A Matter of Life and Death: Essays on the Value of Human Life in Politics

By

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DEHUMANIZING THE COST OF WAR: HOW POLITICIANS TALK ABOUT DEATH IN THE IRAQ WAR

Political language—and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists—is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable

  - George Orwell, Politics and the English Language, 1946

Some of the most important decisions that politicians make are decisions about war; they ultimately decide whether to go to war, whether to continue existing wars and when to terminate conflict. Even if hyperbole often suggests that politics are a matter of life and death, foreign policy decisions have direct life or death consequences for individuals in both the United States and foreign countries. Even politicians who support military action must accept the fact that their decisions can lead to a potentially large loss of life. Politicians who support war are thus faced with an uncomfortable reality: they must attempt to rally public support for a policy that has consequences that, if considered in the abstract, most Americans would find abhorrent. I argue that politicians confront rhetorical decisions about war strategically: they talk (or, choose not to talk) about casualties of war using language that should lead the public to support their position on the war.

Both Americans and foreigners, military and civilians alike, could potentially have their lives at risk during war. I develop a typology of groups that could have their lives put at risk by war, and test predictions for how rhetoric will be used to discuss death among these groups. The military is sent abroad to fight the war, putting their lives in very real danger. The foreign enemy is targeted by military action, with their deaths to be expected. In efforts to attack the enemy, foreign civilians are frequently put in danger. Military action can be framed as a measure to

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prevent future, or respond to past, attacks on American civilians. However, I do not expect that politicians will discuss all four groups equally; instead, they will use rhetoric strategically when discussing the threats of military action or inaction towards each group. Indeed, depending upon whether one supports or opposes war, certain types of death should be more politically advantageous to discuss or ignore.

Even when supporters of war do discuss casualties of war, they can find ways to, as George Orwell said, "make murder respectable" (1946). There are certain traits that are essential to humanity, such as the ability to reason, feel emotions, create social bonds, and have a distinct personality (Haslam 2006). I examine two rhetorical strategies that can be adopted to deny, or at least minimize, these essential traits. The use of *sanitized language,* that is, language that reduces humans to machines or objects, can lessen the impact of casualties of war by obscuring the fact that a human being has died. Examples of sanitized language include referring to "losses" or "sacrifices" made by soldiers, and "destroying" or "eliminating" the enemy. Additionally, *dehumanizing language*, or language that compares humans to non-human creatures, such as animals or diseases, can be employed to make the enemy seem to be something less than human.

To test my predictions about how support of policy influences the use of rhetoric about casualties, I conduct a content analysis of Senate speeches on the Iraq War from 2002-2004 to determine the different ways political elites talk about death. I expect that the main factor driving differences in patterns of speech about death will be whether a Senator supports or opposes the war. Both supporters and opponents of the war will speak about death in ways that should be advantageous to their goals, by employing specific frames targeted at specific groups. Taking advantage of over 40 public opinion polls conducted over the course of the early stages of the Iraq War, I also examine how the discussion of death by Senators influences public opinion at

the aggregate level. These analyses demonstrate that elite rhetoric can drive the public's attitudes towards war.

Who Is at Risk? A Typology of Casualties of War

Research in political science has long focused on how elite rhetorical strategies can be used to influence public opinion. The consequences of rhetoric, in fact, have been debated for thousands of years. Aristotle (1991) noted that elites could strategically use rhetoric to influence the public. In modern times, researchers have demonstrated that politicians can win over the public to support their policies by using rhetoric to present issues in an advantageous way (Riker 1996; Lakoff 2004; Nelson 2004).

These strategies should be effective, as a largely ambivalent public tends to form political attitudes based on considerations of messages received from elites (Zaller 1992). Research has also demonstrated, however, that political elites are at least partially responsive to public opinion across a wide range of issues (Burenstein 2010). This could lead to a feedback loop, where politicians attempt to respond to public opinion by taking strategies to shape those opinions to become more favorable to them (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000). Since Americans are especially ambivalent and uninformed on foreign policy issues (Page and Bouton 2008), the decision to talk about, not talk about, or obscure casualties of war should be an especially effective rhetorical strategy. I expect that elites will use the discussion of casualties of war in a strategic manner to attempt to influence public support of war.

Combined with theories on how Americans respond to casualties of war, and how issue framing can influence political attitudes, I develop a typology of how strategic political elites should discuss these four types of death in war, and how this rhetoric should shape public opinion. These four groups vary based on citizenship (American or foreign) and military status

(civilian or military). The groups vary based on closeness to American citizens, and in how American citizens view them as appropriate casualties of war, as casualties for the military of either side are more fundamental to war than those of civilians. These groups differ, as well, in what types of rhetorical strategies elites will use to discuss their deaths. In the following sections, I will discuss existing research on American military, American civilians, enemy combatants, and foreign civilians in war, and provide predictions for how rhetoric can be used by both hawks and doves to present these casualties of war in a way that serves their policy goals.

Fallen Heroes and Domestic Threats: American Casualties of War

While evidence suggests that the American public exhibits *casualty aversion* towards military deaths, scholars disagree about exactly how casualty averse the American public is. John Mueller argues that casualty aversion is simple: as the number of American military deaths increases, support of war decreases (1973; 2005; see also Burk 1999). While most researchers do not take such a broad view of casualty aversion, Americans have demonstrated casualty aversion under many circumstances (see Gartner 2008 for discussion).

Further, the actions of political elites and the media suggest that they believe the public is casualty averse. From 1991-2009, the Department of Defense explicitly banned media coverage of the caskets of dead American soldiers at Dover Air Force base. The George W. Bush administration, in particular, made it difficult for the media to cover the return of dead soldiers (Mueller 2005). Conservative media outlets, such as Fox News, are less likely to mention the deaths of the American military than traditional news sources, such as NBC Nightly News (Aday 2010). While scholars may disagree about the level of impact of military casualties on public support for war, the consensus is that the effect is negative in direction. At the very least, nobody believes military casualties influence public support for war *positively*. As such, I expect that

supporters of war are less likely than opponents to discuss American military casualties of war. Additionally, an increase in discussion of American military deaths by political elites should increase public opposition to war.

However, even supporters of war cannot completely avoid the discussion of military casualties. In this instance, they can use *sanitized language* to limit the impact of American casualties of war on public opinion. Sanitized language occurs when a human being is denied traits considered typical or essential for humans – these traits include warmth, drive and vivacity (Haslam 2006). In this instance, human are essentially reduced to objects or machines (Haslam 2006). Compared to non-sanitized language, the use of sanitized language should lead to feelings of indifference towards the deaths of individuals (Haslam 2006). Sanitized language is used to obscure the fact that people are actually dying (Bandura 2002), and has been used, especially in recent times, in order to make war seem clean and clinical (Kuttab 2007). As researchers have shown that the American public generally responds negatively to military casualties of war, and sanitized language can cause "even killing a human being [to lose] much of its repugnancy" (Bandura 2002, p. 104), supporters of war should be more likely to use sanitized language than opponents when discussing American military casualties.

While supporters of war should want to avoid discussing military casualties, they may gain an advantage by framing the war to focus on preventing threats to the American homeland. Prospect Theory says that, when making a decision between a probabilistic or certain outcome, individuals will select the certain, risk-averse option in the domain of gains, yet they will prefer the probabilistic, risk-seeking outcome in the domain of losses (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). And, for doves, the reverse can be true: once a war begins, they can frame the war itself as threatening the lives of American civilians, to encourage a diversion from the status quo.

Framing an issue as causing American civilian casualties may be especially powerful, given that the low probability of occurrence should be overweighed (Tversky and Kahneman 1984), and that fear of one's own death is perhaps the most powerful way to produce anxiety (Becker 1973). Here, supporters of war can argue that there is a threat to *not* going to war; that Americans may be killed in attacks against the homeland. As such, I believe that supporters of war should be more likely to discuss American civilian casualties than opponents, and that this effect should be especially profound prior to the beginning of war. By noting the threat to the American homeland, supporters of war will be able to put the American public into the domain of losses, making them more willing to accept the risky policy proposal of starting a war.

Dehumanized and Ignored: Foreign Casualties of War

Much like Americans, two types of foreigners are at risk during war: enemy combatants and foreign civilians. Here, I consider the enemy to be those engaged in combat against the American military. Traditionally, this has been military forces from nations the United States is at war with, though in recent times this has expanded to include terrorists and guerilla combatants. The death of the enemy is often accepted as necessary in war – to obtain military victory, the United States may have to kill those who are fighting against its soldiers. Even if the death of the enemy is expected in war, human lives are still being lost. One strategy that supporters of war can use to combat this connection is to use *dehumanizing language* against the enemy.

Dehumanizing language denies individuals traits that separate humans from animals; this leads to responses of disgust and contempt towards the dehumanized other (Haslam 2006). Dehumanization frequently takes the form of referring to human beings as animals, diseases, or some other less developed organism (Haslam 2006). Individuals are more likely to prefer harsh

punishment of dehumanized persons, as those who are viewed as less than human are seen as incapable of realizing when they are treated poorly (Bandura, Underwood and Fromson 1975). Dehumanization has been used as a means for individuals to morally justify punitive conduct against others by placing a low level of worth on the victim – this typically occurs because individuals disregard the negative effects of punishment on dehumanized persons, or because they have vilified these individuals (Bandura et al. 1996; Bandura 2002). Dehumanizing language allows people to justify their punishments of others, and overall aggression towards them, by denying those others their essential humanity.

Dehumanizing language has frequently been used to describe the enemy in war time. During World War II, the Japanese were frequently depicted in American media as apes, and often discussed in terms of hunting or extermination metaphors (Dower 1986). The use of dehumanizing language encourages individuals to support considerably harsher punishment for terrorism detainees (Waytz and Epley 2012). In this instance, Waytz and Epley (2012) show that social distance, in particular, allows dehumanization to more readily occur. When groups are thought of as socially distant from an individual, dehumanization occurs more easily. This finding is especially useful when considering dehumanization of Islamic terrorists, who live on the other side of the globe, and do not share a religion or race with a vast majority of Americans. Supporters of war should be more likely to use dehumanizing language about the enemy than opponents, as this should lead to greater feelings of hostility towards the enemy. Increased use of dehumanizing language should predict an increase in public support of war.

While enemy deaths may be accepted during war, they are not the only "other" put at risk. With wars occurring in their homeland, foreign civilians are also likely to die in war. There is often a disconnect between what the mass public says about civilian casualties of war, and

how they respond to these casualties. During the first Gulf War, respondents to public opinion polls overwhelmingly said foreign civilian casualties are not acceptable, but public support of the war was not moved at all by large foreign civilian casualty events (Mueller 2000; 2003). Many times, civilian casualties are said to be a necessary evil of the war process: in order to defeat the enemy, or to make American troops safer, some innocent civilians must die (Wheeler 2002; Lacquement 2004). However, since many people *claim* to care about civilian casualties, I would expect that opponents of war are more likely than supporters to discuss foreign civilian casualties. But, based on existing research (Burk 1999; Mueller 2003), I do not expect rhetoric about foreign civilian casualties to have much impact on aggregate public opinion. This could still be a strategic consideration for opponents of war; in public opinion polling, opposition to civilian casualties is relatively high, signaling to elites that discussing civilian casualties may increase opposition to war.

Sanitized language—language used to obscure casualties and create feelings of indifference—may be used to obscure the deaths of Iraqi civilians, just as it can be done with American soldiers. In the first Gulf War, "collateral damage" was typically used as a euphemism for civilian casualties, but only 21% of Americans were even aware of what the term meant (Bennett 1994). Sanitized language justifies conduct that would be typically considered reprehensible (Bandura 2002), and allows human beings to be treated as a "means towards vicious ends" (Haslam 2006, p. 254). I expect that supporters of war are more likely to use sanitized language than opponents when discussing foreign civilian casualties. There is a distinction between targets of sanitized and dehumanizing language, because of how the language should operate. The deaths of the enemy are often parts of the mission of war, especially the war on terrorism, and dehumanizing language serves to make the public more

eager to see these individuals die. Foreign civilian casualties, however, are often an unfortunate and inevitable consequence of war, and supporters can use sanitized language to obscure these casualties.

Speech about civilian casualties caused by the enemy, however, may be different. The media typically reports on civilian casualties of war as being the responsibility of the enemy, rather than the United States (Wheeler 2002), and they often focus on previous atrocities committed against citizens by enemy regimes (Schildkraut 2002). Further, Prospect Theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) suggests that discussing foreign civilian casualties caused by the enemy, ones that would continue without military intervention, could increase support for war, at least prior to the onset of war. In this scenario, supporters of war can mention the risk foreign civilians face without military intervention: in the case of Iraq, the risk of being murdered by a cruel dictator. Since going to war, and changing the status quo, is a risky policy proposal (Quattrone and Tversky 1988), mentioning losses to life caused by inaction would, according to Prospect Theory, lead to increased support for this risky option. Accordingly, I expect that supporters of war will be more likely to discuss civilian deaths caused by the enemy than opponents prior to the war, and opponents will rely on discussion of civilian deaths caused by the war after the start. It is difficult to predict how these casualties will influence support for war, as citizens have shown to be somewhat ambivalent about civilian casualties.

How Politicians Talk about Death: Senate Speeches on the Iraq War

I draw on theories of how *the mass public* should respond to certain types of rhetoric in an effort to predict and evaluate elite behavior. Politicians provide a useful case through which to study the impact of elite rhetoric: politicians are the ones who make the ultimate decision to go to war, and making an unpopular decision in such a high profile setting could lead to negative

electoral outcomes. While politicians have many motives, including re-election (Mayhew 1974), they also have policy related goals (Fenno 1978). When politicians use rhetorical strategies that lead the public to agree with their policy preference, this should help them achieve both goals. Politicians frequently use strategic rhetoric to convince the public to agree with their policy proposals (Riker 1996). Foreign policy is a domain where the use of strategic rhetoric can be especially useful, since the policy decisions are often new, and the public is relatively ambivalent in these new foreign policy areas (Page and Bouton 2008). If elites are able to lead public opinion, pursuing rhetorical strategies to make one's side more convincing should increase public support for a policy, aiding achievement of both re-election and policy goals.

The Congressional Record provides an account of all floor speeches, or written speeches that members of Congress request be entered into the record on their behalf. While this may not be as direct of a way of communication as speech conducted through the media, statements in the Congressional Record can easily be sought out by the media, and quotes from the Senators are often used as sound bites. Ted Kennedy's statement that "Saddam's torture chambers reopened under new management—U.S. management" (2004) is a famous rebuke of the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal that originated as a Senate floor speech. Senators also believe that their floor speeches will reach the public, as they frequently use floor speeches to send signals to their home constituency and as ways to advocate their preferred policies (Hill and Hurley 2002). Senators also frequently post the content of some of their floor speeches on their Senate websites (Osborn and Mendez 2010).

The Iraq War is an especially useful case for this analysis. The war takes place over a relatively long period of time, there is a wealth of public opinion polling data (over 40 different questions from multiple polling organizations, with many questions asked regularly over the

course of the war) to examine how the public views the war, and there was a significant difference in elite support of the war from the start. Taken together, these factors make the start of the Iraq War a helpful case to examine how rhetoric about casualties of war is used strategically and is correlated with public opinion.

I have collected Senate speech data from the Congressional Record[1] for the years 2002-2004. To collect these data, I searched for "Iraq" in the Congressional Record, and selected speeches from these results[2]. Within each result, I broke up the debate into speeches, which I code as all comments made by a Senator within a search result. As such, while a result could include many speech records in my data set, it could only include one speech record for any given Senator. This search strategy yielded a total of 797 speech records.

I then manually coded each speech record. First, I determined whether the speech was about the Iraq War, or not. If the speech was about the Iraq War, I then coded whether the speech takes a position in favor of the Bush administration's position on Iraq, or opposed, or if the position cannot be determined. A total of 588 speeches were retained for analysis, with 290 in support of the Bush administration's position on war, and 298 opposed. These speeches were made by 102 different Senators, with a minimum of one speech[3], and a maximum of 32 speeches made by Robert Byrd. Of these speeches, 227 occurred prior to the invasion of Iraq on March 20, 2003, and 361 occurred after.

I coded each speech for whether or not the speech discussed death of American troops, American civilians, the enemy, and Iraqi civilians. The deaths of Iraqi civilians were further broken down, as I coded whether the responsibility for civilian deaths was attributed to U.S.

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[1] A searchable online version of the Congressional Record is available at
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=Record&c=112
[2] I excluded records relating to budgetary debate and confirmation of appointees.
[3] 18 Senators made only one speech.

action in Iraq, or to Saddam Hussein. For each of these categories, I coded whether or not the deaths discussed were future oriented. I code for whether or not sanitized language was used to describe these deaths. In order to provide a more conservative test, when coding for sanitized language, I included records where *only* sanitized language was used to discuss deaths of a target group. That is, if a Senator uses sanitized language to describe the death of Iraqis in one instance, but refers to, for example, "civilian casualties" later, this would be coded as *not* using sanitized language. I also coded for whether or not the speech used dehumanizing language against the enemy – this included any instance where the enemy was referred to as an animal, a disease, or some fictional living, but non-human, entity (such as a monster). Table 1 provides the percentage of speeches containing each of these coded elements.

I collected additional variables specific to each Senator, to control for potentially confounding factors. These include an indicator of whether or not the Senator held a leadership position, strength of ideology as measured by DW-NOMINATE, whether or not the Senator was running for re-election in the next election cycle, the logged number of years served in the Senate, the gender of the Senator, and whether or not the Senator served on the foreign relations committee. Further, I collected data for potential confounding factors based on the speech date. These include the number of military casualties over the previous 30 days[4], as is standard in research on casualties of war and public opinion, and public opinion about the war over the previous 15 days[5]. *Aggregate War Disapproval* is the average of the percentage of respondents saying they disapprove of war in available polls[6] conducted over the previous 15 days.

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[4] Data collected from icasualties.org <http://icasualties.org/Iraq/index.aspx>
[5] These results are robust to a time frame of 10 or 30 days.
[6] I use all polls available from the Polling Report on Iraq http://www.pollingreport.com/iraq.htm. Question wording and the organization conducting each poll are available in Appendix A.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics – Senate Speeches on Iraq 2002-2004*

	% Total	% Pre-Invasion	% Post-Invasion
Speeches Support	49.32	56.83	44.60
Speeches Oppose	51.68	43.17	55.40
American Military Death	50.51	46.26	53.19
American Military Death Sanitized	*14.48*	*12.38*	*15.63*
American Civilian Death	32.82	47.58	23.55
American Civilian Death Sanitized	*8.81*	*6.48*	*11.8*
Iraqi Civilian Death	16.84	17.18	16.62
Iraqi Civilian Death Sanitized	*7.07*	*2.56*	*10.00*
Enemy Death	26.70	39.21	18.84
% Enemy Death Sanitized	*57.96*	*64.04*	*50.00*
Deaths Caused by Hussein	32.99	47.14	24.10
Dehumanization of Enemy	20.58	18.94	21.61

N=588. Source: *Congressional Record*

Fallen Heroes: How Senators Talk about American Military Casualties

Discussion of American military casualties is essentially unavoidable in war; American soldiers die during major military action and are mourned by opponents and supporters of the war alike. Over 50% of all speeches in the dataset mention American military casualties in some way. Prior to the war, war opponent Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) said "…our military would have to be prepared to fight block by block in Baghdad, and that we could lose a battalion of soldiers a day in casualties. Urban fighting would … look like the last brutal 15 minutes of the movie ``Saving Private Ryan.'" (2002). Kennedy paints a picture of thousands of military casualties each day, and uses a famous war film to portray what the loss of life could look like.

Roughly 15% of all speeches that mentioned American military casualties exclusively used sanitized language to talk about these casualties. The type of sanitized language used to describe American military deaths includes words such as fallen, sacrifice, or lost, though they are also often described as targets of the enemy. This language seems to imply worth: even while denying humanity to a "lost" soldier, a lost possession would be implied to have much greater value to its owner than one that is destroyed. Bob Bennett (R-UT) used this language as he discussed an Armed Forces Day celebration in his home state, "where everyone was having a picnic and a good time. Set up in that area was a series of flags, one flag for each individual who had fallen in either Iraq or Afghanistan" (2004). It is often noted that soldiers in Iraq are making "the ultimate sacrifice," a way to euphemize an honorable death. By using this type of sanitized language, Senators are able to mourn and honor the deaths of soldiers in Iraq, without having to directly mention the inconvenient truth that soldiers are dying.

Table 2. *The Influence of War Support on Speeches about American Military Deaths*

	Mention American Military Deaths	Mention American Military Deaths	Mention Future Oriented American Military Deaths	Mention American Military Deaths using Sanitized Language
Support of War	**-0.99****	**-0.99****	**-1.39****	**1.62****
	(0.21)	**(0.21)**	**(0.27)**	**(0.39)**
Public War Disapproval	0.02	0.01	-0.04*	-0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Military Casualties Last 30 Days	-	0.00 (0.00)	-	-
Prior to Invasion	-0.37	-0.15	1.13**	-0.30
	(0.25)	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.48)
Strength of Ideology	0.43	0.42	0.53	1.34
	(0.82)	(0.82)	(1.06)	(1.42)
Leadership position	-0.30	-0.30	0.00	0.56+
	(0.25)	(0.26)	(0.39)	(0.34)
Re-election	0.02	0.04	0.21	-0.29
	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.28)	(0.41)
Seniority (Logged)	-0.09	-0.09	0.08	-0.13
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.16)
Female	0.49	0.52+	0.73*	0.30
	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.36)	(0.60)
Foreign Relations Committee	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.41
	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.31)	(0.47)
Number of Words (Logged)	1.03**	1.05**	1.19**	-0.31
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.13)	(0.28)
Constant	-7.54**	-7.81**	-8.98**	0.12
	(1.46)	(1.47)	(1.43)	(2.34)
N	577	577	577	293
pseudo R^2	0.1293	0.1307	0.2310	0.1202

Table entry is logit coefficient with robust standard errors, clustered by Senator, in parentheses
+ p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, two-tailed
*Note – *Military casualties last 30 days* set to 0 for all pre-invasion speeches
Analysis of sanitized language restricted only to speeches that mention American military deaths

Turning to a quantitative analysis of how Senators speak about American military casualties in the Iraq War, I use support of war as the primary explanatory variable to predict how likely a speech is to discuss American military casualties in general, future oriented military casualties (as opposed to just honoring those who have already died), and, provided a speech

discusses casualties, how support of war influences the use of sanitized language. These results are presented in Table 2. Speeches that are supportive of the Iraq war are less likely than speeches opposed to war to discuss American military deaths, but are more likely to use sanitized language when they do discuss troop deaths. Speeches supportive of the Bush administration's position on the war are predicted[7] to be about 24 percentage points less likely than opposing speeches to discuss American military deaths. The coefficient for *Military Casualties Last 30 Days* in column 2 of Table 2 provides some evidence that discussion of military deaths is purely a rhetorical decision. As recent military casualties increase, there is no effect on the likelihood of Senate speeches mentioning military deaths. Column 3 of Table 2 demonstrates that this is not limited simply to a discussion of *existing* military deaths, but that a similar pattern emerges when focusing only on a discussion of (potential) troop deaths in the future (a predicted 13 percentage point difference). These results suggest that politicians believe Mueller's (1973) argument that Americans will be less likely to support war as military casualties, or, in this case, their awareness or anticipation of military casualties, increase.

However, among speeches that discuss the death of American troops, Senate speeches in favor of war are considerably more likely to use sanitized language than those opposed to war, as shown in column 4 of table 2. Supportive speeches are over 4 times more likely than those opposed to use sanitized language. Taken together, these results show that speeches supporting the Iraq War are far less likely than those opposed to mention military casualties. However, when military casualties are mentioned, speeches *in favor* of war use sanitized language more frequently. An examination of the qualitative evidence suggests that Senators often use euphemism or language that implies honor or worth when sanitizing American military casualties. This is rather similar for those opposed to war, and those in favor of war.

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[7] Predicted probabilities are calculated with all control variables held at the sample median.

