caused him to so strongly sympathize with Cuban suffering in 1897. He responded as we would expect a policymaker to respond, by using American power to defend against the illicit Spanish threat. The result was the Spanish-American War, but what is most notable is the influence that McKinley's idea of American identity had on his threat identification.

McKinley feared that China would devolve into a chaos because of Germany's inhumane policies. At the end of the nineteenth century, the great powers occupied "spheres of influence" in China. Germany, Russia, France, Great Britain, and Japan claimed large swaths of territory, often at gunpoint, with the express intent of creating zones of economic exclusivity in the crumbling Chinese empire. Of the great powers, only the United States was without some influence in the area, although Americans often worked with the British and Japanese in order to sell their goods through their spheres.

The establishment of the spheres was a destabilizing force in Chinese society, whose state was already rocked by internal turmoil and the catastrophic loss to Japan in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-5. At the conclusion of the war, the Chinese empire lost

⁵⁰² McKinley 1900:321. *Speech at the Deutscher Club, Milwaukee, Wisconsin on October 16, 1899*

Korea and Formosa (Taiwan) and most of its territory, save Peking (Beijing,) was under foreign control.

The destabilization of China became an international concern as early as 1897. Louis Gould describes McKinley's China goal from the onset to be to "Protect China from the designs of the Germans, Japanese, and Russians."⁵⁰³ The increasingly chaotic status of Chinese society and the inhumane behavior of the Germans were twin threats identified by the president during his tenure. Complicating matters, McKinley viewed Chinese instability to be a direct consequence of the behavior of the Germans.⁵⁰⁴ Both were, ultimately, behavior contrary to the president's American way.

Much like McKinley's fears in Cuba, the same basic threat identification existed regarding China. McKinley saw the inhumanity unearthed by the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 as an urgent issue. The inhumanity and force with which the great powers suppressed the rebellion was a direct threat to Americans living and working in China but, more generally, Chinese chaos was a threat to humanity. The German (and to a lesser degree, Russian and French) *modus operandi* was unconcerned with the dignity of the Chinese people; they took what they wanted by bayonet.⁵⁰⁵

German policy in China was, therefore, a threat to humanity. What is particularly interesting, however, was how inconsistent McKinley's identification of the German threat was in the larger scope. For example, the president had no problem negotiating with them over the fate of Samoa in 1899, merely months before the Chinese crisis

⁵⁰³ Gould 1980:359

⁵⁰⁴ Morgan (2003:357) writes that McKinley sought to "protect China from the designs of the Germans," who used force to undermine the authority of the Chinese government. He writes of McKinley's opposition to the German insistence on punishing the Boxers after their failed rebellion as one example of the president's fear of German aggression in China (360).

⁵⁰⁵ McKinley acknowledged that the British did not operate in the same way with the Chinese and was eager to omit them from discussions of his greater China approach.

resulted in the Boxer Rebellion and required Western military intervention. The president was confident that the Germans would not take Samoa by military force; in fact, McKinley was pleased to settle the Samoa question by dividing the islands into “spheres,” one American and one German. The difference between China and Samoa, and the difference between the German threat in China and the benign Germany in Samoa, is the level of order and human security on the ground. In China, McKinley understood German behavior to be contributing to Chinese suffering. The Kiachow massacre was evidence of German complicity in Chinese instability. It was, fundamentally, the same type of relationship that the president saw between Spain and Cubans in 1897. German behavior was threatening, so much so that McKinley was inspired to pursue the Open Door Policy with the help of Great Britain and Japan in 1900.⁵⁰⁶ After the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion, McKinley strongly opposed German insistence to punish the Boxers by death. The president was this as a threat to Chinese sovereignty and civil order; he worked hardest on opposing the Germans in this regard throughout 1900, despite other pressing matters implored by his advisors.⁵⁰⁷

The German threat in China, but not Samoa, underscores a theme that relates to the RBI hypothesis. A review of McKinley’s personal memoranda indicate that he was at least as concerned about the threat that the Germans posed to incivility in China as he was to threats to American commerce. McKinley was most concerned by the human dignity of the Chinese; it is no coincidence that McKinley identifies Americans as a people defined by their emphasis on human dignity. Americans are a civilized people;

⁵⁰⁶ While New Left historians (Williams 1959, LaFeber 1963) are quick to identify the trade benefits due to the US under the Open Door Policy, they ignore McKinley’s concern for the sovereignty of the Chinese state and the mechanisms in the policy designed to restore order and civility in China. One should not forget that a primary goal of the ODP was to stop the further colonization in China. Morgan 2003:358

⁵⁰⁷ Morgan 2003:360-1

when the Germans acted uncivilly in China, then they were threats to the American way. When Germans acted civilly in Samoa, despite the fact that Germany and the United States were dividing the archipelago between themselves, McKinley did not consider them to be a threat. McKinley's assessment of the German threat, therefore, hinged on how the Germans behaved relative to the president's view of American identity.

William McKinley never considered the British to be a threat because he considered them to be part of an Anglo-American mission to civilize the world. McKinley considered "British way" to be compatible with his American way because the president maintained that both societies were agents of the enlightenment. The British way could not be a threat simply because it was analogous to the American way and the president's expectations for the behavior of other states.

The British explicitly supported McKinley's goal of civilizing the world. The British presence in China was more benign—and treated the Chinese as sovereign partners—which satisfied McKinley and brought British behavior into compatibility with his American Way. The president felt that the British and the Americans were the only civilized people "capable of granting autonomy in a constructive way."⁵⁰⁸ While historians claim that McKinley was an anglophile, an alternate assessment indicates that he simply felt that the British were more compatible with the American way than the other great powers.

Perhaps the most curious development in McKinley's threat assessment of the British came in 1899. Great Britain was in the depths of the Boer War, a counter-insurgency against South Africans of Dutch heritage that resisted British hegemony on

⁵⁰⁸ The president clearly viewed the British model in Canada as a responsible way to civilize and emancipate its colonies. McKinley often referred to Canada as a example for the Spanish and Cubans to follow during the 1897-8 crisis. Morgan 2003:259

the southern end of the continent. The war was brutal and decidedly inhumane; the British used tactics similar (although on a lesser scale) ripped straight out of the Spanish manual; they employed concentration camps. The Boers lobbied McKinley for support in December of 1899 and had sympathizers in Washington, but their pleas for intervention fell of deaf ears.⁵⁰⁹ McKinley sided with the British and passed on the opportunity to help himself. The president had a political incentive (opposing the British would have wooed the Irish vote in an election year) and it seemed that supporting the Boers would have been a chip in the negotiations over the Alaska boundary and Clayton-Bulwer revisions. McKinley, however, remained neutral on the Boer issue based on principle alone. He saw no interest or threat in the British counter-insurgency, presumably because he understood the British to be an enlightened, civilized, and humane society.⁵¹⁰

McKinley had no reservations regarding the British in the Western Hemisphere. The president believed that a continued British presence in North America was not a pressing issue. At the same time, however, President McKinley insisted on a revision of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850 that would give the United States an advantage over the British on the isthmus.

The Hay-Pauncefote Treaty that came out of his concern over Clayton-Bulwer was an odd development. McKinley, the Department of War, and the Congress recognized the pressing need for a canal in Nicaragua or Panama. In fact, the idea had been bandied about for over fifty years, without any serious actions taken; even the

⁵⁰⁹ Morgan 2003:351

⁵¹⁰ See Ferguson (1939) and Mulanax (1994) for exhaustive analyses of McKinley's assessment of the Boer War in 1899.

allegedly isolationist Grover Cleveland researched the issue in 1896.⁵¹¹ When Secretary Long ordered the *Oregon*, a battle cruiser, to sail from the Pacific and join the North Atlantic Squadron currently engaged with the Spanish in the Caribbean, it had to travel around South America. The inability for the *Oregon* to quickly respond to the call of duty was a clarion call for Congress and spurred a new debate over an inter-ocean canal.⁵¹² The need for a canal was not, however, spurred by a specific British threat.

The canal was in no way a result of an identified British threat. In fact, McKinley instructed Hay to use canal fortification as a bargaining chip with the British on other North American issues; he had no intention of actually fortifying the canal. The president knew that the British wanted an un-militarized canal, so he used the issue as leverage for the Alaska-Yukon boundary issue (about which the Americans were surprisingly adamant, according to Pauncefote.) If McKinley had any inkling that the British were a threat, he would have pushed for militarization.⁵¹³

The most likely explanation for McKinley's friendly view of the British is the one suggested by the RBI hypothesis. The president deeply contended that British society was too similar to American society in the ways that mattered to him—basically the enlightenment project that included human rights—to ever be considered something that would jeopardize his American way.

⁵¹¹ Cleveland established the Nicaragua Canal Commission in 1896. Interestingly, he dispatched troops to Panama early in his first administration (1885) to help Columbia suppress an independence movement and explore the possibility of a canal there. See Wicks (1980).

⁵¹² Gould 1982:131

⁵¹³ Ironically, the Congress rejected Hay-Pauncefote in 1900 because it did not include an American militarization; clearly, some in Congress were concerned about the potential threat of British sea power to such a valuable American asset. The second version of Hay-Paunceforte provided for a war-time fortification, which placated the Congress, who passed the treaty at the end of 1901, after McKinley's death.

