Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to U.S. Dominance

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The United States finds itself increasingly isolated in multilateral organizations. To infer what this trend signifies, we need to disentangle changes in the agenda from changes in revealed preferences. This paper does so with a novel data set, important votes in the United Nations according to the State Department, and method, a multilevel item-response model estimated by MCMC methods. The results show that the agenda becomes more negative for the United States after 1996, whereas the almost universal widening of the preference gap occurs at a constant rate between 1991 and 2001. In addition, there is no evidence for an increasing clash of civilizations and some evidence that the gap with states that become more liberal has increased less.

In the aftermath of September 11, almost unanimous support from other nations greatly aided the U.S. government in invading Afghanistan, stopping financial flows to terrorist organizations and in other aspects of the newly declared war on terrorism. However, such widespread foreign backing for the U.S. position on issues of global concern has become somewhat of a rarity over the course of the post-Cold War period. Huntington (1999) therefore argues that the United States has become a "lonely superpower" alone not only in its preponderant power, but also in its preferred resolution of many issues. While the increased loneliness of the United States has featured prominently in editorials, articles, and books that ponder the future of American hegemony, little systematic research documents this trend. As a consequence, many substantively and theoretically interesting questions have remained unanswered. When and how fast has the gap between the United States and the rest of the world widened? Is the trend uniform across states or is there significant variation?

An important but mostly ignored issue that complicates answers to these questions is that a large number of multilateral initiatives that have surfaced in the second half of the 1990s intend to constrain the United States to a far greater degree than other states. Hence, it is unclear whether the proliferation of disagreements is due to a growing gap in revealed preferences, changes in the global agenda, or both. I introduce here a research design to tackle this problem, which plagues any longitudinal study of policy preferences. The database contains roll-call voting records of states in the United Nations (UN) from 1991 to 2001 on

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those resolutions that are important to the United States according to State Department publications. The sample contains votes on many of the most controversial issues that have appeared on the global agenda in the post-Cold War period such as the Middle East, sanctions, arms control, and the human rights records of China, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Russia, and Yugoslavia. The database comprises resolutions that are on the agenda in consecutive years as well as those that correspond to single events. Repeated observations of votes on the same resolution are used to anchor changes in policy preferences that occur irrespective of changes in the agenda. This is modeled with a multilevel ordinal item-response model that combines a measurement model for state preferences with a hierarchical regression model that captures temporal and structural variation in those preferences. The model builds on advances in the study of legislative and judiciary politics that impose structure on the estimation of ideal points by incorporating covariates (Bailey 2001; Clinton 2001; Londregan 1999), the agenda (Clinton and Meirowitz 2001), and dynamics (Martin and Quinn 2002; Poole and Rosenthal 1997).

The analysis addresses three substantive questions. First, has the preference gap between the United States and the rest of the world widened since the end of the Cold War? The answer to this question is an unequivocal yes. The substantive impact is illustrated with an example of the effect of the preference change on the size of the coalition that defeated the resolution that singles out Zionism as a form of racism. Second, what is the timing of this increase? The results show that the gap has widened at a constant rate, thus rejecting the proposition that the apparent unilateral shift in U.S. foreign policy since the mid-1990s has led to the widening gap. Third, are there variations in the extent to which countries have departed from the U.S. position? The increase itself appears to be nearly universal, but there are some notable individual and systematic deviations in the extent and timing of the departure from the U.S. position. Most notably, states that have become more respectful of domestic civil and political liberties have shifted less than other states. There is no evidence of an increasing "clash of civilizations" (Huntington 1993).

Resistance to the Lonely Superpower

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, some observers believed that most countries would acquiesce in the short run to benign American hegemony (e.g., Krauthammer 1991). As the Cold War lies further behind us, however, schisms between the remaining superpower and the rest of the world have become increasingly apparent (e.g., Huntington 1999; Kagan 2002; Nye 2002; Walt 2000). With regard to political and security issues, the UN is an important global arena in which these divisions have manifested. Some argue that this development constitutes a prelude to the formation of balancing coalitions that could eventually undermine American hegemony. As Ikenberry puts it: "Worried states are making small adjustments, creating alternatives to alliance with the United States. These small steps may not look important today, but eventually the ground will shift

and the U.S.-led postwar order will fragment and disappear" (2001, 19). Others warn against such dramatic conclusions and claim that these confrontations represent "unipolar politics as usual" (Brooks and Wohlforth 2002). The sheer size of the power gap prevents serious balancing. Instead states resort to lesser forms of resistance, which may complicate Washington's options but ultimately do not challenge U.S. predominance.

Regardless of whether the increasing confrontations in the UN serve as an overture for more consequential balancing behavior, they are interesting in their own right. From a policy perspective, our primary concern lies with the prospect for multilateral coalitions in the management of hegemony. Scholars widely recognize that multilateral coalitions are a considerably cheaper regulatory device to manage global affairs than are its alternatives (e.g., Rosecrance 1992). A widening preference gap complicates the use of multilateralism. The less congruence in preferences, the more the United States needs to resort to costly coercive methods to assemble coalitions. It is unclear, however, to what extent the observed rise in disagreements indeed reflects an erosion of support for U.S. policy positions. Evidence for this proposition would be that the United States finds itself increasingly isolated on resolutions that have been on the agenda for a long time, such as the Cuban embargo and certain resolutions related to the Middle East. The fact that other countries change their position, while the U.S. position remains the same is an indication of a widening gap in policy preferences. An alternative account is that the characteristics of the resolutions on the agenda have changed. International agreements such as the ABM Treaty, the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the Land Mine Convention pose far greater restrictions on the United States than on most other states. One should not be surprised that the United States is less enthusiastic about such international agreements than states that have nothing to lose from them. Hence, it may appear that the United States increasingly diverges from the rest of the world even if states have not actually changed their policy positions. The methodology developed in this paper separates the effects of agenda change and revealed preference change.

The information contained in controversies in the UN about revealed state preferences is also interesting from a theoretical perspective. Theories of international conflict and cooperation routinely make assumptions about the distribution of state preferences. Examples are expected utility theories (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita 1980), spatial models (e.g., Morrow 1986), and Constructivists theories (e.g., Chafetz, Spirtas, and Frankel 1999). However, our understanding of the origins and dynamics of state preferences is poor. State preferences are orderings among underlying substantive outcomes that may result from international political interaction (Moravcsik 1997). These orderings are usually unobserved. We can detect the choices states make, but not the considerations that led to these choices. The best approach to inferring preferences from observed choices is to rely on an explicit theoretical model of how states use their preferences to make choices. The measurement model developed in this paper is derived from a spatial model that stipulates how states translate their ideal point along an unobserved continuum into choices (votes).

Besides the obvious question of whether state preferences have changed at all, I test propositions regarding two important aspects of preference change in the post-Cold War period: *timing* and *country-specific variation*. An analysis of the timing of preference change sheds light on the question whether states have adjusted their preferences in response to the unilateralist turn in U.S. foreign policy. In the early 1990s, the United States initiated a great number of new multilateral endeavors and expanded on old ones, as evidenced by the Gulf War coalition, the efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East through multilateral conferences, the expansion of NATO, disarmament treaties with Russia, and the creation of NAFTA, APEC, and the WTO. Although the United States still frequently uses multilateral solutions, it has increasingly turned towards unilateralist policies since the mid-1990s. The defining moment for many came in March 1996 when President Clinton signed the Helms-Burton Act. Although its enforcement has been weak, the extraterritorial application of U.S. sanction policies provoked greater outrage abroad than virtually any previous policy initiative (Mastanduno 2002). Since then, the United States has rejected several high profile multilateral initiatives (e.g., Land Mine Convention, ICC, Kyoto, CTBT) and announced its intention to depart from existing ones (ABM Treaty).