The Homeland at Risk: How Senators Discuss American Civilian Deaths when Talking about War

The death of American *civilians* seems an unlikely topic when thinking about conflicts fought exclusively on foreign soil. In the Iraq War, the United States sent soldiers halfway around the world to fight an enemy in Saddam Hussein who, while threatening to American interests, seemed unlikely to be able to launch an attack on the American homeland. Nonetheless, the risk to the United States homeland and its civilians was used to sell the public on the War with Iraq. In a late February 2003 speech that was often quoted on the Senate floor, George W. Bush mentioned both past and potential future terrorist attacks, saying "On a September morning, threats that had gathered for years, in secret and far away, led to murder in our country on a massive scale. As a result, we must look at our security in a new way, because our country is a battlefield in the first war of the 21st century" (2003). This vivid imagery provides a reminder of the "murders" of September 11th, 2001, refers to the United States as a battleground of war, and implies that inaction in Iraq could lead to a similar attack. This is very typical of how speeches in the dataset discuss American civilian casualties: either by referencing September 11th, or by noting the threat of future terrorist attacks on U.S. soil. After the war in Iraq began, Senator Evan Bayh equated threats to the homeland with the war in Iraq, saying "it is the same fight. It is the same war. Disarming rogue regimes of weapons of mass death, [and] protecting American citizens who might be killed by those weapons of mass death, is the same fight" (2003).

Table 3. *The Influence of War Support on Speeches about American Civilian Deaths*

	Mention American Civilian Deaths	Mention Future Oriented American Civilian Deaths	Mention American Civilian Deaths using Sanitized Language	Mention American Civilian Deaths (Post-invasion only)
Support of War	**1.06****	**1.08****	**2.28****	**0.42**
	(0.28)	**(0.29)**	**(0.68)**	**(0.36)**
Public War Disapproval	0.05	0.07	-0.11*	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Prior to Invasion	1.32**	1.86**	-1.80**	-
	(0.37)	(0.51)	(0.53)	
Strength of Ideology	1.49	1.15	-1.14	1.76
	(0.99)	(0.97)	(1.81)	(1.43)
Leadership position	-0.46	-0.34	0.04	-0.16
	(0.44)	(0.38)	(0.78)	(0.40)
Re-election	-0.24	-0.04	-0.78	-0.10
	(0.31)	(0.28)	(0.57)	(0.36)
Seniority (Logged)	-0.10	-0.14	0.48	-0.05
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.33)	(0.15)
Female	-1.54*	-1.49*	^	-0.86
	(0.61)	(0.67)		(0.70)
Foreign Relations Committee	-0.58+	-0.26	0.04	-0.14
	(0.32)	(0.35)	(1.02)	(0.39)
Number of Words (Logged)	1.27**	1.16**	-0.13	1.13**
	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.53)	(0.17)
Constant	-13.32**	-13.99**	1.51	-12.02**
	(1.86)	(2.77)	(4.51)	(1.94)
N	577	577	189	359
pseudo R^2	0.2148	0.2235	0.1781	0.1151

Table entry is logit coefficient with robust standard errors, clustered by Senator, in parentheses
+ $p<0.1$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, two-tailed
^ - Omitted for colinearity
*Analysis of sanitized language restricted only to speeches that mention American civilian deaths

Discussion of American civilian death occurs frequently in Senate debate on the Iraq War, in roughly 33% of speeches. And this rhetoric is often vivid, with only 9% of speeches using sanitized language. Table 3 demonstrates that supportive speeches are more likely to discuss the death of American civilians. Again, these effects are quite large. Speeches of opponents of the war are less than half as likely as supportive speeches to mention American

civilian casualties. These results are statistically and substantively similar when restricting the discussion of American deaths only to future events, which essentially excludes references to September 11th.

Note, also, in column 4 of Table 3, that the pattern for discussion of American civilian deaths does not persist when the sample is restricted only to speeches made after the invasion of Iraq. These findings comport with existing research on prospect theory. Since discussion of death should make individuals risk seeking, they will be more likely to choose a "risky" policy that changes the status quo (Peterson and Lawson 1989). By presenting the risk of losing American lives prior to the start of the conflict, supporters of the war may have believed they could create public support of war. However, once the invasion of Iraq began, war became the new status quo. According to a prospect theory approach, supporters then had less reason to discuss the possibility of American deaths, and indeed they did not discuss American civilian deaths any differently than opponents after the invasion of Iraq[8]. By discussing the risk that terrorism poses to American lives prior to the start of conflict, supporters of the Iraq War may have believed that they could create more public support for the invasion. Once the invasion began, however, it does not appear that elites focused on threats to the homeland to bolster their case for war.

Less than Human: The Discussion of Enemy Deaths in the Iraq War

The enemy is often directly dehumanized in Iraq War speeches, with dehumanization of the enemy occurring in roughly 20% of speeches. Prior to the war, dehumanizing language was used mainly against Saddam Hussein. Phil Gramm (R-TX) spoke about Hussein as a snake, saying "My view is we do have the rattlesnake in the rock garden. We have the ability to go in

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[8] I would not expect opponents to emphasize civilian deaths post-invasion. Even those opposed to the Bush administration's policies in 2004 were not calling for an instant end to war, but rather changes in war policy. This could be evidenced by a greater discussion of *military* deaths, which can be seen in Table 2, as much of the rhetoric of opponents focused on making our military safer.

and get him out" (2002). After the Iraq War began, dehumanizing rhetoric shifted primarily to terrorists. Senators often worried about creating "breeding grounds" for terrorists and "containing" the threat they pose. This language is often quite dramatic, with George Voinovich (R-OH) noting that the United States should be "dedicated to excising the cancer of terrorism wherever it raises its ugly head" (2003). Dehumanizing language sends a clear signal: the enemy is not afforded the same humanity that we are. Considering that killing the enemy is widely considered acceptable in wartime, it is not especially surprising that Senators use a rhetorical strategy to make killing them less troubling.

Politicians talk about the enemy in roughly one-quarter of their floor speeches about the Iraq War. Unlike other groups, however, sanitized language about enemy deaths is *more* common than non-sanitized language, occurring nearly 58% of the time. Sanitized language about killing the enemy is employed against all types of enemies, from Saddam Hussein and his loyalists to Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda terrorists. Kent Conrad (D-ND) uses two different sanitizations when referring to Osama bin Laden by saying "It has been 775 days, and we have not brought him to justice. I believe we ought to find Osama bin Laden and the rest of the al-Qaida leadership and take them out" (2003). Here, terms such as "brought to justice" and "take them out" are used as means to sanitize death, which is typical of how Senators sanitize enemy deaths. When sanitizing the death of the enemy, Senators also use words like destroy and eliminate; this language stands stark contrast to words such as fallen and sacrificed that are reserved for American soldiers. Given that sanitized language leads to indifference or a muted emotional response towards deaths of the sanitized group (Haslam 2006), the enemy deaths may be sanitized more frequently because Senators, regardless of whether or not they support the war, do not want citizens to feel sympathy for enemies who are being killed.

Table 4. *The Influence of War Support on Speeches about the Enemy*

	Mention Enemy Deaths	Mention Enemy Deaths using Sanitized Language	Dehumanization of Enemy
Support of War	**0.21**	**0.21**	**1.07****
	(0.22)	**(0.36)**	**(0.25)**
Public War Disapproval	-0.04*	0.02	0.02
	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.02)
Prior to Invasion	0.49*	0.80+	-0.40
	(0.23)	(0.48)	(0.27)
Strength of Ideology	-0.09	-0.14	-0.08
	(0.87)	(1.81)	(1.24)
Leadership position	0.10	0.08	0.02
	(0.44)	(0.61)	(0.46)
Re-election	0.16	-0.64	-0.26
	(0.24)	(0.40)	(0.27)
Seniority (Logged)	-0.08	-0.04	-0.00
	(0.11)	(0.18)	(0.12)
Female	0.20	-0.15	0.14
	(0.33)	(0.71)	(0.36)
Foreign Relations Committee	-0.47*	0.22	0.10
	(0.24)	(0.50)	(0.39)
Number of Words (Logged)	0.92**	-0.08	1.00**
	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.17)
Constant	-6.35**	-0.09	-9.90**
	(1.56)	(2.78)	(1.62)
N	577	151	577
pseudo R^2	0.1037	0.0330	0.0961

Table entry is logit coefficient with robust standard errors, clustered by Senator, in parentheses
+ $p<0.1$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, two-tailed
* Analysis of sanitized language restricted only to speeches that mention enemy deaths

Table 4 demonstrates that there is little difference in how speeches that support and oppose the war mention about enemy deaths. However, speeches supporting and opposing the war do not discuss the enemy in a completely uniform way; supportive speeches are more likely

to dehumanize the enemy[9]. The model predicts that supportive speeches are 18 percentage points more likely to use dehumanizing language than speeches opposed to war. It is not surprising that supporters are more likely to dehumanize the enemy. Dehumanization leads to disgust and contempt (Haslam 2006), so the use of dehumanizing language should killing them less objectionable.

Turning a Blind Eye: How Senators Discuss Civilian Casualties of War

Iraqi civilians are the group affected most significantly by the Iraq War. By the end of 2004, it is estimated that at least 33,000 Iraqi civilians were killed during the war, and this estimate jumped to over 120,000 by the end of combat.[10] Despite this, Senators were less likely to discuss civilian deaths caused by the Iraq invasion than any other group, with only about 17% of speeches mentioning civilian casualties of war. Quoting an anonymous soldier who talked about civilian casualties in Iraq, Fritz Hollings (D-SC) could have summed up the Senate's attitude about civilian casualties as well, saying "I've heard men worry about civilians, and I've heard men shrug and sum up their viewpoint in two words--`F - - - 'em.'" (2004). When Senators did mention civilian deaths, they did so directly, and referred to them most typically as deaths and casualties.

In contrast to discussing civilian casualties of war, the Iraqi deaths caused by Saddam Hussein were often mentioned in great detail in Senate speeches. Bill Frist (R-TN) described Hussein's 1988 chemical attack against the Kurds by saying "People were dying all around. When a child could not go on, the parents, becoming hysterical with fear, abandoned him. Many children were left on the ground by the side of the road. Old people as well. They were running. Then they would stop breathing and die" (2004). The language used to talk about civilian deaths

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[9] Note that the enemy shifts from Saddam Hussein pre-invasion to terrorists/insurgents generally post-invasion.
[10] Data from iraqbodycount.org

caused by Saddam Hussein is considerably stronger than that used to discuss civilian casualties

caused by the invasion, and focuses on especially vulnerable populations; this makes some sense.

Prior to the war, this suggests the human cost of *inaction*, while after the war it could serve as a

post-hoc rationale for why the war was the right thing to do, in the absence of ties to al-Qaeda

and weapons of mass destruction.

Table 5. *The Influence of War Support on Speeches about Iraqi Civilian Deaths*

	Mention Iraqi Civilian Deaths	Mention Iraqi Civilian Deaths using Sanitized Language	Mention Iraqi Deaths Caused by Saddam Hussein
Support of War	**-0.54***	**0.12**	**2.36****
	(0.24)	**(0.76)**	**(0.33)**
Public War Disapproval	0.00	0.07	-0.06**
	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.02)
Prior to Invasion	-0.08	-1.21	0.43+
	(0.37)	(1.62)	(0.25)
Strength of Ideology	2.23*	-6.60	0.51
	(1.08)	(4.47)	(1.35)
Leadership position	0.10	0.48	0.08
	(0.55)	(0.82)	(0.25)
Re-election	-0.20	^	0.17
	(0.30)		(0.28)
Seniority (Logged)	0.13	-0.74+	-0.17
	(0.11)	(0.39)	(0.12)
Female	0.34	^	0.46
	(0.41)		(0.28)
Foreign Relations Committee	-0.22	0.79	0.03
	(0.34)	(1.47)	(0.34)
Number of Words (Logged)	0.89**	0.11	1.35**
	(0.17)	(0.59)	(0.17)
Constant	-9.19**	-2.00	-9.82**
	(2.13)	(6.64)	(1.64)
N	577	99	577
pseudo R^2	0.0818	0.2187	0.2756

Table entry is logit coefficient with robust standard errors, clustered by Senator, in parentheses
^ - omitted for colinearity
+ p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, two-tailed
*Analysis of sanitized language restricted only to speeches that mention Iraqi civilian deaths

Speech about Iraqi civilian casualties of war is analyzed in Table 5. Supportive speeches are less likely than those opposed to war to mention civilian casualties by about seven percentage points. While there is no observed difference in the use of sanitized language, this may be because sanitized language is used so infrequently: only seven total speeches in the dataset use sanitized language to refer to Iraqi civilian casualties. Why is this happening? In the first Gulf War, politicians referred to civilian casualties frequently as "collateral damage," a term that a majority of the public did not understand the meaning of (Bennett 1994). It is likely that this term is much better understood, and therefore less effective at hiding the real human cost of war, in 2002 than 1991. It appears that politicians are taking a different strategy towards civilian casualties in the Iraq War: they simply do not talk about them much at all.

Speeches that support war are over six times more likely than those that oppose war to mention Iraqi civilian deaths caused by Saddam Hussein. This suggests that Senators may mention threats to civilians in order to note that the human cost of war is smaller on their side of the issue: while war opponents want to mention the risk faced by Iraqi civilians by taking action, supporters are more likely to mention the risk to civilians of leaving Saddam Hussein in power.

In summary, the content analysis of Senate floor speeches on the Iraq War suggests that when Senators speak about the war, their rhetoric depends upon their stance on the war. Even though a Senator's policy position influences rhetorical strategies so frequently, one thing that categorically does not influence Senate rhetoric is public opinion[11]. Rather than responding to the public, it appears that Senators may be trying to convince them to take a position on the war. Next, I will move to a set of analyses that examine whether or not the use of different types of rhetoric about death has a meaningful impact on public opinion about the Iraq War.

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[11] While public opinion is occasionally a statistically significant predictor of rhetoric, there is consistently no discernible pattern, and coefficient estimates are often quite small.

How Rhetoric Influences Support of the Iraq War (2003-2004)

While supporters and opponents of war use different rhetorical strategies in how they discuss the casualties of war, it is important to consider whether or not this speech has any impact on public opinion. Research on casualty aversion (see Gartner 2008 for a discussion), sanitized and dehumanizing language (see Haslam 2006), and prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) suggests that discussion of deaths *should* have consequences for mass public attitudes, and Senators seem to be largely taking strategies that seem advantageous to their position, according to these theories. In order to determine the effects of rhetoric, I turn to measures of aggregate public opinion on the war.

Data and Methods

In this set of analyses, I take advantage of the Congressional Record speech data and public opinion polling to determine how the discussion of death in the Iraq War influences public opposition to war. To do so, I have created a dataset where each observation is a day from March 19th, 2003 (the start of the Iraq War) to December 31st, 2004. To construct my primary independent variables, I calculated the number of speeches made in the Senate each day that contained discussion of American military deaths, American civilian deaths, and Iraqi civilian deaths. These variables were selected as they were the types of speech found to have significant differences in their usage between supporters and opponents of war in the content analysis. Then, I calculated the total number of speeches that discussed each topic[12] over the previous 15 calendar days[13]. Summary statistics for these variables are presented in table 6.

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[12] In this section, all counts of Senate speeches exclude instances where sanitized language was used.
[13] Results are robust to setting a threshold of 10 days.

Table 6. *Elite Rhetoric Summary*

	N days	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*
American Troop Deaths	654	3.81	5.74	0	27
American Civilian Deaths	654	1.80	2.94	0	18
Iraqi Civilian Deaths	654	1.31	2.12	0	12
Dehumanization of Enemy	654	1.82	2.98	0	17
Deaths Caused by Hussein	654	2.10	3.49	0	20

- All rhetoric data is total number of speeches mentioning the topic (not using sanitized language) over the previous 15 days.

To construct a measure of public opinion, I use the same public opinion questions from the previous section[14]; however, this time, I create an average of all polls conducted over the *subsequent* 15 calendar days to construct the variable *public opposition to war*. This ensures that my measure of rhetoric temporally precedes my measure of public disapproval of war. Figure 1 demonstrates how disapproval of the war fluctuates, generally and among different partisan groups, over the course of 2003 and 2004.

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[14] Full text available in Appendix A

Figure 1. *Public Disapproval of the Iraq War*
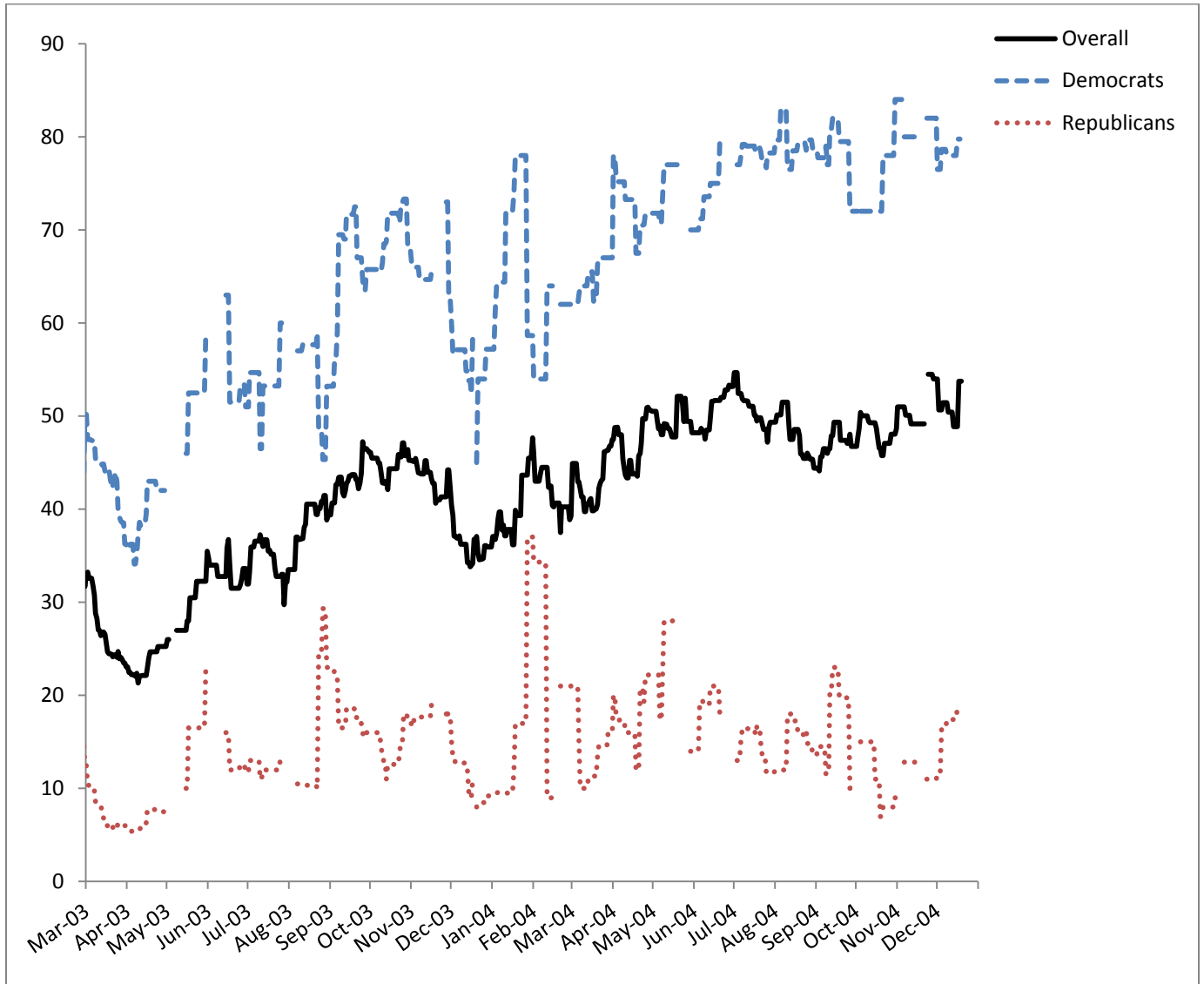
Data is 15-day moving average of public opinion polls. Source polls are listed in Appendix A.

I collected additional variables to control for potentially confounding factors. First, I included a variable, *days since start of war*, to capture the fact that opposition to war increases over time (Gartner and Segura 1998), along with casualty data from the previous 30 days[15], as

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[15] I have chosen 30 days for the casualty measure to be consistent with the literature on military casualties and public opinion. Results are robust to calculating this measure over 15 days. Data collected from icasualties.org http://icasualties.org/Iraq/index.aspx

proximate military casualties are generally accepted to influence opposition to war[16] (Gartner and Segura 1998). I further include indicator variables for major events: the variable *After Main Combat* indicates dates that occurred before President Bush declared major combat operations over on April 30, 2003; *Abu Ghraib* and *Saddam Capture* indicate dates that occur in the 2 weeks after these events were made public; and *Emergency Supplemental Debate* indicates dates in October 2003, as there was an unusually large amount of debate during this month. These major events could influence public support of the war in ways that work beyond the use of Senate rhetoric about casualties. I also include a measure of casualty news coverage, based on the number of mentions of death and casualties in Iraq via LexisNexis major newspaper search over the previous 15 days. Finally, I include a variable for the total number of polls used to calculate the average war disapproval. In all analyses, only dates where the Senate was in session at least once[17] over the previous 15 days are included, as the value of all independent variables of interest on these excluded days must be zero.

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[16] As required by the inclusion of this variable, results in this section are restricted to post invasion only. Analyses for pre-invasion prove difficult. Debate is heavily clustered in mid-October 2002, the period where authorization of the Iraq War was being discussed in the Senate. From 2003 to 2004, debate on the Iraq War is considerably more spread out.

[17] Results are robust to setting a threshold of 2 or 5 days.

Table 7. *The Influence of Elite Rhetoric on Opposition to the Iraq War (2003-2004)*

	Public Opposition to War
American Military Deaths	**0.28****
	(0.05)
American Civilian Deaths	**-0.33****
	(0.09)
Iraqi Civilian Deaths	**0.15**
	(0.15)
Deaths Caused by Saddam Hussein	**-0.21****
	(0.07)
Days since Start of War	0.04**
	(0.00)
Casualty News Coverage – Major Newspapers	0.07+
	(0.04)
Military Casualties Last 30 Days	-0.01+
	(0.01)
After Main Combat	10.67**
	(0.85)
Abu Ghraib	3.91**
	(0.87)
Saddam Capture	-5.96**
	(0.89)
Emergency Supplemental Debate (October 2003)	3.41**
	(0.99)
Proportion of Speeches Supporting War	2.74**
	(0.56)
Constant	20.06**
	(1.00)
N	471
R^2	0.8848

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses
Data includes only dates where at least one speech on the Iraq War made within the previous 15 days
+ $p<0.1$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Results

    As demonstrated in Table 7, discussion of death does seem to influence public opinion[18].

Discussion of American military casualties correlates with an increase of public opposition to

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[18] Granger causality tests to determine whether public opinion influences content of Senate speeches are presented in Appendix D. These tests show that public disapproval of war does not Granger cause the content of Senate Speeches, except in the case of American Civilian deaths. This effect disappears if the number of lags is increased from 1 to 5.

war, with each additional speech corresponding to a predicted .28 percentage point increase in opposition. Moving from the minimum to maximum number of speeches about American military deaths predicts a substantial increase in opposition to war of about 7.8 percentage points. Recall that opponents of war are considerably more likely than supporters to discuss American military casualties. These results suggest that opponents of the Iraq War are taking a useful rhetorical approach: they talk more about American military deaths than supporters, and this rhetoric leads to increased disapproval of war. Since I don't expect many Americans are directly experiencing these Congressional Record speeches, these findings suggest that the rhetoric of elites may be influencing how the media reports on war. The coefficient for *casualty news coverage* suggests this is true, as increased newspaper reports of casualties in Iraq leads to an increase in disapproval of war[19]. The correlation between Senate speeches on American military casualties and public opposition to war is strong, and important. Further, it is difficult to imagine an anticipatory relationship here – a predicted increase in opposition to war should not have any influence on the likelihood of discussing American military casualties.

Discussion of the deaths of American civilians is also correlated with public disapproval of war. Each additional speech mentioning American civilian deaths predicts a drop of roughly one-third of a percentage point in opposition to war. Moving from the minimum to maximum value predicts a large drop in aggregate-level opposition of roughly 6.3 percentage points. This also provides evidence that hawks may have the right idea, as speeches supportive of war are more likely to mention American civilian casualties. However, my previous content analysis shows that this difference is driven by speeches given *prior* to the start of war. These results suggest that opponents of war may want to speak less frequently, or supporters more frequently,

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[19] Obviously, it is impossible to capture *all* coverage of casualty reports, which is why the Senate rhetoric remains a significant predictor of public opinion towards the war even when controlling for newspaper coverage. Elite rhetoric can also be reported on television or the internet, which in turn could influence opinion.

about the risk to American lives throughout the war, rather than just in the lead up to the war. When Senate speeches to frame American civilian lives as at risk, even during the war, it appears to make the public more supportive of war.

