Looking for Audience Costs in all the Wrong Places: Electoral Institutions, Media Access, and Democratic Constraint

Philip B. K. Potter University of Michigan
Matthew A. Baum Harvard University

For leaders to generate credibility through audience costs, there must be mechanisms in place that enable citizens to learn about foreign policy failures. However, scholars have paid relatively little attention to variations among democracies in the extent to which the public is able to obtain this sort of information. We argue here that electoral institutions play this role by influencing the number of major political parties in a country and, with it, the extent and depth of opposition to the executive. Opposition leads to whistle-blowing, which makes it more likely that that the public will actually hear about a leader's foreign policy blunders. The effectiveness of this whistle-blowing, however, is conditional on the public's access to the primary conduit for communication between leaders and citizens: the mass media. We test these expectations statistically, demonstrating that leaders in systems with these attributes fare better with respect to their threats and the reciprocation of conflicts that they initiate. These findings suggest that democracies are not automatically able to generate credibility through audience costs and that the domestic institutions and political processes that link the public and leaders must be taken seriously.

The audience cost argument, long a staple of the international relations literature on crisis bargaining, has recently come under serious and sustained fire.[1] Trachtenberg (2012) and Snyder and Borghard (2011) explore historical crises and find little evidence that audience costs played a role in any of them. Downes and Sechser (2012) question the empirical work underpinning most existing findings on audience costs, arguing that the theory is largely unsubstantiated because most of the previously assessed disputes involved no coercive threat.

Yet audience costs are crucial to the prevailing scholarly understanding of international conflict. As Shultz (2012) puts it, they are the ''dark matter'' of international relations—hard to observe, but central to our theoretical models. Extending that analogy, without audience costs the ''equations'' describing international interactions become unbalanced, and our understanding of conflict behavior unravels along with leading explanations for long-standing empirical observations. While perhaps beyond their purview, the recent spate of articles challenging the audience cost proposition offer nothing with which to replace it. As Schultz adds, this leaves the discipline with important unanswered questions. Moving forward productively, then, requires that we dig more deeply into the processes that might give rise to credibility through audience costs in order to understand the origins of the divergent results that have emerged in the recent literature.

We argue that insufficient attention to the underlying mechanisms has obscured the consistent role of domestic political costs in conflict processes. Specifically, there is a dearth of research into the factors mediating the transmission of information from leaders to the ultimate source of audience costs—the public. Our concern is that the theoretical models underpinning the audience cost argument have relatively little to say about institutional heterogeneity within democracies. Unsurprisingly, the failure to model this heterogeneity (most often by modeling democracies dichotomously) has led to ambiguous

[1]A supplemental online appendix as well as replication data are available at http://www-personal.umich.edu/~pbkp/pbkpotter/Research/Research.html.

The Journal of Politics, Vol. 76, No. 1, January 2014, Pp. 167–181 doi:10.1017/S0022381613001230

ISSN 0022-3816

findings because leaders who face substantial audience costs are lumped together with those who do not. Drawing on the comparative political knowledge and communication literatures, we identify two sources of variation in the capacity of democracies to generate credibility through audience costs: (1) the prevalence of whistle-blowers positioned to ensure that information about a leader's foreign policy missteps will reliably become public and (2) the extent of public access to such information.

Leaders, both democratic and autocratic, have clear incentives to hide their foreign policy blunders. To minimize their capacity to do so, there must be heterogeneous and autonomous political elites in positions of power that have both independent access to foreign policy information and the incentive to reliably blow the whistle when leaders blunder. We argue that opposition political parties are the most obvious candidates to fill this role in democracies and that the larger the number of opposition parties, the more efficient this mechanism becomes.[2]

Why is a single opposition party sometimes insufficient to blow the whistle on the executive's foreign policy miscues? Fewer parties translate into diminished options for voters and a lesser likelihood that they will punish at the ballot box. Systems with larger numbers of parties are more likely than are systems with fewer parties to produce ideologically proximate alternatives for voters (Downs 1957). In addition, electoral competition among a larger number of parties results in more competing policy frames (Milner 2002). Consequently, media in multiparty democracies are more likely than their counterparts with fewer parties to have access to, and hence to make available to citizens, competing frames—including alternatives to the government's preferred frame (Sheafer and Wolfsfeld 2009).

By themselves, heterogeneous political elites are necessary but insufficient to generate audience costs. The public must also have access to the whistle-blower's message, which is most likely with a free and accessible media. Several scholars have noted that a free media is an integral part of the audience cost process (Potter and Baum 2010; Slantchev 2006). Yet, it is also the case that democracy and the available measures of media freedom are nearly perfectly collinear, making any effects of media freedom difficult to differentiate from the more prevalent arguments about regime type. What *does* vary among democracies, however, is *access* to these media—that is, to the technologies of media reception (e.g., televisions, radios, etc.). The implication of this variation is that public scrutiny—and the consequent potential political costs and benefits that go with it—may be more prevalent in some states than in others for the simple reason that leaders (and opposition parties) have varying degrees of access to the public eye.

Thus, we argue that the ability of leaders to generate audience costs is contingent on the presence of independent political parties to serve as whistle-blowers, conditioned on the extent of access to an independent media that can bridge the gap between political elites and the mass public. Overlooking these contingencies may cause researchers to wrongly conclude that no relationship exists between regime type and dispute behavior. The reason is that in some democracies—specifically, those with predominantly two-party electoral competition and limited media access—the hypothesized link is likely to be tenuous at best, whereas in others—particularly multiparty systems with high levels of public access to mass media—we anticipate a strong audience cost effect. Grouping all such democracies together introduces a great deal of error into the model, thereby reducing the efficiency of estimates of democracy's effect on dispute behavior. Only by unpacking democracy to investigate the effects of variations *within* democracies can we expect to rediscover the audience cost signal hidden within the noise introduced by conflating appropriate and inappropriate cases. Just as Weeks (2008) differentiates among autocracies, finding a subset that is in fact able to generate audience costs because their leaders are subject to public or elite opinion, we do much the same for democracies by establishing that not all are equally well-equipped to signal credibly.

While audience cost arguments play an integral role in rationalist theories of war and peace, uncovering empirical support for them has proven challenging. The very nature of audience costs makes them difficult to detect. Leaders who successfully generate credibility do not incur costs (Schultz 2001), leading to potential bias stemming from partial observability. The solution that Schultz and others (e.g., Weeks 2008) employ is to explore the reciprocation of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) as a second-order implication of the audience cost argument. The logic is that the decision to reciprocate a dispute indicates the extent to which

[2]Schultz (2001) also notes the central theoretical role for opposition parties in the audience cost story but does not model it statistically. Also, see Ramsey (2004) for a formal model of the role of opposition in crisis bargaining.

the targeted state finds the initiator credible.[3] All else equal, states that are able to generate audience costs should be more credible to their adversaries and therefore face less reciprocation when they initiate conflicts (Schultz 1998). In order to speak to the broadest possible body of work, we initially assess our proposed theoretical mechanism in the context of extant reciprocation models.