A read of the early historiography on William McKinley would lead one to believe that the president did not identify threats to anything other than his popularity. Theodore Roosevelt allegedly claimed that his predecessor “had the backbone of a chocolate éclair”⁵¹⁴ and Speaker Joe Cannon famously said that “McKinley’s ear was so close to the ground that it was full of grasshoppers.”⁵¹⁵ Both were wrong; later historical work and this study’s careful analysis of what scant documents he left behind demonstrate two important conclusions. First, the president ignored contending threat identifications that, if had adopted them, would have helped his popularity and been politically wise. Thus, we cannot accept out-of-hand that the original, “domestic political” view of McKinley’s threat assessment is correct. Second, William McKinley was a highly moralistic and principled man who viewed Americans in the same light and, accordingly, identified illiberal and inhumane behavior as clear threats. The president viewed chaos and inhumanity in Cuba and China as threats, which were so pressing that they led to the largest departure from American foreign policy in over a century—the Spanish-American War and the Open Door Policy. William McKinley took a strong stance against the Spanish in Cuba and the Germans, to a lesser degree, in China, because he believed that their actions were the source of human suffering. It was the inhumanity, however that the president feared the most and what motivated his threat identification. The fact that he identified inhumanity as a threat and used humanity to describe the American way is no coincidence; it demonstrates the relationship between identity and threat identification according to the dictates of the RBI hypothesis.

⁵¹⁴ May (1961:116) attributes the quote to Theodore Roosevelt in a footnote, although Hamilton (2006a) claims that it is a fabrication from earlier biographies.

⁵¹⁵ Olcott 1916:564; Gould 1982:4

8.4 Results

This chapter establishes that different American ways correspond with different threat identifications. The lynchpin is the types of behavior that a policymaker finds threatening; threatening behavior is antithetical to his constitutive rule-based identity. In the period studied, three presidents held varied views of what constitutes American identity. The foreign states that they found to be most threatening were the ones that behaved in ways that broke their constitutive rule. The answer to the question, “Why do threat identifications vary among presidents” lies therein: **When the American way changes between presidents, threat identification will also change.**

Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley all held different American ways; they relied on different constitutive rules in order to conceptualize American identity. Grover Cleveland possessed a **LEGAL American way**, Harrison believed in the **EXCEPTIONAL American way**, and McKinley demonstrated the **ENLIGHTENED American way**. Accordingly, Cleveland identified threats to international law, Harrison identified threats to prosperity, and McKinley identified threats to humanity. A comparison of the presidencies, complete with constitutive rules and threat identifications, highlights the importance of these factors in understanding American foreign policy

Grover Cleveland and Benjamin Harrison disagreed on many prominent foreign policy issues, the most notable being the annexation of Hawaii. In 1893, the coup in Hawaii gave rise to an American-led junta that sought annexation by the United States. Harrison obliged but was unable to gain a Senate vote on the treaty before his term ended; when Cleveland re-entered the White House, he immediately withdrew the treaty,

citing international law and the need for a “neighborly” foreign policy. This reversal is the best example the radically different grand strategies of the two successive presidencies. This disparity is mistakenly understood as Cleveland’s isolationism versus Harrison’s jingoism. There is no evidence to support either claim; Cleveland was not an isolationist and Harrison was not a jingo. Instead, each president’s view of the American way reveals their motivation.

Cleveland and Harrison were motivated by fear in an uncertain world; Harrison feared that if he did not support annexation, the islands (and their lucrative economic relationship with the United States) would fall into the hands of another great power. Cleveland feared that the violation of Hawaiian sovereignty would set a precedent and weaken the influence of law on international relations. Both presidents acted out of a threat identification that related to their view of American identity. Cleveland interpreted Americans as just, orderly, and lawful, while Harrison viewed Americans as unique and prosperous.

The differences over the identification of the United Kingdom as a threat also serve as an effective contrast between Cleveland and Harrison. Cleveland viewed Great Britain as a partner in free trade and little else. Harrison was convinced, however, that the British Empire sought to colonize the Western Hemisphere if given the opportunity. It makes sense that they would disagree; Cleveland had no reason to see Britain as threatening as long as it abided by international law and Harrison expected all states to covet the prosperity of the Americas. Again, this dynamic leads us back to the presidents’ different American ways.

Grover Cleveland and William McKinley also had different views of what it means to be American. McKinley held a popular view of America while his predecessor engaged in a dying Jeffersonian ideal. McKinley defined Americans as enlightened people—they were democratic, peaceful, humane, and free. Ultimately, McKinley believed that what made Americans was their practice of respecting human dignity. At first light, the constitutive rules of Cleveland and McKinley might seem similar; they both loosely focus on morality. There are deep and important differences, however, between Cleveland's legal American way and McKinley's enlightened American way. Cleveland viewed Americans as people that pursued justice through laws and boundaries, thus producing social order and a "live and let live" practice. Cleveland's view is fully in line with the Jeffersonian tradition and explains why he emphasized international law in his foreign policymaking. McKinley, on the other hand, viewed Americans as peaceful and civilized, without boundaries that law and order provide, because they were inherently peaceful, humane, and civil. This difference in constitutive rules led to significant differences in threat identification.

The manner in which Cleveland and McKinley dealt with the Cuban crisis best illustrates how their American ways and threat identifications differed while at the helm. Cleveland regarded the Cuban issue as an internal Spanish matter. International law established Spain as sovereign over Cuba, which allowed it to deal with the *insurrectos* as it pleased. Cleveland was aware of the increasing brutality just offshore, but his only concern was that Americans remained neutral. Cleveland was so committed to neutrality, thus protecting international law, that he used naval assets to arrest Americans seeking to aid the Cuban insurrection. Cleveland was also willing to forgive Spain for its seizure of

American ships, since they were willing to pay reparations— as provided by international law. As far as Cleveland was concerned, there was no Spanish threat. Counterfactually, if Spain had not paid reparations or had violated American sovereignty, it is likely that Cleveland, who relished in diplomatic brinkmanship, would have brought the United States to war before McKinley took office.

McKinley, on the other hand, viewed Spain as a threat for his own reasons. He did not always see Spanish behavior as threatening, though. It was only when he learned of the Spaniards' inhumane treatment of the Cubans in 1897 that he became involved in the crisis to the south. When he was convinced that the human suffering would not stop on the island, the president moved to defend the Cuban people from the Spanish government. McKinley was motivated by threat to humanity; Cleveland was motivated by the threat to international law. This division explains why Spain was a threat to McKinley and benign to Cleveland. It is no coincidence that McKinley defined Americans as humane people and Cleveland defined Americans as law-abiding. The differences in constitutive rules held by these two leaders correspond to their view of the Spanish threat in Cuba.

Benjamin Harrison and William McKinley commanded different American ways. The obvious consequence of their different constitutive rules was their appraisal of the United Kingdom. Harrison identified Britain as a threat while McKinley viewed it as a partner. The reason for the difference is their different views of American identity.

Harrison's exceptional view places Americans in their own category; it led Harrison to believe that conflict with the rest of the world was inevitable. Americans were the most prosperous people in the world. All foreign states, therefore, would seek

to steal away American wealth. Great Britain, which was the most capable of the world powers and demonstrated its willingness to steal wealth over the decades, was a clear threat to Harrison. McKinley cared little about prosperity and wealth, despite his emphasis on protectionism while he was a Congressman. Instead, McKinley evaluated states on their humanity; states and societies that were democratic, humane, peaceful, and enlightened were benign. For this reason, McKinley viewed the British as a natural ally with the United States; his view of the British was highly compatible with his American way. It is important to note that Harrison agreed that Britain and America had much in common and would agree with McKinley's claim that the two societies were "civilized." Harrison, however, would ultimately assert that "civilization" was irrelevant and that only prosperity mattered. Harrison and McKinley disagreed on the British threat because the Anglo-American relationship was evaluated according to different criteria. They used their different American ways to assess the British as a threat and produced different results.

The RBI hypothesis is falsifiable and this study searched for disconfirming evidence. Specifically, in order for the rule-based approach to be false, the presidents would have agreed on one view American way. Such evidence did not appear in the primary and secondary documents available for research. What is most remarkable was how differently the three presidents defined what it means to be an American. They held views of America that were completely independent of each other; never did they use the same constitutive rules. This difference cannot be ignored.

At the same time, there is significant confirming evidence available to reasonably believe that the RBI hypothesis effectively explains variance in threat identifications

among presidents. There are too many examples where presidents were presented with virtually similar circumstances and had different reactions—namely the Cuban crisis and Anglo-American relations. This affords the researcher what is as close to a natural experiment that one can conceive with a case study that is one-hundred and twenty-three years old. Considering the inability of the alternate theories to answer the question, the RBI theory offers the best explanation.

One final issue remains: are the results of this study generalizable? The final chapter proposes a matrix of constitutive rules that can provide a general theory, discusses implications for theory and policy, and suggests future avenues for RBI research.

8.5 Primary Issues

This chapter applies the RBI hypothesis to the cases studied in chapter seven. After an analysis of the American ways of Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley and their threat identifications, it provides the following primary issues for consideration:

1. Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, and William McKinley all held distinct views of American identity that could be reduced to constitutive rules. These American ways were based on justice, exceptionalism, and enlightenment, respectively.
2. The differences between the presidents' constitutive rules accounts for their differences in threat identifications. There is a clear relationship between how a president defines being American and the types of behaviors he identifies as threatening during their administrations.
3. Cleveland focused on the role of international law in international politics, while Harrison emphasized prosperity and McKinley concentrated on human dignity. When foreign states behaved in ways that threatened these foci, the respective president would identify them as threats.
4. Variations in threat identifications among the three presidents studied relate to differences in American ways. The examples of Great Britain, Germany, and Spain demonstrate how, when faced with similar circumstances, presidents will identify threats in diverse ways. Their

dissimilar views of American identity provide a compelling explanation for the differences in policymaking.