One type of discussion of death that seems to have a negligible impact on public opinion is casualties of Iraqi civilians. The coefficient for *Iraqi civilian deaths* does not approach statistical significance, and is substantively quite small. This is not surprising, given that previous research suggests that the American public is not especially responsive to foreign casualties (Mueller 2005). The effect of Iraqi deaths caused by Saddam Hussein on war disapproval, however, is statistically significant and negative, with an increase of one speech predicting a roughly one-fifth percentage point decrease in disapproval of war. Over the range of the variable, this corresponds to a predicted decrease in disapproval of about 5.2 percentage points. These findings suggest that supporters, who discuss deaths caused by Hussein more frequently, are taking an effective rhetorical approach in this instance[20].

Surprisingly, the proportion of speeches over the previous 15 days that are supportive of the war has a *positive* effect[21] on disapproval of war. This may further suggest that Senators attempt to anticipate public opinion; when support of war is strong, opponents may be more willing to speak out against it in and attempt to lead public opinion, and when disapproval rises,

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[20] Appendix D presents analyses controlling for lagged public opinion data. Such analyses are problematic, as public opinion data is not available daily and is instead averaged over the number of polls available in the 15 day time period. Note that the coefficients for deaths caused by Saddam Hussein and American Civilian deaths decrease in magnitude, but remain statistically significant, when controlling for public opinion on a 7 or 15 day lag. The coefficients for Iraqi Civilian casualties actually become larger and reach statistical significance in both models. The effects for American Military casualty mentions, however, disappear when controlling for lagged measures of public opinion.

[21] This effect persists even when outliers (days with more than 3 standard deviations above the mean number of speeches) are excluded from analysis.

supporters of war may speak more often. A look at the partial correlation[22] of public opinion on the proportion of supportive speeches suggests this may be true. The aggregate public disapproval of war is positively correlated with the proportion of speeches that support the war (ρ = .1939, p<.01). As the public becomes more opposed to the Iraq war, the proportion of Senate speeches that support the war increases.

Another explanation may be that only those predisposed to support the war are actually *accepting* the messages that are supportive of the war. According to Zaller (1992)'s model of elite opinion leadership, individuals should be more likely to accept messages they agree with. Partial correlation coefficients for the effect of the proportion of speeches on disapproval of the Iraq War partially bear this out. For public opinion among Democrats[23], the proportion of supportive speeches has a positive partial correlation[24] with aggregate levels of disapproval (ρ = .2506, p<.01), but among Republicans, an increased proportion of supportive speeches is negatively correlated with aggregate disapproval (ρ = -.1745, p<.01). This suggests that Democrats may be rejecting messages supporting the war, while Republicans may be accepting these messages. However, there are instances where Democrats seem to accept arguments made largely by supporters of war, such as the deaths caused by Saddam Hussein, which suggests that something more nuanced is at work here.

Overall, rhetoric about casualties of war seems to be used strategically and effectively by political elites. Discussion of American military casualties, used more often by opponents of war, predicts an increase in public opposition to war. Discussion of deaths of American civilians, and

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[22] This partial correlation is calculated while controlling for the number of days into the war, the number of military casualties over the previous 30 days, and an indicator for the pre-invasion phase. Results are similar when simply controlling for the number of days into the war.

[23] These correlations are calculated using only data from polls (25 total) that offer a breakdown of responses by partisanship.

[24] These results are computed while controlling for all independent variables presented in Table 8.

Iraqi civilians caused by Saddam Hussein, both are correlated with decreases in public opposition to war, and these strategies are used more often by supporters of war. The findings are somewhat nuanced. Supporters appear to anticipate public negative reactions to war, and make more supportive speeches as public opinion towards the war becomes more negative. As these speeches become more common, they are accepted more by those pre-disposed to agreeing with the speakers (in this instance, Republican partisans accepting messages from Republican supporters of the war, but Democrats rejecting these messages).

Summary and Conclusion

The decision to go to war is one of the most consequential ones that politicians can make: even if the war is successful, it is inevitable that people, both Americans and foreigners, will be killed. How elites talk about, or do not talk about, these deaths depends upon the speaker's support of military action and the group being discussed. I developed a typology of individuals at risk during wars: American or foreign, civilians or military. The deaths of these four groups are discussed in different ways, and have unique consequences for public opinion towards war. I also examined strategic descriptions of casualties, through the use of sanitized and dehumanizing language, that political elites can take to obscure or even create support for casualties of war.

The American military is the group whose deaths are most discussed overall on the Senate floor. Here, opponents of war are considerably more likely than supporters to discuss death. This is a sound rhetorical strategy, as the public displays signs of aversion to American military casualties. Using aggregate level measures, I show that increased non-sanitized speeches about American military deaths increases public disapproval of the Iraq War.

Supporters of war are also considerably more likely to use language that sanitizes the deaths of American soldiers fighting the war. This language is intended to soften the impact of

the deaths of human beings, and as such it is often vague and unclear. It is difficult, in this design, to determine exactly what the consequences of sanitized language are for public opinion. In Chapter 3 of this dissertation, I examine this very question, finding that sanitized language does positively influence support for hawkish foreign policy attitudes.

Supporters of war frequently discuss threats to American civilians at home. However, this is mostly driven by discussion of deaths prior to the invasion, in line with how prospect theory predicts issue framing should influence attitudes. Additionally, public opinion data suggests that supporters of war would be wise to continue discussing the threats to American civilians after the war begins, since increased discussion of civilian deaths at home predicts a decrease in disapproval of war.

Finally, the group whose deaths are mentioned least often are foreign civilians. This is the group that should be most affected by war: since the fighting occurs in their country, they are the ones at most risk. While opponents of war are a bit more likely than supporters to mention civilian deaths in the Iraq war, these speeches have a negligible impact on public opinion. In fact, increased discussion of civilian casualties actually predicts increased support of war among Republicans and Independents. When supporters of war talk about Iraqi civilian casualties, they focus on the casualties caused by Saddam Hussein, rather than those caused by the U.S. led invasion. Here, foreign civilians seem to be used as pawns by political elites who are looking to sell their side of the argument. When mentioning civilian deaths is convenient for one's policy position, Senators readily do so. When civilian casualties are a direct consequence of a Senator's policy preference, they are noticeably silent.

These findings have implications for research both on foreign policy and on elite-led public opinion generally. It appears that, at the aggregate level, how elites talk about the war

drives public opinion. This somewhat comports with existing models that suggest that elite influence drives public opinion (Zaller 1992). However, my findings diverge from this research in important ways. Rather than a purely exogenous relationship, where elite rhetoric influences public attitudes, I argue that the relationship between elite rhetoric and public opinion is partially endogenous – elites try to lead public opinion, but they also make efforts to anticipate public opinion changes that influence their rhetorical strategies. First, the public seems to not be responsive simply to messages that support or oppose war – an increase in the proportion of supportive speeches is correlated with an increase in public opposition to war. Further, groups do not necessary seem to be accepting or rejecting messages based on their predispositions. For example, discussion of American civilian deaths, a tactic employed more frequently by supporters, is correlated with a decrease in opposition among Democrats, but has no effect for Republicans, despite the fact that supporters of the war are overwhelmingly Republican. Similar patterns emerge for the discussion of deaths caused by Saddam Hussein.

My findings also suggest that it is not casualties *per se* that move public opinion, but the elite discussion of these casualties. Most importantly, casualties do not need to have happened for elites to discuss them (and for this discussion to influence public opinion). Previous research has found that predictive appeals by elites, done through rebutting opposing arguments or providing alternate frames, can influence how the public views issues (Jerit 2009). Here, I extend upon this work by finding that elites can manipulate the public's response to military casualties by making an effort to discuss or avoid them. This could be especially important when there is a consensus among elites on war policy, as they will be able to speak to the public with one voice.

The influence of death in politics, along with sanitized and dehumanizing language, can be extended to policy areas outside of war. There are many policy areas, such as health care,

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immigration, euthanasia, and crime, where political decisions can have real life and death consequences. It is important to understand how talking about the potential for death, and *who* may die, in these areas can have real consequences for public support of these policies. Using the example of health care reform, talking about the death of a member of an individual's in-group should be a more effective strategy to increase support than talking about someone very different from them. One can easily think of Sarah Palin's remarks about "death panels" in her opposition to health care reform, or the Republican Party's focus on using the term "death tax" instead of "estate tax" as ways that language about death can be injected into policy debates. This suggests that politicians may be wise to tailor their messages about the life and death consequences of policy towards specific audiences.

This research also provides some practical lessons. While discussion of American military casualties of war does seem to be correlated with increased public opposition, there are few, if any, policy consequences of this opposition. This is consistent with findings of how public opposition did little to change the course of war in Vietnam and Korea (Mueller 1973). This can also be seen with the Iraq invasion: despite increasing opposition to the war, even in 2004, American troops were not withdrawn from Iraq until December 2011. Since these events occurred after the war had become the status quo, however, the policy was difficult to change. At the start of the Iraq war, public opinion was overwhelmingly supportive. These findings suggest that there are rhetorical strategies that could benefit those who oppose or support war; however, it seems likely that these approaches must be taken before the decision to go to war is made. Once elites made their case for the Iraq war, and influenced public opinion to support it, they were able to establish a new status quo that proved quite difficult to change. Even with the very clear life or death consequences faced by many groups in the Iraq War, the public's

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understanding of these consequences seems to be highly influenced by how political elites choose to talk, or not talk, about casualties of war.

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CHAPTER II

FIRST DO NO HARM? ATTITUDES TOWARDS HARM AND LIFE OR DEATH
POLITICAL DECISIONS

"The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others."

- John Stuart Mill, On Liberty

Even in John Stuart Mill's famous work *On Liberty* (1869)*,* which detailed the perils of government intervention, he accepts that the role of government is to prevent harm to others. Even today, in many instances, political decisions have consequences that could either cause or prevent physical harm to others. Scholars have indeed gone to great lengths, often employing ethically questionable practices (see Milgram 1963), to see how far an individual will go to harm another person. Harm is a key concept in political and moral life, as it relates to how we treat other people and what we perceive the role of government to be.

Harm is one of the five moral foundations upon which individuals make judgments (Haidt and Joseph 2004). Many policy areas are amenable to the study of how harm influences policy attitudes. Foreign policy interventions often have very obvious consequences for harm – when we go to war, individuals, both Americans and foreigners alike, have their lives put directly at risk. However, harm can be framed in multiple ways when political elites disucss foreign policy. Arguments can be made that foreign intervention can prevent harm in the long-term by taking action now, but many individuals are directly put in harm's way by the action. When politicians make the case for war, they frequently reference different groups whose lives

may be put at risk by their actions (Utych n.d.). Given this, predicting how harm should influence political attitudes should depend on characteristics unique to both the conflict and the individual.

I draw on theories from political science and psychology to predict how both context and personal predispositions influence tolerance of casualties of war. Certain conflicts, such as the War on Terror after the attacks of September 11th, may lead to a higher tolerance for casualties given the threat to American lives. The characteristics of individuals who are threatened by military intervention also may matter in how Americans judge a potential foreign intervention. Further, different individuals may be more or less pre-disposed to oppose harm, which will influence their attitudes as well.

In this paper, I first analyze a set of available poll questions from the past 28 years to determine which individual level demographics predict tolerance for foreign civilian casualties. I then develop a new measure to understand what types of individuals are opposed to physical harm, and show how this predisposition influences attitudes towards American military, and foreign civilian, casualties of war using original survey data. Using original experimental data, I examine how context matters and interacts with predispositions towards harm, in determining how individuals support interventions and tolerate casualties of war. Finally, I extend applications of individual level pre-dispositions towards harm to other policy areas that are frequently framed as having life or death consequences.

The Political Consequences of Attitudes towards Harm

Researchers have gone as far as to claim that "Harm aversion is so common that it may appear, at first glance, to constitute the entirety of moral cognition," (Heiphetz and Young 2014

p.315) Indeed, even in Milgram's (1963) classic study of harm and obedience towards authority, many participants became visibly uncomfortable with the thought that their actions were harming another person. A dimension of harm/care is one of the five underpinnings of Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt and Joseph 2007; Haidt, Graham and Joseph 2009), suggesting that many individuals heavily weigh elements of harm when making moral decisions. Harm should then be an important factor in many aspects of political decision making.

A moral foundation of harm has been shown to be correlated with some political beliefs. In general, liberals tend to value harm as more relevant to moral considerations than conservatives do, though this difference is small (Graham, Haidt and Nosek 2009; Koleva et al. 2012). Those who place higher moral value on the harm foundation are more likely to morally disapprove of a host of political issues, though this only translates to more negative issue opinions on a small subset of issues, such as the death penalty, animal testing, and human closing (Koleva et al. 2012). Moral rhetoric related to harm is prevalent in discussion of political issues, including stem cell research (Clifford and Jerit 2013) and environmental policy (Feinberg and Willer 2013), though this language is often less effective in persuading conservatives than liberals (Feinberg and Willer 2013). Although attitudes towards harm have been studied across cultures (Haidt 2012), little work has been done on individual differences in opposition towards or acceptance of harm. I measure individual level opposition to harm by creating a new battery of questions, and using this attitude to predict tolerance towards casualties of war.

On issues related to the value of human life, Moral Foundations Theory often has conflicting dimensions. Protecting human life can be viewed as protection from harm, or it can be viewed on the purity dimension (Haidt and Joseph 2004; Haidt, Graham and Joseph 2009). Given that harm is typically more morally relevant for liberals, while purity is more morally

relevant for conservatives and religious individuals (Graham, Haidt and Nosek 2009), it could prove difficult to determine which domain is most important for individuals when forming judgments. Further, the questions on the Moral Foundations harm dimensions relate to a more general version of harm, including beliefs about emotional suffering and harm towards animals. In this paper, I extend upon this work by developing a measure of attitudes towards physical harm specifically. This should serve as a better and more consistent predictor towards political attitudes in areas where individuals are threatened specifically with physical harm or death.

I expect that individuals who are opposed to harm will reject concepts such as utility maximization in making political judgments. These individuals will be opposed to physically harming others, even when harm is framed as serving a greater good. Such individuals believe that adhering to strict moral guidelines tend to produce the most beneficial outcomes (Forsyth 1980). Moral transgressions such as harm are often considered to be morally wrong, and are thought of in a different domain from what is legally or socially wrong (Turiel 1983). Indeed, even priming individuals to think of harm makes them more likely to view a political issue as a moral issue (Ben-Nun Bloom 2014).

One political issue where attitudes towards harm should guide attitude formation is the decision to go to war. When the United States engages in foreign military intervention, the lives of American military members and especially foreign civilians are put at risk. A long line of research has focused on how the public responds to American military casualties of war (Mueller 1973; Larson 1996; Garter, Segura and Wilkening 1997; Gartner 2008). This line of research suggests that, generally or at least under particular conditions, the American public becomes less supportive of war as American military casualties of war increase (for a discussion, see Gartner 2008). This suggests that harm to the American military is generally viewed quite negatively by

the public – unless the public views a foreign policy mission as especially vital, they generally do not believe the benefits outweigh the harm and loss of life for the American military.

Americans also have a general, though less pronounced, distaste for the deaths of foreign civilians in conflicts. During the first Gulf War in the early 1990s, a majority of Americans said civilian casualties of war are not acceptable (Mueller 2000; 2003). In 1998, nearly 80% of survey respondents indicated that civilian casualties are an important consideration in whether or not to support the use of force (Larson and Savych 2006). When primed to think of foreign civilian casualties of war, individuals become less likely to support the use of force (Walsh 2014). However, this response, like the response to American military casualties, is not uniform. Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler (2009) find that over 40% of survey respondents support the use of force against North Korea even with a large civilian death toll, and over 30% admit that protecting American military personnel is much more important than limiting foreign civilian casualties. This suggests that certain individuals are more pre-disposed to tolerate civilian deaths in war time.

Why does this tolerance emerge? In certain contexts, foreign civilian casualties may be tolerated because they are seen as a necessary evil to achieve a greater good. Often times, civilian casualties are thought of as an unfortunate consequence of war – they are something that is necessary to achieve a goal of defeating an evil enemy, or to protect American lives (Wheeler 2002; Lacquement 2004). After dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the American public was highly supportive of these actions, since they were seen as a means to prevent a long, protracted invasion of Japan (Mueller 1973). Similarly, the cold, statistical manner in which foreign civilian casualties are presented often fail to capture the attention of the public, and, when they do, they fail to induce an emotional response similar to that of American

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military casualties (Slovic 2007). Often times, when foreign civilian casualties are reported, they can be framed as mistakes, which reduces concern for these deaths (Wheeler 2002).

Some work does suggest that there are individual level or contextual differences in how individuals respond to civilian casualties of war. Individuals who believe terrorists should be tried in criminal courts, rather than merely executed by the military, have been shown to be more sensitive to civilian deaths in war (Edy and Merrick 2007). Using advertisements to prime individuals with economic differences between the "haves" and "have-nots" caused conservatives to show a heightened tolerance for civilian casualties, compared to liberals (Friedman and Sutton 2013). When foreign civilian casualties are characterized as proportions of a larger group, rather than in absolute terms, individuals, especially men, show a larger tolerance for these casualties (Friedrich and Dood 2009). Given that there appear to be certain characteristics that make individuals more or less likely to respond to civilian casualties of war, I will examine more in-depth how individual-level characteristics influence individuals to be pre-disposed towards tolerating foreign civilian casualties.

Attitudes towards harm are especially interesting to examine when looking at individual attitudes towards outgroups. People's attitudes towards in-groups and outgroups have long predicted their behavior. Even when groups are arbitrary or trivial, individuals are more likely to penalize out-group members economically (Tajfel and Turner 1986). Often, out-groups are put beyond standard boundaries of normal moral consideration, which is "an important precondition of consequence of violence" (Haslam 2006, p.255). While attitudes towards harm are generally expected to be stable and context independent in Moral Foundations Theory (Graham, Haidt and Nosek 2009), it is possible that out-groups, such as foreign civilians, may be denied the moral considerations given to Americans.

Those who are most opposed to harming others should be less tolerant of civilian casualties, as I expect opposition to physical harm to predict an decrease in utilitarian thinking and a greater value attached to all lives. I further expect conservatives, who tend to be foreign policy hawks, to be more tolerant of foreign civilian casualties than liberals. Women, who have been shown to be less receptive of frames that decreased civilian casualty aversion, and minorities, who tend to be more egalitarian, should be more civilian casualty averse[25]. I expect the context of an intervention to matter more for those least opposed to harm, while those opposed to harm are likely to be intolerant of foreign civilian casualties regardless of the context. Further, I expect individual level opposition to harm to influence attitudes towards policies related to life and death, even when these policies are not related to foreign intervention.

Context and Demographics – Predicting Tolerance for Foreign Civilian Casualties

Both contextual and individual level differences should impact the levels at which individuals tolerate foreign civilian casualties of war. To examine this, I turn to poll questions available via the Roper Center's iPoll databank from 1986-2013.[26] A total of 61 polls asked questions about attitudes towards civilian casualties of war. The full question text is available in Appendix A. Figure 2 demonstrates the proportion of individuals in each poll who provide a response indicating they are tolerant of foreign civilian casualties of war. The poll questions are clustered heavily around military conflicts, namely the Persian Gulf War, the War on Terror and September 11th, and the Iraq War. Aggregate level tolerance for foreign civilian casualties varies

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[25] These may be artifacts of particular traits of these individuals, or it may reflect these groups' experience as marginalized groups in society, causing them to care more about foreign civilians.

[26] http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/. With the exception of one question from 1935, 1986 is the first year the Roper Center has a dataset available that includes a question about civilian casualties of war.

largely from poll to poll, with a minimum of 16.24% in 2013, on a question related to drone

bombings, and a maximum of 88.48%, just following the September 11th terrorist attacks.

Figure 2.
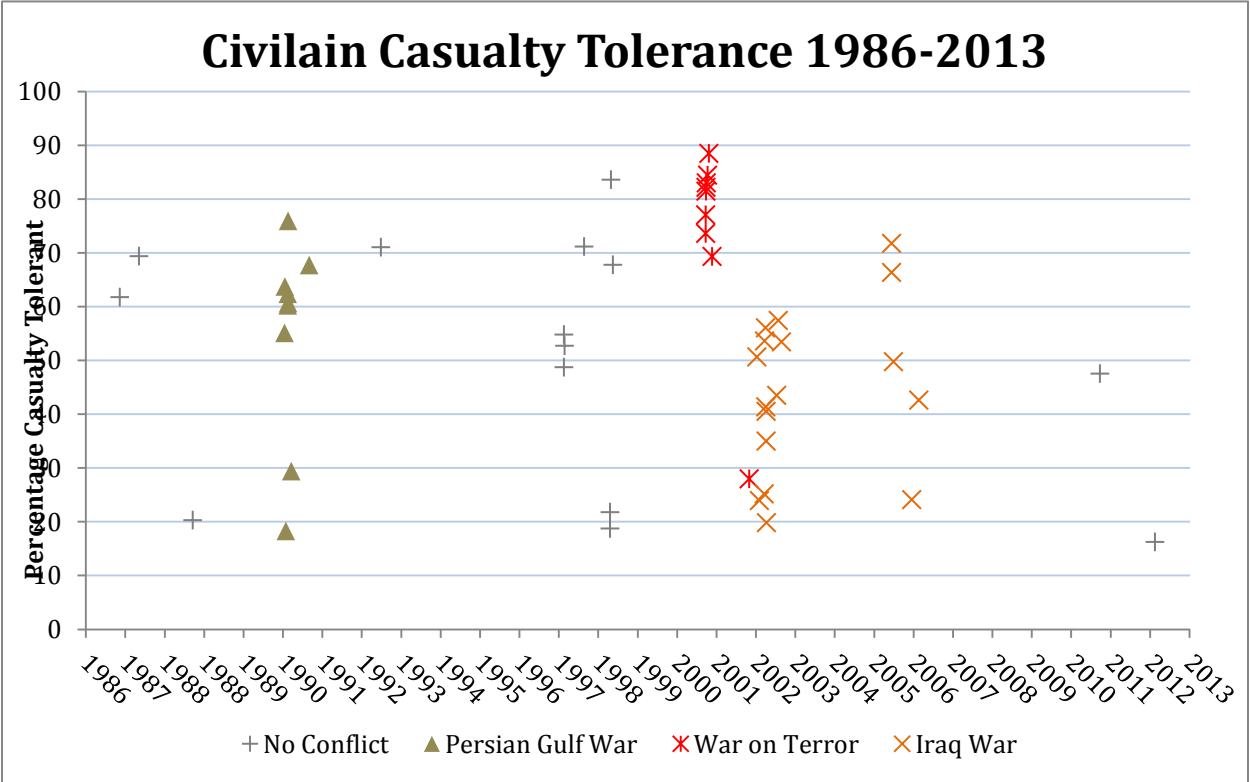
As Mueller (2003) found, tolerance for foreign civilian casualties increased dramatically

after September 11th – in polls from late 2001, tolerance for civilian casualties was advocated by

over 75% of respondents. However, contrary to Mueller's (2003) suggestion, it does not appear

that 9/11 was a turning point in mass attitudes towards civilian casualties, as civilian casualty

tolerance returned to lower levels during the Iraq War, starting in 2003, with polls during the Iraq

War typically showing less than 50% of respondents displaying a tolerance for foreign civilian

casualties. Looking back to the Persian Gulf War, tolerance for foreign civilian casualties is

shown by about 60% of respondents in most polls, a level between September 11th and the Iraq

War. These results suggest that context matters. When there is a threat to American lives, as in the September 11th terrorist attacks, Americans become rather tolerant of foreign civilian casualties when combatting those responsible for the attack. In the Persian Gulf War, a relatively short, successful conflict with some bipartisan support, tolerance for the deaths of foreign civilians remains relatively high. However, in the Iraq War, these levels of tolerance drop, especially as the war goes on. In this conflict, which lasted longer than expected and had a bitter partisan divide in support, Americans seem generally less willing to accept foreign civilian casualties. This suggests that context does matter; if a conflict is successful or popular, or if American lives are in danger, it seems that Americans are more willing to tolerate the deaths of foreign civilians.

However, context is not the only factor that influences whether Americans tolerate foreign civilian casualties during conflict. Even in the weeks and months after September 11th, 11-30% of respondents indicated that civilian casualties should not be tolerated. Individual level differences, in addition to context, should therefore predict tolerance for civilian casualties. Using these 61 polls, I conduct analyses to determine which *types* of individuals are more predisposed to be tolerant of civilian casualties of war. These results are presented in Table 8. In this analysis, I estimated models using demographic characteristics to predict responses to the civilian casualty question in each survey. I include dummy variables for Republican and Democratic partisanship, ideology, education, gender, race, ethnicity, age, and veteran status. I included each variable in the model whenever it was available. If a variable was not available, I estimated the model excluding that variable. All variables are recoded from 0-1, including the

dependent variable. In order to compare coefficients from the 61 models, I estimate linear probability models for each.[27]

Table 8. *Demographic Predictors of Civilian Casualty Tolerance*

	Number of Polls	Proportion Significant (Negative)	Proportion Significant (Positive)	Mean Coefficient (Standardized OLS)
Republican Party	61		**.443**	0.071
Democratic Party	61	**.197**		-0.023
Ideology (Conservative – continuous measure)	32		**.563**	0.097
Education	53	**.340**		-0.038
Female	61	**.770**		-0.102
Black	58	**.483**		-0.082
Hispanic	54	**.204**		-0.048
Age	54		**.444**	0.095
Veteran Status	18		**.438**	0.046

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[27] Estimates made using logit models for dichotomous dependent variables produce statistically similar results.

Table 8 shows that demographic factors influence individual-level tolerance for foreign civilian casualties, while Figure 3 displays the distribution of the size of coefficients for these variables over the 61 polls. Republicans, conservatives, older individuals and veterans are more likely to be casualty tolerant, while women, Hispanics and blacks are less likely. Note that, while Democratic Party affiliation tends to predict a decreased tolerance for casualties generally, the distribution of coefficients is highly centered around zero. Education is not a very consistent predictor of tolerance. While, on balance, it tends to predict a lesser tolerance more often than a greater tolerance, note that the coefficient values are disturbed both in the positive and negative range.

These effects are also rather substantial. Republicans are about 7 percentage points more likely than Independents to report a tolerance for civilian casualties, and those who are very conservative are about 10 percentage points more likely than those who are very liberal to be civilian casualty tolerant. Women are 10 percentage points less likely than men to be tolerant of civilian casualties, and gender is easily the most consistent predictor of aversion to civilian casualties across the polls. These results suggest that individual level differences are important factors that predict tolerance for civilian casualties. While these surveys provide evidence of how demographic characteristics influence attitudes towards casualties of war, none of these surveys contain more in-depth measures of individual level predispositions.

Figure 3. Distribution of Coefficients for Demographics Predicting Tolerance of Civilian Casualties – Kernel Density
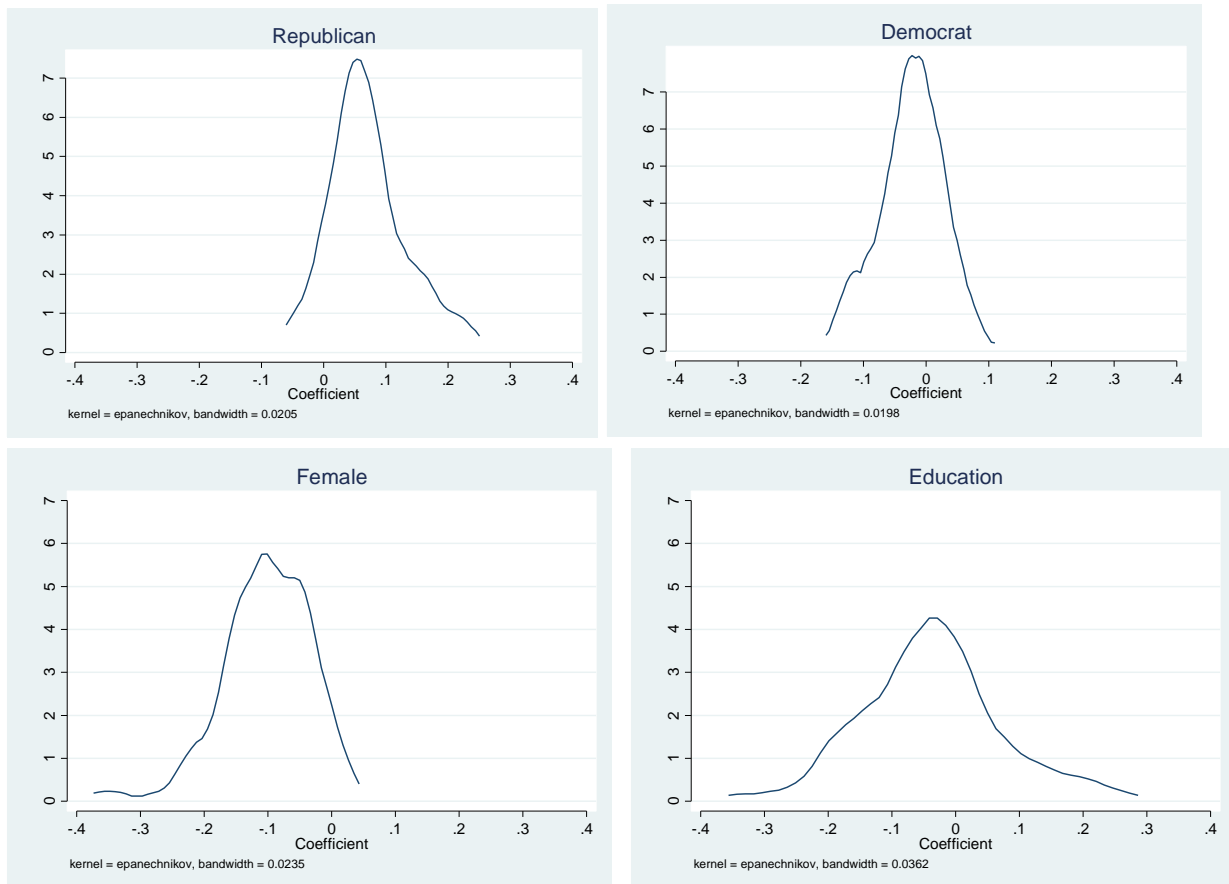
Figure 3 CONT.
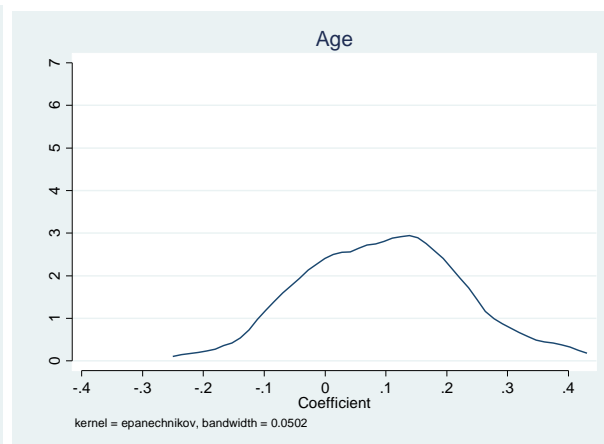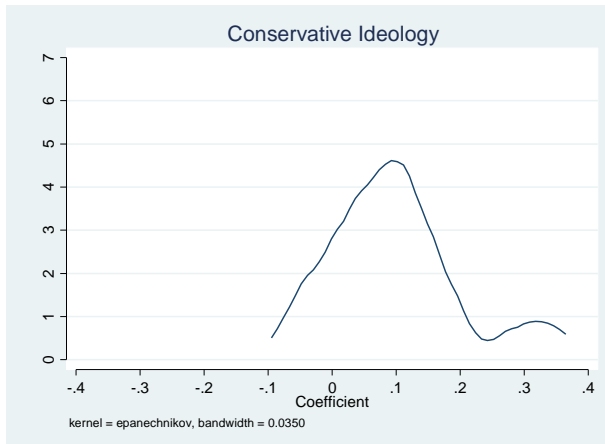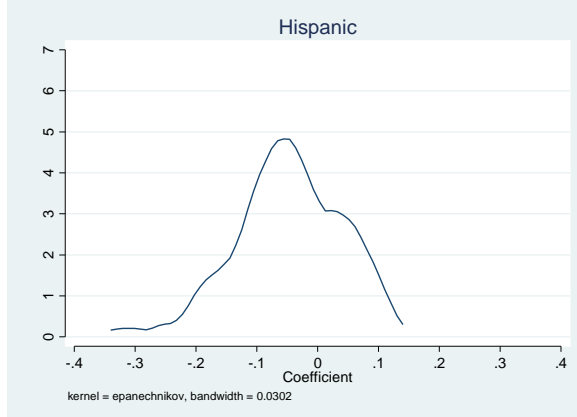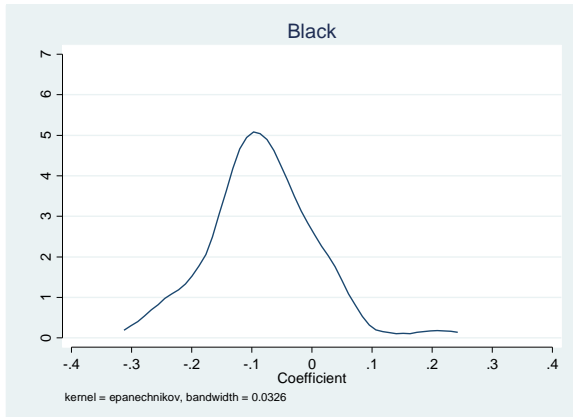
Opposition to Harm and Casualty Tolerance

To further examine the relationship between personality and aversion to casualties of war, I conducted a survey in late July and early August of 2014. A sample of non-Hispanic whites who do not have family members serving in the military was collected using Survey Sampling International's online panel. A total of 2200 subjects completed this survey. In this survey, I am able to measure personality predispositions and tolerance of foreign civilian casualties. I am further able to include questions about aversion to military casualties of war. I also create a scale to measure an attitudinal opposition to harm, in order to directly measure that element of tolerance towards casualties of war. This scale was created with four questions adapted from the Ethics Position Questionnaire[28] (Forsyth 1980), a question from the Moral Foundations Scale (Haidt and Joseph 2004), two questions from the Values in Action scale (Park, Peterson and Seligman 2004), and one question I created. These eight questions were measured on a seven-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with a Cronbach's α reliability coefficient of 0.8027. Responses to these eight questions are added together to create the *Opposition to Harm* scale.

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[28] The questions for this scale are available in Appendix C.

Table 9. *Predicting Opposition to Harm*

	Opposition to Harm
Republican	0.01
	(0.01)
Democrat	0.03***
	(0.01)
Conservative	-0.11***
	(0.02)
Education	-0.06***
	(0.02)
Female	-0.01
	(0.01)
Age	0.07***
	(0.02)
Income	-0.03
	(0.02)
Follow political news	0.08***
	(0.02)
Catholic	0.04**
	(0.02)
Protestant	0.04***
	(0.01)
Other religion	0.02
	(0.02)
Constant	0.68***
	(0.02)
N	1438
R^2	0.0832

SOURCE: 2014 SSI Survey
Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses, using survey weights.
Independents (on a 3 point Party ID question) are the suppressed reference category for Party ID.
Those with no religious affiliation are the suppressed reference category for religion.
All variables are coded from 0-1.
* $p<0.10$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$

As demonstrated in Table 9[29], some standard demographics serve to predict attitudes of

opposition to harm. Conservatives and the educated are less likely to be opposed to harm, while

older individuals and Democrats and those who follow political news are more likely to be

opposed to harm. Catholics and Protestants, compared to those who are not religious, are also

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[29] Due to a programming error, some respondents' ages were not available. Results are similar when omitting controls for age. All SSI panelists must be 18 years of age or older.

more likely to be opposed to harm. Other than results for education and age, these demographic results are not especially surprising. Educated individuals tend to be less tolerant of civilian casualties of war, though this result was somewhat mixed. Older individuals tend to be more tolerant of foreign civilian casualties, but appear to be more opposed to harm as well.

Table 10 presents analyses showing how both demographics and opposition to harm influence attitudes towards casualties in the SSI 2014 survey. The dependent variable for civilian casualties is a question originally derived from the 1991 American National Election Study. I slightly adapted that question to create a military casualties variable. The questions are worded:

> *Civilian Casualties*: Some people say there should be no bombing of targets near where civilians live because it is immoral to risk innocent lives. Others say such bombing may be necessary in wartime. Which of these is closest to your position?
>
> 1. Strongly feel there should NOT be bombing near foreign civilians
>
> 2. Somewhat feel there should NOT be bombing near foreign civilians
>
> 3. Neither/Both
>
> 4. Somewhat feel that such bombing may be necessary in war time
>
> 5. Strongly feel that such bombing may be necessary in war time
>
>
> *Military Casualties:* Some people say the United States should not send its troops to war, since it is immoral to risk their lives. Others say that certain situations require a commitment of ground troops. Which of these is closest to your position?
>
> 1. Strongly feel the U.S. should NOT send troops to ground wars
>
> 2. Somewhat strongly feel the U.S. should NOT send troops to ground wars
>
> 3. Neither/Both
>
> 4. Somewhat strongly feel certain situations require commitment of ground troops
>
> 5. Strongly feel certain situations require commitment of ground troops

Table 10. *Predicting Tolerance for Civilian and Military Casualties of War – SSI Survey 2014*

	Civilian Casualty Tolerance	Military Casualty Tolerance	Civilian Casualty Tolerance	Military Casualty Tolerance
Republican	0.11*	0.13**	0.12**	0.15**
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Democrat	-0.16***	-0.10*	-0.07	-0.07
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Conservative	0.84***	0.69***	0.66***	0.61***
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Education	0.28***	0.46***	0.10	0.37***
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Female	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.05
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Age	0.01***	0.00	0.02***	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Opposition to Harm			**-2.18***	**-1.15***
			(0.13)	**(0.14)**
Constant	0.06	0.91***	1.57***	1.69***
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.15)
N	1472	1472	1438	1438
R^2	0.1486	0.0864	0.2881	0.1338

SOURCE: 2014 SSI Survey
Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses
Independents (on a 3 point Party ID question) are the suppressed reference category for Party ID.
All variables are coded from 0-1.
* $p<0.10$, **$p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$

Similar to previous analyses, conservatives, Republicans and older individuals are more likely to tolerate foreign civilian casualties of war. Effects are similar in magnitude and direction for tolerance of military casualties of war as well. Interestingly, gender does not have a large effect on aversion to casualties of war, and is actually differently signed, with women showing a somewhat higher tolerance for foreign civilian casualties than men. This difference may be explained by the fact that my sample includes only *white* women. Higher levels of education predict an increased tolerance for foreign civilian casualties, and have a larger magnitude effect on tolerance for military casualties. This may be due to the prevalence of drone warfare in 2014, as Walsh (2014) finds that tolerance for foreign civilian casualties decreases when drones are used.

Opposition to harm, despite the battery not mentioning war or politics, consistently predicts decreased tolerance for casualties, both for foreign civilians and American military, and the effect is large in magnitude (roughly 1.5-2 points on a four point scale). Those who are most opposed to harm are considerably less tolerant of both civilian and military casualties of war. This coefficient dwarfs the effect of standard predictors such as partisanship and ideology, suggesting that opposition to harm and value of life has strong predictive power for how individuals view casualties of war.

Taken together, this evidence suggests that both the context and individual matter when determining why citizens do or do not respond to casualties of war. It appears that when conflicts are successful or popular, tolerance for foreign civilian casualties increases. There are also general political or demographic factors that explain why certain individuals are more or less tolerant of foreign civilian casualties. The evidence demonstrates that opposition to harm is an important predictor of tolerance for casualties of war, above and beyond basic demographic

characteristics. Individuals who assign a higher value to limiting harm towards others are considerably less tolerant of civilian and military deaths in foreign conflicts.

Opposition to Harm and Civilian Casualties: An Experimental Test

In order to evaluate how individual level predispositions and context interact, I turn to a set of experiments conducted in the 2014 SSI survey. While survey data allows me to examine general attitudes about casualties of war, these experiments allow me to examine the conditions under which the lives of foreign or American citizens may have a greater or lesser value attached to them. I have identified contextual variation using survey data across time, but these experiments allow me to hold time constant and vary *only* the context of the events happening.

The first experiment is a variation of the classic "trolley problem." This problem is an ethical thought experiment where individuals must take an action to sacrifice the life of one person to save the lives of many others (Foot 1967). In multiple variations of this problem, individuals are faced with a choice where doing nothing would cause a greater loss of life than taking an action (see Thomson 1985, Unger 1996). In this experiment, I use a variation of the trolley problem, which I call the "grenade problem," to see if there is a greater preference for saving the lives of Americans compared to foreigners.

The text of the grenade problem is:

> A soldier is on patrol when he notices that someone has thrown a live grenade near a group of four **[American/foreign]** civilians, who do not notice it. The soldier is not wearing body armor, and would be unable to save the civilians by himself. The soldier's partner is wearing heavy body armor, and, if the soldier threw his partner on the grenade, he would be able to absorb the impact, saving the civilians. If the soldier does nothing, he and his partner can take cover, but the four **[American/foreign]** civilians will be killed.

Subjects were then asked if they would throw their partner on the grenade to save the four civilians.

The national origin of civilians influences subjects' willingness to sacrifice a member of the American military. When told that four American civilians will be saved, 60.5% of subjects are willing to sacrifice their partner. When told that the civilians are foreign, only 47.2% of subjects are willing to sacrifice their partner (difference of proportions test is significant at p<.01). OLS regression results of these analyses are available in Table 11.

Table 11. *Foreign vs. American Civilians Gernade Experiment*

	No Moderators	Opposition to Harm
Foreign Civilian Treatment	**-0.13**** **(0.02)**	**-0.27**** **(0.09)**
Opposition to Harm		0.01 (0.09)
Opposition to Harm x Treatment		**0.20+** **(0.12)**
Constant	0.61** (0.01)	0.60** (0.06)
N	2207	2207
R^2	0.0179	0.0205

Source: 2014 SSI Survey
Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis
+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Those most opposed to harm are about 7 percentage points more likely to throw their partner on the grenade in the American treatment, though this difference does not reach standard levels of statistical significance. Those least opposed to harm, however, are nearly twice as likely to throw their partner to save Americans, compared to foreigners (60% for Americans, 33% for foreigners). Americans are generally more willing to sacrifice the life of one American military

member to save four civilians when these civilians are Americans. This difference is especially heightened among those with personality predispositions that make them less likely to be concerned with foreign civilian casualties of war.

Next, I turn to a target of war experiment[30]. In this experiment, subjects are presented with information about a drone strike to target al-Qaeda leaders. The location of this strike is experimentally manipulated to be either the Middle East, where civilians presumably do not share a race with the white survey respondents, or Eastern Europe, where civilians do share a race with the respondents. Subjects are then asked the extent to which they would support the drone strike, the extent to which they would support the drone strike with 100 civilian casualties, and the extent to which they would support the use of special forces units, where the objectives would be achieved with no civilian casualties, but the deaths of two American soldiers[31].

When told the target of war was in the Middle East, participants were more likely[32] to support military intervention (5.50, compared to 5.24 for Eastern Europe, p~.01), and more likely to support intervention even with 100 civilian casualties (3.82, compared to 3.44 for Eastern Europe, p<.01). They were also marginally *less* likely to support the use of a Special Forces team to eliminate 100 civilian casualties, at the expense of the lives of two American military members (4.61, compared to 4.76 for Eastern Europe, p~.12). These differences are small, but they suggest that individuals are generally more likely to support military intervention in the Middle East, and are more accepting of civilian casualties there, compared to Eastern Europe, where civilians share their race.

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[30] A total of 1110 subjects participated in this experiment. The remaining subjects were assigned to participate in an unrelated study.
[31] Full treatment and question texts are available in Appendices B and C.
[32] These results are robust to controls for assignment to a previous experimental condition. All variables in these analyses are coded on a seven-point scale, with 7 being the most supportive and 1 being the least supportive.

Table 12. *Target of War and Support for Military Intervention*

	Support Intervention	Support Intervention with Civilian Casualties	Support Intervention with Special Forces
Middle East Treatment	0.53	1.07***	-0.38
	(0.36)	(0.41)	(0.38)
Opposition to Harm	-0.95***	-2.77***	-1.62***
	(0.36)	(0.42)	(0.39)
Opposition to Harm x Treatment	-0.38	-0.99*	0.36
	(0.50)	(0.58)	(0.54)
Constant	5.88***	5.33***	5.86***
	(0.25)	(0.29)	(0.27)
N	1110	1109	1109
R^2	0.0275	0.1171	0.0268

Source: 2014 SSI Survey
Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis
Control for partisanship included due to differences in random assignment.
+ $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

While Opposition to Harm has a rather large direct effect on foreign policy attitudes, it does not have an interactive effect with the Middle East treatment, except for when individuals are asked about civilian casualties. These results are available in Table 12. In this instance, those most opposed to harm are equally supportive of intervention. However, looking at those least opposed to harm, support for intervention decreases by about 1 full scale point (6.40 for the Middle East, 5.33 for Eastern Europe) when the target of war is in Eastern Europe. Those most opposed to harm, however, are considerably less likely to support any intervention, including a Special Forces intervention designed to limit the total loss of life. This further suggests that those opposed to harm are considering casualties as a negative regardless of who is affected. However, for those who are not opposed to harm, the target of war may matter, and they are less tolerant of the deaths of co-racial individuals than non-co-racial individuals.

Beyond Foreign Policy: Opposition to Harm in Other Policy Areas

Thus far I have focused on how Opposition to Harm influences foreign policy attitudes. Since I argue that opposition to harm is an individual-level predisposition, I now examine policies that are often framed in a way where they could have serious life or death consequences. These policy areas: abortion, the death penalty, and euthanasia, all could have consequences for the health and lives of American citizens, and, since attitudes towards harm and outgroups predict tolerance for casualties, these traits should also have predictive power for attitudes in these areas.

In the 2014 SSI survey, I asked the questions on abortion, the death penalty, and support for euthanasia for those who are terminally ill[33]. By using this strategy, I am able to determine how opposition to harm predicts attitudes in policy areas beyond foreign conflict that imply life or death policy decisions. These results are presented in Table 13.

Looking at Table 13, opposition to harm predicts attitudes that are more restrictive for abortion and euthanasia, and more opposed to the death penalty. Those who are most opposed to harm are less supportive of abortion, by about 2/3 of a point on a 4 point scale. However, they are considerably more opposed to the death penalty, by over 3 points on a 7 point scale. They are also considerably more opposed to euthanasia for the terminally ill, by over a full point on a 7 point scale. That is, those opposed to harm demonstrate more conservative attitudes on abortion and euthanasia, and more liberal attitudes towards the death penalty.

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[33] The abortion and death penalty questions are adapted from the American National Election Study. This question was adapted from multiple Pew public opinion poll questions. The question reads: "If someone is terminally ill, is in great pain and wants to kill themselves, do you support or oppose a law that would make it legal for a doctor to assist the individual in ending their life?"

Table 13. How Opposition to Harm Predicts Attitudes towards Abortion, the Death Penalty and Euthanasia

	Pro-Choice Attitudes	Oppose Death Penalty	Support Euthanasia
Opposition to Harm	**-0.63***	**3.29***	**-1.20***
	(0.16)	**(0.28)**	**(0.27)**
Female	0.04	0.23**	-0.03
	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Conservative	-1.63***	-1.41***	-2.19***
	(0.12)	(0.22)	(0.21)
Republican	-0.33***	-0.35**	-0.29*
	(0.10)	(0.17)	(0.16)
Education	0.21*	1.26***	-0.00
	(0.12)	(0.21)	(0.20)
Age	0.01***	-0.01***	0.01***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	3.86***	1.35***	6.75***
	(0.18)	(0.31)	(0.30)
N	1321	1321	1321
R^2	0.2347	0.2020	0.1473

SOURCE: 2014 SSI Survey
Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses
All variables are coded from 0-1.
* $p<0.10$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$

This suggests that opposition to harm is an important predisposition that predicts how individuals feel about policies related to life and death issues. These attitudes are not simply liberal or conservative attitudes, either – those who are most opposed to harm are more likely to take a conservative, pro-life position on abortion and euthanasia, but also take a liberal position on the death penalty. While these positions differ in who ideologically supports them, they all are the sides that are frequently framed as the sides of issues that protect human life. These findings show that many policy areas are influenced by individual level opposition to harm, independent of political ideology.

Summary and Conclusions

Taken together, these analyses suggest that both contextual-level and individual-level factors influence how Americans respond to risking the lives of other individuals, especially in the context of casualties of war. Generally, tolerance for foreign civilian casualties tends to vary in the aggregate based on the conflict and the group of civilians being put at risk. Individual-level factors also routinely predict attitudes towards casualties of war, regardless of the conflict. A predisposition towards being opposed to harm leads individuals to be less accepting of casualties of war, both for foreign civilians and American military. The impact of attitudes towards harm on policy attitudes extends towards other policy areas frequently framed as matters of life and death.

This effect seems to extend beyond a traditional liberal/conservative distinction. Those who are opposed to harm are slightly more likely to be liberals, but this predisposition predicts attitudes towards casualties of war above and beyond, and also more powerfully than, traditional measures of ideology and partisanship. Additionally, those opposed to harm are more supportive not just of liberal policies, such as opposition to the death penalty, but also of the conservative policies of restricting abortions and euthanasia.

This research has implications for those who study individual-level political attitudes, especially on policies where human lives are at stake. By measuring opposition to harm, I have conceptualized a predictor of political attitudes that is quite powerful in predicting attitudes across a host of life or death policy areas. This could be extended to other areas, such as health care, the environment or immigration, where human lives are at risk, but the risk is typically made less clear. Additionally, those who are opposed to harm may be especially susceptible to

media framing of issues that demonstrate that human lives are in danger due to political actions. By using the opposition to harm scale, researchers can better unpack why certain individuals respond to political issues and media frames.

This research also speaks to emerging work on Moral Foundations Theory. While previous work on policy positions and moral foundations has been mixed, it has shown that elements of foundations of purity and harm often predict attitudes towards life or death policies differently, depending on the specific policy (Koleva et al. 2012). By developing a measure that focuses more clearly on physical harm, specifically to other humans, I am able to extend on this work and more clearly measure how predispositions towards harming others influence political decision making.

When determining why individuals support foreign policy intervention, it is important to consider both the context and the individual. In certain contexts, tolerance for civilian casualties can be relatively high, as it was after the September 11th terrorist attacks. However, this tolerance can change drastically based on the conflict. In the later stages of the Iraq war, civilian casualties were not tolerated by a majority of Americans. Further research can explore how elements of specific conflicts, such as a threat to American lives or bipartisan support, influences attitudes towards foreign civilian casualties.

Individual level traits can also interact with context, as those most opposed to harm show no difference in casualty tolerance between co-racial and non-co-racial groups, while those least opposed to harm show considerably higher concern for casualties of co-racial groups. While scholars of public opinion of foreign policy have long noted how intolerant the American public is of military casualties, studies of tolerance for foreign civilian casualties have been more

limited and provided mixed evidence. This could be because different groups of Americans react in completely different ways when presented with information about foreign civilian casualties of war. By examining more closely *who* is more or less responsive to casualties of war, scholars can have a richer understanding of public opinion of foreign interventions and their potential consequences.

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CHAPTER III

HUMAN OR NOT? POLITICAL RHETORIC AND FOREIGN POLICY ATTITUDES

"Our best offense won't always be deploying large armies abroad, but delivering targeted, surgical pressure to the groups that threaten us."

- John O. Brennan, White House Counterterrorism Advisor, 2011[34]

The decision to use military force abroad is often a difficult political decision. The use of force has serious life and death consequences for those involved in the conflict, and, with the rising use of drone warfare, foreign civilians or combatants are overwhelmingly the ones whose lives are put at risk. A majority of Americans typically report that the United States government should minimize the killing of foreign civilians in international conflicts (Mueller 2003). In many instances, however, the killing of foreign civilians is an inevitable side effect of war. How, then, can those who support foreign intervention minimize the impact of these casualties on public opinion?

I argue that political elites can influence the attitudes of the mass public towards foreign civilian casualties of war through the rhetorical strategies they use to describe these casualties. In particular, I focus on how the use of *sanitized* and *dehumanizing* language can influence foreign policy attitudes among the public. Language that is sanitized serves to obscure the fact that a human being has died. This language denies traits to individuals that separate humans from non-living entities (Haslam 2006). The opening quote from John Brennan exemplifies how war can be sanitized. By referring to "surgical pressure," Brennan first does not mention "air strikes" or

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[34] Quoted in "New plan to defeat al-Qaida: 'Surgical' strikes, not costly wars." msnbc.com 30 June 2011.

"bombings," obscuring the fact that military action is being taken at all. By calling the action surgical, a high level of precision is implied, suggesting that only those persons targeted will feel the effects of this pressure. By using this language, Brennan not only obscures the fact that military action is being taken, but also makes this action seem clean and precise, and omits any discussion of civilians. I expect that the use of sanitized language will increase support for military intervention, and decrease concern over civilian casualties of conflict, compared to language that is not-sanitized and discussed civilian casualties directly.

Another strategy that can make foreign casualties more palatable is the use of dehumanizing language. Dehumanizing language is used to reduce human beings to animals or other lower level forms of life (Haslam 2006). The use of dehumanizing language will not obscure death, but will increase the public's acceptance of the deaths of certain groups by presenting them as sub-human. The use of dehumanizing language occurs frequently. In Senate speeches on the Iraq war, Saddam Hussein was referred to as a snake and terrorists were frequently referred to as insects (Utych n.d). Dehumanization typically occurs against foreign combatants, as this disliked group is more natural to deny humanity to. I expect that the use of dehumanizing language against a foreign enemy will lead to increased support for military intervention, and an increased acceptance of killing the enemy, rather than capturing them and trying them for their crimes.

To examine these hypotheses, I conduct experimental studies to examine how sanitized and dehumanizing language influences political attitudes. In these experiments, I compare the attitudes of those who receive sanitized or dehumanizing language to those who receive neutral language that does not sanitize death or dehumanize others. This comparison is used to ensure that attitudes are influenced by language itself, rather than through individuals receiving

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additional information. I find that the use of language has important policy implications for foreign policy decisions.

Ignorance Is Bliss? How Americans (Do Not) Respond to Foreign Civilian Casualties of War

Research in political science, over the past forty years, has shown that Americans do respond to casualties of war – when those casualties are American soldiers (Mueller 1973). While this is not all-encompassing, there are a wide range of conditions under which Americans will become less supportive of war as military casualties increase (see Gartner 2008 for a discussion). While a vast literature on American responsiveness to military casualties exists, comparatively little work has been done on how the American public responds to *civilian* casualties of war.

Research examining responsiveness to foreign civilian casualties of war suggests two things: 1) many Americans say that they wish to avoid foreign civilian casualties of war, but 2) actual foreign civilian casualties have a negligible impact on support for war. This was demonstrated during the first Gulf War, where a majority of Americans viewed civilian casualties as unacceptable, but did not demonstrate any response to events where actual casualties occurred (Mueller 2003). In small scale military events, Americans are responsive to the small numbers of U.S. military casualties, but ignore considerably larger amounts of foreign civilian casualties (Burk 1999). Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler (2009) find that over 40% of survey respondents support the use of force even with a large civilian death toll, and over 30% admit that protecting American military personnel is much more important than limiting foreign civilian casualties. Most Americans, even if they are concerned about foreign civilian casualties

of war, tend to put the welfare of other Americans above that of people from other nations (Page and Bouton 2008).

Why do Americans not respond to foreign civilian casualty events? I have previously demonstrated that tolerance for harm and personal dispositions influence attitudes towards foreign civilian casualties. Another explanation is that the public is simply not aware of civilian casualty events. This argument is compelling – major U.S. news networks devote only a very small amount of time to civilian casualties of war (Aday, Livingston and Hebert 2005). Even in the Iraq War, where civilian death tolls were especially high, the Western media tended to avoid reporting these incidents (Kuttab 2007). The media also tends to defer to the White House's policy position on foreign affairs, which is unsurprisingly optimistic and does not focus on the risk to foreign civilians (Entman, Livingston and Kim 2009). When civilian deaths are reported, this is typically done in a distant, statistical fashion, compared to the more personalized stories on the deaths of soldiers, which fails to induce a strong emotional response to the casualties (Slovic 2007). Further, civilian casualties can also be mentioned as a proportion of a larger group, rather than in absolute numbers, which causes individuals to be more accepting of casualties (Friedrich and Dood 2009). Even when civilian casualties are reported, Americans may hold conflicting views on these casualties.

In most foreign policy operations, there are specific goals that the U.S. hopes to achieve. It is possible that the killing of foreign civilians can be viewed as a means to a noble end; ideally, we would like to avoid the deaths of civilians, but certain goals, such as the removal of an evil dictator, are worth that human cost (K. Mueller 2000). Risks to civilians are often thought of as a means to keep Americans safe (Lacquement 2004). This was especially clear after the events of September 11th, when Americans were considerably more accepting of civilian casualties in the

War on Terror, as the threat to American lives from terrorism was made very real (Mueller 2003). This was also seen during World War II, when Americans were supportive of the use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as they were viewed as a means to prevent an even greater death toll (Mueller 1973).

However, these are not necessarily the only reasons why Americans may not respond to civilian casualties of war. Next, I examine two rhetorical strategies, the use of sanitized and dehumanizing language, which can be employed by politicians and the media to lessen the impact of civilian casualties of war on public opinion. Through these strategies, deaths can be obscured, lose their meaning, or even become something that the public supports.

Sanitized Language and Foreign Policy Attitudes

In this paper, I examine two types of language that can be used to influence support for foreign policy intervention. The first is the use of *sanitized language*. This language is used to reduce human beings to machines or non-living objects (Haslam 2006). The use of sanitized language denies individuals traits that are essential to human nature – these include characteristics such as vivacity, emotionality, and warmth (Haslam 2006). A famous example of sanitized language is the term "collateral damage," which was used to describe civilian casualties during the first Gulf War. In a content analysis of Senate speeches on the Iraq War, frequently used sanitizations included the terms "lost" or "eliminated" as synonyms for death, or referring to individuals as "targets" rather than human beings (Utych n.d.). Sanitized language should operate by creating feelings of indifference towards the lives of those whose deaths have been sanitized (Bandura 2002; Haslam 2006). Because of this, I expect the use of sanitized language

towards casualties of war to increase feelings of indifference towards their deaths, and to lead to more "hawkish" foreign policy attitudes overall.

Since sanitized language denies human nature traits, and individuals tend to be more susceptible to denying human nature traits to individuals in out-groups (Haslam et al. 2005), the use of sanitized language should be especially strong at decreasing concerns over foreign civilian casualties of war. And sanitization of civilian deaths does occur often during war time. When the media reports on civilian casualties, it is often done with vague language, leaving open the possibility that those killed were not civilians, but enemy combatants (Entman 2006). This type of sanitization, where the agent responsible for the killing is not mentioned, is an especially strong way to sanitize casualties (Bandura 2002). Reporting on civilian casualties also frequently frames civilian deaths as accidents, or side effects of war (Wheeler 2002). Sanitized language frequently is seen as a way to justify conduct that is considered morally reprehensible (Bandura 2002), and has been used to create the image of clean, surgical wars (Kuttab 2007). Through the use of sanitized language, the impact of the deaths of foreign civilians can be minimized in order to increase support for foreign military intervention.

To determine how sanitized language impacts political attitudes, I conducted a question wording experiment, where I varied the use of language to describe foreign civilian casualties of war. This study was conducted in March 2014, using a sample of undergraduates enrolled in political science at Vanderbilt University[35]. In this study, subjects were randomly assigned to one of two groups: a *sanitized language* group or a *non-sanitized language* group. Each group received three questions on their attitudes towards civilian casualties of war, and were then asked

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[35] Subjects completed the study in a laboratory on campus in exchange for course credit. As expected with a student sample, most subjects were aged 18-22. Due to ease of comparability with Study 2, only non-Hispanic white subjects without a family member serving in the military are retained for analysis. This gives a total N of 153 subjects.

to what extent they felt upset about the statement they just read. The full text of the questions appears in Table 14. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 15.

Table 14. *Question wording experiment texts, Study 1.*

	Sanitized Language	Non-Sanitized Language
Mention of casualties	The United States should do whatever it takes to capture al-Qaeda leaders (Mean: 4.59, s.d.: 1.73)	The United States should do whatever it takes to capture al-Qaeda leaders, **even if this leads to the death of civilians** (Mean: 3.62, s.d.: 1.62)
Non-combatant targets	When considering military action, the United States should do everything possible to minimize **the elimination of non-combatant targets** (Mean: 5.54, s.d.: 1.67)	When considering military action, the United States should do everything possible to minimize **the killing of foreign civilians** (Mean: 5.95, s.d.: 1.12)
Collateral damage	The United States does not do enough to minimize **collateral damage** in war (Mean: 4.58, s.d.: 1.28)	The United States does not do enough to minimize **civilian casualties** in war (Mean: 4.63, s.d.: 1.37)

As demonstrated in Table 15, various types of sanitizations of casualties of war affect political attitudes. When casualties of war are sanitized by omission, individuals are about 1 point more likely, on a seven point scale, to agree that the United States should take action to capture al-Qaeda leaders. Even though foreign civilian casualties are a general consequence of war in foreign nations, the mention of these casualties makes individuals quite a bit less likely to support an all-out approach to capturing terrorists. This is a common type of sanitization – individuals can simply *not mention* consequences of actions to obscure the fact that, in this case, human lives will be lost.

Table 15. *How Sanitized Language Influences Attitudes and Emotional Reactions towards Civilian Casualties of War*

	Mention of Casualties	Non-combatant Targets	Collateral Damage	Upset – Mention of Casualties	Upset – Non-combatant Targets
Sanitized Language	**1.05*****	**-0.38***	**0.03**	**-0.45*****	**-0.44****
	(0.25)	**(0.23)**	**(0.20)**	**(0.16)**	**(0.18)**
Female	0.41*	-0.35	0.28	-0.07	0.16
	(0.25)	(0.23)	(0.21)	(0.16)	(0.18)
Republican	0.41	0.67	-0.08	-0.29	-0.35
	(0.71)	(0.66)	(0.59)	(0.46)	(0.52)
Conservative	1.89**	-1.09	-1.52*	0.19	-0.12
	(0.94)	(0.86)	(0.78)	(0.60)	(0.68)
Constant	2.32***	6.29***	5.15***	2.63***	3.62***
	(0.29)	(0.27)	(0.24)	(0.19)	(0.21)
N	153	153	153	153	153
R^2	0.2572	0.0421	0.1242	0.0563	0.0612

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis.
Data includes only non-Hispanic whites who do not have a family member serving in the military.
* $p<0.1$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$

On the *non-combatant targets* question, the use of this sanitization makes individuals less likely to believe that the U.S. should do everything possible to minimize civilian casualties. Here, the use of sanitized language predicts a roughly 1/3 point decrease in support for the statement. While this effect is rather small, the variable distribution is heavily skewed to the right. Here, language is used to obscure the fact that individuals have died by referring to them as "targets" rather than "civilians." And it seems to be effective, as individuals show significantly less concern for civilian casualties when the word target is used.

For the *collateral damage* question, there is no effect of sanitized language on attitudes towards casualties, or the emotional reaction to these casualties. The coefficient estimate for sanitized language is small, at .03, with a standard error of .20. This could potentially be explained by the fact that the term collateral damage was used frequently in the first Gulf War to refer to the deaths of civilians (Bennett 1994). It is possible that individuals have become aware of what collateral damage really means, and take it to mean the same thing as civilian casualties.

This provides some evidence that political elites, when using sanitized language, are only able to do so until the sanitization becomes well known by the public.

Sanitized language should operate by creating feelings of indifference towards the target of that language (Haslam 2006). To test this prediction, I asked subjects the extent to which they feel upset about the statements that they just read. In both the *mention of casualties* and *non-combatant targets* questions[36], those exposed to sanitized language reported that they were less upset about the statements than those who were exposed to non-sanitized langue. The effect is roughly half a point on a five-point scale for both the mention of casualties and the non-combatant targets questions. This serves to explain how sanitized language operates – it causes a weaker emotional response to a person, which leads to greater approval of policies that put those people's lives at risk.

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[36] Once again, there was no effect on the *collateral damage* question.

Figure 4a. How Feeling Upset Mediates the Effect of Sanitized Language – Mention of Casualties

-0.446

(0.158)

Feeling Upset

-0.566

(0.120)

Sanitized Language

U.S. Should Do "Whatever it takes" to capture terrorists

0.798

(0.236)
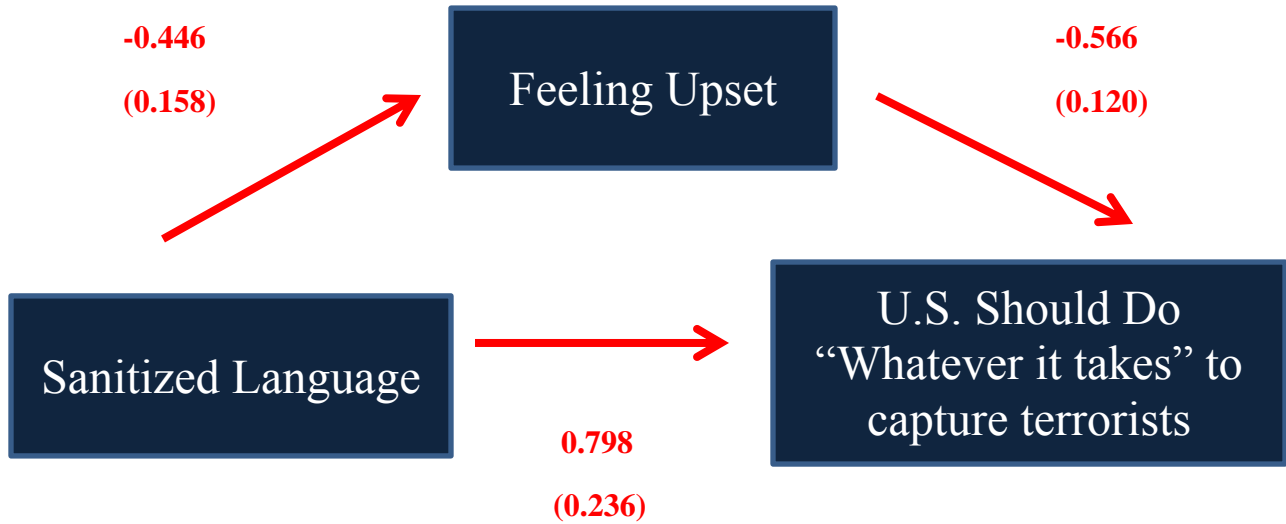
Figure 4b. How Feeling Upset Mediates the Effect of Sanitized Language – Non-Combatant Targ

-0.437

(0.180)

Feeling Upset

0.605

(0.091)

0.798

(0.236)

Sanitized Language

U.S. Should Minimize Killing Foreign Civilians

-0.116

(0.203)
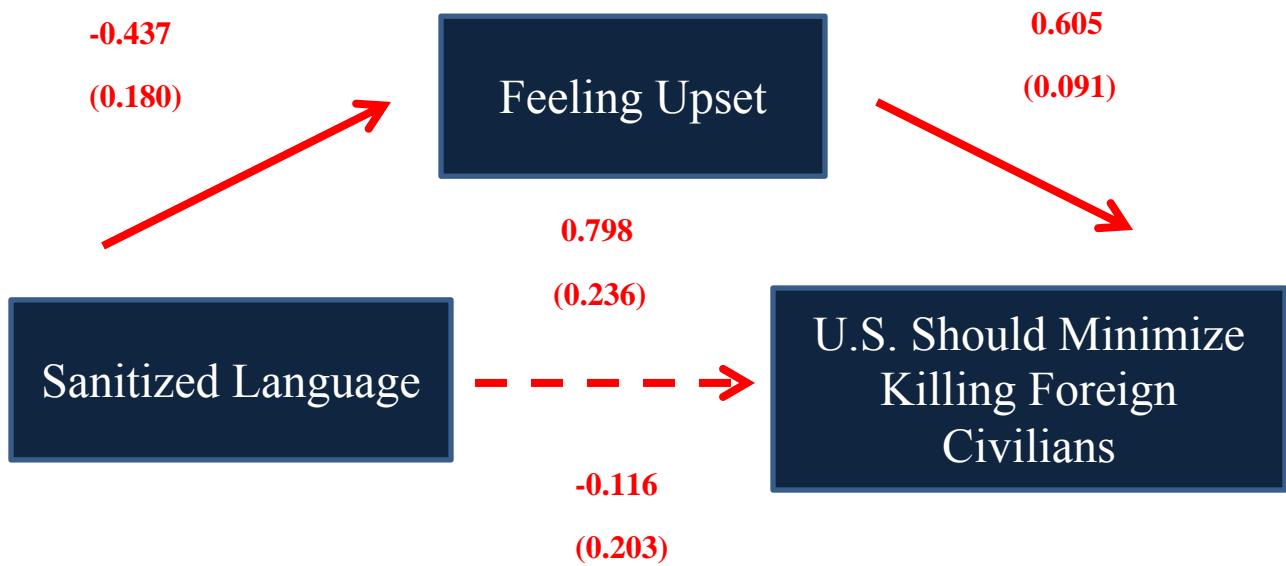
To examine this effect further, I turn to a Sobel mediation analysis of emotional response on these two attitudinal questions. The results are presented in Figure 4a. Here, we see that feeling upset partially mediates the effect of sanitized language on attitudes in the *mention of casualties* question. Both the indirect effect of feeling upset and the direct effect of sanitized language are statistically significant predictors of belief that the U.S. should do whatever it takes to capture terrorists. It is not surprising that there is only partial mediation, as this type of sanitization also provides less information than in the non-sanitized condition. The non-sanitized condition prompts subjects to think about civilian casualties of war, while the sanitized condition only has them think about "whatever it takes." For the *non-combatant targets* question, the effect of sanitized language is completely mediated by how upset subjects are towards the statement, as shown in the second part of Figure 4b. While there is an indirect effect of sanitized language causing individuals to feel less upset about civilian casualties, there is no remaining direct effect of believing that the United States should minimize civilian casualties. This suggests that certain types of sanitizations may operate more effectively, as the "non-combatants target" sanitization appears to operate completely through muting the emotional response. In this case, sanitized language creates indifference towards the lives on the individuals being sanitized, depending upon whether they are called non-combatant targets or foreign civilians, which leads to less concern about their deaths.

Finally, in this study, participants were asked to estimate the number of civilian casualties in the war in Afghanistan. Subjects were assigned to one of two groups – one where the estimates were high numbers, and one where the estimates were low numbers[37]. The actual number of civilian casualties over the course of the War in Afghanistan, at the time of the study,

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[37] The full question text is presented in Appendix C.

was just under 20,000. In the high condition, the fourth highest answer option was correct, while the highest answer option was correct in the low condition. Sanitized language had an influence on estimates of civilian casualties, but only in the high condition. The results are presented in Figure 5. Those in the sanitized language condition estimated civilian casualties about .46 points lower[38], or almost half of a category on the scale, than those in the non-sanitized language condition (means of 3.79 and 3.33, respectively. p~.06, two-tailed, in a difference of means test). This difference was not significant (p~.34) in the low casualty condition, though this may be because an overwhelming amount of subjects (72%) made estimates in the two highest categories. This suggests that exposure to sanitized language may lead individuals to believe that fewer civilian casualties are occurring in war than there actually are. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that sanitized language can have a profound effect on attitudes towards civilian casualties of war – when language is sanitized, individuals are less concerned about civilian casualties, have a weaker emotional response to civilian casualties, and even believe that fewer casualties are actually occurring.

Figure 5. Sanitized Language and Casualty Estimates in Afghanistan
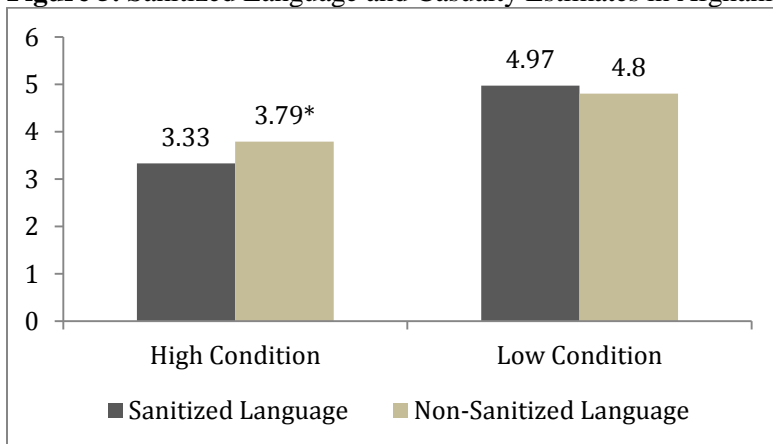
* - Difference is significant at p<.05

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[38] Here, the sample is only restricted to U.S. citizens. The total N is 132 in the high condition and 137 in the low condition.

Dehumanization of the Enemy and Foreign Policy Attitudes

Dehumanizing language also serves as a way in which to deny basic human traits to other individuals. Dehumanizing language denies human beings traits that are uniquely human – traits such as the ability to reason, that separate human beings from wild animals (Haslam 2006). In this instance, the dehumanized group can still be viewed as capable of exhibiting affect and behavior, but is denied the human trait of cognition (Tipler and Ruscher 2014). Dehumanization occurs frequently when political elites discuss terrorists (Utych n.d). This often takes the form of comments that directly compare terrorists to animals, such as snakes and roaches, or through language describing animalistic action, such as referring to areas as "breeding grounds" for terrorism. Dehumanizing language, due to the denial of these human traits, is powerful in its own right. However, the relationship between dehumanization and negative attitudes towards outgroups is mediated by a negative affective response, either through disgust (Haslam 2006) or contempt (Esses, Medianu and Lawson 2013; Louis, Esses and Lalonde 2014). Dehumanization denies important, human traits to outgroups, and creates an increased negative affective response to these dehumanized groups.

Dehumanization has consequences for how others are viewed. When an individual is dehumanized, they are viewed as less capable of realizing they are being treated poorly, which leads people to prefer harsher punishment of dehumanized individuals (Bandura, Underwood and Fromson 1975). Dehumanized others are assigned low levels of worth, allowing individuals to justify punitive conduct towards those who are dehumanized by disregarding any negative effects of punishment (Bandura et al. 1996). Dehumanization allows individuals to view others as something less than a human being. In the instance of terrorism, the use of dehumanization

against terrorists should lead to attitudes that accept harsher punishment of terrorists, and a devaluation of the lives of terrorists.

Dehumanization of terrorists, much like the sanitization of deaths of foreign civilians, should happen relatively easily. Individuals tend to view groups that are more different than them as more animalistic (Leyens et al. 2000). Given that Middle Eastern terrorists do not share a race, ethnicity, or religion with most Americans, they should be especially easy for the average citizen to accept as less than human. In times of foreign conflict, or towards criminals, dehumanization has been frequently used. During World War II, the Japanese were frequently depicted as animals in texts or on propaganda posters (Dower 1986). Dehumanization of criminals also occurs frequently, and leads to harsher support of capital punishment for those convicted of murder (Goff et al. 2008) and those accused of sex offenses (Stevenson et al. 2014). Dehumanization leads to increased support of torture against terrorism detainees (Waytz and Epley 2012). Waytz and Epley (2012) argue that this occurs because of social distance—socially distant groups, such as terrorists, are easier for individuals to dehumanize. These findings suggest that terrorists or foreign enemies may be especially easy for political elites to dehumanize, and for the mass public to accept the dehumanization.

To examine how language that dehumanizes terrorists influences political attitudes, I conducted an experiment that assigned subjects to read short texts about terrorists. Subjects were assigned to receive either language that dehumanized terrorists, or language that was not dehumanizing. This study was conducted in late July and early August 2014. Participants were recruited from Survey Sampling International's (SSI) survey panel. The entire survey took about 13 minutes, and participants were compensated with entries into SSI's prize drawings. Only non-

Hispanic whites who are U.S. citizens and do not report having an immediate family member serving in the military were recruited for this study.

Table 16. *How Dehumanizing Language Influences Attitudes towards Terrorism*

	Support Military Intervention	Terrorists Forfeit Right to Life	Kill Terrorists Rather than Try in Court
Dehumanization Treatment	**0.30***** **(0.11)**	**0.26*** **(0.14)**	**0.28**** **(0.12)**
Republican	0.66*** (0.20)	-0.18 (0.25)	-0.01 (0.22)
Conservative	1.36*** (0.26)	2.10*** (0.32)	1.57*** (0.28)
Constant	3.44*** (0.13)	3.27*** (0.17)	4.13*** (0.14)
N	623	623	623
R^2	0.1401	0.0910	0.0786

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis.
Data excludes any participant who read the 5 sentence vignette in less than 10 seconds, or rated the text in the bottom 10% of all subjects in terms of believability.
 * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

In this study, subjects participated in an experiment on dehumanizing language and attitudes towards terrorism. 1,106 subjects[39] participated in this portion of the study. Here, subjects were randomly assigned to one of two groups: one that described terrorists using non-dehumanizing, neutral language, and one that described terrorists using dehumanizing language. This dehumanizing language was adapted from Senate speeches on the Iraq War, made from

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[39] Compared to Amazon's Mechanical Turk, there were significantly more issues with compliance in the SSI survey (see Chapter 4). Many subjects read through the vignette very quickly. Of all respondents, 274, or about 24.7%, clicked through the page in less than 10 seconds. This corresponds to a reading time of less than three seconds per sentence. As such, these subjects were excluded from analysis, as it is unlikely that they were able to process the information. Further, subjects were asked how believable they felt the vignette was on a scale of 0-100. I excluded subjects in the bottom 10% of believability in this analysis, or those who rated the text below 18 for believability. Believability ratings did not differ between the treatment and control groups (mean 55.0 for the control group, 55.3 for the treatment, p~.84). This again suggests that subjects were not treated – while they may have read the text, they did not believe it, and it seems unlikely that the treatment was effective on these subjects. This strategy retains 623 subjects for analysis. Those retained were equally likely to be in the treatment group as those excluded (47.12% retained were in the treatment group, 49.9% excluded were in the treatment group, p~.39).

2003-2004. The full treatment texts are available in Appendix B. Results of the analyses for this study are presented in Table 16.

Here, we see that support for military intervention is influenced by dehumanizing language. The dependent variables all exhibit a skew towards the right side of the scale. Support for military intervention in the sample has a mean value of 4.58 on a seven-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.48. When terrorists are dehumanized, individuals are about .30 points more likely to support military intervention against terrorists. This effect is about 22% of the effect of moving across the scale of ideology.

Further, those presented with dehumanizing language are also more likely than those who are not to believe that terrorists' lives are less valuable. Subjects were asked two questions related to the lives of terrorists. The first question asks to what extent subjects agree with the statement "*When someone engages in terrorism, they have forfeited their right to life.*" This variable is largely right-skewed in the sample, with a mean of 5.10 and a standard deviation of 1.59. Here, subjects in the dehumanization treatment are about a quarter of a point more likely than those who are not to agree with the statement. Next, subjects are asked their level of agreement with the statement "*The military should kill known terrorists, rather than capture them and try them in court.*" In the entire sample, the mean of this dependent variable is 4.45, with a standard deviation of 1.81. The effects here are similar, just over a quarter of a point on the scale, with those in the dehumanizing treatment more likely to agree with the statement. This is about 12% and 18%, respectively, the size of the effect of moving from extremely liberal to extremely conservative in ideology. Taken together, this set of results suggests that individuals are more likely to be supportive of action against terrorists, and more likely to disregard the value of their lives, when they are presented with language that dehumanizes terrorists.

Dehumanizing language should operate through increasing disgust or anger towards the dehumanized individual. I do not find evidence, however, that the dehumanization treatment led to increased feelings of disgust. Those in the treatment group reported a mean of 4.24 on a 5 point scale that terrorists made them feel disgusted, while those in the control group reported an average level of disgust towards terrorists of 4.26 (p~.73). Similarly, for anger, those in the treatment group reported a mean value of 4.21, while those in the control group reported a mean value of 4.13 (p~.30). While individuals do not appear to be responding to the dehumanization treatment with disgust or anger, the overall levels of these negative emotions are very high[40]. This suggests that this mechanism may already be operating, and simply cannot be further activated using terrorists as the target of dehumanization. Suggestive of this, self-reported disgust and anger towards terrorists are correlated with support for intervention at .23 and .25, respectively. These negative emotional responses are also correlated with beliefs that terrorists have forfeited the right to life at .27 for disgust and .29 for anger, and with beliefs that the military should kill terrorists at .39 for both emotions.

While the effects of dehumanization on attitudes are small, and there is no effect on emotional responses to dehumanized terrorists, this could be because subjects were presented with only one brief text dehumanizing terrorists. When political elites speak about terrorists, they frequently use language to dehumanize them. Over 20% of all Senate speeches on the Iraq War from 2003-2004 dehumanized the enemy in some way (Utych n.d.). With language frequently discussing "breeding grounds" for terrorist, or hunting "terrorist cells," chronic dehumanization of terrorists may already have had rather profound effects on public attitudes towards support for military action against, and a disregard for the value of the lives of, suspected terrorists. This

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[40] For comparison, in an unrelated portion of the study, subjects were asked to report their level of disgust and anger towards illegal immigrants. Here, the mean level of disgust was only 2.40, and the mean value of anger is 2.67.

may also serve to explain why individuals, across treatment groups, report such high levels of disgust towards terrorists.

Summary and Conclusions

Sanitized and dehumanizing language both influence how individuals view foreign policy intervention and casualties of war. When presented with sanitized language, individuals were less concerned about civilian deaths in military interventions, and they reported lower feelings of concern about the deaths of civilians, which mediate the effect of sanitized language on attitudes. Further, when presented with sanitized language, individuals provided lower estimates of casualties in a foreign conflict. Dehumanization causes individuals to be more supportive of military intervention, and be more accepting of the deaths of terrorists, rather than their capture and trial. This effect is not mediated by an emotional response, but this may occur because individuals are already highly disgusted by terrorists, regardless of how they are described.

This research has implications for scholars of public opinion. The language used to talk about political issues has an impact on public attitudes about these issues. If war is often described in clean, sanitized terms, this should lead to increased public support of foreign conflict. If war is described in ways that dehumanize the enemy, this will also lead to an increase in public support. Because of this, it is important to pay attention to how political elites are talking about policies and consider the consequences that this rhetoric has for attitudes of the mass public.

The use of language should influence attitudes about the values of life and death beyond foreign policy. Further work is needed to examine how sanitized and dehumanizing language can influence political attitudes in these other policy areas, such as immigration or the death penalty.

This could be particularly useful with regards to dehumanizing language, where the case of international terrorism provides a ceiling effect on the disgust response that individuals have. In other policy areas, individuals may be less disgusted as a baseline and an emotional response of disgust towards dehumanized individuals may indeed mediate the relationship of dehumanization and attitudes.

It is also important to consider the traits that make certain individuals more prone to the effects of sanitized and dehumanizing language. One could imagine that personality characteristics, such as general feelings towards out-groups or how much an individual values human life, could make individuals more or less prone to the effects of these rhetorical strategies. Additionally, those who dislike out-groups, for example, could either be more prone to dehumanizing language, or may simply dehumanize these out-groups on their own. Further work is needed to examine these relationships.

In the area of foreign policy intervention, the lives of foreigners are routinely put at risk. I find that the language used to discuss foreign intervention can have an important impact on political attitudes towards intervention. By using language that sanitizes casualties, or dehumanizes an enemy, political elites can garner increased support for military intervention. When the public reacts to casualties in foreign policy, it seems to matter not only what they learn, but what words are used to convey those messages.

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CHAPTER IV

AVOID THEM LIKE THE PLAGUE: HOW DEHUMANIZATION INFLUENCES
ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRANTS

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

- Emma Lazarus, quoted on the Statue of Liberty

Political elites can employ numerous strategies to convince the public to agree with their

policy positions. Perhaps one of the most powerful ways is to denigrate the out-group affected by

the legislation. Discriminatory attitudes towards outgroups, and preferential treatment of in-

groups, is a long established trait of human behavior (see Sumner 1906). One tactic used to

denigrate out-groups is dehumanization, which denies groups of individuals the same human

status given to others (Haslam 2006). Even on the Statue of Liberty, an American icon

representing entry to the country for countless immigrants, language used to deny immigrants

some element of humanity is used. By referring to immigrants as "huddled masses yearning to

breathe free," this quote depicts immigrants as succumbing to their more animalistic roots of

humanity, huddled together to maintain warmth, and focusing on the very basic act of breathing

that sustains all living things. Even as the Statue of Liberty welcomes immigrants to the United

States, it serves to deny them an element of their humanity.

As the quote suggests, dehumanization of immigrants is not new rhetoric in American

political life. In the early 20th century, dehumanizing language was used frequently to describe

immigrants entering the country (O'Brien 2003). While the type of people immigrating to the

United States has changed, dehumanizing language used to describe immigrants remains. Indeed,

even common terms for undocumented immigrants, such as "illegals" or "aliens" can serve to

strip them of elements of their humanity (Martin, Navarrete and Johnson 2010). Frequently, dehumanization of immigrants takes the form of comparing them to vermin or disease. This form of dehumanization is especially powerful, as it denies attributes of affect and cognition to the group that is dehumanized (Tipler and Ruscher 2014).

In this paper, I first analyze news articles surrounding a contentious immigration debate to determine how frequently immigrants are dehumanized in the media. Then, I draw upon original experimental data to determine how dehumanizing immigrants as a disease influences attitudes towards immigration. Dehumanization should operate directly, by providing moral justification for harsh punishment against immigrants, and also indirectly, through increasing a negative affective response towards immigrants. I examine how discrete emotional responses – disgust, anger, and fear – may mediate the impact of dehumanization. Given that rhetoric that dehumanizes immigrants is relatively common in current political speech, it is important to understand how this rhetoric can influence attitudes towards immigrants.

Dehumanization and Attitudes towards Immigrants

There are numerous rhetorical tactics political elites can take to denigrate out-groups and increase support for policies that are punitive towards these groups. In this paper, I focus particularly on the use of *dehumanizing language* and how it influences policy attitudes. In particular, I focus on a type of dehumanization referred to by social psychologists as "animalistic dehumanization." This type of dehumanization denies outgroups traits that are uniquely human – things such as the ability to reason, think critically, or feel emotions – that are typically thought of as what separates human beings from other living organisms (Haslam 2006). Dehumanization leads to harsher judgments of a wide array of groups across a range of political issues, such as

the Japanese in World War II (Dower 1986; Russell 1996), African-Americans on trial for murder (Goff et al. 2008), natural disaster victims (Cuddy et al. 2007; Andrighetto et al. 2014) and terrorists (Waytz and Epley 2012, Utych 2014a).

Illegal immigrants are another group who may be dehumanized. Since the early 1900s, metaphors used to dehumanize immigrants as invaders or diseased organisms have been prevalent in the American media (O'Brien 2003). More recently, this metaphor has continued to be used, describing immigrants as a virus or a pollutant (Cisneros 2008), in addition to direct reports that show immigrants as spreaders of infectious diseases (Esses, Medianu and Lawson 2013). Dehumanization of others as vermin or disease can have especially troubling uses, as it is a frequent tactic used by groups who commit genocide (Russell 1996). Dehumanizing language related to disease and vermin may be even more powerful than language comparing humans to non-human animals. Human beings are generally attributed affect, behavior, and cognition. When compared to wild animals, dehumanized groups are denied cognition, but retain affect and behavior. However, when compared to disease or vermin, these groups are attributed only behavior, and denied both affect and cognition (Tipler and Ruscher 2014).

Dehumanization influences judgments of out-groups through multiple channels. The first channel is cognitive, through moral exclusion of dehumanized groups. Dehumanization allows individuals to morally disengage from reprehensible conduct by changing how they look at the victim of the conduct (Bandura 2002). When groups are dehumanized, they are excluded from the typical moral consideration given to other human beings (Haslam 2006). By denying cognition to dehumanized groups, individuals will view them as less capable of realizing they have been treated poorly, which leads to an increased willingness to punish these groups (Bandura, Underwood and Fromson 1975). Additionally, dehumanized groups are assigned

lower levels of worth than non-dehumanized groups, which allows individuals to morally justify harsh punitive conduct against those who are dehumanized (Bandura et al. 1996). Moral exclusion causes dehumanized groups "lose the capacity to evoke compassion and moral emotions, and … be treated as means toward vicious ends" (Haslam 2006, p.254).

The cognitive process of moral disengagement is not the only mechanism through which dehumanization should lead to harsher treatment of and attitudes towards out-groups. Dehumanization also frequently produces a negative emotional response towards groups that are dehumanized. Typically, dehumanization leads to increased disgust or contempt towards a dehumanized group (Haslam 2006). When comparing humans to other, lower-level organisms, the distinction between humans and other living things is reduced, leading people to think of basic traits like death and excretion, leading to feelings of being debased (Rozin, Haidt and McCauley 2000). At the same time, another group has been lowered beneath an individual's in-group, which leads to contempt (Miller 1997). Existing empirical work on dehumanization demonstrates that dehumanization decreases empathy (Andrighetto et al. 2014; Stevenson et al. 2014) towards dehumanized groups, and humanization increases empathy towards humanized groups (Costello and Hodson 2010).

On the topic of immigration, Esses, Medianu and Lawson (2013) find that Canadian political cartoons that are negative towards immigrants can lead individuals to express dehumanizing views of immigrants, and these views lead to contempt for immigrants. Beliefs about a conflictual relationship between immigrants and nationals also lead to contempt, which leads to negative attitudes towards immigrants (Louis, Esses and Lalonde 2014). Stereotyping groups who are considered to be low in both competence and warmth (a category that typically includes migrant workers) leads to judgments of contempt, disgust and anger towards these

groups (Fiske et al. 2002). Those higher in disgust sensitivity are more supportive of detaining illegal immigrants (Kam and Estes n.d.). Anger and disgust do not seem to be influenced by dehumanization of terrorists, though this could be because of high baseline levels of these emotions towards terrorists (Utych 2014a). While knowledge of the effects of emotional response to immigrants and dehumanization has made some strides, little has been done to study these emotional responses in tandem to determine the relative influence of each.

While emotions such as anger, disgust and fear are all negative, they have distinct consequences for political engagement. Anger tends to mobilize all forms of political participation, while fear only mobilizes relatively costless forms of participation (Valentino et al. 2011). Those who feel anger or aversion are more likely to rely on their dispositions, while those who are fearful or anxious will seek out new information (Marcus, Neuman and Mackuen 2000). Individuals who are disgusted with politics, however, are less likely to participate in politics (Vandenbroek 2011). Considering these distinct consequences of emotions, it is important to consider how each discrete negative emotion is influenced by the dehumanization of immigrants, and how these emotions mediate the relationship between dehumanization and anti-immigrant attitudes.

I first conduct a content analysis of articles in the *New York Times* around an especially contentious immigration debate to determine the prevalence of rhetoric that dehumanizes immigrants. Then, taking advantage of experimental data, I examine how dehumanization of immigrants through disease metaphors influences political attitudes. I expect that dehumanization of immigrants will lead to more negative attitudes towards immigrants. This relationship should be mediated by increased levels of negative emotions. Based on existing literature, I expect that dehumanization will lead to increased levels of anger and disgust. Also,

since I focus on dehumanization through disease metaphors, I expect that this will make individuals more fearful of immigrants.

Study 1 – Dehumanization of Immigrants in the *New York Times* – April and May 2010

To examine how frequently dehumanization of immigrants occurs in the media, I turn to analysis of language used in the *New York Times* in April and May 2010. This timing is especially useful in studying rhetoric about immigrants, as Arizona passed Senate Bill 1070, a restrictive immigration law, on April 23, 2010. This law gave police officers the right to check immigration status of anyone they suspect of being in the country illegally during any lawful stop they made. When this bill was enacted, it led to protests and boycotts of the entire state of Arizona from groups who were concerned that the bill would lead to racial profiling.

The rhetoric surrounding the bill was intense, and often dehumanizing. Republican Arizona State Senator Ron Gould, a supporter of the law, summed up his beliefs by saying "Essentially, we've given up American territory 60 miles from the border. People are living in no-man's land. They're being attacked by foreign invaders. They're being killed by drug smugglers. Arizona needs to do something."[41] Gould's language about foreign invaders falls in line with typical rhetoric used to dehumanize immigrants as invaders or disease.

In this analysis, I searched the Lexis-Nexis database for all mentions of immigration in the *New York Times* from April 1, 2010-May 31, 2010. Then, I retained articles which directly related to illegal immigration enforcement. This yielded a total of 79 news articles. 21 of these articles were editorial or opinion columns, and 58 were news articles. The articles were manually

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[41] Quoted in "Quotes from the debate on SB 1070 and others on the legislation" *The Arizona Daily Sun* 20 April 2010. http://azdailysun.com/quotes-from-the-debate-on-sb-and-others-on-the/article_b19e44b7-6484-5e60-97a5-062d3c47297b.html

coded for words used to describe immigrants (illegal, undocumented, or alien) and for different ways that immigrants can be dehumanized (as animals or vermin, as a virus, or as a disaster).

Language used to describe immigrants heavily focused on the term illegal, with this term used in 80% of all articles. Undocumented was used considerably more rarely, in only just over 15% of articles, while alien was used in just over 10% of articles. It appears the *New York Times* focused on referring to immigrants as illegal rather than undocumented during this debate, though use of the more strongly dehumanizing term alien occurred rather infrequently.

In general, dehumanizing language against immigrants was used rather frequently. Language used to dehumanize immigrants as animals, viruses, or compare them to natural disasters was used in 26 articles, or almost 1/3 of the sample. This occurred equally in both main section news articles and editorial or opinion columns. Of these instances, 16 were related animals or vermin, 4 to viruses, and 12 to natural disasters[42]. This language is often rather subtle, from talking about a "flood" of immigrants across the border, or the United States "absorbing" too many immigrants. Immigrants are often referred to as "prey" for those who wish to wrong them, or as creatures who must be "hunted" by law enforcement.

Occasionally, the dehumanizing language is even more pronounced. In a May 2 article, Frank Rich said of the immigration debate -- "Its hysteria is but another symptom of a political virus that can't be quarantined and whose cure is as yet unknown (2010)." Arizona Representative Jon Kavanaugh supported the law, quoted as saying "when the new tsunami of illegal immigration comes, we will be ready for them (Archibold 2010)." Even pro-immigrant speakers, such as Kenneth Tenebro, whose wife is an undocumented immigrant, use

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[42] Some articles dehumanized immigrants in multiple ways.

dehumanizing language. Tenebro said the visa process for undocumented immigrants married to U.S. citizens is "like the cheese in a mousetrap. It's like, hey, come and get it! And then, swat! They'll get you. (Preston 2010)."

Language used to dehumanize immigrants occurred frequently in *New York Times* articles surrounding the debate over Arizona's restrictive immigration law in 2010. The term "illegal" or "illegal immigrant" was used in a vast majority of all articles, and dehumanization of immigrants occurred in about a third of all articles. While this dehumanization was also subtle, the previous quotes show it was sometimes quite strong. This dehumanization is not limited simply to editorial articles or quotes, but is often embedded in the news story itself. Indeed, 15 of the 32 instances of dehumanization were in the writer of the article's voice in a news story. Dehumanization occurs frequently in the debate over immigration. Given this, it is important to consider what implications this rhetoric may have for public opinion and attitudes towards immigrants.

Study 2 – Dehumanization of Immigrants on Mechanical Turk

In this study, I conducted a brief experiment using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (mturk) in July 2014. Subjects were U.S. citizens over the age of 18 who were recruited from the mturk platform. They were paid 50 cents for their time spent completing the study, which took an average of roughly 3 minutes. Only non-Hispanic whites were retained for analysis, giving a total *N* of 237. The sample is a convenience sample, with participants ranging in age from 18-82, with a mean of 31. The sample was roughly 35% female, and highly educated, with 50% of subjects having a bachelor's degree or higher. In the study, subjects were asked a few demographic questions, and were then assigned to read one of two texts about immigration. The

text was negative towards immigration. Text from the first group did not contain dehumanizing language, while the second group received some words changed to dehumanize immigrants. In total, roughly 18% of the text was changed between the non-dehumanization and dehumanization groups. The full treatment texts are available in Appendix B.

Table 17. *Impact of Dehumanization on Immigration Attitudes – 2014 Mturk Survey*

	Increase Level of Immigrants	Increase Border Security	Support Amnesty for Illegal Immigrants
Dehumanization treatment	**-0.37+** (0.19)	**0.39*** (0.20)	**-0.65**** (0.21)
Age	-0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Female	0.26 (0.19)	-0.35+ (0.20)	0.27 (0.22)
Education	0.55 (0.45)	-0.26 (0.47)	0.38 (0.52)
Text realistic	-0.28 (0.39)	0.74+ (0.40)	-0.66 (0.44)
Text persuasive	-2.27** (0.35)	3.88** (0.36)	-3.47** (0.40)
Text unnatural	0.69+ (0.37)	-0.09 (0.39)	1.03* (0.42)
Constant	4.61** (0.52)	2.25** (0.54)	6.29** (0.59)
N	237	237	237
R^2	0.2875	0.4915	0.4275

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.
Sample restricted to non-Hispanic whites only
+ $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

After reading the text, subjects were asked to rate their agreement with a series of questions about immigration policy. These questions are related to increasing the level of legal immigration, increasing border security, and supporting a way for illegal immigrants to gain

legal status.[43] These results are presented in Table 17. Dehumanization has a significant impact on attitudes towards immigration. Subjects in the dehumanization treatment are about a third of a point less likely to believe the level of legal immigrants should be increased and a similar magnitude more likely to support increased border security than those in the non-dehumanization group. They are also nearly two-thirds of a point less likely to support an amnesty program granting legal status to illegal immigrants. These results suggest that, even on a hotly contested issue like immigration, even one short text dehumanizing immigrants as a virus or disease can have a negative influence on political attitudes.

Table 18. *Impact of Dehumanization on Emotional Responses to Immigrants - MTurk*

	Fear	Anger	Disgust
Dehumanization treatment	**0.11**	**0.14**	**0.26+**
	(0.10)	**(0.15)**	**(0.14)**
Age	0.01	0.00	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Female	-0.29**	-0.43**	-0.58**
	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Education	-0.10	-0.31	0.07
	(0.24)	(0.37)	(0.34)
Text realistic	0.05	0.12	0.30
	(0.21)	(0.32)	(0.29)
Text persuasive	0.73**	1.98**	1.46**
	(0.19)	(0.28)	(0.26)
Text unnatural	0.20	-0.23	-0.36
	(0.20)	(0.30)	(0.28)
Constant	1.06**	1.32**	0.92*
	(0.28)	(0.42)	(0.39)
N	237	237	237
R^2	0.1234	0.2855	0.2580

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses..
Sample restricted to non-Hispanic whites only
+ $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

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[43] Full question texts are available in Appendix C.

Subjects were also asked the extent to which they had an emotional response to illegal immigrants. This was measured on a five point scale, from "very slightly or not at all" (1) to "extremely" (5). Results of these analyses are presented in Table 18. Mean levels of these negative emotions were relatively low (1.52 for fear, 2.34 for anger, and 1.74 for disgust). Those in the dehumanization treatment were not different from the non-dehumanization group in self-reported feelings of fear or anger, though those in the dehumanization treatment were more likely to report feeling disgusted towards illegal immigrants. This effect is small, but is equivalent to a roughly 1/5 standard deviation increase in self-reported disgust.

Figure 6. *How Disgust Mediates the Effect of Dehumanization on Attitudes towards Immigrants – Study 2*
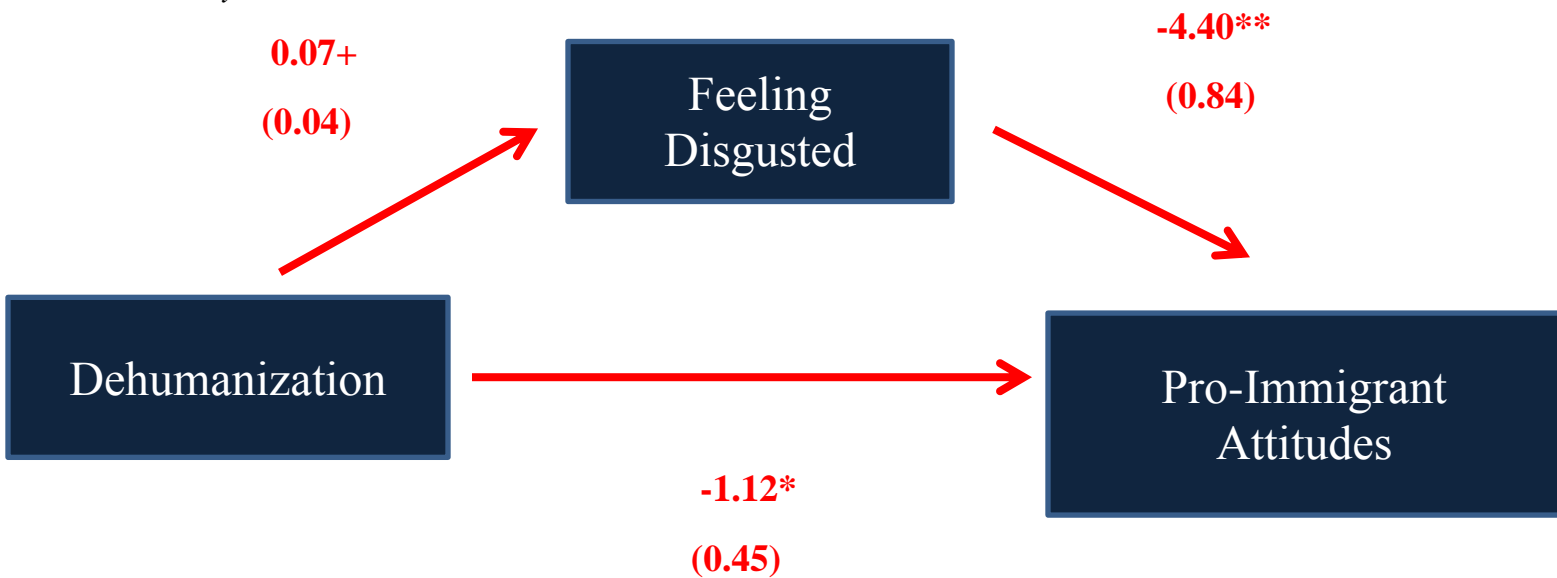
Sobel Coefficient: -0.29+   Proportion of total effect mediated: .204

(0.16)

+ p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

This emotional response should, in part, explain the effect of dehumanization on attitudes towards immigrations. To test this, I turn to a Sobel mediation analysis (Sobel 1982; Preacher and Leonardelli 2001) to determine the mediating effect of disgust on attitudes towards immigrants. First, I combine the three dependent variables in an additive scale ranging from 0-18, with 18 corresponding to the most pro-immigrant attitudes. This scale has high reliability (Cronbach's α = .81). Then, I conduct an analysis to determine how increased feelings of disgust mediate the effect of the dehumanization treatment on these attitudes. These results are presented in Figure 6. Here, dehumanization increases feelings of disgust, which in turn decreases the likelihood of an individual having pro-immigrant attitudes. Dehumanization retains a relatively large direct effect of over a point on the scale, though disgust itself has a rather large effect of over 4 points. Roughly 20% of the effect of dehumanization on attitudes towards immigrants is explained by increased feelings of disgust.

Dehumanization of immigrants through the disease metaphor influences attitudes towards immigrants directly by causing more negative attitudes towards immigrants, and indirectly by increasing self-reported levels of disgust towards immigrants. However, the current study uses a convenience sample. While there is no reason to expect the treatment to be more effective on younger people, men, or the highly educated, it would be beneficial to see how dehumanization influences a more representative sample.

A more problematic issue is with the measurement of disgust. In this sample, self-reported disgust and anger were highly correlated ($r = .765$), suggesting that anger and disgust are hard emotions to disentangle with self-reports. Indeed, Nabi (2002) finds that lay perceptions of disgust often combines elements of what psychologists consider to be anger and disgust. In a sample of undergraduates tasked with writing a short essay, roughly 75% of those assigned to

write about a time they felt disgust wrote about something that could be classified as anger, while only 25% wrote about something typically classified as disgust (Nabi 2002). To address these concerns, I turn to a similar study conducted on a representative sample of non-Hispanic whites.

Study 3 – Dehumanization of Immigrants – Survey Sampling International Study

Using the same treatment texts and group assignment as in study 1, I included an immigration dehumanization module on an omnibus study conducted in late July and early August 2014. Participants were recruited from Survey Sampling International's (SSI) survey panel. The entire survey took about 13 minutes, and participants were compensated with entries into SSI's prize drawings. Only non-Hispanic whites who are U.S. citizens and do not report having an immediate family member serving in the military were recruited for this study. Participants were sampled to be nationally representative on age, gender and education.

In this study, at total of 1,084 subjects were assigned to participate in the immigration experiment. They were assigned to receive a text that was negative towards immigrants, but not dehumanizing or a text that was negative towards immigrants and dehumanized them as a disease or toxin.[44] Subjects were then asked the same series of questions as in the Mturk study regarding their attitudes towards immigration, and a series of questions about their emotional responses towards illegal immigrants.

In this study, subjects were asked to rate illegal immigrants on a feeling thermometer. In these analyses, I have excluded the bottom and top 10% of all respondents on pre-existing

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[44] Treatment texts and variable wording are the same as in the Mturk study, and are available in Appendix B.

attitudes towards illegal immigrants.[45] The bottom 10% included only those rating illegal immigrants at 0 on the feeling thermometer, which comprises 18% of the sample, while the top 10% rated illegal immigrants at 80 degrees or higher[46]. For those rating illegal immigrants at 0, there is not likely to be any effect of dehumanization, as they already have a strong, negative affective response to illegal immigrants. Those with strong pre-existing positive beliefs about illegal immigrants, conversely, may reject any language that dehumanizes immigrants. As such, I have retained only those 72% of subjects who have more ambivalent attitudes towards illegal immigrants. This retains a total of 624 subjects for analysis. Results for the main dependent variables[47] using this restricted sample are presented in Table 19.

Here, the effect sizes of the dehumanization treatment are a bit smaller in magnitude than in Study 1, but dehumanization still has an effect on attitudes towards immigration. Compared to the non-dehumanization group, those in the dehumanization group are less likely to want to increase the number of legal immigrants and support a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants, and more likely to want to increase border security. As with the Mturk sample in study 1, this sample of non-Hispanic whites is influenced by dehumanization of immigrants.

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[45] There is no difference between treatment and control groups in the distribution of these respondents.
[46] Results are robust to setting an upper threshold of only those who rated illegal immigrants at 100 on the feeling thermometer, about 4.6% of all respondents.
[47] A total of 52 subjects who read the 100 word treatments in less than 2 seconds are excluded from analysis.

Table 19. *Impact of Dehumanization on Immigration Attitudes – 2014 SSI Survey*

	Increase Level of Immigrants	Increase Border Security	Support Amnesty for Illegal Immigrants
Dehumanization treatment	**-0.21+**	**0.21***	**-0.24+**
	(0.11)	**(0.09)**	**(0.12)**
Conservative	-0.18	0.13	-0.36*
	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.18)
Liberal	0.17	-0.42**	0.24
	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.17)
DK Ideology	0.04	-0.20	0.01
	(0.22)	(0.18)	(0.24)
Republican	0.10	0.18	-0.27
	(0.20)	(0.17)	(0.22)
Education	0.45+	-0.01	0.21
	(0.25)	(0.21)	(0.27)
Female	0.11	0.04	0.14
	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.13)
Political knowledge	-0.08	0.21	0.34
	(0.23)	(0.19)	(0.25)
Political news	-0.56*	-0.33	0.29
	(0.25)	(0.20)	(0.27)
FT Illegal Immigrants	2.17**	-2.16**	3.23**
	(0.29)	(0.24)	(0.31)
Text realistic	-1.50**	1.08**	-0.75*
	(0.32)	(0.26)	(0.34)
Text persuasive	-0.11	0.70**	-0.30
	(0.29)	(0.24)	(0.32)
Text unnatural	-0.02	-0.44*	-0.29
	(0.25)	(0.21)	(0.27)
Constant	2.27**	5.47**	2.06**
	(0.37)	(0.31)	(0.40)
N	624	624	624
R^2	0.2409	0.3606	0.2825

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses..

Sample excludes those who are in the top and bottom 10% on pre-existing attitudes towards illegal immigrants

+ $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table 20. *Impact of Dehumanization on Emotional Responses to Immigrants*

	Fear	Anger	Disgust	Immigrants Make Americans More Prone to Disease
Dehumanization treatment	**0.05**	**0.17***	**0.18***	**0.20+**
	(0.08)	**(0.08)**	**(0.09)**	**(0.12)**
Conservative	0.04	-0.03	-0.06	0.23
	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.18)
Liberal	-0.22*	-0.39**	-0.38**	-0.20
	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.16)
DK Ideology	0.03	-0.26	-0.11	-0.15
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.23)
Republican	-0.01	-0.09	-0.18	-0.06
	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.21)
Education	0.16	-0.23	-0.27	-0.06
	(0.17)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.26)
Female	0.06	-0.08	-0.09	-0.04
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.13)
Political knowledge	-0.42**	-0.31+	-0.39*	-0.78**
	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.24)
Political news	-0.15	-0.24	-0.43*	-0.53*
	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.26)
FT Illegal Immigrants	-0.75**	-2.85**	-2.44**	-2.31**
	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.22)	(0.30)
Text realistic	0.38+	0.42+	0.64**	1.13**
	(0.22)	(0.23)	(0.24)	(0.33)
Text persuasive	0.43*	0.89**	0.53*	0.57+
	(0.20)	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.31)
Text unnatural	0.62**	0.15	0.56**	-0.14
	(0.17)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.26)
Constant	1.59**	3.32**	2.95**	4.64**
	(0.25)	(0.27)	(0.29)	(0.39)
N	624	624	624	624
R^2	0.1230	0.3825	0.3017	0.2480

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses..
Sample excludes those who are in the top and bottom 10% on pre-existing attitudes towards illegal immigrants
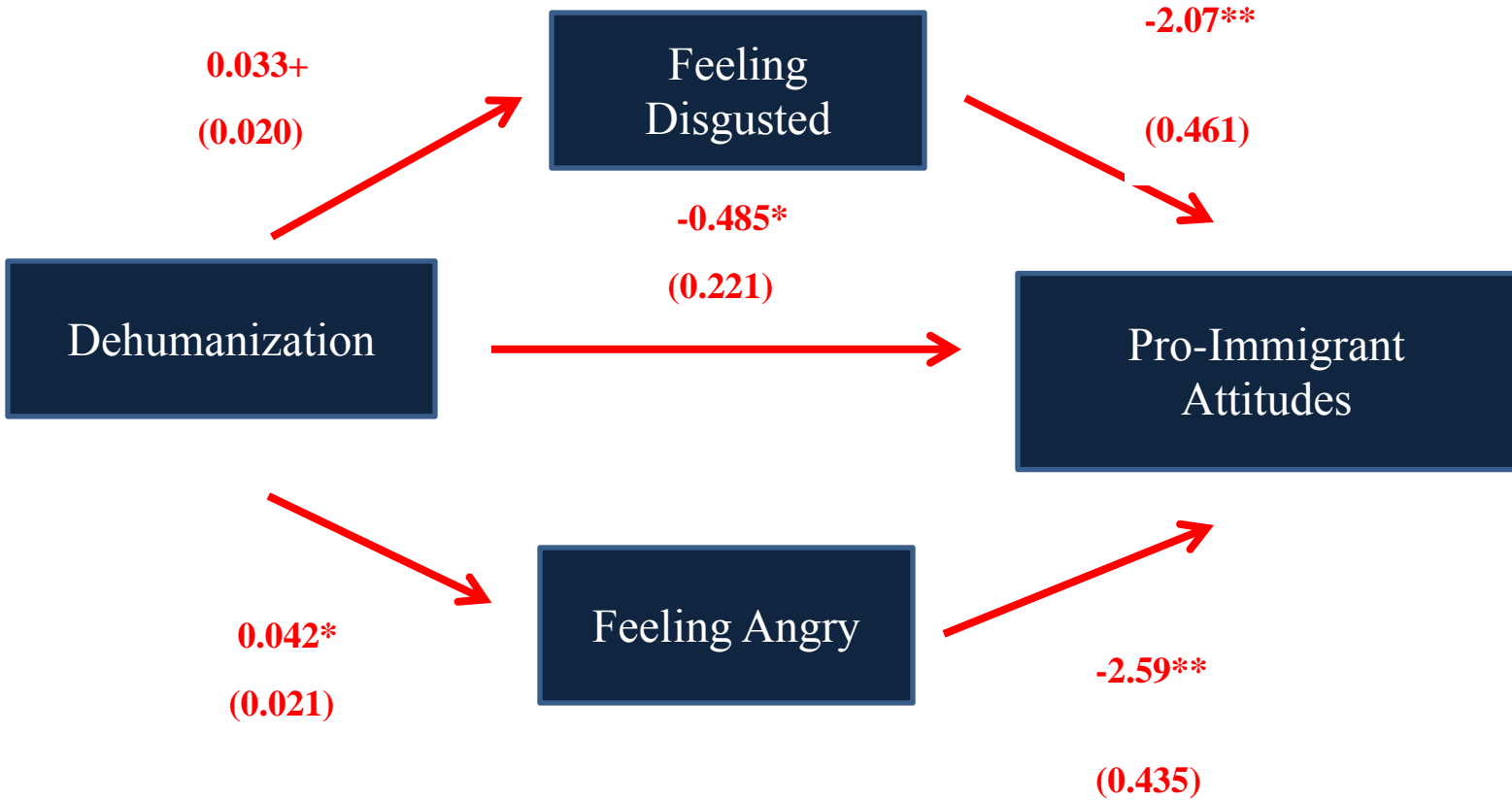+ $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table 20 demonstrates how dehumanizing immigrants leads to an emotional response towards illegal immigrants. Fear, anger and disgust were measured on the same five-point scale as in study 1. Again, these negative emotional responses had relatively low mean values (1.73 for

fear, 2.47 for anger, and 2.12 for disgust). Here, dehumanization leads to higher reported feelings of both anger and disgust, but not fear. Both anger and disgust increase about 1/5 of a point on a five-point scale for the dehumanization treatment, compared to the non-dehumanization treatment. Again, anger and disgust are highly correlated in this sample ($r = .719$), suggesting that self-reported disgust may be tapping feelings of anger rather than disgust. To address this concern, I also asked respondents to indicate, on a seven-point scale, whether immigrants make Americans more prone to infectious diseases. This measure helps tap the idea of contamination disgust, which helps alleviate concerns about the lack of a lay distinction between disgust and anger (see Kam and Estes n.d.). This measure is still correlated with feelings of anger, though considerably less so than the self-reported disgust measure ($r = .458$). Further, it is still able to tap an element of disgust where illegal immigrants are clearly the target of the emotional response. Those in the dehumanization treatment are more likely to report that they believe immigrants make Americans prone to infectious disease, though the effect is small, only about 1/5 of a scale point.

To determine how emotional response mediates the effect of dehumanization on attitudes, and to determine how anger and disgust operate differently, I again turn to a Sobel mediation analysis (Sobel 1982). Since this analysis uses two mediating variables, I perform the mediation analysis according to Preacher and Hayes (2008). I again recode the three immigration attitude variables into an additive scale ranging from 0-18 (Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$). Anger is measured through self-reported measures, while disgust is measured through the question on how much the respondent agrees that immigrants make Americans more prone to infectious diseases. Both variables are recoded from 0-1, with 1 indicating higher levels of the emotional response. This analysis is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7. *How Disgust and Anger Mediate the Effect of Dehumanization on Attitudes towards Immigrants – Study 3*

Indirect effect of Anger: -0.110+   Proportion of total effect mediated: .269

                                                       (0.057)

Indirect effect of Disgust: -0.068^

                                                       (0.043)

Total indirect effect: -0.178*

                                                       (0.078)

^ p<.12, + p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Both anger and disgust have a mediating effect on how dehumanization influences attitudes towards immigrants. Anger has a bit larger of an indirect effect than disgust, and both have relatively strong negative effects on attitudes towards immigrants. The direct effect of dehumanization persists, equivalent to about a half point decrease on the scale of pro-immigrant attitudes. Roughly 27% of the total effect of the dehumanization treatment on attitudes towards immigrants is mediated by feelings of anger and disgust.

Table 21. *Impact of Dehumanization of Immigrants and Name of Smugglers on Attitudes towards Punishment*

	Support Harsher Punishment
Dehumanization treatment	**0.27***
	(0.12)
Coyote treatment	**0.33****
	(0.12)
Dehumanization x Coyote	**-0.41***
	(0.17)
Text realistic	0.57*
	(0.22)
Text persuasive	0.49*
	(0.21)
Text unnatural	-0.26
	(0.17)
FT Illegal Immigrants	-1.75**
	(0.15)
Constant	5.55**
	(0.17)
N	1030
R^2	0.1986

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses..
+ $p<0.10$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Finally, in this survey, I took advantage of the common term "coyote," which refers to individuals who transport immigrants illegally into the United States (and frequently exploit them) to conduct an additional question wording experiment. I asked subjects the following

question, and manipulated whether these sumgglers were called "coyotes" or "persons." The question text is as follows:

"Would you favor or oppose harsher punishment for [**coyotes/persons**] who are paid by undocumented immigrants to bring them into the United States?"

Here, I analyze results from all survey respondents[48], as I do not necessarily expect that pre-existing attitudes towards illegal immigrants will bias how individuals feel about those who transport illegal immigrants into the U.S. should be punished. These results are presented in Table 21. As expected, the coyote treatment has a positive direct effect, though only for those in the non-dehumanization treatment group. In the non-dehumanization group, individuals believe about 1/3 of a point more strongly that individuals should be punished more harshly for transporting immigrants when they are called "coyotes" compared to when they are called "persons." However, this effect disappears in the group where immigrants have been dehumanized. Those in the control group are actually about 1/10 of a scale point more supportive of harsher punishment, though this effect is not distinguishable from zero. Those in the dehumanization group also are more supportive of harsher punishments generally (about a ¼ point difference, comparing those who receive the "persons" language only). The term "coyotes" itself is a dehumanizing term, comparing those transporting immigrants to wild, predatory animals. It appears that, when immigrants are not dehumanized, dehumanizing a group who takes advantage of them encourages harsher punishment. However, when immigrants are dehumanized, it appears that respondents prefer punishment generally, but dehumanizing the

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[48] Excluding again the 52 subjects who read the treatment text page in less than 2 seconds.

individuals who transport immigrants across the border does not have an effect on the level of punishment they support.

As in Study 2, dehumanization influences attitudes towards immigrants negatively. In this study, I am able to better isolate the discrete emotional responses to dehumanization of immigrants as a disease, and find that both disgust and anger partially mediate the effect of dehumanization on attitudes towards immigrants. This falls in line with existing work on dehumanization that suggests contempt and disgust are the emotional mechanisms through which dehumanization operates, and extends upon this work by testing each emotional response concurrently. The dehumanizing term "coyote" can have some *positive* consequences for illegal immigrants, as this language leads to increased support for harsher punishment for individuals who smuggle immigrants across the border, often exploiting them and putting their lives at risk. However, I find that this effect only persists in instances where illegal immigrants have not already been dehumanized.

Summary and Conclusions

Philosopher Martha Nussbaum explains dehumanization by saying that "People find a group of humans onto whom they can project the discomfort they feel about their own bodies, calling them smelly, slimy, disgusting" (2008, p.85). Media portrayals of immigrants have long followed this formula (O'Brien 2003; Cisneros 2008). I find that dehumanizing immigrants by portraying them as a virus or disease leads to more negative attitudes towards immigrants and more restrictive policy preferences. The impact of dehumanization is mediated by the emotional responses of disgust and anger. Using a nationally representative survey, I further find that anger and fear have distinct consequences for policy preferences and attitudes on immigration.

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This research has implications for scholars of political psychology and language in politics. Using language that dehumanizes out-groups leads to harsher evaluations of those groups, and predicts more restrictive policy preferences. While these effects are small, they are based only on a single instance of dehumanization of the out-group. Many groups, such as terrorists, are dehumanized with a relatively high frequency by political elites (Utych 2014). As dehumanization of out-groups occurs more frequently, it may lead to increasingly negative attitudes towards these groups among the public.

There are also implications for those who study how emotions mediate the role of political rhetoric. In this study, I use a measure of disgust that is more distinguishable from anger than a self-report, and am able to examine distinct emotional responses to dehumanization together in the same study. I show that anger and disgust both mediate the effect of dehumanization on attitudes, suggesting that the emotional response to dehumanizing language is relatively complex. This could explain why scholars have found such varied emotional mediation mechanisms in previous research on dehumanization. It's clear that dehumanization leads to a negative affective response to out-groups, but it is unclear which responses are triggered in which types of individuals. Future research could examine how dehumanization influences individuals high in trait aggression and disgust sensitivity in different ways.

Dehumanization is a normatively troubling concept. When a group is referred to as vermin or disease, they are denied the human traits of affect and cognition. This leads to preferences that are in line with how individuals would treat a disease or infestation – through extermination or eradication (Tipler and Ruscher 2014). These troubling metaphors are shockingly similar to those used in Nazi Germany (Russell 1996). Given that dehumanization has historically led to catastrophic consequences for dehumanized groups, it is important for both

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scholars and practitioners of politics to understand how this language operates and the serious

consequences it may have for marginalized groups.

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Appendix A. Question Wording of Public Opinion Polls

Appendix A1. Public Opinion polls used in Chapter 1

ABC News

- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?"
  *"Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bush is handling the situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein?" before 4/03
- "All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war with Iraq was worth fighting, or not?"
- "Considering everything, do you think the United States did the right thing in going to war with Iraq, or do you think it was a mistake?"
- "Do you think the United States has gotten bogged down in Iraq, or do you think the United States is making good progress in Iraq?"
- "Thinking about the next 12 months, would you say you feel optimistic or pessimistic about the situation in Iraq?"
- "Do you support or oppose the current U.S. military presence in Iraq?"
- "Do you support or oppose the United States having gone to war with Iraq?"
  *"Would you support or oppose the United States going to war with Iraq?" prewar
- "Would you favor or oppose having U.S. forces take military action against Iraq to force Saddam Hussein from power?"
- "Do you think the Bush Administration has or has not presented enough evidence to show why the United States should use military force to remove Saddam Hussein from power?"
- "Would you support or oppose a U.S. invasion of Iraq with ground troops?"

Associated Press

- "When it comes to the situation in Iraq, do you approve or disapprove or have mixed feelings about the way George W. Bush is handling that issue?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?"

CBS News

- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?"
- "Looking back, do you think the United States did the right thing in taking military action against Iraq, or should the U.S. have stayed out?"
- "How would you say things are going for the U.S. in its efforts to bring stability and order to Iraq? Would you say things are going very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the United States' current occupation of Iraq?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the United States taking military action against Iraq to try to remove Saddam Hussein from power?"

Chicago Tribune

- "Do you favor or oppose taking U.S. military action against Iraq?"

CNN

- "All in all, do you think it was worth going to war in Iraq, or not?"
  *"All in all, do you think the current situation in Iraq is worth going to war over, or not?" until 6/03
- "Do you favor or oppose the U.S. war with Iraq?"
- "In the long run, do you think the U.S. war with Iraq will end up creating more problems than it solves or will end up solving more problems than it creates?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the United States' decision to go to war with Iraq in March 2003?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?"
- "Would you favor or oppose invading Iraq with U.S. ground troops in an attempt to remove Saddam Hussein from power?"

Fox News

- "Do you think going to war with Iraq was the right thing for the United States to do or the wrong thing?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the job George W. Bush is doing handling the situation with Iraq?"
- "Do you support or oppose the United States having taken military action to disarm Iraq and remove Iraqi President Saddam Hussein?"
  * "Do you support or oppose the United States taking military action to disarm Iraq and remove Iraqi President Saddam Hussein?" Pre-War

Gallup

- "Do you favor or oppose the U.S. war with Iraq?"

Investor's Business Daily

- "Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the U.S. military action in Iraq? Would you say you support it strongly, support it somewhat, oppose it somewhat, or oppose it strongly?"
- "And generally speaking, how satisfied are you with the current administration's Iraq policies? Would you say that you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied?"

Los Angeles Times

- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?"
- "All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?"
- "Suppose President George W. Bush decides to order U.S. troops into a ground attack against Iraqi forces. Would you support or oppose that decision?"

Newsweek

- ". . . Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?"
- "From what you know now, do think the United States did the right thing in taking military action against Iraq last year, or not?"
- "In the fight against terrorism, the Bush Administration has talked about using military force against Saddam Hussein and his military in Iraq. Would you support using military force against Iraq, or not?"
- "Please tell me whether or not you would support the following kinds of U.S. military action against Iraq and Saddam Hussein. What about Sending in large #s of ground troops? Would you support this kind of military action or not? "

Pew

- "Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force in Iraq?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?"

Program on International Policy (University of Maryland)

- "Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in going to war against Iraq?"

Quinnipiac University

- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?"
- "Do you think going to war with Iraq was the right thing for the United States to do or the wrong thing?"

Time Magazine

- "Do you approve or disapprove of the job President Bush is doing in each of these areas? Handling the situation in Iraq."
- "Do you think the United States was right or wrong in going to war with Iraq?"

- "Do you think President Bush is doing a good job or a poor job handling the situation in Iraq?"
- "In general, do you approve or disapprove of current military policy in Iraq?"
- "Do you think the U.S. should or should not use military action involving ground troops to attempt to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq?"

University of Pennsylvania

- "All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?"

USA Today

- "In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Iraq, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq, or not?"
- "In general, how would you say things are going for the U.S. in Iraq: very well, moderately well, moderately badly, or very badly?"
- "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?"

Zogby International

- "Currently, would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a war against Iraq?"

Appendix A2. Question Wording of Civilian Casualty Questions (Chapter 2)

ABC News/Washington Post

January and February 1991 (2 polls)

Do you think US bombers should pass up some possible military targets if Iraqi civilians might be killed, or not?

February 1991

Which comes closest to your own view, the US (should be making a greater effort, is making enough of an effort, is making too much of an effort) to avoid bombing civilian areas in Iraq?

Do you think the US should stop bombing the city of Baghdad in order to avoid civilian deaths?

And which of the following do you think the US military should do?

Bomb the hotel even if reporters and other guests are killed

Announce a deadline to leave, then bomb if still there

Do not bomb if any reporters or other guests might be killed

April and May, 1998 (2 polls)

As you may know, some civilians have been killed in the air strikes against Serbia, and recently the NATO allies bombed the Chinese consulate in Serbia's capital. Do you think the United States and its European allies are not being careful enough to avoid civilian casualties, or do you think there are just unavoidable accidents of war?

March 2003 (2 polls)

In its efforts to try to avoid civilian casualties in Iraq, do you think the United States is doing too much, too little, or about the right amount?

March 2003

Do you think the United States should strike Iraqi military targets even if they're located in areas where civilians might be killed, or should the United States avoid striking Iraqi military targets located in civilian areas?

June 2006

Some U.S. forces in Iraq have been accused of intentionally killing Iraqi civilians. Do you think this represents a few isolated cases, or do you think it's more widespread than that?

What's your own personal reaction to these alleged killings of Iraqi civilians - would you say you're (not concerned about it; concerned but not upset; upset but not angry; or angry about it)?

American National Election Study

1991 ANES

Some people say there should be no bombing of targets near where civilians live because it is immoral to risk innocent lives. Others say such bombing may be necessary in wartime. Which of these is closest to your position:

1. STRONGLY FEEL THERE SHOULD BE NO BOMBING NEAR CIVILIANS

2. NOT SO STRONGLY FEEL THERE SHOULD BE NO BOMBING NEAR

CIVILIANS

3. NEITHER/BOTH

4. NOT SO STRONGLY FEEL SUCH BOMBING MAY BE NECESSARY IN WARTIME

5. STRONGLY FEEL SUCH BOMBING MAY BE NECESSARY IN WAR TIME

Americans Talk Security Project

September 1988

If you had to make a decision about using the American military, how important would each of the following factors be to you- very important, somewhat important, or not very important?

The number of civilians that might be killed in the area of combat

Associated Press

June 2006

Would you say, the United States military...is doing about all it can to prevent the killing of civilians in Iraq or could do more than it is doing now to prevent the killing of civilians in Iraq

February 2007

When you hear about the deaths of civilians in Iraq, do you personally tend to feel upset, or more that their deaths are unfortunate but part of what war is all about?

Has there been an acceptable or unacceptable number of Iraqi civilian casualties in Iraq?

CBS News/New York Times

January 1991

Should American bombers attack all military targets in Iraq including those in heavily populated areas where civilians may be killed?

1998

Suppose military action in Iraq would result in substantial Iraqi civilian casualties, then would you favor or oppose the United States using its military to bomb targets in Iraq?

September 2001

Do you think the U.S. SHOULD take military action against whoever is responsible for the attacks, even if it means that innocent people are killed?

What if that meant that many thousands of innocent civilians may be killed, then do you think the United States should take military action against whoever is responsible for the attacks?

Gallup

October – November 1986

Should the US use military force against terrorist orgs or nations that harbor terrorists even if there is a risk that civilians may be killed?

February 1998

If Saddam Hussein places Iraqi civilians at sites which he thinks the U.S. might attack, do you think the U.S. should attack those sites anyway, or should the U.S. refrain from attacking those sites?

First, would you favor or oppose taking military action to force Saddam Hussein from power if it would result in substantial casualties among Iraqi civilians

August 1998

If it turns out the U.S. military attacks results in civilian casualties -- which of the following statements would come closer to your view

1 Civilian casualties are regrettable, but the U.S. was right to attack

2 The US should not have attacked unless it was certain there would be no civilian casualties

October 2001

There have been reports recently about civilian casualties in Afghanistan as a result of the U.S. military action there. Which comes closer to your view

1 These civilian casualties are an unavoidable aspect of war, (or)

2 These civilian casualties could have been avoided if the U.S. took proper care

March 2003

Which comes closer to your view about the U.S. military's approach to avoiding Iraqi civilian casualties

1 The U.S. military is taking too many precautions and as a result are putting U.S. troops at unnecessary risk,

2 The U.S. military is taking too few precautions and are causing unnecessary Iraqi civilian deaths,

3 About right

Gallup/CNN/USA Today

June 1993

Do you think it was right to take this military action even if the US knew ahead of time that there were likely to be civilian casualties?

Gallup/Newsweek

February 1991

Should allied forces attack Iraqi military targets even if it is known that civilians are at or near the sites to further weaken Iraqi capabilities?

Gallup/Times Mirror

April-May 1987

Should the US use military force against terrorist organizations or nations that harbor terrorists even if there is a risk that civilians may be killed?

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: American lives are worth more than the lives of people in other countries

Knowledge Networks Faith Poll

2011

Is it a spiritual obligation to seek to prevent innocent civilians from dying in war?

Los Angeles Times

February 1991

Do you feel what the U.S. has accomplished in the war against Iraq so far has been worth the number of deaths and injuries suffered by civilians in the war zone, or not?

Some people have charged that Saddam Hussein is hiding Iraq's military equipment and armed forces in areas populated by civilians. If that's the case, do you think the U.S. is justified in attacking those areas or should the U.S. avoid attacking them?

April 2003

As you may know, the Iraqi military is using Iraqi citizens as human shields at some strategic sites in an attempt to keep the United States from bombing those sites. The United States military is trying not to bomb areas where civilians are being used by the Iraqi military as human shields. Which of these statements comes closer to your view:

"Even though this is war, the U.S. military is doing the right thing in trying not to bomb areas where Iraqi civilians are being used as human shields,"

or
"This is war, so the U.S. military should bomb any Iraqi military position they think is necessary, regardless of whether Iraqi civilians are being used as human shields" ?

Would you say the war in Iraq was successful if it removed Saddam Hussein from power and fewer than 100 Iraqi civilians were killed in battle, or would you not say it was successful in that case?

  (IF YES) Would you still say it was successful if up to 500 Iraqi civilians were killed in battle?

  (IF YES) Up to 1000?

  (IF YES) Up to 5000?

  (IF YES) Would you say that the military action against Iraq had been successful if Saddam Hussein was removed from power, no matter what it costs in Iraqi civilian casualties?

NBC News/Wall Street Journal

October 2001

Do you think that combating terrorism is worth risking civilian casualties in Afghanistan, or do you think that it is not worth risking civilian casualties?

March 2003

Which comes closer to your view?

Statement A: The U.S military should do everything it can to minimize Iraqi civilian casualties, even if it means taking longer to achieve our objectives.

OR

Statement B: The U.S. military should use whatever force necessary to achieve our objectives as quickly as possible, even if it means more Iraqi civilian casualties.

Pew Research Center

April 1999

How worried are you that Serbian civilians are being hurt or killed by U.S. and NATO air strikes— very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

September 1999/July 2003

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: American lives are worth more than the lives of people in other countries

November 2001/ March 2003

What do you worry about more when the United States uses military force:

1 That the U.S. doesn't do enough to avoid civilian casualties

OR

2 That the U.S. doesn't go far enough to achieve military victory

October 2002, February 2003, March-April 2003 (3 polls)

Thinking about a possible war with Iraq, how worried are you that many Iraqi civilians might be killed– a great deal, a fair amount, or not much?

February 2013

How concerned are you, if at all, about whether U.S. drone strikes endanger the lives of innocent civilians? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

Princeton Survey Research Associates

January 2003

Please tell me whether you think each of the following is a good reason, or is NOT a good reason AGAINST going to war with Iraq. What about this possible reason - It will result in many innocent Iraqi civilians being killed or seriously injured. Is this a good reason or NOT a good reason (against going to war with Iraq)?

July, August 2003 (3 polls)

Which of the following steps, if any, would you support in response to the attacks on U.S. military personnel and other targets by anti-American forces in Iraq since major combat ended?

> More aggressive action by U.S. forces to stop the violence, even if it means greater risk of civilian casualties

Princeton Survey Research Associates/Newsweek

September 2001 (2 polls)

Thinking about a possible U.S. military response to the terrorist attacks on September 11th, would you favor or oppose attacking terrorist bases and the countries that allow or support them EVEN IF there is a high likelihood of civilian casualties?

September 2001

How effective do you think each of the following would be in preventing terrorist attacks in the future? Military strikes against terrorist targets, even if there might be civilian casualties

March 2003

Please tell me which ONE of the following two options you would choose for U.S. military action in the Iraq war, if it were up to you

1) More aggressive military action that would increase the risk of high Iraqi civilian casualties but might lead to a shorter war

OR...

2) More safeguards that would reduce the risk of high Iraqi civilian casualties but might lead to a longer war?

Program on International Policy Attitudes

October-December 2006

Is attacking civilians ever justified?

1 Never

2 Rarely

3 Sometimes

4 Often

<u>Times Mirror</u>

January and March 1991 (2 polls)

How worried are you that many Iraqi civilians might be killed?

A great deal, a fair amount, not much

<u>Washington Post</u>

September 2001 (2 polls)

What if it meant innocent civilians in other countries might be hurt or killed - in that case would you support or oppose taking military action? Would you support/oppose that STRONGLY or SOMEWHAT?

Appendix B. Experimental Treatment Texts

Appendix B2. Target of War Experiment Texts (Chapter 2)

*Imagine that the United States had credible intelligence about the location of al-Qaeda leaders hiding in [**the Middle East/Eastern Europe**]. Military experts predict a drone strike on the building where they are living would be incredibly likely to succeed and cripple al-Qaeda's capabilities.*

To what extent do you support the United States conducting this drone strike?

Strongly Oppose						Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Now, imagine that experts predict 100 [**Middle Eastern/Eastern European**] civilians would be killed in this strike. To what extent do you support the United States conducting this drone strike?

Strongly Oppose						Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Now, imagine that that these civilian casualties can be eliminated by using a special forces team. The use of special forces is equally likely to kill the al-Qaeda leaders as the drone strike. However, if the special forces team is used, experts predict that 2 of the 20 American soldiers in the special forces unit will be killed. To what extent do you support the United States using special forces in this operation?

Strongly Oppose						Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix B3. Treatment Texts – Study 2 (Chapter 3)

Imagine now that the United States is considering a foreign military intervention as part of the War on Terrorism. Please read the following text from a supporter of intervention.

Non-dehumanization treatment

The United States must do whatever it can to *stop terrorism* around the world. If a country becomes a *safe haven* for terrorists, we are responsible for going in there and *combating* the threat. Over a decade ago, we made a commitment to *catch terrorists*, wherever they are, and we must not stop until we have accomplished that goal. These terrorists, these *criminals,* they do not deal in diplomacy. *We are facing a serious threat, and we must take action to prevent it.*

Dehumanization treatment

The United States must do whatever it can to *crush terrorist cells* around the world. If a country becomes a *breeding ground* for terrorists, we are responsible for going in there and *exterminating* the threat. Over a decade ago, we made a commitment to *hunt down these wolves,* wherever they are, and we must not stop until we have accomplished that goal. These terrorists, these *creatures*, they do not deal in diplomacy. *We have a rattlesnake in the garden, and we must go in and chop off its head.*

Appendix B4. Treatment Texts (Chapter 4)

Non-dehumanization text

I understand that immigration has become a *controversial* issue these days. However, the *movement* of immigrants across our border must be *controlled*. Our nation is *negatively impacted* by illegal immigration; this *situation* is getting worse, not better. Some have suggested amnesty as a *solution*; I believe this is a *solution that just exacerbates the problem*. Offering amnesty will not *end* the problem of illegal immigration – it will only make our country *let in* more immigrants. We have to *address* this problem at its *location*. Only increased border security and deportation will serve to *control* the *danger* of illegal immigration.

Dehumanization text

I understand that immigration has become a *toxic* issue these days. However, the *transmission* of immigrants across our border must be *contained*. *The body of* our nation is *plagued* by illegal immigration; this *disease* is getting worse, not better. Some have suggested amnesty as a *cure*; I believe this is a *remedy that kills the patient*. Offering amnesty will not *eradicate* the problem of illegal immigration – it will only make our country *absorb* more immigrants. We have to *attack* this problem at its *nucleus*. Only increased border security and deportation will serve to *quarantine* the *poison of* illegal immigration.

Appendix C. Question Wordings

Appendix C2. Opposition to Harm Scale Question Wording

People should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree (Forysth 1980)

It is sometimes necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others (R) (Forysth 1980)

One should never psychologically or physically harm another person (Forysth 1980)

The existence of potential harm to others is not always wrong, depending on benefits to be gained (R) (Forysth 1980)

It can never be right to kill a human being (Haidt and Joseph 2004)

I hate to see anyone suffer, even my worst enemy (Park, Peterson and Seligman 2004)

I am willing to harm others, if it benefits me (R) (Park, Peterson and Seligman 2004)

One cannot place a monetary value on human life (Utych)

Appendix C3. Question Text – Civilian Casualties Estimates – Study 1 (Chapter 3)

What is your best estimate of the number of Afghan civilians who were killed in the war in Afghanistan from 2001-2013?

Low Condition

Less than 500

More than 500, but less than 1000

More than 1000, but less than 2000

More than 2000, but less than 5000

More than 5000, but less than 10000

More than 10000

High Condition

Less than 5000

More than 5000, but less than 10000

More than 10000, but less than 20000

More than 20000, but less than 50000

More than 50000, but less than 100000

More than 100000

Appendix C4. Question texts (Chapter 4)

Dependent variables – Study 1 and 2

Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be INCREASED, LEFT THE SAME as it is now, or DECREASED?

Decreased a lot   Increased a lot

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Would you favor or oppose legislation to increase border security in order to make it more difficult for individuals to enter the country illegally?

Strongly Oppose   Strongly Favor

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Would you favor or oppose legislation that would allow undocumented immigrants already in the country to apply for legal status?

Strongly Oppose   Strongly Favor

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Disgust measure – Study 2

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Illegal immigrants make Americans more prone to infectious diseases

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix D. Supplemental Analyses

Table D1. *Descriptive Statistics – Public Opposition to War (Post invasion only)*

	N days	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Overall	635	42.59	8.21	20.67	54.67
Number of Polls	*635*	*8.86*	*5.45*	*1*	*42*
		Partisan Identification			
Democrats	567	66.25	12.17	34.1	84
Republicans	567	15.13	5.96	5.3	37
Independents	567	45.80	8.47	23.2	58
Number of Polls	*567*	*3.80*	*2.45*	*1*	*15*

- All Public Opinion data is average public opinion (in %) for the next 15 days

Table D2. *The influence of elite rhetoric on opposition to the Iraq War (2003-2004) (by party identification)*

	Public Opposition to War (Democrats)	Public Opposition to War (Independents)	Public Opposition to War (Republicans)
American Military Deaths	0.34**	0.46**	0.25*
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.10)
American Civilian Deaths	-0.54**	-0.49**	0.11
	(0.16)	(0.13)	(0.18)
Iraqi Civilian Deaths	0.08	-1.00**	-0.75**
	(0.26)	(0.22)	(0.29)
Deaths Caused by Saddam Hussein	-0.20	0.13	-0.14
	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.15)
Days since Start of War	0.05**	0.03**	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Casualty News Coverage – Major Newspapers	-0.08	0.10*	0.02
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Military Casualties Last 30 Days	-0.01	-0.03*	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
After Main Combat	11.05**	11.25**	8.11**
	(1.47)	(1.23)	(1.61)
Abu Ghraib	2.83*	4.04**	4.54**
	(1.44)	(1.20)	(1.57)
Saddam Capture	-8.32**	-9.47**	-8.62**
	(1.52)	(1.27)	(1.66)
Emergency Supplemental Debate (October 2003)	5.60**	-0.52	-1.83
	(1.73)	(1.44)	(1.89)
Proportion of Speeches Supporting War	5.22**	2.81**	-3.91**
	(1.02)	(0.84)	(1.11)
Constant	38.06**	24.58**	8.35**
	(1.71)	(1.42)	(1.86)
N	408	408	408
R^2	0.8450	0.7933	0.3591

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses

Data includes only dates where Senate was in session at least once within the previous 15 days

Disapproval measured as average of polls over next 15 days

+ p<0.1, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Table D3. Granger Causality Tests of Senate Speeches and Public Opinion (one lag)

	F Statistic	P>F (Not Granger Caused by Public Opinion)
American Military Deaths	1.19	.275
American Civilian Deaths	3.46	.064
Iraqi Civilian Deaths	1.40	.237
Deaths Caused by Saddam Hussein	.23	.629
Enemy Combatant Deaths	.01	.901

Table D4. Public Opinion Analyses with Lagged DV

	7 day lagged public opinion	15 day lagged public opinion
American Military Deaths	**0.01**	**0.04**
	(0.04)	**(0.06)**
American Civilian Deaths	**-0.18****	**-0.27****
	(0.07)	**(0.09)**
Iraqi Civilian Deaths	**0.26***	**0.41****
	(0.11)	**(0.14)**
Deaths Caused by Saddam Hussein	**-0.11***	**-0.18****
	(0.05)	**(0.07)**
Days since Start of War	0.01**	0.02**
	(0.00)	(0.00)
Casualty News Coverage – Major Newspapers	0.01	-0.01
	(0.03)	(0.04)
Military Casualties Last 30 Days	0.00	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)
After Main Combat	4.51**	8.01**
	(0.82)	(1.20)
Abu Ghraib	1.56*	2.89**
	(0.62)	(0.82)
Saddam Capture	-2.48**	-5.21**
	(0.65)	(0.83)
Emergency Supplemental Debate (October 2003)	2.15**	3.84**
	(0.71)	(0.93)
Proportion of Speeches Supporting War	0.81*	1.22*
	(0.40)	(0.55)
Lagged Public Opinion	0.70**	0.42**
	(0.03)	(0.05)
Constant	5.68**	11.21**
	(1.05)	(1.41)
N	459	451
R^2	0.9389	0.8857

Table entries are OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses
Data includes only dates where at least one speech on the Iraq War made within the previous 15 days
+ $p<0.1$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$