Downes and Sechser (2012) challenge this empirical approach, arguing that many of the disputes in the MID data set are inappropriate for testing the audience cost logic. In response, we replicate our analysis with their reformulated data set focusing on military compellent threats. We find evidence that democracies with substantial opposition and media access are more successful when they make compellent threats than are those without these attributes.

The remainder of this article proceeds as follows. We begin by discussing the logic of audience costs in more detail, with particular attention to the issue of mass political knowledge and engagement. We then clarify the role that electoral institutions play in linking the public to leadership in ways that make sanctions for foreign policy failures more or less likely. Next, we establish the importance of media access as a key requirement that allows audiences to monitor the foreign policy performance of their leaders. Finally, we statistically test the resulting hypotheses, employing both the MID data set (Ghosn et al. 2004) and Downs and Sechser's (2012) compellent threat data set. We find support for the proposed conditional relationship between whistle-blowers, media access, and credibility. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of our findings for future work on audience costs.

Audience Attention Is Not Automatic

Most scholarship on audience costs shares an implicit assumption about the nature of democracies. This is simply that the actions and statements of democratically elected leaders are immediately transparent to the voting public. This expectation, however, is at odds with recent research in the political communication literature, which holds that the media filter and distort the information elites attempt to transmit to the public (Baum and Groeling 2010). Compounding the problem, the public is not equally attentive to all types of messages (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Popkin 1993).

While nothing in the audience cost argument requires the public to be perfectly informed, the theory does rest on the assumption that the public engages with foreign policy enough to be both aware of the commitments leaders have made and consistent enough in its judgment of success and failure to punish failure at the ballot box. Obviously, such a process is contingent on the public's capacity to gather and retain information and to then use that information to formulate coherent opinions about the performance of leaders. Existing research, however, suggests that the public is not particularly well-equipped to accomplish either of these tasks (Baum and Groeling 2010; Berinsky 2007).[4] Moreover, the prevailing evidence suggests that the public's attention to matters of foreign policy is generally quite low (Holsti 2004). This raises troubling questions about the extent to which nuanced information about foreign policy reaches individual voters.

It is therefore quite plausible that, at least under some circumstances, democratically elected leaders can conduct foreign policy unencumbered by public scrutiny and any accompanying democratic constraints (Baum 2004). Presumably, when they do so their signals have no added credibility. If this is the case, then audience costs are unlikely to arise mechanically or universally in democracies, but rather they will be varied and context dependent. Thus, our contention is not that the audience cost argument is necessarily incorrect but rather that mapping the model to actual politics requires that we carefully consider which institutions are required for the mechanism to function well.

Elite Dissention, Parties, and Audience Costs

Given the established low baseline of public attention, what prompts the mass public to sometimes pay enough attention to foreign policy matters to impose political costs? Drawing on the prevailing view in political behavior research, we argue that voters use heuristics to help them determine both when to engage with foreign policy issues and what to think about them when they do. Research has shown that in many situations citizens are able to make rational decisions with relatively little information by

[3]Data come from the Correlates of War Project Militarized Interstate Dispute dataset (Ghosn et al. 2004). MID Reciprocation equals 1 when the hostility-index score for the target (cwhost2) is greater than 1.

[4]But see Tomz's (2007) experimental research indicating that audience costs build as a crisis escalates, suggesting that citizens (especially politically attentive ones) respond rationally to events and that they *do* care about their nation's international reputation and are hence motivated to punish failure in foreign policy.

employing informational shortcuts (Popkin 1993; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991), most notably by relying on the opinions of trusted political elites (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Krosnick and Kinder 1990; Larson 2000).[5]

This insight is particularly salient when considered in conjunction with the extensive literature on public opinion and foreign policy that finds that elite discord plays a central role in drawing a typically disengaged public into the foreign policy fray (Baum and Groeling 2010; Berinsky 2009). Schultz (1998) notes the key role for opposition parties but conceives of this role in binary terms: the presence of a single opposition party represents a shorthand for democracy, while its absence represents a shorthand for autocracy.

Yet, the expansive literature on democratic governance makes it clear that the number of opposition parties matters a great deal. Downs (1957) links the number of political parties to the nature of political debate, arguing that a small number of parties leads to ineffective government in the absence of political consensus among voters and ambiguous platforms and positions. In contrast, he argues that multiparty democracies tend toward sharply defined ideological distinctions between the parties. Similarly, Lijphart (1999) demonstrates a relationship between the effective number of parties in a democracy and the number of issue dimensions over which elections are fought (see also Cox 1990; Dow 2001). At its core, the link between the number of opposition parties and costs is based on an electoral logic. Opposition parties are likely to point out the blunders of a sitting president or prime minister because this will, at the margin, weaken the sitting government and perhaps help them at the ballot box down the line.

A recent example illustrates this insight. The Obama administration's apparent mishandling of the attack on the American consulate in Benghazi, Libya might be construed as a foreign policy blunder warranting an electoral response. Many Republicans clearly thought that it would. Yet, relatively few of those inclined to support the president in the 2012 election campaign prior to the attack subsequently abandoned him in favor of his Republican opponent. The reason, arguably, is that the two candidates differed substantially on many other policy dimensions. In contrast, were Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu caught in an equivalent situation, he would presumably be more susceptible to defections by centrist and far-right religious parties. The higher density of parties in Israel across the ideological spectrum means that these parties are more ideologically proximate to the median Likud voter.

Bolstering this point, recent research into the relationship between institutional forms of democracy, media diversity, and citizens' political knowledge (e.g., Schmitt-Beck 2003) suggests that not all democracies are alike in the quality of information they provide to their citizens. Systems with more parties tend to have more ideological diversity among those parties (Pennings 1998; Powell 1982).[6] Consequently, the media in such systems will index policy discussion to a wider range of debate on any given issue, as well as report on a wider range of policy issues, and offer more competing policy frames than their counterparts in two-party systems. In other words, multiparty systems are associated with higher-quality political information—where quality is defined as "information voters can use to inform party choices across contests (local, state, and federal) and across time" (Moosbrugger, n.d., 13).

Citizens in multiparty systems will thus be exposed to a greater range of higher-quality information than their counterparts in two-party systems and hence will be operating in a richer information environment that will improve political knowledge and sophistication in general (Kumlin 2001; Schmitt-Beck 2003) and highlight a leader's foreign policy blunders in particular. Hence, all else equal, citizens in multiparty systems ought to be better equipped to hold their leaders accountable than their counterparts in two-party systems.

In general, elite discord—including discord among multiple parties—serves as a heuristic which signals to voters that they should engage with the policy process. Zaller (1994) notes that elite discord can produce a "polarization effect" by sparking more critical media coverage, resulting in heightened attention from the public. Through this mechanism, opposition parties can act as whistle-blowers who inform the public when leaders are not performing, including when their foreign policy bluffs are called. This possibility complements the received wisdom about the role of elite discord in the formation of public opinion about foreign policy. For instance, in studies of the U.S. media, scholars (e.g., Bennett 1990; Entman 2003; Zaller and Chiu 2000) have found substantial evidence that news content, especially in times of war, tends to reflect the tone of policy debate in Washington.