9 Results and Implications

This chapter concludes the dissertation with four final thoughts. First, it summarizes the results of this study. Second, it generalizes the findings through the development of an identity-threat matrix. Next, it discusses the relevance of this study's conclusion to current policy debates. Finally, this chapter discusses how the findings of this research might implicate the theoretical study of international politics and identifies opportunities for further research.

9.1 Summary of Results

This dissertation answers the question, "Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?" **Through the analysis of four plausible answers, it concludes that presidents who have different conceptions of American identity will identify threats differently.** Ultimately, the reason for identity's influence is in the fact that individuals define their identity according to constitutive rules, which delineate types of identity-appropriate behavior. When foreign states behave in ways are contrary to the rule-based identity or demonstrate the ability to jeopardize that rule-based identity, policymakers will identify them as threats. After studying the foreign policymaking of Presidents Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley, this study concludes that they held dissimilar constitutive rules and, subsequently, identified threats differently. Three plausible alternate hypotheses did not meet the same standard of evidence as the rule-based approach did.

The application of the rule-based identity (RBI) hypothesis to the cases studied revealed three modalities of American identity that corresponded with three distinct identifications of threat. The LEGAL view of American identity is based on constitutive

rules that emphasize justice, law, and order. Grover Cleveland demonstrated the legal view of American identity consistently throughout his life and presidency; he always spoke of Americans as a people who sought justice by respecting law and order and were obedient to the state and the commonweal. Whether he applied the notions of fealty, humility, or honesty, Cleveland saw Americans as a distinct group with a particular type of defining behavior.

The EXCEPTIONAL view, espoused by Benjamin Harrison, relied on constitutive rules that focused on the status of Americans as much as their behavior. Two sets of constitutive rules emerged from the case study. First, Harrison believed that Americans were a unique people due to their one-of-a-kind political history. This political exceptionalism led him to believe that Americans were alone in the world, with no natural allies. Second, Harrison believed that Americans were exceptionally prosperous, meaning that they enjoyed unparalleled wealth. These dual constitutive rules combined to form the exceptional view.

William McKinley demonstrated the ENLIGHTENED view, which defined Americans as a nation of people who were civilized and respected human dignity. McKinley consistently described Americans as free, democratic, peaceful, and humane. He argued that human dignity defined Americans and it was no coincidence that human dignity defined his assessment of friends and enemies.

Organizing policymakers and presidents into these three categories can yield a matrix for explaining and predicting threat identification:

Table 9.1: The Identity-Threat Matrix

American Way	Constitutive Rules	Threatening Behavior
LEGAL	Justice; order	Illegal
EXCEPTIONAL	Shared history; prosperity	Covetous
ENLIGHTENED	Civilized; humane; free	Inhumane

This matrix is not a typology; it is only a way of ordering relationships between values of two variables. Further, these variables are merely nominal, therefore they cannot be ordered in a meaningful way. Still, the matrix provides a means for presenting the results of this study.

9.2 What Can the Matrix Tell Us about Politics Today?

A study of presidential foreign policymaking that focuses on the nineteenth century is fruitless if it cannot relate to other historical periods. Additionally, it fails to be useful if it cannot shed light on current politics and policy. Fortunately, the three American ways that influence threat identification during the Gilded Age are present in the current era and have an impact on today's foreign policymaking. This sub-section offers some anecdotal evidence of the continuing presence of the variety of American ways and how they continue to influence threat identification and foreign policymaking.

The presidencies of Grover Cleveland seem remote when considered against the politics and discussions of American foreign policy in the current era, but there is still a minority in the foreign policymaking apparatus that advocates policies that would resemble those of 1887; one example is the Texas Republican, Ron Paul. On threat and American foreign policy, he recently said:

What if China becomes the most powerful country? What if they want our oil in the Gulf of Mexico? Will we expect them to behave differently than how we behave now? You'll bet that we'll believe in the second amendment then. What we do now will influence how we will be treated in the future. We need to be more honest in our foreign policy.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁶ Ron Paul, at *The Future of Freedom Foundation*, June 6, 2008, <http://www.fff.org>

Ron Paul advocates a foreign policy that retracts American power and reserves it for the protection of international law. Grover Cleveland saw American foreign relations in the same basic way. He believed that honesty was the best policy in human relations, including international politics. After all, he was the man who said, “I would rather the man who presents something for my consideration subject me to a zephyr of truth and a gentle breeze of responsibility rather than blow me down with a curtain of hot wind”.⁵¹⁷ Today, supporters of Ron Paul’s candidacy see foreign policy in the same basic way that Grover Cleveland did in the nineteenth century. Further, Paul and Cleveland appear to share a similar view of the American way—honesty, humility, and dedication to order and justice through the respect of law.

The Paul-Cleveland connection is one of many possible similarities between the socially constructed identities and threat assessments of nineteenth- and twenty-first century America. The questions of both periods focused on what America’s role in the world was and what threats to those roles existed. Both the role and threat are contingent on the subjectively-defined notion of what America is; the American way is the keystone of the arguments built in 2008 as well as 1888.

Another contemporary example, the debate over the rogue state threat, highlights the current interplay between identity and threat identification. George W. Bush’s identification of the “Axis of Evil” in 2002 resonated with many Americans, who were convinced that a set of motivated middle power states posed a clear and present danger to the United States. Despite the lesser capacity of these states to harm American national security, rogue states were a priority in the Bush administration. Further, the notion of a

⁵¹⁷ Nevins (1936) attributes this quote to Grover Cleveland without a source.

group of aligned illiberal states as a threat precedes Bush; Tony Lake alluded to the threat posed by illiberal “backlash states” in his landmark article of 1996.⁵¹⁸ While Lake’s argument had a limited audience in the early years of the Clinton administration, a revised version of it took hold in the succeeding administration’s first term. Bush described rogue states as a set of immoral, inhumane, and indecent agents that sought to destroy human dignity wherever possible. They were bound by their “hate for America and what it stands for.”⁵¹⁹

George W. Bush’s view of America clearly falls in line with the McKinley tradition. Bush speaks often about the defining characteristics of American society—freedom, democracy, and human rights. Here, we see a clear parallel to the constitutive rules used by McKinley at the end of the nineteenth century. Further, both feared the growing influence of inhumanity and sought to protect the American way against it.

The emergence of the identification of the “rogue state threat” relates to the growing influence of American society as the paragon of liberalism and humanity. It is no mistake that the triumphalism seen in epistemic communities, the foreign policymaking apparatus, and in the public discourse emerged at the same time as the fear of rogue states and the “axis of evil.” They are joined at the hip and, quite possibly, mutually constituting. Toward the end of the century, as more Americans became convinced that they were an enlightened society, societies that were the antithesis of the enlightenment were natural enemies. The triumphant streak that followed the end of the Cold War gave rise to a new batch of enemies. *The domination of the enlightened*

⁵¹⁸ Lake 1996.

⁵¹⁹ *National Security Strategy of the United States* 2006:8.

American Way is precisely what gave rise to the fear of rogue states among foreign policymakers at the start of the twenty-first century.

Today, we see a strong relationship between American identity and threat identification. The three American Ways uncovered and analyzed in this dissertation provide a framework for understanding how and why policymakers identify threat. The RBI approach to analyzing threat identification, therefore, is a powerful tool for understanding the nature of threat identification. Simply, it is a policy-relevant theory because it can help analysts discern real threat—existential threat to state security—from something entirely different.

9.3 Making the Results Theory Relevant

In 1959, William Appleman Williams wrote *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. His fellow members of the New Left avant-garde, Walter LaFeber and Lloyd Gardner, followed with their influential books over the next four years.⁵²⁰ These three books and those they inspired turned the conventional wisdom of diplomatic history on its head; the New Left contended that business interests dominated American foreign policymaking. While such a proposition seems simple and common sense today, it was a revolutionary concept fifty years ago. Williams and his cohort impacted political science as much as it did the humanities; one needs only look as far as Trubowitz's sectional politics theory to see the influence of the New Left.

A similar revolution is currently underway in the humanities and the social sciences. The influence of structuralism, post-structuralism, and the “linguistic turn” in the humanities gained momentum in the 1970s and 80s. In political science, the rise of cultural theories and the increasing influence of social constructivism are substantial,

⁵²⁰ Williams 1959; LaFeber 1963; Gardner 1964

although not yet considered mainstream. From Campbell's *Writing Security* through Wendt's *Theory of International Politics*, this new critical view of the mainstream standard in the study of international politics is impacting the way that we approach the subject. At the very least, the constructivist movement challenges rationalist assumptions and offers newly discovered evidence that disproves elements of the rationalist-materialist program.

The constructivist turn is encouraging scholars of international politics to study the cultural forces behind the political economy, foreign policymaking, the international security environment, and other myriad topics. This dissertation and the RBI theory it proposes encourage the reader to consider what role identity has on a policymaker's decision to label an actor as an enemy or a friend. It relies on a new vision of culture, one that conceptualizes identity not as a static category or even as Janus-faced. Instead, this study argues that identity has an infinite number of possible values, each subjectively defined, all of which can impact political behavior differently.

The findings of this study impact our understanding of the social psychological approach to inter-group conflict and foreign policymaking. Shades of SIT appear in the RBI formulation; the notion of mutually exclusive groups and the heuristic role it plays in discerning friend from enemy is evident. For this reason, SIT is a valuable forbearer of RBI; both agree that a basic inter-group dynamic helps policymakers identify threats. RBI departs from SIT when it comes to categorization of identity. Whereas SIT claims that a simple self-categorization determines an individual's us-them dynamic, the RBI theory and this dissertation demonstrate that the process is far more nuanced. The three presidents studied all self-categorized as "American" as their most salient identity, yet

had disparate notions of what it meant to be American. This difference led to various threat identifications. Social identity theory would not have been able to pick up on this nuance.