Various liberal-institutionalist scholars have argued that the more America's might emerges from behind mutually accepted rules and institutions, the more it will provoke resistance (Ikenberry 2001; Nye 2002). In this view, the United States can mitigate fears of abandonment and domination by engaging in multilateral initiatives. Unilateralist policies alienate other states and thus contribute to the isolation of the United States in international politics. We thus expect a more rapid widening of the preference gap since 1996. On the other hand, realists generally believe that great powers cannot credibly hide behind multilateral commitments. Other states can never be sure that the hegemon will use its power wisely (Layne 1993; Mearsheimer 1990; Waltz 1993). States will adjust their perceived interests based on more systematic properties of U.S. dominance than perceived variations in the U.S. commitment to multilateralism. The discrepancy in both economic and military power between the U.S. and most other states has increased at a steady pace since the end of the Cold War (Brooks and Wohlforth 2002). From this perspective, there is no reason to expect any temporal variation in the rate by which states have diverged from the United States.

It should be noted that propositions about the timing of preference change are not explicit in realist or liberal-institutionalist theories about state responses to U.S. hegemony. For instance, it is unclear in the liberal-institutionalist framework whether resistance to U.S. unilateralism will take the form of preference change or that states will seek to resist the United States by affecting the agenda in multilateral institutions (or both). The empirical tests in this paper should be understood as tests of important elaborations from these theories, aimed at obtaining a better understanding of the dynamics of unipolar politics.

A second issue is that of country-specific variations in both the degree and timing of changes in state preferences. One hypothesis is that the United States

has become so dominant that all states ought to oppose its prevalence. In the words of Henry Kissinger: "Hegemonic empires almost automatically elicit universal resistance" (2000, 50). A counterhypothesis is that opposition to the United States is a more limited phenomenon, as some states may choose to bandwagon with the superpower.

There are good reasons to expect that countries will differ in the extent and timing of their divergence. First and most obvious, states are affected in different ways by the manner in which the United States projects its power. For example, American interference in the former Yugoslavia elicited fierce nationalistic reactions in Russia, which resulted in considerable domestic pressure on the Russian government to take more anti-American foreign policy stances (McFaul 1997). This country-specific variation may also take more systematic forms. The most interesting divergence between realists and liberals in this regard concerns the manner in which the traditional allies of the United States are expected to react to the end of the Cold War. According to realists, the disappearance of the Soviet threat has eradicated the overriding common interest that kept the transatlantic coalition together (e.g., Waltz 1993). The Europeans and the Japanese now have amplified opportunities to express their discontent at the policies of the remaining superpower and to pursue their own interests when these are at odds with U.S. interests. Some realists predicted that this structural force would lead to the collapse of NATO and an unstable multipolar world (Mearsheimer 1990). While this dire prediction has so far not come true, there are indications that the United States and Europe are drifting apart (e.g., Kagan 2002; Walt 1999). Liberals are more optimistic about the future of the alliance between Western states. They argue that this partnership was not just a balancing coalition against Soviet power, but also based on a shared set of liberal values. These values have not changed and are now shared by many more countries than before. Liberal democracies should therefore feel less threatened by U.S. preponderance and not shift away as much as other states.

An entirely different, but very influential perspective on post-Cold War politics is that it will increasingly take the shape of a "clash of civilizations" in which states define their interests in the global arena according to cultural identity. According to Huntington: "The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future" (1993, 22). If this prediction holds, we expect to see that variation in the degree to which states have shifted away from the U.S. conforms to Huntington's civilizational typology.

Data

Votes in the UNGA have been used since the 1950s to measure the extent to which states have common interests in global politics.[1] The assumption that

[1] See Dixon (1981) for an overview of the older literature. Recent examples include Kim and Russett (1996), Alesina and Dollar (1998), and Gartzke (1998, 2000).

underlies the use of this data in this paper is that these votes are manifest indicators of the degree to which the perceived interests of states overlap with those of the United States. I therefore limit the sample to votes on which the United States perceives that its interests are at stake and clearly expresses a position. Only on such resolutions does a vote against the United States provide evidence that the perceived interests of the United States and the dissenting state diverge. The sample is based on two documents published by the U.S. State Department (see also Jo 2000 and Wang 1999). First, pursuant to public law, the State Department reports to Congress each year on "votes on issues that directly affected United States interests and on which the United States lobbied extensively."[2] Second, the State Department publishes a more detailed annual account of its dealings: *United States Practices in the United Nations*. This document includes issue-specific analyses of the extent to which the United States has achieved its goals in the UN. If it reveals active efforts on the part of the United States to advance its position, the resolution is added to the database. An advantage of this publication is that it also reports on resolutions in forums other than the UNGA. In particular, the UN Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) is a venue for highly controversial resolutions, including those that cite human rights violations by China, Indonesia, and Russia.[3]

The application of these criteria generates a database of 283 roll calls (23 from the UNHRC) on 75 unique resolutions divided over the 11-year period of analysis (1991–2001). Frequent repetition of resolutions is unusual in most legislatures. Many resolutions the UNGA adopts are position-taking statements that do not by themselves alter the status quo. For example, vote choices on the resolution that denounces the U.S. embargo of Cuba reveal information about (changes in) the policy positions of states, but the outcome of the vote has no direct effect on the embargo itself. The determination whether resolutions are identical is based on textual analysis of the resolutions. These judgments are facilitated by the common practice in the UNGA to explicitly recall and reiterate its previous resolutions.[4]

Appendix A lists descriptive titles for the 75 unique resolutions. The sample includes votes on arms treaties such as the ABM, CTBT, and the Anti-Personnel Land Mine convention; controversial resolutions related to the Middle East such as the status of the Golan Heights and Israeli settlement policies; U.S. sanctions policies; the human rights records of states such as China, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Russia, and the Serbian government in Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo. Some resolutions remain on the agenda for most of the period (e.g., Cuban embargo). Others disappear because a situation is resolved (e.g., apartheid in South Africa). New resolutions emerge due to changes in policies (e.g., missile defense) or incidents (e.g., the nuclear tests held by Pakistan and India in 1998). The sample is

[2] *Voting Practices in the United Nations* (Public Law 101–246).

[3] However, only 53 countries vote in the UNHRC.

[4] A more detailed codebook and the data are available from http://www.journalofpolitics.org.

fairly representative of issues that have been on the global agenda, with two important caveats. First, the UNGA rarely deals with pure economic or monetary issues. Second, the UNGA does not vote on issues that have appeared in the Security Council (UNSC). Some of these issues do emerge in different forms, most often through votes on the human rights situation in particular areas (e.g., Kosovo). The UNSC does not offer a similar opportunity for states to reveal their preferences because participation is limited and its politics are highly strategic.

The database records the vote choices of 154 states. This sample does not include microstates that do not meet common criteria for independent statehood (Gleditsch and Ward 1999) and states that voted less than 50% of the time in at least six of the sessions. On all roll calls, states have the option to vote yes, no, or abstain. In the UNGA, abstention is an explicit vote choice, which is more common than a no-vote.[5] In accordance with the literature, I assume that abstentions are weaker signals of disapproval than no-votes (e.g., Lijphart 1963; Gartzke 1998, 2000). I thus assume that these choices measure preferences on an ordinal scale.[6] In addition, states may be absent from a vote. Most analyses treat absentees as if they were abstentions in an ordinal choice setting. This is problematic because states can be absent for a variety of reasons, including civil wars or government turnovers. I therefore treat absentees as missing values and use multiple imputation techniques in the estimation of the multilevel item-response model to augment the data.[7]

Method

Analyses that use UN votes as indicators for (revealed) state preferences almost always rely on annual summary measures of similarity (e.g., Signorino and Ritter 1999), coincidence (e.g., Lijphart 1963), or association (e.g., Gartzke 1998, 2000) in the vote choices of pairs of states. This practice does not distinguish shifts that occur because of changes in state preferences from those that result from changes in the resolutions that are voted upon. For example, if there are large yearly fluctuations in the number of resolutions related to the Middle East conflict we would also expect to observe large fluctuations in the vote coincidence between the United States and most Arab states, regardless of whether these states actually change their position on any resolution. There is no good way to incorporate additional information about the agenda into these measures.

Even if the agenda were consistent, however, the use of summary measures requires undesirably strong assumptions about the way vote choices map onto the

[5] There are 7,012 abstentions and 2,351 no-votes in the data.

[6] Some make the stronger assumption that the choices reflect an interval scale (e.g., Signorino and Ritter 1999). Voeten (2000) collapses abstentions and no-votes into a single category that indicates disagreement with a resolution. On some resolutions no no-votes were observed. These are modeled as binary choices.

[7] The exception is issue 56, "Accreditation of NGOs to World Conference on Women." There were 70 absences, explicitly in protest to the vote, that are coded as abstentions.

concept that we are interested in but do not directly observe: the extent to which states' revealed preferences overlap with those of the United States. Vote choices on resolutions important to the United States are manifest but fallible indicators of this latent variable. Item-Response Theory (IRT) offers a measurement model that defines the relationships between the observed vote choices and the positions of states along the (latent) preference continuum. We can then analyze these estimated scores of states as a dependent variable instead of the summary measures of association or similarity. The main advantage of an IRT model over the use of summary measures is that it provides a realistic treatment of measurement error. Moreover, it is straightforward to analyze data from incomplete designs, such as different states voting on different resolutions, and to take characteristics of resolutions into account, such as the fact that identical resolutions may be repeated over time.

An important additional advantage is that the IRT model is identical to the most important theoretical model of roll-call voting: the spatial model (Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2000; Londregan 1999). The spatial model assumes that a country's (legislator's) utility for an outcome is negatively related to the distance between a country's "ideal" point and the point associated with the outcome. Both points are identified in a low-dimensional ideological space, such as the liberal-conservative continuum. Largely inspired by the work of Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal, the model has recently taken off as an empirical model of roll-call voting behavior (Poole and Rosenthal 1991, 1997, 2001). The UNGA differs from standard legislative settings in that its resolutions are nonbinding. This may enhance the validity of the spatial model because issue-specific nonspatial considerations, such as bringing home pork, play a smaller role, although they can never be excluded entirely. For instance, obtaining U.S. foreign aid may motivate states. However, as long as this is a consistent motivation across resolutions important to the United States, it does not violate the spatial model. Voeten (2000) has shown that voting behavior in the UNGA since 1991 strongly conforms to a one-dimensional spatial model with the United States at one pole of the continuum. Although the empirical spatial model has so far only been used to analyze binary choices, the extensions to ordinal choice situations is clear-cut within the IRT framework (Johnson and Albert 1999; Jackman and Treier 2002). Appendix B shows how the ordinal IRT model can be derived from a simple spatial model that assumes a Euclidean distance function, and that resolutions vary in their salience.

Let i = 1, . . . ,154 index states, t = 1, . . . , 11 the measurement occasions and j = 1, . . . ,75 the resolutions. The measurement occasions are sessions of the UNGA (between 1991 and 2001). Most votes are taken between October and December of a year. I assume that ideal points are constant within sessions, but may vary across sessions. A resolution j is never voted on twice within a session, but the same resolution often appears in consecutive sessions. The vote choice of state i on resolution j in year t is denoted by y_{ijt}. In the ordinal IRT model, we can write the probability of observing each vote choice as follows:

$$y_{ijt} = \begin{cases} \text{no} & \text{if } \eta_{\text{ijt}} < \delta_{\text{j1}} \\ \text{abstain} & \text{if } \delta_{\text{j1}} \le \eta_{\text{ijt}} < \delta_{j2} \\ \text{yes} & \text{if } \eta_{\text{ijt}} < \partial_{j2} \end{cases} \quad (1a)$$

$$\text{And:} \qquad \eta_{ijt} = \beta_j \theta_{it} + \varepsilon_{\text{ijt}} \quad (1b)$$

Throughout the paper, Greek letters denote unobserved components (parameters to be estimated) and Roman letters observed components (data) of the model. In equation 1, θ_{it} represents state i's ideal point in session t. β_j is a characteristic of resolution j. It is analogous to a factor loading in that a large absolute value indicates that vote choices on resolution j are strongly related to variation in ideal points. The IRT model has many similarities to factor analysis, but is more appropriate as a measurement model especially for dealing with categorical data (Jackman and Treier 2002).[8] δ_{j1-2} are threshold parameters as in regular ordered regression models. These threshold parameters indicate levels of support for a choice independent of variations in ideal points. The resolution parameters do not have subscript t, but the ideal points do. This captures the assumption that identical resolutions at different points in time have a stable relationship to the latent continuum. This assumption incorporates information about the agenda into the model and helps identify preference change. If we assume that the disturbance term follows the standard logistic distribution, we obtain a hierarchical ordinal logit model with the complication that all the right-hand side variables are unobserved and thus need to be estimated. There is a considerable literature that discusses various methods of estimating such models and ways of dealing with the identification issues that arise in the estimation (e.g., Londregan 1999; Jackman 2000; Jackman and Treier 2002). The estimation section highlights the choices made in this regard.

Regressing the Ideal Points on Observed Variables

The model so far does not specify how ideal points in year t are related to year t + 1 or how they relate to observed characteristics of states. The multilevel IRT model integrates the measurement model of equation 1 with a hierarchical regression model that models the relationship of the latent dependent variable (ideal points) with observed variables, such as time and civilization categories. In the model, countries are allowed to have distinct over time patterns of ideal point change that vary around a common polynomial trend.[9] This variation may be influenced by fixed characteristics of states, such as Huntington's civilizational

[8] In this analogy, θ_{it} would be the factor scores.

[9] This model is known as a latent trajectory model (e.g., Bosker and Snijders 1999) and is similar to that used by Poole and Rosenthal (1997), although they do not incorporate covariates. Traditional time series methods are problematic because of the small number of repeated measurements. Martin and Quinn (2002) alternatively model the dynamics in the ideal points of Supreme Court justices as random walk processes.

typology. Equation 2 defines the ideal point measurements as a quadratic trend with one covariate. The extension to higher polynomial degrees and multiple covariates is straightforward.

$$\begin{aligned}
\theta_{it} &= \pi_{0i} + \pi_{1i}T_t + \pi_{2i}T_t^2 + \upsilon_{it}, \text{ with} \upsilon_{it} \sim \mathrm{N}(0, \sigma^2) \\
\pi_{0i} &= \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}Z_{1i} + \nu_{0i} \\
\pi_{1i} &= \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}Z_{1i} + \nu_{1i} \\
\pi_{2i} &= \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21}Z_{1i} + \nu_{2i}
\end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

These equations define a hierarchical regression model with as dependent variable the latent variable θ defined by equation 1. T_t indicate the years in which votes are observed, where $\mathrm{T}_1(1991) = -5, \ldots, \mathrm{T}_6(1996) = 0, \ldots, \mathrm{T}_{11}(2001) = 5$. The model allows us to draw inferences not from eleven consecutive ideal point estimates, but rather from three country-specific coefficients that together define a quadratic trend in country ideal points: an intercept (π_{0i}), a linear slope (π_{1i}) and a quadratic slope (π_{2i}). These country-specific coefficients are themselves functions of an intercept (γ_{00}) or slope (γ_{10}, and γ_{20}) that is common to all countries (the average trend), and country characteristics such as its civilization (Z_{1i}). The disturbance terms V_{0-2i} follow a multivariate normal distribution with mean 0 and covariance matrix $\mathbf{\Omega}$. The entries $\omega_{00} \ldots \omega_{22}$ of matrix $\mathbf{\Omega}$ describe the country-specific variation around the common trend that is not absorbed by the covariates. Covariation between the intercept and slope random coefficients implies that country-specific variation in the ideal-points of countries at $\mathrm{T} = 0$ are related to variation in the rate of change. The variance σ^2 of the level-one error term signifies the variation in θ left unexplained by the polynomial curve.

Together, equations 1 and 2 make up a structural equation model. Equation 1 defines the "measurement model" in the sense that it specifies how the concept that we are interested in (ideal points along a continuum) relates to indicators (vote choices by states). Equation 2 relates our concept to quantities of interest: the characteristics of preference trajectories specified by a quadratic curve and the relationship of a covariate to those curves. The additional structure on the estimation of ideal points imposed by equation 2 also helps to achieve more stable estimation. Another advantage of the multilevel model is that measurement error in the dependent variable is fully incorporated.

Estimation and Identification

Directly maximizing the likelihood of the multilevel IRT model by integration is numerically infeasible due to the high dimensionality of the problem (Fox 2003). An alternative is to use an iterative algorithm, as in DW-NOMINATE, which alternates between estimating subsets of parameters holding other parameters constant. A shortcoming of such an approach is that the uncertainty in one set of model-parameters is ignored in estimating the other subset, thus leading to underestimation of uncertainty in the model-parameters. I follow Clinton (2001)

and Fox and Glas (2001) in using an MCMC algorithm based on Gibbs sampling. This algorithm exploits the situation that, while the joint distribution of the model parameters is quite complicated, it can be split into subsets such that the conditional posterior distribution of every subset has a tractable form and can be easily sampled. This is very similar to the approach in pseudomaximum likelihood algorithms. However, the posterior distribution of a model parameter is built up of many samples, each conditional on only one of many sampled values of the other model parameters. Thus, the uncertainty in the estimates of the conditioned parameters is incorporated. A feasible alternative is a Stochastic Expectation-Maximization (SEM) algorithm (Fox 2003). Both methods consider the latent variables as missing data and estimate the parameters by sampling the missing data. The Gibbs sampler samples the entire posterior distributions of the parameters while SEM draws direct inferences from the pseudocomplete data. Fox (2003) shows that both methods generate similar results. Fox and Glas (2001) demonstrate with simulated data that the Gibbs sampler accurately recovers parameters of a multilevel IRT model.

In the Bayesian framework that underlies the Gibbs sampler, inferences about the parameters are made in terms of their posterior distributions. For each parameter we obtain a series of estimates (one for each sample) that together define the posterior distribution of a parameter. I report the mean and standard deviation of each posterior distribution. I also report the 95% posterior probability interval, which is the Bayesian variant of the confidence interval. This interval contains the middle 95% of sampled parameter estimates from the posterior distribution. In any Bayesian analysis, we also need to define prior distributions for all parameters. I use vague prior distributions that have large variance and thereby assure that the data dominate prior information. Appendix B gives more specifics on the estimation procedure and its implementation. The estimates have low autocorrelations and the running means of the posterior probability intervals are generally constant over the iterations from which inferences are drawn, thus indicating convergence.

A problem in the estimation of IRT models is that the scale on which ideal points are measured is not identified. The values of states' ideal points can only be interpreted relative to those of other states on a scale fixed by the analyst. I follow Clinton (2001) and Fox and Glas (2001) by imposing restrictions on the roll-call parameters of one particularly representative resolution: the U.S. embargo of Cuba.[10] In addition, I fix the ideal point of the United States at −3.67.[11] This is necessary, because we are interested in movement relative to the United States. Moreover, the lack of variation in the U.S. vote choices on resolutions that are included in multiple years makes it difficult to identify ideal point shifts by the United States.

[10] I validated the results using issue 61 "Unilateral economic measures" to fix the scale.

[11] Based on estimation of a static model with N(0,1) prior on the distribution of ideal points.

Results

Table 1 reports the characteristics of the posterior distributions of parameters from three basic models without covariates: a quadratic trend model, a linear trend model, and a static model. The static model assumes that the ideal points of states do not change between 1991 and 2001, but instead vary randomly around a common mean γ_{00}. The linear model estimates a common trend with intercept γ_{00} and slope γ_{10} and country-specific variation around the intercept and slope. The quadratic model adds a common quadratic slope coefficient γ_{20} and country variation around this slope coefficient. I use orthogonal (Hermite) polynomials to estimate the quadratic model. This improves convergence of the model somewhat, but also makes the interpretation of the substantive impact of the quadratic coefficient a little harder. I use graphs for this purpose.

Table 1 reveals strong evidence for a common linear trend in the ideal points of states. The positive sign of the linear slope coefficient γ_{10} indicates that on average countries have shifted their ideal points away from the position of the United States. Both in the linear and the quadratic models, the 95% posterior probability interval of γ_{10} lies well above 0. The change is also large in substantive terms. Over the 11-year period of analysis, the estimated distance between the United States and the average country has increased by 22% of the original distance. Thus, the United States has lost considerable support for its policy positions even if we take the changing nature of the agenda into account. There is no evidence for a common quadratic trend. The posterior probability interval for γ_{20} is distributed symmetrically around zero. Substantively, this means that on average states edge away from the United States at a linear rate and thus do not follow apparent fluctuations in U.S. multilateral engagement. However, as I illustrate later in this section, there are exceptions to the linearity in the ideal point trajectories of states.

The ω parameters in Table 1 are the entries of the covariance matrix $\mathbf{\Omega}$ that identify the country-specific variation around the common trend. As evidenced by the large estimates for ω_{00}, country-specific variation around the common intercept is much larger than the variation around the slope coefficients (ω_{11} and ω_{22}, respectively). Nevertheless, the fact that posterior probability intervals for ω_{11} and ω_{22} lie above 0 shows that countries do differ in the degree to which the preference gap with the United States has changed. Exactly how countries deviate from the common trend is of substantive interest. The vast majority of countries do shift their ideal points significantly away from the fixed U.S. ideal point. In the linear model, the 95% posterior probability interval of the slope estimate for 110 out of a 153 countries lies above 0. Only one country, Cyprus, has an estimated slope coefficient in the opposite direction. The remaining 42 countries have slope coefficients whose 95% posterior probability intervals include 0. Although the shift away from the United States is not quite universal, there is certainly no evidence that states are bandwagoning.

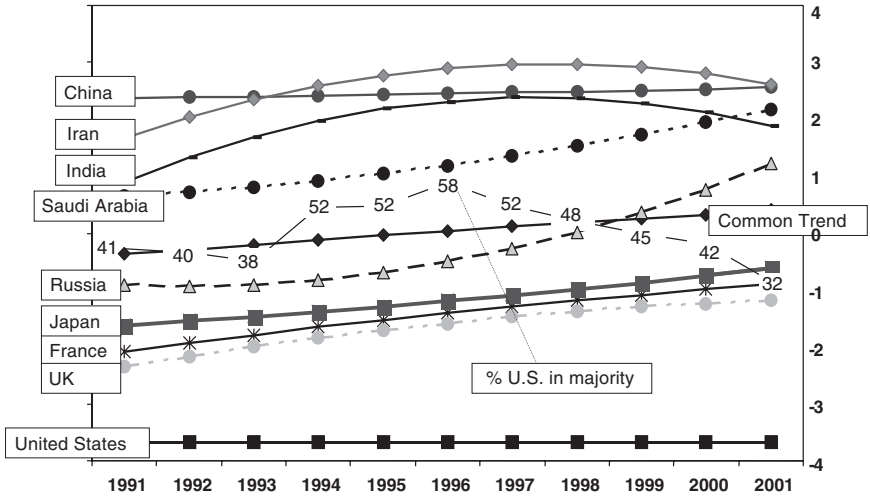
TABLE 1

Characteristics of posterior distributions of model parameters

	Static		Linear		Quadratic	
	Mean (S.D.)	95% Posterior Probability Interval	Mean (S.D.)	95% Posterior Probability Interval	Mean (S.D.)	95% Posterior Probability Interval
Fixed Effects						
γ_{00} (intercept)	.092 (.091)	[−.083, .272]	−.132 (.094)	[−.310, .059]	.0412 (.1213)	[.1792, .6534]
γ_{10} (linear slope)			.061 (.006)	[.050, .072]	.0776 (.0074)	[.0633, .0923]
γ_{20} (quadratic slope)					−.0003 (.0022)	[−.0045, −.0048]
Variance around common trend						
ω_{00} (intercept)	.735 (.107)	[.544, .961]	1.087 (.154)	[.823, 1.433]	1.527 (.214)	[1.16, 1.99]
ω_{11} (linear slope)			.0028 (.0004)	[.0020, .0037]	.0014 (.0002)	[.0011, .0018]
ω_{22} (quadratic slope)					.0007 (7.92E-5)	[.0006, .0009]
Covariance						
ω_{01} (intercept/linear slope)			−.011 (.0059)	[−.023, −.0004]	3.03E-5 (.004)	[−.0088, −.0009]
ω_{02} (intercept/quadratic)					.0002 (.003)	[−.0052, .0053]
ω_{12} (linear/quadratic)					.0007 (9.52E-5)	[.0005, .0009]
Fit						
σ	.021 (.003)	[.015, .028]	.0031 (.0010)	[.0016, .0056]	.0028 (.0010)	[1.32E-5, 0051]
Class. %	85.71 (.093)	[85.53, 85.89]	86.02 (.089)	[85.84, 86.19]	86.16 [.094]	[85.97, 86.34]
Mean PRE	42.87		44.11		44.67	

FIGURE 1

Variation in Preference Trends



Note: Estimates are from the Quadratic Model with Hermite Polynomials.

Figure 1 plots the common (average) trend from the quadratic model together with the estimated trends for a few important countries as well as the percentage of roll calls on which the United States is on the majority side.[12] This percentage increases steadily from 41% in 1991 to 58% in 1996. It then drops gradually to 42% in 2000 and more steeply to 32% in 2001. Given that the U.S. position on individual resolutions is constant throughout this period and that the common trend in state preferences is virtually linear, this implies that the agenda becomes more positive for the United States until the mid-1990s and more negative after that.[13]

The plot suggests that the linearity of the common trend may be the product of the different trajectories states have followed. The trend for Russia's ideal point is virtually flat until 1994 when it accelerates away from the United States at a rapid pace. This is consistent with the common view that Russia's perception of its interests shifted away from the United States when Yevgeni Primakov replaced Andrei Kozyrev as foreign minister (McFaul 1997). Saudi Arabia's trend follows a similar pattern, moving away from the United States in the second half of the 1990s, thus corroborating that the United States and Saudi Arabia have grown

[12] "Yes" for adopted resolutions, "no/abstain" for others.

[13] In the working paper version (available from http://home.gwu.edu/~voeten/papers.htm), I demonstrate this point using parameters from the IRT model.

apart since the end of the Gulf War. By contrast, India leaves its position of Cold War neutrality early in the 1990s. Iran also shifts away from the United States rapidly early on, and continues to be one of its fiercest opponents. These individual results have considerable face validity. Overall, there are 27 states with quadratic slope coefficients whose 95% posterior probability interval does not include 0. For the vast majority of states, however, a linear trend away from the United States suffices to describe their preference trajectory.

Inferences with Spearman rank-order correlations between the vote choices of the United States and the 153 other states yield different findings. For instance, Saudi Arabia's vote congruence with the United States reveals no trend, but rather goes up and down in a fairly random fashion.[14] This is plausibly related to yearly fluctuations in the proportion of resolutions that relate to the Middle East rather than highly volatile policy preferences. In addition, the Spearman correlations reveal no evidence for an increase in the gap between the United States and its West-European allies. Furthermore, looking at Spearman correlations, China remains the most distant from the United States, whereas in the IRT model the "rogue states" (Iran, Syria, and North Korea) become the most extreme opponents of the United States during the 1990s. We can also estimate the latent trajectory model specified by equations 2a and 2b with the Spearman rank-order correlations as dependent variable. These results do reveal a quadratic trend in which the Spearman correlations on average do not diverge during the first half of the 1990s, but change rapidly since the mid 1990s. This result occurs because the Spearman correlations do not take into account the changing nature of the resolutions on the agenda. When controlling for this through the IRT model, it becomes evident that support for U.S. positions already began to erode in 1991.

The estimates for ω_{01}, ω_{02}, and ω_{12} in Table 1 denote the covariation between the slope and intercept coefficients. The coefficient for the covariance between the linear and quadratic slopes implies that states that have a quadratic trend also tend to deviate from the common linear trend. The last two parameters of Table 1 are indicators for the fit of the model. The estimate for σ signifies the extent to which the latent curve model accounts for variation in θ_{it}. The classification percentage denotes the degree to which variation in ideal points (θ_{it}) helps account for the observed vote choices of states.[15] The static model correctly predicts 85.7% of all observed vote choices. A better indicator is the Proportional Reduction in Error (PRE), which denotes the extent to which the model reduces the number of errors made by the benchmark prediction that all states vote with the plurality category. The static model reduces 42.9% of the errors made by the plurality model. The linear model improves the classification to 86.0% and the PRE to 44.1%. Although this increase appears modest, it is beyond the 95% posterior

[14] Detailed results discussed in this paragraph are available from the supplemental materials (www.journalofpolitics.org).

[15] Although the model does not maximize classification, it is a commonly used yardstick for model fit. See Poole and Rosenthal (1997) for more on the fit of spatial models.

probability interval of the static model. Moreover, the estimate of σ is considerably smaller in the linear model than in the static model. Thus, we can conclude that accounting for the common shift away from the United States and the country-specific variation around this trend explains global politics in the UN better than a static perspective. The quadratic trend adds little to the explanatory value of the linear model. The value of the quadratic model therefore rests in its ability to help account for substantively interesting exceptions to general patterns (e.g., Russia, India, and Saudi Arabia) rather than in it its ability to explain a general trend.

Substantive Implications: The Zionism Equals Racism Resolution

The findings clearly demonstrate that the preference gap between the United States and the rest of the world has widened. Besides Israel, whose ideal point is very close to the United States, the United Kingdom's trend line in Figure 1 is closer to the United States than that of any other state. This confirms previously untested conventional wisdom. To get a sense of the substantive impact of this development, it is illustrative to examine the potential erosion of support for the U.S. position on a high profile issue: the resolution that singles out Zionism as a form of racism. After this resolution was successfully repealed in 1991, Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger said that the time had come "to consign this relic of the Cold War to the dust bin of history."[16] However, the issue resurfaced at the 2001 UN World Conference against racism in Durban, prompting Israel and the United States to abandon the conference. On the final day of the conference, a motion was voted upon to adopt a compromise proposal for the final Declaration without further considering three paragraphs that amongst others singled out Zionism as a form of Racism.[17] If we make the strong assumption that the roll-call parameters of the 1991 resolution are identical to the 2001 motion, the model predicts that 24 of the 86 countries that voted on both resolutions alter their votes, including all 12 countries that actually did alter their vote. Thus, the model does reasonably well in identifying those countries that are most likely to actually shift their policy positions on a specific issue. That not more countries shifted could be attributed to the fact that the Final Declaration included an explicit right of return for Palestinians (something the United States objects to) and the desire by countries to close the Conference, which already went beyond its scheduled conclusion. Should the issue reappear on the UNGA agenda as in 1991, the findings suggest that the United States and Israel would likely lose the vote.

[16] *USA Today*, December 17 1991, page 4A.

[17] September 8, 2001. The motion was approved by a vote of 51–38 with 10 abstentions.

A Clash of Civilizations?

The results indicate that there are some interesting differences between countries in the extent to which they have shifted their preferences from the United States. Figure 1 only sketches this variation by detailing the trajectory of a few important countries. It is possible to test more systematic hypotheses that relate the trajectory of state preferences to systematic characteristics of states. First, I test the "clashes of civilizations" hypothesis, which claims that differences between categories of civilizations have become more pronounced over the course of the post-Cold War period. This suggests that the trajectories for different civilizations vary. To test this hypothesis, I define dummy variables that capture Huntington's five main civilizations: the West, Islam, Latin American, African, and Orthodox. The remaining civilizations (Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, and "Other") define the reference category. The dummy variables become the "Z-variables" in equation 2. The dummies are allowed to have independent effects on the intercept, linear slope and quadratic slope coefficients in the model.

Figure 2 plots the mean estimated trends for the five civilizations from a quadratic trend model with orthogonal polynomials.[18] Although there are large differences in the mean intercept there are few systematic differences in the slopes of the curves. Latin American countries appear not to shift away from the United States until the mid 1990s, and the divergence with Western countries seems strongest in the early post-Cold War period. However, nothing points to growing gaps between the civilizations. None of the civilization dummies has a regression coefficient on the slopes whose 95% posterior probability interval does not include 0. The country-specific variances in the linear slopes (ω_{11}) and in the quadratic slopes (ω_{22}) are barely reduced compared to the model without civilizational dummies.[19] Adding the dummies also does not improve the fit of the model.[20] It is thus fair to conclude that differences between countries in the extent to which they edge away from the United States are not caused by civilizational differences. The relative positions of civilizations versus the United States have remained stable since 1991.

The Impact of Liberalism

The observation that Western countries have diverged from the United States at a similar rate to other countries does not necessarily imply that liberal democracy is not a determinant of state preferences. To test this relationship directly, I introduce a specific measure of liberal democracy: the combined Freedom House scores for the level of civil and political liberties in a country, recoded such that a score of 1 indicates the highest level of civil and political liberties and −1 the

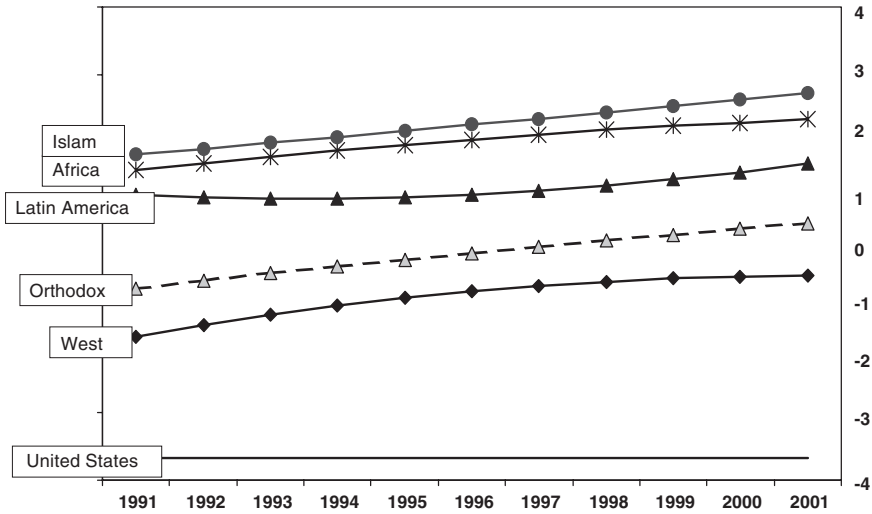
[18] A full table with results is in the supplemental materials (http://www.journalofpolitics.org).

[19] ω_{11} = .0014 [.0010, .0013] and ω_{22} = .0007 [.0006, .0009]. The country-specific variance in the intercept (ω_{00}) is reduced substantially to .657 [.474, .904].

[20] Classification % = 86.15 [85.95, 86.34]. σ^2 = .0028 [.0013, .0055]

FIGURE 2

Trends by Civilization



Note: Estimates are from a Quadratic Model with Hermite Polynomials.

absence of such liberties. I introduce the 1996 level of liberal democracy in the intercept equation of a quadratic model and regress the difference with the 1996 level directly as a time-varying covariate on the ideal points. We thus get an estimate of the extent to which a change in liberal democracy affects a state's perceived interests vis-à-vis the United States.

As expected, the regression coefficient for the impact of liberalism on the intercept is large (mean = −1.37[−1.59; −1.16]). States with high levels of domestic liberalism are much closer to the United States than are illiberal states. However, among stable liberal democracies the level of liberalism correlates strongly with many other potentially important determinants of preferences (e.g., economic development, civilization, alliances). It is therefore more revealing to investigate the extent to which changes in the level of liberalism lead to shifts in preferences. The coefficient on the change in liberalism is also different from zero (mean = −.14[−.25; −.04]). An increase in liberalism generally leads to a shift towards the United States. However, the effect is relatively small in comparison to the common trend away from the United States. On average, a state is expected to shift .86 points away from the United States over the 11-year period of analysis, whereas a shift from being completely illiberal to fully respectful of civil and political liberties leads to only a .28 move towards the United States. Moreover, the fit of the model is barely affected by the introduction of the covariate and there remains considerable unexplained country-specific variation around the

common trends.[21] Nevertheless, the evidence supports the Liberal hypothesis that respect for liberal democratic values is a determinant of state preferences.

Conclusion

The preference gap between the United States and the rest of the world widened considerably and at a constant rate between 1991 and 2001. The increase in the gap is not a phenomenon limited to states from particular parts of the world, and there is not much evidence that some states have chosen to bandwagon with the United States. It appears that U.S. hegemony has elicited almost universal resistance. One might interpret these results as evidence that the widening preference gap is purely a structural phenomenon and thus largely unaffected by apparent temporal variations in U.S. foreign policy. We should, however, consider some caveats before settling on such a conclusion too confidently. For example, I have only investigated the responses of states, not individual citizens. It may be that the more important consequence of unilateralist policies is that it turns world public opinion against the United States. This may have a lagged effect on the behavior of states through increasing domestic pressures. It may also increase support for nongovernmental activities targeted at the United States. Finally, the shift towards more unilateralist policies in the mid-1990s appears to have had a substantial impact on the agenda. States increasingly introduce resolutions to denounce unilateralist U.S. policies and drop resolutions supportive of U.S. purposes. This suggests a modification to the liberal-institutionalist perspective. States may punish uncooperative behavior by introducing multilateral initiatives that complicate Washington's calculations, even though they do not adjust their perceived interests to policy fluctuations. The rationale is that U.S. policies are subject to change as new Administrations (or Congresses) are elected. Governments that realize this have little reason to adjust their policy preferences in response to policy fluctuations. By affecting the multilateral agenda they seek to affect policies more directly.

Although the finding that states have negatively adjusted their preferences to U.S. dominance is robust and applies to the vast majority of states, there is considerable country-specific variation in the extent of the changes. The results support the hypothesis that changes in the degree to which a state respects civil and political liberties domestically explains shifts in foreign policy preferences. Thus, a purely structural account of post-Cold War politics is inadequate. Just because this finding is consistent with the liberal paradigm and the previous finding better fits a realist framework does not imply that the two are logically inconsistent. States may well be influenced in forming perceptions of their national interests both by structural pressures and liberal concerns, which is exactly what the analysis suggests. On balance, the common shift away from the United States appears to be the most powerful force, which is mitigated only

[21] Classification % = 86.16, $\sigma^2 = .00287$, $\omega_{11} = .0013$, $\omega_{22} = .0007$.

slightly by variation in domestic orientations. Future research with longer time series as well as alternative data sources should evaluate whether this main finding holds up. Finally, there remains considerable variation that is left unexplained by the model, implying that other variables may also help explain preference change. For example, future studies could test whether replacement of leaders with specific ideological or religious beliefs leads to changes in foreign policy preferences. It would also be useful to explore the use of alternative data. For example, the current data does not allow us to track movements in U.S. preferences as the U.S. votes consistently on the issues under investigation.

Besides its substantive implications, the analysis also demonstrates the merit of the multilevel IRT model. The integration of a measurement model with a structural model demonstrably leads to different inferences than when different indicators of a latent construct are combined using an arbitrary aggregation mechanism that ignores measurement error and characteristics of the items (resolutions) under consideration. The application of the IRT model to roll-call data is attractive because of its identity with the main behavioral model of legislative behavior: the spatial model. However, the IRT model can be used as a more general measurement model for latent constructs (e.g., Jackman and Treier 2002). Given the prevalent use of fallible manifest indicators to measure latent constructs such as democracy and ideology, the multilevel IRT model holds great promise for applications in political science.

Appendix A: Resolutions Included in the Database

	Middle East Issues	
1	Support for health and relief services to Palestinian refugees	1991–1992
2	Assistance to Palestinian Refugees	1993–2001
3	Revokes determination that Zionism = Racism	1991
4	Motion to require 2/3 majority on repeal of Zionism = Racism resolution	1991
5	Palestine, International Peace Conference with participation PLO	1991–1993
6	Principles for a peaceful settlement of Palestine Question	1994–2001
7	Condemns Israel for occupied territories and settlement policies	1991
8	Demands Israeli withdrawal from Golan Heights	1992–2001
9	Work of special committee on Israeli human rights practices	1991–2001
10	Calls on Israel to renounce nuclear weapons and accede to NPT	1991–2001
11	Supports Middle East peace process (Madrid Conference, introduced by U.S)	1993–1996
12	Condemns social and economic repercussions of Israeli settlement policies	1991–1995
13	Right of Palestinians to self-determination	1994–2001
14	Enhancement of Palestinian status in the United Nations	1997
15	Condemns violence Israeli army on the Temple Mount (Sept. 28)	2000
	Security Issues	
16	Endorses IAEA efforts to promote peaceful use of atomic energy. Condemns Iraq + North Korea for noncompliance	1991–2001
17	Urges states to achieve a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty	1991–1992
18	Adoption of and support for nuclear test-ban treaty	1996–2000

19	UN involvement in nuclear test-ban regime	2001
20	Condemns nuclear tests Pakistan and India	1998
21	Universal register for arms transfers	1991–2001
22	Ban on anti-personnel landmines	1996–1997
23	Conference on illicit trade in small arms	1999
24	Implementation of ban on landmines	2001
25	Renunciation of strategic doctrines based on nuclear weapons (NAM initiative)	1992–1993
26	Maintenance of international security (U.S., UK, Russia alternative to above)	1992–1993
27	Criticizes state of bilateral nuclear arms negotiations between Russia and U.S.	1991
28	Supports state of bilateral nuclear arms negotiations between Russia and U.S.	1994–1998
29	Abandonment of nuclear weapons and deterrence tactics	1998–2000
30	Ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons (U.S. supported alternative to 29)	1999–2000
31	A path to the elimination of nuclear weapons (Compromise between 29–30)	2001
32	Calls for a review of nuclear doctrines to reduce nuclear danger	1998–2001
33	Requests advisory opinion of ICJ on legality of nuclear weapons	1994
34	Acceptance and follow-up of advisory opinion ICJ	1997–2001
35	Reaffirmation of the ABM Treaty	1999–2001
36	Compliance with ABM Treaty (direct response to U.S. missile defense plans)	2001
	Human Rights	
37	Human Rights in Occupied Kuwait	1991
38	Human Rights in Cuba	1991–2001
39	Human Rights in Sudan (human rights commission version)	1992–1998
40	Human Rights in Sudan (weakened UNGA version)	1999–2001
41	Human Rights in Iraq	1991–2001
42	Human Rights in Iran	1992–2001
43	Human Rights in Bosnia, FRY, and Croatia	1994–2000
44	Human Rights in Kosovo	1994–1999
45	Human Rights in Nigeria	1995–1998
46	Human Rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo	1998–2001
47	Human Rights in China (motion not to consider resolution)	1992–2001
48	Human Rights in China	1995
49	Human Rights in East Timor	1997
50	Human Rights in Chechnya	2000–2001
51	Human Rights in South-Eastern Europe	2001
52	Foreign economic interests and self-determination of peoples	1991–1996
53	Convention on suppression of crime of apartheid	1991–1993
54	Endorsing electoral assistance by UN to promote periodic and genuine elections	1991–2001
55	Right to development	1991–2001
56	Accreditation of NGOs to World Conference on Women	1994
57	Honor Crimes Against Women	2000
58	Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights	2000–2001
59	Importance of self-determination as a human right	1992–1994
60	Implementation of accords World Conference against Racism	2001
	Sanctions and Other Issues	
61	Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries	1991–2001
62	Elimination of unilateral sanctions (initiative from Cuba/Libya)	1995, 1998

Appendix: *continued*

	Sanctions and Other Issues	
63	External debt problems and development	1992–1993
64	Referenda for Nonself Governing Territories (includes Guam, Samoa, and Virgin Islands)	1995
65	Stability of International Financial System	1999
66	Human rights and unilateral coercive measures (sanctions)	2001
67	UN Membership Yugoslavia	1992
68	U.S. embargo of Cuba	1992–2001
69	Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	1991
70	Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Much stronger than 69, U.S. supports both)	1992–1994
71	Situation in Croatia	1994
72	Measures to eliminate international terrorism	1999, 2000
73	Emergency assistance to Sudan	1999
74	Law of the Sea	1991–1993
75	Law of the Sea (includes an implementation agreement on seabed mining issues, a major sticking point in previous conventions)	1994–1996

Appendix B: The Ordinal Spatial/IRT Model and Estimation Issues

The latent variable η defined by equation (1) can be thought of as representing utility differentials arising from a one-dimensional spatial model. Let each outcome $O_j \in$ {yes, no, abstain) be identified by a point ξ_j^o along a continuum X. At time t, state i has symmetric, single peaked preferences over X with ideal point θ_{it} as the most preferred outcome. If we recode the data such that a yes-vote implies a vote against the U.S. position (so: $\xi_j^{yes} > \xi_j^{no}$), we can use the simplest spatial metric, Euclidean distance, to define utilities. To capture that resolutions vary in salience, I assume that the impact of distance on utility increases linearly in $\kappa_j \geq 0$. We can rewrite equation (1) as:

$$y_{ijt} = \begin{cases} \text{no} & \text{if } \kappa_j\theta_{it} + \varepsilon_{ijt} < \kappa_j\xi_j^{MAN} \\ \text{abstain} & \text{if } \kappa_j\xi_j^{MAN} \leq \kappa_j\theta_{it} + \varepsilon_{ijt} < \kappa_j\xi_j^{MAY} \\ \text{yes} & \text{if } \kappa_j\theta_{it} + \varepsilon_{ijt} \geq \kappa_j\xi_j^{MAY} \end{cases}$$

ξ_j^{MAN} and ξ_j^{MAY} represent the midpoints between the abstain-no and abstain-yes outcomes respectively. In the IRT model, $\beta_j = \kappa_j$, $\delta_{j1} = \kappa_j\xi_j^{MAN}$, and $\delta_{j2} = \kappa_j\xi_j^{MAY}$. ε_{ijt} is a common stochastic shock that follows the standard logistic distribution. It is more common in the literature to derive the model using quadratic distance. A quadratic distance function is often chosen to eliminate the problem of identifying polarity and because of its symmetry properties in a multidimensional space. Both are not issues in the current application. The derivation with a simple Euclidean metric illustrates that the simplest spatial model (assuming $\kappa_j = 1 \forall j$) is a one-parameter IRT model. With quadratic utility, a two-parameter model is

derived through the (rather arbitrary) assumption of increasing marginal disutility as the distance between ideal point and outcome point increases. This is unattractive in the ordinal case, because the discrimination parameter becomes a function of the outcome points.

Assume that states vote independently conditional on the model parameters. The likelihood of observing the categorically distributed data **Y** can be written as:

$$\mathrm{L}(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \boldsymbol{\delta}, \boldsymbol{\theta}|\mathbf{Y}) = \prod_{i=1}^{N}\prod_{t=1}^{T}\prod_{j=1}^{M}\left(\frac{1}{1+\exp(\beta_j\theta_{it}-\delta_{j1})}\right)^{Y_{ijt}no} \times$$

$$\left(\frac{1}{1+\exp(\beta_j\theta_{it}-\delta_{j2})}-\frac{1}{1+\exp(\beta_j\theta_{it}-\delta_{j1})}\right)^{Y_{ijt}abs} \times \left(1-\frac{1}{1+\exp(\beta_j\theta_{it}-\delta_{j2})}\right)^{Y_{ijt}yes}$$

The observed vote choices Y_{ijt}^{O} take value 1 if the observed vote choice corresponds to the index and 0 otherwise. Let the joint proper prior density be defined by p(β, δ, θ). The posterior is proportional to the likelihood times the prior thus:

$$\mathrm{g}(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \boldsymbol{\delta}, \boldsymbol{\theta}|\mathbf{Y}) \propto \mathrm{L}(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \boldsymbol{\delta}, \boldsymbol{\theta}|\mathbf{Y}) \times \mathrm{p}(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \boldsymbol{\delta}, \boldsymbol{\theta})$$

The vectors of roll-call parameters β and δ have vague normal prior densities. The dynamic structure on the ideal points enters the model by estimating "hyperparameters" within a hierarchical framework. These hyperparameters define the prior mean and variance of the ideal-point vector θ and thereby affect the posterior distribution of the model parameters (Clinton 2001). The prior density of the vector of ideal points is: $\theta \sim N(\mu_\theta, \sigma^2)$, where μ_θ is the mean of the level-1 regression defined by equation 2. The prior density on σ^2 is an inverse gamma distribution with location and scale parameters both set at .001. If Q is the polynomial degree, the Q + 1-length vector of random coefficients has multivariate normal prior density $\pi_i \sim \mathrm{MVN}(\boldsymbol{\mu}_\pi, \boldsymbol{\Omega})$, where $\boldsymbol{\mu}_\pi$ is a matrix whose entries are: $\mu_{qi} = \gamma_{q0} + \gamma_{q1-s}\boldsymbol{Z}_{i1-s}$. The regression coefficients γ have an uninformative normal prior density with mean 0, except γ_{00} which gets an informative N(0,1) prior. This is justified by the way the latent scale is identified. $\boldsymbol{\Omega}$ is the variance-covariance matrix whose prior density is defined as $\boldsymbol{\Omega} \sim \mathrm{Wishart}(\mathbf{R}[,], \mathrm{Q} + 1)$, where **R** is a (Q + 1) × (Q + 1) matrix that defines the distribution parameters.

Given the prior on θ, estimating the ordinal IRT model by Gibbs sampling is relatively straightforward (e.g., Jackman and Treier 2002). Given θ, the model reduces to a hierarchical or multilevel model, which is also straightforward to estimate (e.g., Western 1998). For a more formal exposition of how the principles of estimating both IRT and multilevel models can be extended to devise a Gibbs sampler algorithm for the multilevel IRT model I refer to Fox and Glas (2001). The model is implemented in WinBugs (Spiegelhalter, Thomas, and Best 2000). The code is available from the supplemental materials (http://www.journalofpolitics.org). The multiple imputation method built into WinBugs assumes that a country's voting record is missing at random, conditional on the

model parameters. The model was run for a burn-in period of 10,000 iterations. Inferences are based on 2000 samples extracted evenly from 30,000 iterations. I first estimated a static model with N(0,1) density on the ideal points to determine the fixed values of the U.S. ideal point and the roll-call parameters of the Cuba Embargo. These are: $\alpha = -1.163$ (S.D. in estimation is .108), $\beta = 1.648$ (S.D. = .111), $\delta = 2.948$ (S.D = .209). The U.S. is at −3.671 (S.D. = .265), all the way at the left extreme of the ideal point distribution.

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