[5]Popkin (1993) terms this process "low information rationality."

[6]Dalton (2008) presents a more direct methodology for measure of the ideological polarization between parties, but this cannot be calculated for the timespan and range of countries needed for this analysis.

A hypothesis follows concerning how domestic institutional structures might influence the ability of leaders to generate audience costs:

> *H1*: Ceteris paribus, as the number of parties increases in the initiator state, the probability of reciprocation by the target state will decrease.

Media Access

Of course, the presence or absence of whistle-blowers means relatively little if the public cannot hear them. Most work in this area assumes that the statements and actions of leaders and the opposition are immediately transparent to the public. This may have been a defensible assumption prior to the twentieth century, when participation in politics and diplomacy was typically limited to a handful of elites within a state. But in an era dominated by mass democracies, in which many millions of individuals hold the franchise, this assumption is problematic. Instead, theories that rest implicitly on political communication must grapple with the role of media as an institution that links leaders, opposition, and the public (Baum and Potter 2008).

A free press is a defining characteristic of liberal democracies. Many autocracies have elections, legislatures, and the outward trappings of representation, but few tolerate open dissent from the press corps.[7] This nearly perfect coincidence of democracy and press freedom has obscured the systematic variation in the transmission of information to the public that might alter the audience cost mechanism.[8]

While press freedom is relatively consistent across democracies, access to that press is not. For instance, among democracies in our data set, the mean number of televisions per 1,000 in population across all years is 354, or about one television for every three inhabitants. Norway in 1980 fell very close to this average, at 350 televisions per 1,000 people. However, the standard deviation around this mean is 245. This means that in roughly one-third of the democracies in our data set, there is at most one television for about every 10 inhabitants. The Philippines in 1998 fell near this level, with, on average, about 110 televisions per 1,000 residents. In 1996, television access was just over half that level in India, at 63 televisions per 1,000 residents. This represented a sharp rise from, say, 1985, when there existed in India only about one television for every 250 residents. The United States and the United Kingdom have the highest levels of television access among democracies in our dataset, at 831 (1997) and 850 (1999) televisions per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively.

Access to mass media is integral to the process of generating audience costs because when access is limited the public has a diminished capacity to reliably identify foreign policy failures. In such a setting, the leaders in power, regardless of how they gained office, can control the flow of information in a way that renders hollow the threat of electoral sanction. Even if there are opposition politicians with an interest in exposing the failure of an incumbent leader, absent broad media access their ability to communicate with the public is severely constrained. An additional hypothesis follows:

> *H2*: Ceteris paribus, as media access increases in the initiator state, the probability of reciprocation by the target state will decrease.

In an absolute sense, whistle-blowers without access will never reach the public. Similarly, a public with universal media access, but without a whistle-blowing elite, will never hear about foreign policy missteps. The implication is that the risk of whistle-blowing will only inhibit leaders when there is a credible threat that the public will hear the whistle being blown. This requires that a substantial portion of the public have access to media reporting about government policy. Conversely, public access to the media is only likely to concern leaders if there exists an autonomous elite to blow the whistle when their policies fail. Consequently, we anticipate an interaction between party systems and media access, with the strongest credibility enhancing effects emerging in the presence of a whistle-blowing elite, a press corps inclined to cover the blowing of whistles, and a public likely to receive such messages. This suggests a third set of hypotheses:

> *H3a*: Ceteris paribus, at low levels of public media access in the initiator state, variations in the number of parties will not significantly affect the likelihood of reciprocation by target states.

> *H3b*: Ceteris paribus, beyond some threshold of media access in the initiator state, as the number of parties increases, greater public access to the media will be more strongly associated with decreased reciprocation by target states.

[7]The widely used Polity IV measure of democracy and the Reporters without Borders Press Freedom Index correlate at 0.77. No country with a Polity score less than 5 in 2003 (on the −10 to +10 DEMOC-AUTOC scale, where +10 is "most" democratic) scored higher than 81st in the world in press freedom. That country was Cambodia.

[8]A few scholars have investigated the role of the free press in the audience cost argument. See Choi and James (2006), Slantchev (2006), and Potter and Baum (2010).

Level of Response

Of course, all reciprocation is not equal. In particular, low-level, nonviolent reciprocation may be less subject to variations in initiator credibility in part because it has a lesser chance of leading to uncontrolled escalation. Indeed, such tepid reciprocation may, in fact, represent a hedging strategy from a target state that believes the initiator is indeed credible but is perhaps playing for time and information or seeking to minimize the costs from its own domestic audience that might follow immediate acquiescence. In contrast, higher-level reciprocation, including the actual use of violence, is a clearer indication that the target is challenging the initiator's credibility. It may, therefore, be the case that violent reciprocation might drive any credibility-based effects for overall reciprocation (combining both low- and high-level types). This leads us to a fourth set of hypotheses.

H4a: Ceteris paribus, as the number of parties increases in the initiating state, the probability of violent reciprocation by the target state will decrease.

H4b: Ceteris paribus, as media access increases in the initiating state, the probability of violent reciprocation by the target state will decrease.

H4c: Ceteris paribus, at low levels of public media access in the initiating state, variations in the number of parties will not significantly affect the likelihood of violent reciprocation by target states.

H4d: Ceteris paribus, beyond some threshold of media access in the initiating state, as the number of parties increases, greater public access to the media will be more strongly associated with decreased violent reciprocation by target states.

Alternative Measures

Our initial hypotheses all address the relationship between democratic institutions and dispute reciprocation as an indirect measure of the ability to generate audience costs. There are, however, substantial drawbacks to reciprocation as an indicator of the presence or absence of a functional audience cost mechanism. Foremost among these is the reality that reciprocation is a second-order implication of the audience cost argument. That is, the domestic calculations that fuel the audience cost mechanism are assumed rather than tested because leaders who face audience costs have obvious incentives not to incur them. This means that, if nothing else, we are uncovering important variation in dispute reciprocation (driven by a mechanism other than audience costs), which we argue is interesting and important in itself. However, this begs the question of what that alternative data-generating mechanism might be. This study adds to a growing literature tying reciprocation to the domestic politics of the initiating state, which, when taken together, increasingly crowd out mechanisms other than audience costs.

Additionally, reciprocation is difficult to measure; even if it is a conceptually sound indicator of variations in audience costs, the coding may be substantially flawed. Indeed, these coding deficiencies have been convincingly documented (Downes and Sechser 2012). These concerns aside, models of reciprocation have become standard in this literature in large part because few equally plausible alternatives have emerged until relatively recently. Hence, since we are making several novel adaptations to audience cost theory, we begin by applying them to the standard measure in order to allow comparability.[9]

That said, while there are several reasons why the evidence of audience costs should be recoverable from extant data on reciprocation, it is also the case that it should arise in cases of compellent threats. Given the documented issues with the MID data, it is particularly important that our theory holds up in other contexts. Moreover, this is a particularly revealing test of the robustness of mechanism that we propose here due to the sparseness of the data and the fact that Downes and Sechser (2012) report a null finding for the relationship between a simple measure of democracy and threat response. This leads us to a final set of hypotheses:

H5a: Ceteris paribus, as the number of parties increases in the initiating state, the probability of successful compellent threats will increase.