The reliance on socially-constructed identity in order to appraise threat does not preclude rationality. This dissertation uses a thin constructivist argument which claims that rationality is a socially permissible behavior that constitutes a mere subset of an individual's cognitive array. In simpler terms, an individual is ultimately guided by social norms, yet might follow a "rationality" norm in certain situations. It is likely that rationality is downstream from non-rationality when it comes to threat identification. Cleveland relied on his socially constructed view of identity to discern friend from foe, but then exhibited rational behavior when interacting strategically with the Germans and British.

Social constructivism and approaches like the RBI hypothesis can update our understanding of traditional approaches, not replace them. Just like how the New Left did not destroy our understanding of diplomatic history, constructivism can fill in the lacunae left by rationalist approaches to studying foreign policy decision-making. The potential link between RBI and Walt's model of threat identification is a strong case in point.

Walt writes that offensive intentions are the critical factor input in threat identification and provides many examples from twentieth-century history to buttress his claim. His is correct, but underestimates the role that interpretation plays in determining what an offensive intention is. While Walt writes that "intention, not power, is

crucial,”⁵²¹ he fails to offer an inter-subjective definition of what an offensive intention is. It is likely that he does not offer a consensus definition because it is impossible for one to exist; there is no universal idea of what an “offensive intention” is because “offensive intention” is subjectively defined. If so, then the RBI approach might offer a more effective manner to understanding what a policymaker might interpret as “offensive intentions.”

A synthesis of Walt and RBI can yield effective results. When we consider the “threatening behavior” identified by our three presidents and informed by their American ways, we have a good metric for understanding their threat identifications. Power and proximity, however, should be added to the mix. After all, Britain behaved in nearly the same way in South Africa than Spain did in Cuba, yet McKinley dismissed British human rights violations as necessary evils. Harrison suspected that the French would annex Liberia and admitted that the French were a threat, but claimed that the United States was powerless to stop it. It seems that he did not identify British and French aggressive behavior in Africa as threatening because they were too distant from core American interests or the homeland. Proximity and power impact threat identification.

A revised version of Walt’s theory, using the RBI approach’s revision of “offensive intentions” instead of his original formulation, might improve the theory’s overall effect. A revised version of Walt’s hypothesis would be:

1. Relative power
2. Geographic proximity
3. Offensive capabilities
4. Identity-specific offensive behavior

⁵²¹ Walt 1987:26

This revision would require a careful analysis of the policymaker's constitutive rules, thus making it more difficult to apply generally. Still, it has the potential to produce more accurate and detailed explanations of threat identification. The Walt hypothesis, as tested in this dissertation, is not irrelevant, merely inaccurate. A constructivist add-on provides an effective fix.⁵²²

The findings of this study also implicate the sub-national interests approach, which is based on Trubowitz's theory. More generally, it claims that sub-national interests impact foreign policymaking. In the nineteenth century, sections of the American republic had such disparate economic interests that it was easy to conflate a section with a particular economic sector. Nearing the end of the Gilded Age, the dominance of sections began to wane. Compounded by the fact that McKinley did not rely on a particular section or economic sector to amass his winning coalition, the notion of section-driven influences on foreign policy is questionable.

In the twenty-first century, the sectional argument is even less useful. In the New York metropolitan area alone, interests range from global capital (Manhattan), post-industrial (northern New Jersey,) simple manufacturing (northeastern Pennsylvania,) and agrarian (Hudson Valley.) One section—not even one U.S. Senator—cannot represent all of these interests satisfactorily. The Trubowitz explanation relates best to industrializing America, not newly industrialized and most definitely not to post-industrial America, where a plurality of economic interests leads to heterogeneous sections and makes

⁵²² There are many epistemological concerns with such an “add-on” approach that I do not wish to engage, yet want to acknowledge. Adding assumptions from the RBI theory to Walt's BOT theory would assuredly violate Walt's hard core rationalist assumption. Lakatos (1970) discourages revision of the hard core, since it impedes the progress of scientifically-derived knowledge and minimizes the impact of *a priori* theorization and hypothesis-testing.

geographically-based interests less significant to forming a winning coalition in the Electoral College.

This study attempts to update the interpretation of late nineteenth century foreign relations extended by Trubowitz. While sub-national interests played a part, the evidence brought to bear in chapter seven disproves the argument that presidents were beholden to industry when making foreign policy. In trade policy, however, Trubowitz is likely correct. In matters of security, sub-national interests are a junior partner. In place of the interpretation offered by Trubowitz, which sees U.S. foreign policy in the 1890s as a weak and naïve state susceptible to economic interests, the RBI hypothesis and the case studies of this dissertation offer an alternate story.

The RBI approach offers a new interpretation of American diplomatic history during the Gilded Age. At the end of the nineteenth century, contending views of the meaning of America and, subsequently, what the appropriate role for Americans in the world would be, prevented a consensus on American foreign policy. The modernization and strengthening of the American state, the increased capacity of the American economy, and the augmented power of its military afforded Americans with a new opportunity to impact the course of world history. Although it was a newly minted great power, America struggled to find a unified and coherent *raison d'être* to give their society meaning in the context of world politics. Although this dissertation ends with the assassination of William McKinley, American society would never agree on its role in the world until the international system forced an answer in 1945. Even then, dissent would be loud through the twentieth century. More changes in the international system and the collapse of the Soviet Union would break the fragile American consensus again,

which brings us to the twenty-first century, where Americans are once again arguing passionately about what it means to be an American how Americans should address the world.

This study impacts our understanding of the alternate hypotheses tested, but also speaks to the future of constructivism in foreign policy analysis. Many constructivist explanations of international politics focus on the role that a broad “world-view” (or strategic culture⁵²³) has in strategy formation, preference formation, or both. Wendt writes of three socially-constructed ideas that influence interaction between states: the Kantian view, the Lockean view, and the Hobbesian view.⁵²⁴ The English school uses a similar approach to categorize states according to social traditions. Martin Wight wrote that a combination of path-dependent history and socially constructed ideas leads states and societies to fall into a realist, rationalist, or revolutionary tradition, which impact the ways that they behave in international society.⁵²⁵

There is some similarity between Wendt, Wight, and the RBI approach. The American ways revealed in chapter eight loosely fit into the Wendt and Wight matrices:

Table 9.2: A Comparison of Categories of Socially Constructed Ideas in the Study of IR

Perceived Modality of Int'l Relations	Wight (1991)	Wendt (1999)	Mislan (2008)
Conflict	Realism	Hobbesian	Exceptional
Cooperation	Rationalism	Lockean	Legal
Universality	Revolutionism	Kantian	Enlightened

This cannot be a coincidence and begs a broader question for future consideration: are social constructivists all describing the same phenomenon in different ways? More importantly for the consideration of this study's value, are changes in identity truly

⁵²³ See Johnson 1995

⁵²⁴ Wendt 1999

⁵²⁵ Bull 1977 and Wight, G. 1991 offer the best summary of Wight's categories, published posthumously.

independent variables or do they co-vary with a broader view of international society? *The vague similarity of the Wight, Wendt, and RBI categories raises the possibility that the RBI hypothesis captures only a part of a broader role that socially constructed ideas play in international political behavior.*

The findings of this study speak to other constructivist studies, including Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.⁵²⁶ Anderson argues that no nation is real and depends on a social consensus in order for it to exist. Further, the "imagined community" mutually constitutes with the behavior of those that subscribe to it. If we apply Anderson's argument to the study of American identity and foreign policy, we see a clear connection: As policymakers define America, America then defines the behavior of policymakers (policymaking.) This study's utilization of the RBI hypothesis speaks to the heart of Anderson's version of social constructivism.

The findings of this study are theoretically relevant. They extend constructivist concepts to a topic that is at the heart of our discipline's understanding of international politics, international security, and American foreign policy. These results present an argument that identity impacts a policymaker's identification of threat and relies on a theory that is elegant and draws on established concepts. If identity influences threat identification, as this dissertation demonstrates, then it implicates the rational, material, and psychological theories of threat identification and foreign policymaking

This section raises salient points regarding the theoretical impact of the findings of this study. Next, this chapter highlights future directions for RBI research and foreign policy analysis.

⁵²⁶ Anderson 1983

9.4 Future Considerations

Successful research produces as many questions as answers. This section proposes three questions that will inform future research on the RBI theory and the relationship between identity and threat identification.

Are there only three American ways? Certainly, there is nothing in the RBI theory that would prevent additional views of American identity. This dissertation only studied three presidencies, all of which varied in substantial ways. There is a possibility that other presidents employed different American ways and advocated different foreign policies. For example, what American way did Theodore Roosevelt espouse? The president was an icon for rugged individualism; perhaps he held a separate American way. A future direction for RBI theory is to map out the different American ways throughout American history. Do certain constitutive rules cease to exist as history progresses? Do new rules arise after the Gilded Age? The only reasonable method to find an answer to these questions is through more inductive research.

Do the three American ways relate to current policymakers and debates? One simple project that can extend the generalizability of the RBI approach is to study the constitutive rules held by contemporary presidents, key foreign policymakers, and presidential candidates. Where do John McCain, Barack Obama, and neo-conservative policymakers fit into the matrix? In order to claim that the RBI approach to threat identification is useful today, it should be able to categorize today's prominent policymakers.

Is the RBI theory internally valid? Case studies are useful for developing theory, but all forms of quasi-experimentation are less helpful in determining internal validity.

Constructing and executing experiments to validate the internal causal process can augment the explanatory and predictive capacity of the RBI approach.

These are only three questions to consider; more exist and can inform future studies on threat and identity. The final section summarizes this dissertation.

9.5 Primary Issues

This chapter concludes this dissertation by summarizing the lessons learned from the research completed. As a result of this study, we know that identity does influence threat identification. Further, it can explain why various policymakers will identify threat differently. If one president has a particular view of American identity and another has a different view, then they disagree on what threatening behavior they should defend against when making foreign and defense policy.

This dissertation raises six primary issues that impact the way that we study and analyze American foreign policy:

1. Threat is a central concept in the study of international politics, yet political science is far from a consensus on why or how foreign policymakers identify threat.
2. Extant theories of foreign policy decision-making cannot effectively answer the question, “Why do threat identifications vary among presidents?”
3. An examination of the presidencies of Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, and William McKinley reveal that all three identified threats differently and viewed various types of foreign behavior as threatening.
4. The three presidents disagreed on what constitutes being American; their different American ways corresponded with the types of behavior that they considered threatening.
5. There is a strong relationship between the constitutive rules a policymaker uses to understand American identity, the types of behavior that he finds threatening, and threat identification.
6. The relationship between identity and threat speaks to current debates over the rogue state threat and disagreements over grand strategy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED WORK

The introduction to this dissertation contains sections of the following conference paper, which will be submitted for publication in 2009:

Mislan, D. B. (2007, Feb) Reality, not Rhetoric: The Rogue State Label in US Foreign Policy. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Hilton Chicago, CHICAGO, IL, USA*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdelal, R., Y.M. Herrera, A.I. Johnston, R. McDermott (2006). Identity as a Variable. *Perspectives on Politics* 4:4, 395-711.
- Acharya, A. (2004). How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism. *International Organization* 58:2, 239-275
- Adams, H. (1909). *The Education of Henry Adams*. (Massachusetts Historical Society)
- Allison, G.T. (1969). Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis. *American Political Science Review* 63:3, 689-719.
- Allison, G.T. and P. Zelikow (1999 [1972]). *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (Longman)
- Allport, F.H. (1950). *The Nature of Personality: Selected Papers*. (Greenwood)
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (London: Verso)
- Armstrong, W.H. (2000:55). *Major McKinley: William McKinley and the Civil War*. (Kent, OH: Kent State Univ.)
- Bailey, T.A. (1931). Japan's Protest against the Annexation of Hawaii. *Journal of Modern History* 3 (March) 46.
- . (1939). Dewey and the Germans at Manila Bay. *American Historical Review* 45 (October), 61
- Barkin, J. (2003). Realist Constructivism. *International Studies Review* 5:3, 325-342.
- Barnum, A. (1884). *The Lives of Grover Cleveland and Thomas Hendricks* (Hartford Publishing)
- Bartels, L.M. (2002). Beyond the Running Tally: Partisan Bias in Political Perceptions. *Political Behavior* 24:2, 117-150.
- Baumeister, R. and M. Leary (1995). The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*. 117:3, 497-529
- Beard, C.A. (1934). *The Idea of National Interest* (Quadrangle)

- Bergh, A.E., ed. (1898). *Letters and addresses of Grover Cleveland*. (The Unit Book Publishing Company, New York)
- Borneman, W. (2004). *1812: The War that Forged a Nation*. (Harper-Collins)
- Brady, H. and D. Collier, eds. (2006). *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. (Rowman & Littlefield)
- Branscombe, N. and D. Wann (1994). Collective self-esteem consequences of outgroup derogation when a valued social identity is on trial. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 24:6, 641-57.
- Brewer, M. (1993). Social identity, distinctiveness, and in-group homogeneity. *Social Cognition* 11:1, 150-64.
- (1999). The Psychology of Prejudice: In-group love or out-group hate? *Journal of Social Issues* 55:3, 429-444
- Bristow, J.L. (1952). *Fraud and Politics at the Turn of the Century*. (NY: Expedition Press)
- Brodsky, A. (2000). *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Character*. (St. Martin's)
- Brooks, Sydney (July 18, 1908). Characteristics of Cleveland. *Living Age*. P. 187.
- Bueno de Mesquita, B., J. Morrow, R. Siverson, A. Smith (2003). *The Logic of Political Survival*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press)
- Bull, H. (1977). *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*. (Macmillan)
- Bull, H. (1977a). *Systems of States*. (Leicester, UK: Leicester Press)
- Burke, J.P. and F.I. Greenstein (1989). *How Presidents Test Reality: Decisions of Vietnam in 1954 and 1965*. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation)
- Bush, G.H.W. and Scowcroft, B. (1998). *A World Transformed*. (Random House)
- Bush, G.W. (2002). *2002 National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office)
- (2006). *2006 National Security Strategy of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office)
- Calhoun, C.W. (2005). *Benjamin Harrison*. (Times Books, New York)

- Callahan, J.M. (1937). *American Foreign Policy in Canadian Relations*. (Cooper Square)
- Caprioli, M. and P. Trumbore (2005). Rhetoric versus Reality: Rogue States in International Conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49:5, 770-791
- Carnegie, A. (1893). A Look Ahead. *North American Review* 156 (June)
- Carr, E.H. (1939). *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*. (Palgrave Macmillan)
- Carter, J. (1982). *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President*. (Bantam)
- Castano, E., et al. (2002). I Belong, Therefore, I Exist: In-group Identification, In-group Entitativity, and In-group Bias. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. 28, 135-143.
- Checkel, J. (2001). Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change. *International Organization* 55:3, 553-588
- Chong, D. (2000). *Rational Lives: Norms and Values in Politics and Society*. (Chicago)
- Cialdini, R., et al. (1976). Basking in Reflected Glory: Three (Football) Field Studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.34:3, 366-75.
- Cleveland, Grover. (n.d.) Grover Cleveland Papers. Library of Congress
- (1897). *The Self-made Man in American Life*.
- (1900). *Presidential Problems*.
- (1900b). *The independence of the executive*.
- (1900c). *Good Citizenship*.
- Coletta, P.E. (1970). *Threshold to American Internationalism, essays on the foreign policies of William McKinley*. (New York: Exposition Press)
- Converse, et al. (1960). *The American Voter*. (Wiley & Sons)
- Coppedge, M. (2007). Case Studies are for Intensive Testing and Theory Development, not Extensive Testing. *Qualitative Methods Newsletter* 5:2, 2-3
- Cortelyou, G.B. (1961). Collected Papers of George Bruce Cortelyou (Library of Congress)

- Crocker, J. and R. Luhtanen. (1990). Collective Self-esteem and In-group Bias. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 58:1, 60-7.
- Dawes, C.G. (1950). *A Journal of the McKinley Years*. (Chicago: Lakeside Press).
- Dennett, T. (1963). *Americans in Eastern Asia*. (New York: Barnes & Noble)
- Department of Defense (1990). Department of Defense Base Structure Report for Fiscal Year 1991. Supplement. (Government Printing Office). Accessed electronically on June 1, 2008 at <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA242825>
- DeRidder, R. and R. Tripathi, eds. (1992). *Norm Violation and Inter-group Relations*. (Oxford, UK: Oxford Univ. Press)
- Diehl, P.F. and G. Goertz (2000). *War and Peace in International Rivalry*. (Michigan)
- Dobson, J.M. (1988). *Reticent Expansionism: The Foreign Policy of William McKinley*. (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne Univ. Press)
- Doty, R. (1993). Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines. *International Studies Quarterly* 37:3, 297-320.
- Dozer, Donald M. (1965). *The Monroe Doctrine*. (NY: Knopf)
- Dueck, C. (2006). *Reluctant Crusaders: Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy*. (Princeton)
- Duffy, G. (forthcoming 2008). Changing the Rules: A Speech Act Analysis of the End of the Cold War. *International Studies Quarterly*
- Dulebohn, G.R. (1941). *Principles of Foreign Policy under the Cleveland Administrations*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Pennsylvania.
- Durkheim, E. (1997 [1897]). *Suicide*. (Free Press)
- Elster, J. (1986). *Rational Choice*. (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press)
- Fearon, J.D. (1997). Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41:1, 68-90
- (1991). Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science. *World Politics* 43:2, 169-83.
- Ferguson, John H. (1939). *American Diplomacy and the Boer War*. (Univ. of

Pennsylvania Press)

Fierke, Karin M. 2002. "Links across the Abyss: Language and Logic in International Relations." *International Studies Quarterly*. 46: 331-354.

Finnemore, M. (1996). *National Interests in International Society*. (Cornell)

Finnemore, M. and M. Barrett (2004). *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics*. (Cornell)

Finnemore, M. and K. Sikkink. (1998). International Norms and Political Change. *International Organization* 52:4, 887-919.

Fisher, L. (1995). *Presidential War Power*. (Lawrence, KS: Univ. of Kansas Press)

Foner, P.S. (1972). The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism. Volume 1 (NY: Monthly Review Press)

Foner, P.S. (1972a). The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism. Volume 2 (NY: Monthly Review Press)

Ford, H.J. (1921). *The Cleveland Era*. (Yale)

Foster, J.W. (1900). *A Century of American Diplomacy*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin)

Franklin, C. and J. Jackson (1983). The Dynamics of Party Identification. *American Political Science Review*. 77:4, 957-973

Freedman, L. (2004). War in Iraq: Selling the Threat. *Survival* 46:2, 6-50.