H5b: Ceteris paribus, as media access increases in the initiating state, the probability of successful compellent threats will increase.

H5c: Ceteris paribus, beyond some threshold of media access, as the number of parties increases, greater public media access will be more strongly associated with successful threats.

The Problem of Perception

While somewhat beyond the purview of the tests presented here, it is worth noting that the issue at

[9]It is also worth noting that because our research question necessarily limits our analyses to democracies in the era of broadcast media, we are dealing with a somewhat skewed sample of democracies largely in the Cold War period. However, since we are interested in variation within democracies, this is less troubling than it is in other studies such as those specifically concerned with the democratic peace.

hand is not simply whether a state can generate audience costs, but rather whether the opposing actor *perceives* this as resulting in increased credibility. In our view, this issue of the perception of audience costs is insufficiently addressed throughout the audience costs literature. The blind spot likely originates from the original legacy of the audience costs proposition as a stylized theory. However, by introducing a more complex mechanism, we beg the questions of if and how these variations are perceptible to the other side in an international interaction.

Our empirical investigations are only able to test implications of this process rather than the process itself. We argue, however, that the answer to this question likely lies in the way that intricate, institutionally based biases in foreign policy behavior coalesce over time into reputations for credibility (or the lack thereof). In this view, there is an important distinction between the question of whether an adversary is bluffing in the immediate term and reputations for credibility developed over time. Institutions that systematically affect the costs and benefits of bluffing will influence the actual frequency of bluffing. Though the process itself may be opaque to an adversary in any particular instance, over time it will coalesce into a reputation for credibility that will be more durable and readily apparent to an adversary.

Our theory implies that the combination of a larger number of parties and extensive media access likely decreases the actual propensity of a state to bluff. More parties makes bluffing harder for at least two reasons. First, parties in multiparty systems typically face stronger incentives than their counterparts in two-party systems to differentiate themselves from one another on policy (Downs 1957). There is thus a relatively higher likelihood that one will defect and undermine a bluff. Increased media access, in turn, makes it more likely that defecting parties will be able to reach and hence influence the public. This raises the likelihood that citizens will hold leaders accountable for failed bluffs.

Second, democracies with many parties and far-reaching media tend to make a great deal of noise when they lack unity, and this noise occurs in a domain where it is readily apparent to adversaries. The result is that bluffs, particularly ambitious ones, are difficult to execute. These same forces make bluffs more costly if they are called. This is simply because they raise the potential for elite discord and increase the availability of political alternatives (i.e., other parties that could potentially take power). The implication is that states with these attributes are, all else equal, less likely to bluff in marginal circumstances.

Over time, the forces we have described could coalesce into a reputation for credibility and commitment that is knowable to adversaries based on past experiences with the state in question. That said, these processes might be too subtle to be observed by an adversary seeking to judge credibility in a one-off encounter. Such one-off encounters, however, are rare in international politics. Indeed, this reputational effect is particularly important because most threats and conflict happen within relatively well-worn international relationships. Threats are rarely "bolts from the blue" that originate from countries with which there has been little prior interaction. Most relationships (and threats) are geographically constrained and occur between countries that have long-standing historical experience with one another. The exceptions tend to be global powers like the United States, but these countries loom so large in the international consciousness that their reputations could precede them even when they interject themselves into situations where they have previously been uninvolved. Thus, the basis for the reputation may not be directly observable or known to the adversary, but the fact that prior interactions have consistently reinforced it makes the reputation stronger.

The question then is which signals are more or less likely to break through the fog and contribute to reputations. Our argument is that the set of factors we identify (i.e., party and media systems) are prime candidates because their institutional basis means that they operate over long time frames and are relatively immune to strategic manipulation by leaders. Thus, while we are not able to assess these processes directly in our empirical analyses, it is plausible to hypothesize that states possessing the attributes we identify will see less reciprocation in the disputes and threats that they initiate than their counterparts lacking these attributes. This is what we demonstrate in our empirical analyses.

Research Design

We begin to test our hypotheses with adaptations of Schultz's (2001) models of MID reciprocation. Our measure of dispute reciprocation is equal to one when the target state responds militarily (and zero otherwise). We assess the robustness of this formulation of the dependent variable by splitting reciprocation into two varieties and analyzing each separately and in conjunction: (1) any militarized reciprocation and (2) violent reciprocation entailing escalation to the actual deployment or employment of military force. We then reassess

our hypotheses using Downes and Sechser's (2012) data on compellent threats.[10]

Our period of analysis spans the years 1965–99. We chose this period because it corresponds with the television age, and access to television serves as one of our primary measures of media access. In addition, this period largely predates the emergence of the Internet as a major mechanism for mass communication. The time series does, however, introduce unavoidable challenges that should be acknowledged. Foremost, this is a period dominated by either the Cold War (1965–89) or U.S. hegemony (1989–99). Where possible, we have assessed whether this transition meaningfully alters the findings we will present, and we find that it does not.

In addition to employing a more limited period of analysis, we make several additional departures from existing models. We are primarily concerned with distinctions within democracies (rather than between democracies and autocracies). Hence, in an attempt to be particularly conservative, we first restrict the models to democracies and therefore exclude the standard dichotomous measure of democracy/autocracy. However, as an alternative approach, we also test models with a democracy dummy variable, which we interact with our variables of interest.

We initially operationalize the extent of political opposition using Golder's (2005) measure of the Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties (ENPP). Golder (2005) defines ENPP based on the following formula, from Laakso and Taagepera (1979): $\frac{1}{\sum s_i^2}$, where s_i is the percentage of seats won by the *ith* party, with Independents or "others" coded as a single party.

For our primary analyses, we account for media access with counts of televisions per 1,000 people. We focus on television for two reasons, one conceptual and one practical. Beginning with the latter, far more data are available on television access than for other indicators of mass media. More significantly, television remains by far the most important form of media worldwide for presenting political information to mass audiences. According to a 2009 Pew Center survey of 25 countries—spanning nearly every region of the globe and level of economic development—an average of 72% of respondents named television as their primary source of news about national and international affairs. Newspapers came in second at less than 10%, while the Internet took fourth place on the list, at 7.9%. It is reasonable to anticipate that the dominance of television during much of our period of analysis was at least as high, if not higher.

To further assess the role of media access, we investigate a second operationalization, combining television and radio access. Because in some developing democracies access to television was and continues to be limited, we combine our television access variable with an indicator of the number of radios per 1,000 population. Simply put, households in less developed nations are relatively more likely to own a radio than a television. Including this indicator is particularly helpful in the early years of our data set, when relatively few citizens in developing nations had access to television, even as radios were far more prevalent.

To illustrate this point, among democracies the correlation between time and our television access indicator is .35, indicating a strong increase in television access over time. The corresponding correlation for radio access is −.06, indicating at most a slight, and in this case negative, over-time trend. The point is that radio penetration had largely peaked by the late 1960s, while television ownership increased over the course of the ensuing decades covered in our data.