Gaddis, J.L. (1997). *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*. (Oxford)

----- (2004). *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*. (Yale)

Gallup Poll (January 13, 2003). Do You Think That the Current Situation In Iraq Is Worth Going to War Over, or Not?

Gardner, L. (1964). *Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy*. (Madison, WI: Univ. of Wisconsin Press)

Gardner, L., A. Schlesinger, Jr., and H. Morgenthau (1970). *The Origins of the Cold War*. (New York: Wiley)

George, A.L. (1969). The "Operational Code": A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making. *International Studies Quarterly* 13:2, 190-222.

- (1979). Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison. In P.G. Lauren, ed. *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy*. (Free Press), 43-68.
- George, A.L. and A. Bennett. 2004). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press)
- Gerring, J. (2007). *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. (Cambridge Univ. Press)
- Ghosn, F., G. Palmer, and S. Bremer. (2004). The MID3 Data Set, 1993–2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 21:133-54
- Gibson, J. (2001). Social Networks, Civil Society, and the Prospects for Consolidating Russia's Democratic Transition. *American Journal of Political Science* 45:1, 51-69
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. (Cambridge)
- Gilder, Richard Watson (1910). *Grover Cleveland: A Record of Friendship*. (Century)
- Gilpin, R. (1981). *War and Change in International Politics*. (Cambridge)
- Glad, P.W. (1964). *McKinley, Bryan, and the People*. (Philadelphia: Lippincott)
- Goemans, H. (2000). *War and Punishment: The Causes of War Termination and the First World War*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press)
- Goemans, H. and G. Chiozza (2004). International Conflict and the Tenure of Leaders. *American Journal of Political Science* 48:3, 604-619.
- Goertz, G. (2006). *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press)
- Goertz, G. and B. Braumoeller (2000). The Methodology of Necessary Conditions. *American Journal of Political Science* 44:4, 844-858.
- Goertz, G. and J.S. Levy (2007). *Explaining War and Peace: Case Studies and Necessary Condition Counterfactuals*. (New York: Routledge)
- Goertz, G. and H. Starr, eds. (2002). *Necessary Conditions: Theory, Methodology, and Applications*. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield)
- Gormley, D.M. (2004). The Limits of Intelligence: Iraq's Lessons. *Survival* 46:3, 7-28.

- Gould, L.L. (1980). *The Presidency of William McKinley*. (Lawrence, KS: Univ. of Kansas Press)
- (1982). *The Spanish-American War and President McKinley*. (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas)
- Gould, L. and C. Roell (1988). *William McKinley: A Bibliography*. (Meckler)
- Graff, H. (2002). *Grover Cleveland* (Henry Holt), 1st edition.
- Greenstein, F. (1969). *Personality and politics: Problems of evidence, interference, and conceptualization*. (Markham)
- (2000). *The presidential difference: leadership style from FDR to Clinton*. (Free Press)
- Gresham, M. (1919). *Life of Walter Quentin Gresham* (Century)
- Griswold, A.W. (1938). *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (Harcourt Brace),
- Halstead, M. (1901). *The Illustrious Life of William McKinley, our Martyred President*.
- Hamilton, R. (2006). *McKinley, War, and Empire*. (Trans-action, New Brunswick, NJ), 109-111.
- (2006a). McKinley's Backbone. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36:3, 482-492
- Harrison, B. (1891). *Through the South and the West with the President: April 14-May 16, 1891*. Edited by J. Shriver (Mail and Express: New York)
- ([1893] 1969). *Public Papers and Addresses of Benjamin Harrison, Twenty-third President of the United States*. (Government Printing Office, Washington, DC)
- (1895). *This Country of Ours*.
- (1897). *The Constitution and administration of the United States of America*.
- (1901). *Views of an Ex-President*. M.L. Harrison, ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Bowen-Merrill Co.)
- Hartz, L. (1955). *The Liberal Tradition in America: an Interpretation of American*

Political Thought since the Revolution. (Harcourt Brace)

Haslam, S.A., et al. (1999). Social Identity Salience and the Emergence of Stereotype Consensus. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 25:7, 809-18.

Hay, J. (n.d.). *Collected Papers of John Hay.* (Library of Congress)

-----, (1902). William McKinley [microform]: memorial address delivered in the Capitol, February 27, 1902, by invitation of Congress.

Heath, P.H. (1899). *President McKinley's Share in the War with Spain.* (Chicago: Allied)

Hedges, C. (1892). *Speeches of Benjamin Harrison.* (New York)

Hensel, W.U. (1888). *Life and Public Services of Grover Cleveland*

Herman, R.G. (1996). Identity, Norms, and National Security: The Soviet Foreign Policy Revolution and the End of the Cold War. In P. Katzenstein, et al., *The Culture of National Security.* (Cornell)

Herrmann, R.K., et al. (1997). Images in International Relations: An Experimental Test of Cognitive Schemata. *International Studies Quarterly*, 41:3, 403-33.

Hewest, F.W. and W. McKinley, Jr. (1892). *What are the Facts? Protection and Reciprocity Illustrated. Questions of Today answered in one hundred graphic studies.* (New York: H.F. Clark)

Hilderbrand, C. (1981). *Power and the People: Executive Management of Public Opinion in Foreign Affairs, 1897-1921* (Chapel Hill, UNC)

Hill, Lawrence F. (1971). *Diplomatic Relations between Brazil and the United States.* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press)

Hobbes, T. ([1651] 1991). *Leviathan.* edited by R. Tuck (New York: CUP)

Hogg, M.A. (1995). Social Identity and Self-Categorization Processes in Organizational Contexts. *The Academy of Management Review* 25:1, 121-146.

Hogg, M. A., & D. Abrams (1993). Towards a single-process uncertainty-reduction model of social motivation in groups. In M. A. Hogg & D. Abrams (Eds.), *Group motivation: Social psychological perspectives.* (Harvester Wheatsheaf), 173-90.

Hollingsworth, J.R. (1963). *The Whirligig of Politics: the democracy of Cleveland and Bryan.* (Chicago)

- Holsti, O. (1977). A Typology of 'Operational Code' Belief Systems, in *Decision-Making Research: Some Recent Developments*, pp. 31-130, (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs)
- Hopf, T. (1998). The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory. *International Security* 23:1, 171-200.
- (2002). *The Social construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow 1955 & 1999*. (Cornell)
- Horsman, R. (1969). *The War of 1812*. (Knopf)
- Huddy, L. (2001). From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory. *Political Psychology* 22:1, 127-156
- Hugins, R. (1922). *Grover Cleveland, a Study in Political Courage*. (Anchor-Lee)
- Huntington, S. (1993). The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs*. 72:3, 22-49.
- (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. (Free Press)
- (2003). *Who are We? The Challenges to American National Identity*. (Simon & Schuster)
- Ikenberry, G.J. (2001). *After victory : institutions, strategic restraint, and the rebuilding of order after major wars*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press)
- Inglehart, R. (1988). The Renaissance of Political Culture. *American Political Science Review* 82:4, 1203-30.
- Jackson, P.T. (2006). *Civilizing the Enemy: German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West*. (Michigan)
- James, Henry (1923 [1971]). *Richard Olney and His Public Service*. (Houghton Mifflin)
- Jeffers, H.P. (2000). *An Honest President: The Life and Presidencies of Grover Cleveland*. (Morrow)
- Jervis, R. (1976). *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton)
- (1978). Cooperation under the Security Dilemma. *World Politics* 30: 167-214
- (2003). Understanding the Bush Doctrine. *Political Science Quarterly* 118:3, 365
- Johnston, A.I. (1995). Thinking about Strategic Culture. *International Security* 19:4, 32-

64.

- (2001). Treating International Institutions as Social Environments. *International Studies Quarterly* 45:4, 487-515.
- Jones, H.F. (1972). *The Cleveland era: a chronicle of the new order in politics*. (USPA)
- Kahneman, D., et al. (1982). *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*. (Cambridge)
- Kant, I. ([1795] 2007). *Perpetual Peace*. (FQ Classics)
- Kaplan, C.A. and P. Trubowitz (2007). Grand Strategy for a Divided America. *Foreign Affairs* 86:4 (July-August), 71-83.
- Katzenstein, P. (1996). Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security. In Katzenstein, P., A. Wendt and R. Jepperson, eds., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*. (Cornell)
- (1996a.). *Cultural Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan*. (Cornell)
- Katzenstein, P. and C. Hemmer (2003). Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism. *International Organization* 56, 575-607.
- Keim, J. (1919). *Forty Years of German-American Relations*.
- Kelley, Lt. Jerrold (30 January 1892) The Crisis with Chile, *Harpers Weekly*
- Kennan, G. (1965 [1957]). *American Diplomacy*. (Chicago)
- Kennedy, P. (1974). *The Samoan Tangle: A Study in Anglo-German-American Relations* (New York: Barnes and Noble)
- Kennedy School of Government. (2002). Standing up for Steel: The US Government Response to Steel Industry and Union Efforts to Win Protection from Imports. *KSG Case* 1651.0. Accessed on August 15, 2008 from <http://www.ksgcase.harvard.edu>
- Kidd, A. (1997). Game Theory and the Spiral Model. *World Politics* 50
- King, G., R. Keohane, and S. Verba (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry*. (Princeton)
- Kissinger, H. (1957). *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812-22*. (Houghton Mifflin)

- Kohlsaatt, H.H. (1923). *From McKinley to Harding: Personal Recollections of Our Presidents*. (New York: Scribner & Sons)
- Kratochwil, F. (1987). *Rules, Norms, and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs*. (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press)
- Krauthammer, C. (1990). The Unipolar Moment. *Foreign Affairs* 70, 23-33
- Kubalkova, V., ed. (2001). *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*. (ME Sharpe)
- Kurth, J. (2005). Global Threats and American Strategies: From Communism in 1955 to Islamism in 2005. *Orbis* (Fall), 631-48
- LaFeber, W. (1963). *The New Empire: an interpretation of American expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press)
- (1993). *Inevitable Revolutions: The US in Central America*. (Norton).
- (1994). *The American Age: USFP at home and abroad, 1750-present*. (Norton)
- Laitin, D. (1998). *Identities in Formation: the Russian-speaking populations in the near abroad*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press)
- Lakatos, I. (1970). Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes. In Lakatos, I. and A. Musgrave (1970). *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*. (Cambridge Univ. Press)
- Lake, A. (1994). Confronting Backlash States. *Foreign Affairs* (March/April)
- Lake, A. (1996). From Containment to Enlargement. *Foreign Affairs*
- Larson, D.W. (1985). *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation*. (Princeton)
- (1997). *Anatomy of Mistrust*. (Cornell)
- Larson, D.W. and A. Shevchenko (2003). Shortcut to Greatness: The New Thinking and the Revolution in Soviet Foreign Policy. *International Organization* 57:1, 77-109.
- Leech, M. (1986 [1959]). *In the Days of McKinley*. (Norwalk, CT: The Easton Press).
- Leffler, M. (2007). *For the soul of mankind: the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War*. (Hill and Wang)

- Legro, J. (2000). The Transformation of Policy Ideas. *American Journal of Political Science* 44:3, 419-32.
- Leites, N. (1951). *Operational Code of the Politburo*. (RAND Corporation)
- Lemke, D. and W. Reed (2001). War and Rivalry among Great Powers. *American Journal of Political Science* 45:2, 457-69.
- Levy, J.S. (1984). The Offensive/Defensive Balance of Military Technology: A Theoretical and Historical Analysis. *International Studies Quarterly* 28:2, 219-238
- (1992). Prospect Theory and International Relations: Theoretical Applications and Analytical Problems. *Political Psychology* 13.2 (1992),
- (1997). Prospect Theory, Rational Choice, and International Relations. *International Studies Quarterly* 41:1, 87-112.
- (2003). Political Psychology and Foreign Policy. In Sears, D.O., L. Huddy, and R. Jervis, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (Oxford)
- Lijphart, A. (1971). Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. *American Political Science Review* 65, 682-93.
- Lippmann, W. (1955). *Essays in the Public Philosophy*. (Little, Brown)
- (1965). *Public Opinion*. (Free Press)
- Little, D. (1991). *Varieties of Social Explanation*. (Westview)
- Lodge, H.C. (1899). *The War with Spain*. (NY: New York Times)
- Lowenfeld, A. (1996). Congress and Cuba: The Helms-Burton Act. *American Journal of International Law* 90:3, 419-34.
- Lynch, Denis Tilden (1932). *Grover Cleveland: A Man Four-Square*. (New York: Liveright)
- Maoz, Z., L. Terris, R. Kuperman, and I. Talmud (2005). International Networks and International Politics. In A. Mintz and B. Russett (eds.). *New Directions for International Relations*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, pp. 35-64.
- (2007). What is the Enemy of My Enemy: Causes and Consequences of Imbalanced International Relations, 1816-2001. *Journal of Politics*, 69(1): 100-115.

- Mansfield, E. and J. Snyder (1995). Democratization and the Danger of War. *International Security* 20:1, 5-38.
- (2002). Democratic transitions, institutional strength, and war. *International Organization* 56 (2): 297-337
- Marszalek, J. (1988). *Grover Cleveland: A Bibliography*. (Meckler)
- Mastanduno, M. (1997). Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War. *International Security* 21:4, 49-88
- May, E. (1973). *Imperial Democracy*. (Harper and Row: New York)
- Mayhew, D. (1974). *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. (Yale)
- McDermott, R. (1998). *Risk-taking in International Politics: Prospect Theory in American Foreign Policy*. (Michigan)
- McElroy, Robert McNutt (1933). *Grover Cleveland, The Man and the Statesman*. 2 vols.
- McFarland, G.W. (1963). The New York Mugwumps of 1884: A Political Profile. *Political Science Quarterly*. 78:1 (March), 40-58.
- McKinley, W. Jr. (1890). Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley from March 1, 1897 to May 30, 1890. (Appleton and Co.: NY)
- (June 1890). The Value of Protection. *North American Review* 150: 740-48.
- (November 1890). What Congress Has Done. *North American Review* 151: 513-18.
- (1891). Bits of Wisdom, Or Daily Thoughts: William McKinley. (New York and Boston: H.M. Caldwell Co.)
- (1893). Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley. (Appleton and Co.: New York)
- (1896). McKinley's Speeches in August. Compiled by Joseph P. Smith. Chicago: RNC, 1896. (best available compilation of campaign speeches)
- (1963). William McKinley, Jr. Papers. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division)
- McWilliams, C. (1971). *Prejudice; Japanese-Americans: Symbol of Racial Intolerance*. (Archon Books)

- Mead, W.R. (1999). The Jacksonian Tradition. *National Interest* (Winter)
- (2001). *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*. (Knopf)
- Mearsheimer, J. (1990). Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War. *International Security* 15:1, 5-56
- (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. (Norton)
- Merrill, Horace Samuel (1957). *Bourbon Leader: Grover Cleveland and the Democratic Party*
- Mill, J.S. (1843). *A System of Logic*.
- Mislan, D.B. (2007). Reality, not Rhetoric. The Rogue State Label in American Foreign Policy. Presented to the *International Studies Association* annual meeting, March 2006, Chicago, Illinois
- Morgan, H.W. (1965). *America's Road to Empire*. (NY: Wiley & Sons)
- (2003 [1963]). *William McKinley and His America*. (Kent, OH: Kent State Univ.)
- Morgenthau, H.J. (1946). *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*. (Chicago)
- Morgenthau, H.J. (1948). *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. (Knopf)
- Morrow, J. (1994). Modelling the Forms of International Cooperation: Distribution Versus Information. *International Organization*, 48, 387-423.
- Mulanax, R.B. (1994). *The Boer War in American Politics and Diplomacy*. (MD: University Press of America)
- Muzzey, D. (1934). *James G. Blaine, Political Idol of Other Days*. (NY: Dodd, Mead, and Co.)
- National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States (2004). *The 9/11 Commission Report*. (W.W. Norton)
- Nau, H. (2002). *At Home Abroad: Identity and Power in American Foreign Policy*. (Cornell)
- Nelson, H.N. (1908). Political Career of Grover Cleveland. *North American Review* (August), contributions by Daniel S. Lamont, Vol 188, Iss DCXXXIII, p. 161

- Neustadt, R. (1960). *Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership* (New York: Wiley)
- Nevins, Allan (1932). *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage*. (Dodd, Mead, & Co.)
- (1933). *The Letters of Grover Cleveland, 1850-1908* (Houghton Mifflin)
- (December 11, 1938). The Americas Weigh the Monroe Doctrine. *The New York Times*
- Nye, J. (2004). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. (Public Affairs)
- Olcott, C.S. (1916). *The Life of William McKinley*. (New York: Houghton Mifflin)
- Onuf, N. (1989). *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*. (South Carolina)
- Orth, S.P. (1922). *The age of reform*. (Yale)
- Parker, George F. (1909). *Recollections of Grover Cleveland*.
- Paul, R. (2007). *A Foreign Policy of Freedom: Peace, Commerce, and Honest Friendship*. (Foundation for Rational Economics and Education)
- Peck, G.R. (1901). *Memorial, William McKinley*. (Chicago Bar Association: Chicago)
- Peck, H.T. (August 16, 1902). Grover Cleveland. *Saturday Evening Post*
- Perkins, Dexter (1937). *The Monroe Doctrine, 1865-1907*.
- (1957). *Foreign Policy and the American Spirit: Essays by Dexter Perkins*.
- Perkins, N.C. (1885). *A Man of Destiny*.
- Perry, J.M. (2003). *Touched with fire: Five Presidents and the Civil War Battles that Made Them*. (PublicAffairs: New York).
- Peterson, L.W. (1961). *The Day of the Mugwump*. (New York: Random House).
- Phillips, K. (2003). *William McKinley*. (New York: Henry Holt & Co.)
- Posen, B. and A. Ross (1997). Competing Visions of U.S. Grand Strategy. *International Security* 21:3, 5-49.
- Powell, R. (1999). *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*. (Princeton)

- Powers, T. (April 29, 2004). The Failure. *New York Review of Books*, 4.
- Pratt, J.W. (1951). *Expansionists of 1898*. (Gloucester, MA)
- (1970). The Coming War with Spain. In P. Coletta, ed., *Threshold to American Expansionism* (New York: Exposition Press)
- Quester, G.H. (1977). *Offense and Defense in the International System*. (New York: Wiley)
- Ragin, C. (1989). *The Comparative Method*. (California)
- Ragin, C. (2000). *Fuzzy Set Social Science*. (Chicago)
- Reagan, R.W. (1990). *An American Life*. (Simon & Schuster)
- Reuters Wire Service (June 19, 2000). Iran No Longer a Rogue State.
- Rhodes, E. (1989). *Power and MADness: The Logic of Nuclear Coercion*. (Columbia)
- (1996). Sea Change: Interest-Based and Cultural-Cognitive Accounts of Strategic Adjustment in the 1890s. *Security Studies* (Summer)
- (1999). Constructing Power: Cultural Transformation and Strategic Adjustment in the 1890s. In Trubowitz, P., E. Goldman, and E. Rhodes, eds., *The Politics of Strategic Adjustment*. (Columbia)
- (2003). The Imperial Logic of Bush's Liberal Agenda. *Survival* 45:1, 131-154
- Rhodes, J.F. (1965 [1922]). *The McKinley and Roosevelt Administrations*. (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press)
- Richardson, J.D. (1898). *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents 1789-1897*, Volume IIX, 1883-1889
- (1898a). *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents 1789-1897*. Volume IX, 1889-1897.
- (1901). *A Compilation of the Messages of the Papers of the Presidents 1789-1900*. Volume X, 1897-1900
- Richelson, J., ed. (Feb 11, 2004). Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction. *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book 80*. Available at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/index.htm>