Following Schultz (2001) and the numerous articles that have built on his work, we control for the power dynamic within the initiator/potential reciprocator dyad, as well as measure whether those states are contiguous, whether they are allies, and the degree of similarity in their alliance portfolios. We also include several measures of the nature of the initiator's challenge. Finally, we include one additional control variable that is not typical in models of reciprocation: child mortality. We use this measure to account for each country's relative level of development (Lake and Baum 2001). This variable reduces the likelihood that our media-access variables will pick up any development effect that might then be collinear with media exposure, the object of our theoretical interest. At the same time, development may be associated with increased demands for political responsiveness and, through this mechanism, influence our dependent variable.[11]

[10]Threats are considered successful if the target acquiesces short of a threshold of 100 military fatalities on the target side. We reverse the coding so that the expected signs are the same as those for the models of reciprocation.

[11]In other analyses, we assess development with measures such as wealth, growth, and education, and we obtain similar results. We employ mortality here because it has very complete data and addresses issues of equality better than other measures. We address remaining concerns about the relationship with development with the aforementioned measure that includes radio access, which is less subject to differences in development. Finally, we cannot think of a logical argument for why "development" would influence conflict behavior in opposing manners depending on the number of parties in a given state. This seems inconsistent with the possibility that development is driving our results.

Results

Table 1 presents the results of our primary regressions. Model 1 explores the effect on all dispute reciprocation. Model 2 limits the analysis to violent reciprocation (that is, the actual deployment or employment of military force). Model 3 tests the robustness of the media-access variable using the combined television and radio indicator in a model otherwise similar to Model 1. Model 4 replicates this same analysis, but includes *all* states, regardless of regime type, while introducing a dummy variable for democracies, which we interact with ENPP and media access.

We do not rely exclusively on this formulation of the model because it requires a substantial (but defensible) assumption regarding the number-of-parties data. Specifically, we must treat autocracies (which are otherwise missing values for this variable) as having one party. This effectively asserts that these states lack independent opposition (which, though we believe it to be a defensible simplifying assumption, is arguably not entirely true in all cases) and forces all the explanatory power for those states to the media and press freedom variables.

Because it is difficult to substantively interpret log likelihoods and conditional coefficients, we transform the coefficients on the key causal variables in Table 1 into probabilities as media access and the number of parties varies, with all other controls held constant at their mean values. Figure 1 plots the results. In each graphic, we separately plot the predicted probabilities as media access increases from its lowest to highest values among democracies (0 to 1,000 for television access and 0 to 3,000 for the combined measure), with the expected number of parliamentary parties (ENPP) set one standard deviation below and above its mean value.

Our first two hypotheses predict that as the number of parties (H1) or media access (H2) increases, reciprocation and violent reciprocation in MIDs by target states will become less frequent. The results in Figure 1 support both predictions. Beginning with Hypothesis 1, across all the graphics and at nearly all values of television access—the exception being at the low-end of television access—the grey curves (representing ENPP one standard deviation below the mean) are 21 or 20 percentage points higher on average, for reciprocation and violent reciprocation respectively, than the black curves (representing ENPP one standard deviation above the mean). These average differences are highly significant.[12]

Turning to Hypothesis 2, here the appropriate test is to observe the slope of the curves as media access increases. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, both the grey and black curves are downwardly sloping in all four panels in Figure 1. All the black curves are statistically significant at $p < .01$, while, as expected, the grey curves are considerably shallower and statistically insignificant. In short, increased media access is indeed associated with reduced reciprocation and violent reciprocation, albeit far more strongly and significantly so (as expected) given a relatively high number of parties.

This brings us to Hypothesis 3a and 3b, which predict that the reciprocation-repressing effects of increased media access ought to heighten as the number of parties rises (H3b), but only beyond some minimum threshold of media access (H3a). As suggested above, and consistent with Hypothesis 3b, this is clearly the case in the graphics. In the low-ENPP cases (the grey curves), the slopes associated with increased media access are all relatively shallow and, as noted, insignificant.[13] In sharp contrast, all the high-ENPP cases (the black curves) are sharply downward sloping and significant at $p < .01$.

Consistent with Hypothesis 3a, in all cases the effects of variations in the number of parties are statistically indistinguishable at the low end of media access. This supports our theory concerning the necessity of access: increased whistle-blowing has no statistically identifiable effect when the mass public is relatively unlikely to get the message. The effects become statistically distinguishable at about one television per three residents, which is quite close to the overall mean level of media access among democracies in our data of about one television per 2.8 residents. For the combined media measure, the threshold is also at about the one-in-three point. Finally, consistent with Hypothesis 4a and 4b, we observed quite similar effects when we focus only on violent reciprocation as when we explore *all* reciprocation.

The similarity across the four panels in Figure 1 is worth remarking upon since the graphs actually arise from notably distinct model specifications. In particular, the robustness to the restricted MID definition

[12]States with above-average ENPP and media access include (for at least some years): Belgium, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Italy, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, and Venezuela.

[13]The slope of the graph in the "All States" panel is actually positive, though statistically insignificant.

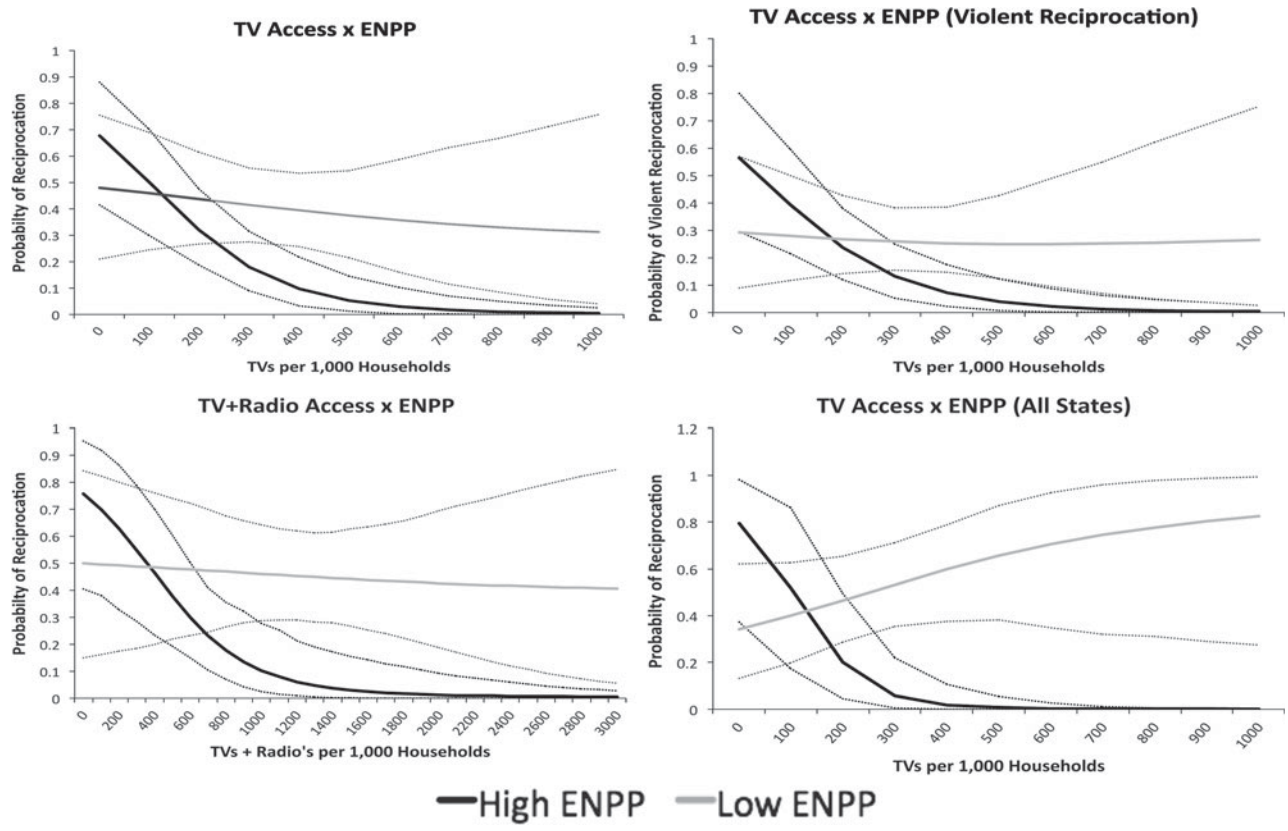
TABLE 1 Logit Analysis of Dispute Reciprocation

	Model 1 Reciprocation β/(SE)	Model 2 Violent Reciprocation β/(SE)	Model 3 TV & Radio β/(SE)	Model 4 All States β/(SE)
Democracy				-1.376
				(0.991)
Dem. × ENPP				0.343
				(0.296)
Dem. × Access				0.012**
				(0.004)
Dem. × Access × ENPP				-0.003**
				(0.001)
ENPP	0.344	0.473	0.499	0.030
	(0.255)	(0.246)	(0.270)	(0.173)
Media Access	0.004	0.004	0.002	-0.006
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.004)
ENPP × TV	-0.003**	-0.003**	-0.001**	0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Major - Major Dyad	-0.417	-0.117	0.441	-0.556
	(0.973)	(0.969)	(1.139)	(0.800)
Minor - Major Dyad	0.339	0.655	0.133	-0.034
	(0.647)	(0.699)	(0.739)	(0.482)
Major - Minor Dyad	0.900	0.265	1.194	0.506
	(0.655)	(0.649)	(0.870)	(0.545)
Initiator Capability Share	0.577	1.241	0.420	0.323
	(0.725)	(0.771)	(0.738)	(0.513)
Contiguity	0.342	0.442	0.277	0.411
	(0.419)	(0.396)	(0.443)	(0.295)
Ally	0.210	0.559	0.890	-0.010
	(0.604)	(0.594)	(0.654)	(0.374)
Alliance Portfolio Similarity	1.295	0.519	1.141	0.932
	(0.875)	(0.944)	(0.983)	(0.561)
Status Quo Initiator	1.004	-0.378	0.823	-0.366
	(1.409)	(1.496)	(1.645)	(0.877)
Status Quo Target	-0.535	-0.692	-1.010	-0.223
	(1.466)	(1.559)	(1.539)	(0.799)
Territory	0.908	0.332	0.880	0.829*
	(0.499)	(0.513)	(0.502)	(0.351)
Regime	-1.125	-0.937	-1.102	-0.162
	(0.790)	(1.244)	(0.818)	(0.538)
Policy	-0.738	-0.338	-0.551	-0.951**
	(0.415)	(0.438)	(0.456)	(0.300)
Other	-2.080	-1.448	-2.088	-0.983
	(1.210)	(1.447)	(1.272)	(0.588)
Child Mortality	-0.006	-0.007	-0.006	-0.002
	(-0.006)	(-0.006)	(0.007)	(0.003)
N	253	253	230	457

Note: Estimates are maximum likelihood coefficients obtained from logit equations with the militarized intersate dispute as the unit of analysis. Standard errors (clustered by initiator) are in parentheses. Constants are suppressed to conserve space.
*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

(violent reciprocation) begins to assuage some of the concerns regarding the measurement of that indicator. The combined television and radio model suggests that the mortality measure sufficiently addresses the relative development issue. Finally, the comparability of the "all states" model, which has a much larger N and more complex interaction terms, enhances our confidence in the robustness of our findings.

FIGURE 1 Probabilities of Reciprocation



Note: The black lines represent the predicted probability of MID reciprocation for high-ENPP states. The grey lines are the same probabilities for low-ENPP states. Dashed lines indicate the .95 confidence intervals.

In order to illustrate the types of incidents driving our aggregate findings, it helps to consider a specific example of a successful (or at least unreciprocated) dispute initiation by a state with above average partisan opposition and media access. Turkey meets both of these criteria. In 1998, in one of the MIDs in our sample, Turkey made an explicit threat against Syria (in the form of 10,000 troops massed on the border) in response to its belief that Syria was tacitly supporting Kurdish (PKK) separatists. While, for the reasons we have noted, it is impossible to directly observe the audience cost process, it is suggestive that Syria backed down and agreed to end its support to the Kurds.

To address our fifth set of hypotheses and the concerns raised by Downes and Sechser (2012), as well as confirm that the mechanism we identify applies even to their very strict definition of compellent threat, we specified the above-described models on that dependent variable. To aid comparisons with their work, we employ their control variables. These are described in detail in Downes and Sechser (2012), and for the sake of space we do not repeat that discussion here. However, their control variables are intuitive and widely used in the literature. The results of the models are found in Table 2. As was the case for our core analyses, the initial model is restricted to just democracies. This results in a small sample size that requires us to limit the controls to the most important ones. The second model includes all regime types and therefore the same democracy dummy and interactions that we previously introduced. The larger sample size, however, allows us to incorporate the full set of controls.

The results in both models are consistent with those in Table 1. However, it is more meaningful to compare the predicted probabilities that result from these models. Figure 2 presents these probabilities for Model 2 of Table 2.[14]

Figure 2 demonstrates a relationship that is similar to those we have presented throughout this study, though the confidence interval for the low

[14]An equivalent exercise for Table 2, Model 1 produces similar curves, but with much wider (and insignificant) confidence intervals due to the small sample size.

Table 2 Logit Analyses of Threats

	Model 1 Democracies β/(SE)	Model 2 All States β/(SE)
Dem. × ENPP × Access		0.038**
		(0.013)
Dem. × ENPP		8.934
		(5.819)
Dem. × TV		-0.136**
		(0.045)
Democracy		-17.878
		(9.786)
ENPP	10.164**	6.153***
	(3.557)	(0.740)
Media Access	0.037**	0.184***
	(0.013)	(0.045)
ENPP × TV	-0.020**	-0.069***
	(0.007)	(0.010)
Democratic Target	-8.279*	4.705**
	(3.463)	(1.782)
Initiator's Share of Capabilities	7.742*	6.909*
	(3.203)	(2.710)
Contiguous	-1.369	-5.162**
	(2.020)	(1.797)
Alliance Portfolio Similarity	-2.597	2.900
	(1.746)	(2.871)
Status Quo Evaluation of Initiator	-5.211*	0.108
	(2.092)	(2.133)
Status Quo Evaluation of Target	0.237	-7.336*
	(2.063)	(3.415)
Both Democratic		-18.439**
		(5.986)
Territory		3.634
		(1.887)
Government		6.626
		(3.678)
Policy		3.518
		(2.098)
Other		4.367
		(2.251)
N	35	79

Note: Estimates are maximum likelihood coefficients obtained from logit equations with the compellent threat as the unit of analysis. Standard errors (clustered by initiator) are in parentheses. $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$, $^{***}p < 0.001$.

party analysis is somewhat larger, likely owing to the decreased statistical power resulting from the small sample size. This smaller sample size (N=79) also contributes to the precipitous drop and exaggerated functional form of the high-ENPP curve. By way of example, Iceland, which had above average media access and partisan opposition (that is, ENPP), was successful in the Third Cod War in 1975 when it threatened to close a NATO base in retaliation for the United Kingdom's naval incursions. The British government apparently deemed this threat credible, as it conceded and agreed to keep its fishing vessels out of the disputed waters. It is also worth noting that the Turkish example we discussed in the context of the MID discussion also appears in the compellent threat data.

Most importantly for our argument, there is a statistically and substantively meaningful difference between the high- and low-ENPP curves. In high-ENPP states, as television access increases, the probability of reciprocating to a compellent threat drops dramatically ($p < .01$); in low-ENPP states, variations in television access have no significant effect on reciprocation to compellent threats. This stands in contrast to Downs and Sechser's (2012) null findings for the audience cost proposition based on the same dependent variable. Moreover, the general consistency of our results across dependent variables should further increase confidence in the mechanism we propose.

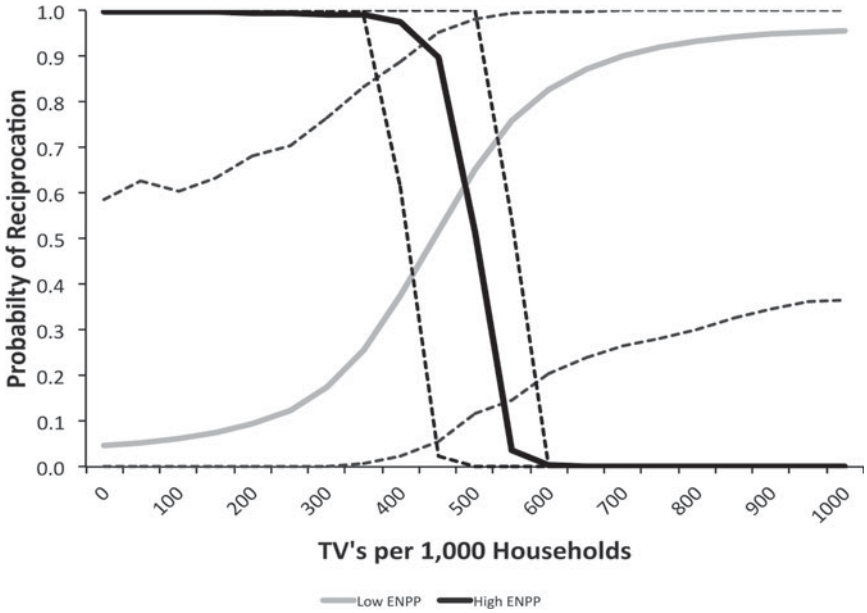
Robustness

In addition to the multiple tests we have described, we pursued numerous variations of these models to assess the robustness of our findings. For the sake of brevity, we present those findings in a supplemental online appendix, and we only briefly summarize them here.

We begin by assessing whether violent reciprocation drives the overall relationship by converting the multiple dependent variables assessed in the previous analysis into a single scaled variable where 0 = not reciprocated, 1 = reciprocated with a maximum of threat, and 2 = reciprocated with a maximum of force deployment or use of force. For reasons we elaborate in the appendix, we then assessed the relationship between this reformulated dependent variable and our proposed mechanism with both ordered logit and unordered multinomial logit models. The findings essentially replicate those in Table 1 and Figure 1. We then introduce an alternative operationalization of the extent of political opposition. Here we turn to Golder's (2005) measure of expected number of electoral parties (ENEP) and again reach very similar conclusions.

Finally, we extend the analysis to the question of whether the additional credibility generated by the processes we identify advantages leaders throughout the entire conflict. To assess this, we determine whether states with the attributes we identify tend to win more of their conflicts than those without these

FIGURE 2 **Probability of Reciprocation (Compellent threat)**



Note: The black line represents the predicted probability of compellent threat reciprocation for high-ENPP states. The grey line is the same probability for low-ENPP states. Dashed lines indicate the .95 confidence intervals.

attributes. We find that this is indeed the case. This finding unifies existing work suggesting that democracies are more successful in their threats and MID initiation with the observation that democracies win a disproportionate number of the conflicts in which they engage (Gelpi and Griesdorf 2001).

Conclusion

The ability of leaders to use their citizenry to generate credibility in their international interactions is variable and context dependent. Specifically, electoral institutions that give rise to a whistle-blowing opposition, combined with sufficient media access to make it likely that citizens will be aware of any such whistle-blowing, facilitates credibility. Put differently, if the domestic institutions in a democracy are such that the public is unlikely to hear about foreign policy blunders, or that what they do hear does not challenge the leader's policies, then leaders face relatively low-potential political costs. Without costs, there is no increased credibility.

This study contributes to an emerging literature explicating the domestic nuances of the audience cost argument (e.g., Horowitz and Levendusky 2012; Tomz 2007). Scholars of international conflict need to take seriously the domestic processes that underpin the audience costs argument. Since the link between leaders' actions and the public's response is far from automatic, it behooves us to understand the institutions that shape this relationship. This includes the critical intervening role of the mass media as the primary vehicle for transmitting information between leaders and citizens. Failing to account for the implications of differences in media and electoral institutions for information transmission will likely perpetuate the seeming disconnect between theoretical propositions and empirical evidence that has bedeviled researchers interested in employing audience cost theory. It also limits scholars' capacities to fully explicate the implications of domestic audience costs for when disputes are, or are not, likely to escalate to war, as well as the role of democratic institutions in mediating this likelihood.

Our findings also address the hotly contested debate in the discipline as to whether audience costs exist at all and are important—the sentiment that unifies previously cited work by Snyder and Borghard (2011), Trachtenberg (2012), Downes and Sechser (2012), and a recent special issue of *Security Studies*. That body of work purports to show that democracies cannot or do not generate meaningful audience costs and then concludes from that finding that audience costs, if they exist at all, are politically inconsequential. By demonstrating that, in fact, audience costs matter

for democracies only under certain conditions and that this finding holds even in the stricter tests proposed by some of these authors, this article helps to resolve some of the primary concerns in that debate.

Finally, this project continues the scholarly conversation about the relative merits of alternative datasets for assessing the audience costs proposition. If Downes and Sechser (2012) are correct that most MIDs do not involve threats (and we believe that they are), the question remains: why has the existing literature found a relationship between dispute reciprocation and democracy despite the well-documented deficiencies of those datasets? This question is a particularly important one, since our analyses produced equivalent findings across the MID and compellent threats data sets, suggesting that the original findings drawn from the MID data arise from more than fitting the error. We argue that the answer is that at each stage of a conflict—initial threats, but also initiation, escalation, and full-scale engagement—leaders who are subject to sanction from a domestic audience face higher costs for failure. Thus, it is not the particular form of executive commitment that matters so much as the relatively higher costs of backing down from it.

Acknowledgments

We wish to thank Bob Axelrod, Pat James, Marc Trachtenberg, and seminar participants at the University of Michigan and UCLA. All errors are our own.

References

Baum, M. A. 2004. "How Public Opinion Constrains the Use of Force: The Case of Operation Restore Hope." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34 (2): 187–226.

Baum, M. A., and P. B. Potter. 2008. "The Relationships between Mass Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 39–65.

Baum, M., and T. J. Groeling. 2010. *War Stories: The Causes and Consequences of Public Views of War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bennett, W. L. 1990. "Toward a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States." *Journal of Communication* 40 (2): 103–25.

Berinsky, A. J. 2007. "Assuming the Costs of War: Events, Elites, and American Public Support for Military Conflict." *Journal of Politics* 69 (4): 975–97.

Choi, Seung-Whan, and Patrick James. 2006. "Media Openness, Democracy and Militarized Interstate Disputes." *British Journal of Political Science* 37: 23–46.

Cox, G. W. 1990. "Centripetal and Centrifugal Incentives in Electoral Systems." *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (4): 903–35.

Dalton, Russell J. 2008. "The Quantity and the Quality of Party Systems: Party System Polarization, Its Measurement, and Its Consequences." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (7): 899–920.

Dow, J. K. 2001. "A Comparative Spatial Analysis of Majoritarian and Proportional Elections." *Electoral Studies* 20: 109–25.

Downes, A. B., and T. S. Sechser. 2012. "The Illusion of Democratic Credibility." *International Organization* 66 (03): 457–89.

Downs, A. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper.

Entman, R. M. 2003. *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gelpi, C. F., and M. Griesdorf. 2001. "Winners or Losers? Democracies in International Crisis, 1918–94." *American Political Science Review* 95 (3): 633–47.

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.

Golder, M. 2005. "Democratic Electoral Systems around the World, 1946–2000." *Electoral Studies* 24 (1): 103–21.

Holsti, O. R. 2004. *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Horowitz, M. C., and M. Levendusky. 2012. "When Backing Down Is the Right Decision: Partisanship, New Information, and Audience Costs." *Journal of Politics* 74 (2): 323–38.

Iyengar, S., and D. R. Kinder. 1987. *News that Matters: Television and American Opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Krosnick, J. A., and D. R. Kinder. 1990. "Altering the Foundations of Support for the President through Priming." *American Political Science Review* 84 (2): 497–512.

Kumlin, S. 2001. "Ideology–Driven Opinion Formation in Europe: The Case of Attitudes Towards the Third Sector in Sweden." *European Journal of Political Research* 39 (4): 487–518.

Laakso, M., and R. Taagepera. 1979. "The Effective Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 12 (1): 3.

Lake, D. A., and M. A. Baum. 2001. "The Invisible Hand of Democracy: Political Control and the Provision of Public Services." *Comparative Political Studies* 34 (August): 587–621.

Larson, E. V. 2000. "Putting Theory to Work: Diagnosing Public Opinion on the US Intervention in Bosnia." In *Being Useful: Policy Relevance and International Relations Theory*, ed. M. Nincic and J. Lepgold. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 174–233.

Lijphart, A. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lupia, A., and M. D. McCubbins. 1998. *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn what They Need to Know?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Milner, H. 2002. *Civic Literacy*. Hanover, NH: Tufts University Press.

Moosbrugger, L. n.d. "Institutions, Information, and Political Sophistication: A Causal Model." University of California, Santa Barbara. Unpublished manuscript.

Pennings, Paul. 1998. "The Triad of Party System Change: Votes, Office, and Policy." In *Comparing Party System Change*, ed. P. Pennings and J. C. Lane. London: Routledge, 73–93.

Popkin, S. L. 1993. ''Information Shortcuts and the Reasoning Voter.'' In *Information, Participation, and Choice: An Economic Theory of Democracy in Perspective*, ed. B. Grofman. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 17–36.

Potter, P. B., and M. Baum. 2010. ''Democratic Peace, Domestic Audience Costs, and Political Communication.'' *Political Communication* 27 (4): 453–70.

Powell, G. B. 1982. *Contemporary Democracies: Participation, Stability and Violence*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ramsay, K. W. 2004. "Politics at the Water's Edge Crisis Bargaining and Electoral Competition." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48 (4): 459–86.

Schmitt-Beck, R. 2003. ''Mass Communication, Personal Communication and Vote Choice: The Filter Hypothesis of Media Influence in Comparative Perspective.'' *British Journal of Political Science* 33 (2): 233–59.

Schultz, K. A. 1998. ''Domestic Opposition and Signaling in International Crises.'' *American Political Science Review* 92 (4): 829–44.

Schultz, K. A. 2001. ''Looking for Audience Costs.'' *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45 (1): 32–60.

Schultz, K. A. 2012. ''Why We Needed Audience Costs and What We Need Now.'' *Security Studies* 21 (3): 369–75.

Sheafer, T., and G. Wolfsfeld. 2009. ''Party Systems and Oppositional Voices in the News Media: A Study of the Contest over Political Waves in the United States and Israel.'' *International Journal of Press/Politics* 14 (2): 146–65.

Slantchev, B. L. 2006. ''Politicians, the Media, and Domestic Audience Costs.'' *International Studies Quarterly* 50 (2): 445–77.

Sniderman, P. M., R. A. Brody, and P. E. Tetlock. 1991. *Reasoning and Choice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Snyder, J., and E. D. Borghard. 2011. ''The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound.'' *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 437–56.

Tomz, M. 2007. ''Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach.'' *International Organization* 61 (Fall): 821–40.

Trachtenberg, M. 2012. ''Audience Costs: An Historical Analysis.'' *Security Studies* 21 (1): 3–42.

Weeks, J. L. 2008. ''Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve.'' *International Organization* 62: 35–64.

Zaller, J. 1994. ''Positive Constructs of Public-Opinion.'' *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 11 (3): 276–87.

Zaller, J., and D. Chiu. 2000. ''Government's Little Helper: U.S. Press Coverage of Foreign Policy Crises, 1946–1999.'' In *Decisionmaking in a Glass House*, ed. B. L. Nacos, R. Y. Shapiro, and P. Isernia. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 61–84.

Philip B. K. Potter is an assistant professor of public policy and political science at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 48109.

Matthew A. Baum is the Marvin Kalb Professor of Global Communications at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138.