- Riker, W. (1962). *Theory of Political Coalitions*. (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press)
- Risse, T. (2000). Let's Argue! Communicative Action in World Politics. *International Organization* 54:1, 1-39
- Risse, T., et al. (1999). To Euro or Not To Euro? The EMU and Identity Politics in the European Union. *European Journal of International Relations* 5:2, 147-87.
- Robar, S. (2002). *Frances Clara Folsom Cleveland*. (Nova History)
- Root, E. (1916). *Addresses on international subjects*. (Harvard)
- Rousseau, D. (2006). *Identifying Threats and Threatening Identities: The Social Construction of Realism and Liberalism*. (Stanford)
- Rousseau, D. and A.M. van der Veen (2005). The Emergence of a Shared Identity: An Agent-Based Computer Simulation of Idea Diffusion. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, 686-711.
- Ruggie, J.G. (1998). *Constructing the World Polity*. (Routledge)
- Ryden, G.H. (1933). *The Foreign Policy of the United States in Relation to Samoa*. (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press)
- Schelling, T. (1966). *Arms and Influence*. (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press)
- Schlesinger, A.M., Jr. (1973). *The Imperial Presidency*. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin)
- Schuyler, M. (1928). W.Q. Gresham (American Secretaries of State, viii)
- (1928a). Richard Olney (American Secretaries of State, viii).
- (1928b). T.F. Bayard (American Secretaries of State, viii)
- Schweller, R. (1993). Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State back in. *International Security* 19:1, 72-107.
- Seager, R. II (1953). Ten Years before Mahan: The Unofficial Case for the New Navy: 1880 to 1890. *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 40:3, 491-512.
- Searle, J. (1969). *Speech Acts*. (London: Cambridge Univ. Press)
- Sherif, M. (1966) *In common predicament: Social psychology of intergroup conflict and cooperation*, Boston: Houghton-Mifflin
- Sherif, M. and Sherif, C. W. (1967). Attitudes as the individual's own categories: The

social-judgment approach to attitude and attitude change. In C. W. Sherif and M. Sherif (eds.), *Attitude, ego-involvement and change* (pp. 105-139). (New York: Wiley.)

Sievers, H.J. (1960). *Benjamin Harrison: Hoosier Warrior*. (NY: University Publishers), 2nd edition, v.1

----- (1960). *Benjamin Harrison: Hoosier President*. (Chicago: Regenery Publishers), 2nd edition, v. 2.

Sievers, H.J., ed. (1969). *Benjamin Harrison: 1833-1901; chronology, documents, bibliographical aids*.

Singer, J.D. (1987). Reconstructing the Correlates of War Dataset on Material Capabilities of States, 1816-1985. *International Interactions*, 14: 115-32.

Skowronek, S. (1993). *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush*. (Belknap)

Socolofsky, H.E. and Spetter, A.B. (1987). *The Presidency of Benjamin Harrison*. (University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, KS), 12.

Sylvan, D. and J. Voss, eds. (1998). *Problem Representation in Foreign Policy Decision-Making*. (Cambridge)

Tajfel, H., ed. (1978). *Differentiation between Social Groups*. (Academic Press)

----- (1981). *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology*. (Cambridge)

----- ed. (1982). *Social identity and intergroup relations*. (Cambridge)

Tajfel, H. and J.C. Turner (1986). The Social Identity Theory of Group Behavior. In *The Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, S. Worchel and W.G. Austin, eds. (Nelson-Hall)

Tansill, C.C. (1940). *Foreign Policy of Bayard, 1885-1897* (Bronx, NY: Fordham Univ.)

Thucydides (1996). *A History of the Peloponnesian War*. Edited by Robert Strassler. (Free Press)

Tilly, C. (2003). Political Identities in Changing Societies. *Social Research* 70:2, 605-620.

----- (2005). *Identities, boundaries, and social ties*. (Paradigm)

- Toqueville, A. ([1835] 2001). *Democracy in America*. Translated by A. Goldhammer. (Penguin)
- Tracy, B. (1893). The Behring Sea Negotiations. *North American Review*
- Trubowitz, P. (1992). Sectionalism and American Foreign Policy: The Political Geography of Consensus and Conflict. *International Studies Quarterly* 36:2, 173-93.
- (1998). *Defining the National Interest: Conflict and Change in American Foreign Policy*. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press)
- (1999). *Geography and Strategy: The Politics of American Naval Expansion*. In Trubowitz, P, E. Goldman, and E. Rhodes, eds. (1999), *The Politics of Strategic Adjustment*. (Columbia)
- Tugwell, R.G. (1968). *Grover Cleveland*. (Maximillian)
- Turner, J. C. (1985). Social categorization and the self-concept: A social cognitive theory of group behaviour. In E. J. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group processes, vol. 2*. (JAI), 77-122.
- Twain, M. (1907). *Christian Science*.
- United States Department of Defense (1991). *Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1992* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense), (January) 131-142.
- United States Department of State (1886). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1887). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1888). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1889). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1890). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1891). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1892). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1893). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1894). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.

- (1895). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1896). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1897). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1898). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1899). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1900). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- (1901). *Foreign Relations of the United States*.
- Van Evera, S. (1997). *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press)
- Vexler, Robert I. (1968). *Grover Cleveland: 1837-1908*. (Oceana)
- Volwiler, A.T. (1938). Harrison, Blaine, and American Foreign Policy. From Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, LXXIX, 637-9
- (1940). *Correspondence between Harrison and Blaine*. (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Historical Society)
- Walt, S. (1987). *The Origin of Alliances*. (Princeton)
- (1988). Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia. *International Organization* 42:2, 275-316.
- Waltz, K. (1959). *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press)
- (1967). *Foreign Policy and Democratic Politics*. (New York: Little, Brown)
- (1979). *Theory of International Politics*. (New York: Addison-Wesley)
- (2000). Structural Realism after the Cold War. *International Security* 25:1, 5-39.
- Weber, M. (1900). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. (Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing)
- Welch, D. (1884). *Stephen Grover Cleveland: A Sketch of His Life*. (Lovell & Co.)
- Welch, R.E. (1988). *The Presidencies of Grover Cleveland*. (Kansas)

- Weldes, J. (1999). *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (Minnesota)
- Weldes, J., M. Laffey, and B. Duvall, eds. (1999). *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities, and the Production of Danger*. (Minnesota)
- Wendt, A. (1987). The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory. *International Organization* 41:3, 335-370.
- . (1992). Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics. *International Organization* 46:2, 391-425
- . (1994). Collective Identity Formation and the International State. *American Political Science Review* 88:2, 384-96.
- . (1999). *Social Theory of International Politics*. (New York: CUP)
- White, S.V. (1901). The personality and character of the late President McKinley, as citizen, statesman, and friend [microform] : addresses delivered at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., on the evening of September 22, 1901 (New York: Eagle Book & Publishing Co.)
- Wicks, D.H. (1980). Dress Rehearsal: The United States Intervention on the Isthmus of Panama, 1885. *The Pacific Historical Review* 49:4, 581-605
- Wight, G. and B. Porter (1991). *International Theory: Three Traditions*. (Leicester, UK: Leicester Press)
- Wildavsky, A. (1966). The Two Presidencies. *Trans-Action* 4 (December), 7.
- Williams, J.L. (1909). *Mr. Cleveland: A Personal Impression*. (Dodd, Mead & Co.)
- Williams, W.A. (1959). *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. (New York: Delta)
- Wolfers, A. (1952). National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol. *Political Science Quarterly* 66:4, 481-502.
- Zakaria, F. (1999). *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press)
- Zaller, J. (1992). *The Nature and Origin of Mass Opinion*. (Cambridge)
- ####
- N.A. (n.d.). Dispatches from US Minister to Spain, 1897-1898, Record Group 59, National Archives.

N.A. (n.d.). Instructions to the US Minister to Spain, 1897-1898, Record Group 59,
National Archives

N.A. (n.d.). Dispatches from US Minister to GB, 1897-1901, Record Group 59, National
Archives

CURRICULUM VITA

David Mislan

Education

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1994 – 1999 | Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey – Livingston College
Piscataway, New Jersey
Bachelor of Arts
History and Political Science |
| 1999 – 2001 | The Johns Hopkins University
Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland
Master of Arts
Government |
| 2002 – 2008 | Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, New Jersey
Doctor of Philosophy
Political Science |

Positions Held

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1999 – 2001 | Student Affairs Coordinator
The Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, Maryland |
| 2001 – 2002 | Director of Student Life
Mount Saint Mary's College
Emmitsburg, Maryland |
| 2002 – 2003 | Research Assistant to Dr. D. Michael Shafer
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, New Jersey |
| 2003 – present | Part-time Lecturer
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, New Jersey |
| 2005 – present | Adjunct Professor
Whitehead School of Diplomacy, Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey |