



AMERICAN OPINION ON TRADE

PREFERENCES WITHOUT POLITICS

ALEXANDRA GUISINGER

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To my boys . . . David, Oliver, and Simon

CONTENTS

List of Figures ix
List of Tables xiii
Acknowledgments xv

CHAPTER 1 Introduction 1
CHAPTER 2 The Changing Landscape of Trade and Trade Knowledge 13
CHAPTER 3 Trade Preferences and Politics 37
CHAPTER 4 Economic Vulnerability, Self-Interest, and Individual Trade Preferences 78
CHAPTER 5 Community and Trade Preferences 109
CHAPTER 6 Racial Diversity and White Americans' Support for Trade Protection 140
CHAPTER 7 Politicians, the Media, and Negative Perceptions of Trade's National Effect 174
CHAPTER 8 Could Positive Information Shift National-Level Beliefs? 200
CHAPTER 9 Conclusions 231

References 271
Index 289

LIST OF FIGURES

- 2.1. Total US trade as a percentage of US GDP (1960 to 2012) 15
- 2.2. US trade balance (1960 to 2012) 15
- 2.3. Manufacturing jobs in absolute numbers and as a percentage of total non-agricultural jobs (1960 to 2012) 17
- 2.4. Comparison of Canada, China, and Japan in terms of percent of US trade (1986 to 2012) 19
- 2.5. Percent of counties with high concentrations of trade-related manufacturing employment (1986 to 2006) 22
- 2.6. Trends in time: increased trade flows and increasing consumer prices (1986 to 2012) 24
- 2.7. Party position and trade's salience in US elections (1920 to 2012) 29
- 2.8. Vote on trade bills by party (key congressional votes, 1970–2012) 32
- 2.9. Vote on trade treaties by party (key congressional votes, 1970–2012) 32
- 2.10. The salience of trade policy relative to other ideological and economic issues 34
 - 3.1. Americans' beliefs about the effect of trade on employment 38
 - 3.2. Post-2008 financial crisis beliefs about the effect of trade on employment 39
 - 3.3. Perceived benefits from trade, ambiguity, and preferences for trade protection 57
 - 3.4. Employment beliefs and preferences for increased limits on trade, 2006 CCES 60

- 3.5. Employment beliefs and preferences for increased limits on trade, 2010 CCES 62
- 3.6. American opinion on trade policy (1986 to 2012) 69
 - 4.1. Economic vulnerability and preferences for trade protection (1986 to 2012) 80
 - 4.2. Impact of trade partner knowledge on preferences for protection from 2010 survey experiment 90
 - 4.3. Beliefs about the effect of trade on own employment 92
 - 4.4. Impact of a positive message on beliefs about trade 93
 - 5.1. Responses to the question “How does trade affect employment in your region?” conditional on concentration of import-competing employment in community 114
 - 5.2. Responses to the question “How does trade effect employment in your region?” conditional on residential turnover in community 117
 - 5.3. Marginal effect of significant variables (model 3) on the probability of opposing new limits on imports 133
 - 5.4. Marginal effect of significant variables (model 3) on the probability of responding “no opinion” 134
 - 5.5. Conditional effect of voter and incumbent issue match on the voter support for the incumbent 137
 - 6.1. Colorado-03: Sal Pace “A Couple of Miles” 142
 - 6.2. Text and photo from condition A (control) for race and trade preference survey experiment 2 149
 - 6.3. Opinion on redistributive policies (ANES 1996, white, non-Hispanic respondents) 155
 - 6.4. Predicted probability of support for redistribution (white, non-Hispanic respondents) 160
- 6.A1. Photos accompanying conditions B and C of race and trade preferences experiment 2 167
 - 7.1. Perceptions of trade’s national benefit 177
 - 7.2. Reporting the US balance of trade on the evening news (1968–2012) 183
 - 7.3. Framing of trade’s influence on economic outcomes in ABC “World News” segments (1984–2013) 185

- 7.4. Concentration of non-campaign trade-related ads in the 2000 election (as percentage of total ads in each market) 192
- 7.5. Concentration of pro-protection trade-related ads in the 2008 election (as percentage of total ads in each market) 197
- 8.1. Effect of a pro-free-trade campaign message on beliefs about national benefits of trade 206
- 8.2. Effect of elite messaging on American opinions about the World Trade Organization 217
- 8.3. Effect of elite messaging on American opinions about US response to China's currency policy 219
- 8.4. Responses from survey experiment switching question order about the desirability of a protectionist policy for China and for the United States 223
- 8.A1. Effect of positive treatment on the distribution of perceptions of trade's effect on national employment, by subgroups 228
 - 9.1. AIC 9 trade volumes and economic importance (1983 and 2013) 237
 - 9.2. Salience of trade in election year party platforms of the AIC 9 (1920 to 2013) 239
 - 9.3. OECD countries' trade volumes and economic importance (2004 to 2013) 242
 - 9.4. Comparative beliefs about the benefits of trade across AIC 9 countries in 2013 243
 - 9.5. Party position and trade's salience in AIC 9 elections (1920 to 2012) 245

LIST OF TABLES

- 2.1. Americans' knowledge of senators' votes by issue 26
- 3.1. Relative influence of trade beliefs on preferences for trade protection 64
- 4.1. Analysis of individual preferences for limits on trade (ANES 1986–2008) 81
- 4.2. Support for trade protection by gender and race 88
- 4.3. Effect of issue match on probability of voting for the incumbent 98
- 4.4. Opinion, knowledge, and support for the incumbent 101
- 4.A1. Analysis of individual preferences for limits on trade (ANES 1986–2012) 106
- 4.A2. Roll-call votes, preferences, and electoral support for the incumbent 107
- 5.1. Effect of residential turnover and import-competing employment concentration on beliefs about trade's effect on regional employment 119
- 5.2. Information, community characteristics, and preference for trade policy 126
- 5.A1. Certainty about state-level presidential campaign results and residency turnover 139
- 6.1. Effect of watching a pro-protection campaign ad on trade policy preferences 143
- 6.2. Effect of reading a trade-related newspaper article on trade preferences 150

- 6.3. Support for redistribution policies (ANES 1988 to 2008, white, non-Hispanic respondents) 158
- 6.4. Support for CAFTA conditional on racial diversity 162
- 6.A1. Support for redistribution policies (ANES 1988 to 2008, white, non-Hispanic respondents), full version of table 6.3 168
- 6.A2. Support for redistribution policies (ANES 1988 to 2012, white, non-Hispanic respondents) 171
- 8.1. Comparison of positive treatment on aggregate beliefs about national benefits of trade, by subgroup (−2 “greatly hurts” to 2 “greatly benefits”) 211
- 8.2. Does consideration of another country’s choice sway opinion on protection? 224
- 8.A1. Influence of a positive trade message on beliefs and preferences for trade 229
- 9.1. Economic and trade characteristics of nine similar, advanced industrial countries (AIC 9) in 2013 236

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American Opinion on Trade

CHAPTER 1 | Introduction

MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS after the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) established the world's largest free trade zone, the majority of Americans' disapprove of it, and American opinion on trade agreements in general is divided. Nonetheless, the White House's 2013 announcement of renewed negotiations for a trans-Atlantic and a trans-Pacific trade agreement initially prompted minimal political debate in talk shows, campaign advertisements, and newspaper editorials that serve to shape and strengthen individual opinion on public policy. The economic stakes of these two negotiations were considerable. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would have removed trade barriers among the United States and three of its four largest US trading partners and as many as nine other nations; together, they would account for about 40 percent of the global economy, twice the size of NAFTA. The proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) would lower tariffs and regulations between the United States and the countries of the European Union, which together comprise about 60 percent of the global economy, or three times that of NAFTA. In the lead-up to the 2014 election cycle, during which politicians took strong stances on such issues as the US response to the embassy attacks in Libya to state education boards' adopting Common Core Standards, the political chatter and discussion of these looming economic agreements was most noticeable in its absence. It took another election cycle and two outsider presidential candidates to spark electoral attention to trade policy. But even in 2016, an election cycle in which the media frequently touted the return of trade to political prominence, only one of the seventeen Republican presidential candidates—Donald Trump, a party outsider—included a position on trade tariffs within his announcement speech.

¹ According to Gallup, 53 percent of Americans disapprove of NAFTA. Cynthia English, "Opinion Briefing: North American Free Trade Agreement: Half of Americans Say NAFTA Has Mainly Negative Effect on the Economy," Gallup World U.S. Foreign Policy Opinion Briefings, December 12, 2008, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/113200/opinion-briefing-north-american-free-trade-agreement.aspx>.

Donald Trump prevailed in first the Republican primary and then the presidential campaign; and in his first week in office, President Trump formally withdrew the United States from the TPP, pledged to renegotiate NAFTA, and threatened to impose tariffs on Mexican imports to pay for a border wall. The new president's policies almost immediately threatened to upend decades of American-led global integration. Although the consequences of Trump's trade policies are still unfolding at the time of this writing, his actions also appear to have shaken a decades-long lull in the political salience of trade policy. During the 2016 campaign, Trump was an aberration because his campaign pledges on tariffs were a throwback to an early era. From the country's founding to the early twentieth century, trade largely defined US politics and political parties. Trade protection spurred the American revolutionaries, merited its own clause in the Constitution, and brought the country to the verge of civil war in the early nineteenth century. For the bulk of the nineteenth and twentieth century, the cleavage between pro-trade southern cotton and tobacco farmers and the pro-protection East Coast industrialists marked the major political alliances. In 1930, seventy-eight separate trade association and labor unions—from sugar farmers to shoemakers—offered testimony on the proposed tariff increases of the Smoot-Hawley bill, and in the post-World War II period, labor unions espoused the protectionist sentiments of auto and other manufacturing workers.

During the 1992 US presidential campaign, concerns about trade liberalization made Ross Perot the most nationally successful third-party candidate since Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party in 1912. The second televised debate among the candidates opened with an audience member's question to Ross Perot about his plans to ensure "fair competition" for American businesses abroad and stop "unfair competition" from foreign competitors in the United States. Perot's memorable response was to suggest that the proposed NAFTA put in place incentives—lower labor costs, no health care, no environmental controls, and no retirement funding—for American businesses to move their factories and jobs across the border, resulting in a "giant sucking sound going south." This quip turned out to be the lasting legacy of Perot's ultimately unsuccessful campaign to create a viable third party in US politics. Perot's anti-NAFTA stance distinguished him from the two major parties' candidates, incumbent Republican George H. W. Bush and Democratic challenger Bill Clinton, and the threat of job losses to the *maquiladoras* in Mexico—particularly in the electronics, automotive, and textile industries—propelled Perot to a 19 percent share of the popular vote and continued post-election prominence as an anti-NAFTA campaigner. His November 1993 debate with then sitting Vice President Al Gore on the *Larry King Show* was watched by 14 million Americans, making it the highest-rated program in cable history for over a decade. Yet despite Perot's short-term mobilization of anti-trade sentiment, trade-related campaigning has been avoided by most candidates of both major parties. Although voter sentiment about the benefits of globalization, trade agreements, and trade protection did not dissipate or become more

unified, few political actors—until Trump—sought to take advantage of those sentiments or the schism between them. In most regions and most races, voters' trade preferences—be they pro- or anti-trade—generally lacked vocal and visible political standard bearers. Trade had become an issue for which voter preferences were not reflected in traditional major party politics.

This book tackles two interwoven puzzles: What are the predictors of Americans' trade preferences in today's postindustrial economy, and why do so few politicians attempt to take advantage of these preferences? In the following chapters, I will argue that structural changes in the American economy have removed many Americans' direct connection to trade's effect on their employment and consumption, leading them to base their consideration on broader economic, community, and national benefits. As a result, trade preferences are no longer neatly defined by or organized into traditional interest groups such as unions, business coalitions, and political parties that educate, affirm, and organize voters to amplify their voice within the political environment. Without political interest groups actively engaging with trade issues, voters' preferences appear to have become less stable and more uncertain, and consequently politicians are less assured of the benefits of taking a strong public stance on trade policy. On trade, therefore, voters' voices have become more subdued than those of lobbyists, corporations, and other concentrated interests.

This shift is no minor thing, as the strength and cohesion of voters' voices matters. Politicians act in response to multiple sets of demands, from lobbying groups to political party whips to private interests, and voters are just one voice among them. Furthermore, trade policy's implications for both domestic and international political issues magnify the number and variety of viewpoints that politicians have to take into consideration. Approval of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, for instance, could lead to a plant closing in Kokomo, Indiana; open Japan's market to US agricultural goods; speed the economic development of poor allies in Asia; and transform the US security position regarding China. The members of Congress who vote on such agreements also know that ultimately they must face the constituents from their district. When the next election comes, what those constituents know, believe, and opine about trade policy will matter a great deal to their elected representatives.

Starting in the 1960s, a transformation of the American economy served to change both corporations' and individuals' relationship with trade. During that period, the United States' postwar policy of trade liberalization and advances in manufacturing catalyzed what became a dramatic shift in what America produced and how Americans produced it. The labor-intensive manufacturing that had supported so many small American towns in the 1950s and 1960s disappeared or was replaced by new industries. Imports increasingly served the interests of domestic producers as well as those of consumers. As a result, the bulk of the American workforce shifted from manufacturing-based jobs to service-based jobs in what economist Alan Blinder (2006) has termed the Third Industrial Revolution.

Earlier changes in trade policy, such as the rapid dismantlement of protectionist policies following World War II, had been vigorously and publically contested, albeit not always successfully, by unions, industry coalitions, and regional interest groups. As imports reshaped the US economy in the following decades, however, these previously predictable sources of pro-protectionist sentiment diminished and splintered. Regional concentrations of manufacturing industries declined, and communities became more industrially and economically diverse. Many domestic manufacturing companies, particularly those producing consumer durable goods such as cars and washing machines, shifted their strategy to incorporate imported components to increase their own productivity, reduce costs, and improve quality. As a result, a trade-based political cleavage emerged within manufacturing: as some manufacturers called on Washington for greater protection, others lobbied for lower tariffs. For instance, when President George W. Bush enacted “temporary safeguards” to protect the steel industry in March 2003, the ensuing tariff debates and congressional testimony pitted AFL-CIO members against each other and created a schism within industrial business coalitions. For many Americans—particularly those outside of the Rust Belt and employed in service industries—debates about trade protection increasingly became about other people’s jobs.

These changes and the nature of trade policy itself together shape how Americans form and organize around their preferences for trade policy in today’s postindustrial American economy. Trade policy differs from most other policy issue areas in that its implications are neither primarily domestic nor international; tariffs, quotas, subsidies, regulatory restrictions, and exchange rate manipulations create effects at the individual, regional, national, and international levels. Domestically, trade policies can also serve as forms of taxation and income redistribution; internationally, they can be used as both reward and retribution in the United States’ relationships with other countries. Furthermore, as China’s economic power has accelerated through the strength of its exports in recent decades, US trade policy has also become increasingly linked to the United States’ global power and international security. As a result, understanding individual Americans’ opinions regarding trade policies requires both unpacking layers of potential effects and evaluating individuals’ incorporation of these effects into their thinking and voting.

This, then, is a book about American opinion on trade policy and how these opinions influence American politics. Each election cycle, individuals evaluate incumbents and challengers regarding their positions on domestic and foreign policy and expect their voting behavior to temper the effect of incentives provided by lobbyists and their customers on politicians’ decision-making and votes. In a handful of recent election campaigns, US trade policy has been a major subject of debate, but in most districts, discussion of trade had largely fallen to the wayside. As a result, trade policy was increasingly formulated and conducted outside the standard systems of voter-driven accountability. Until recently, this lack of accountability allowed political elites to continue both a more liberal free-trade policy than would be supported by the general public

and to accommodate specific instances of trade protection driven by special interests. However, the potential to tap into a quiet protectionist sentiment was waiting for political entrepreneurs willing to buck the elite pro-trade consensus. What remains to be seen is whether the Trump candidacy and presidency has fundamentally changed the political salience of trade, or whether Trump will prove to be the exception to the rule. If his path to power, fueled in part by anti-trade rhetoric, proves difficult to replicate, trade policy may return to being orphaned in elite discourse. Even so, it is not clear whether trade policy would return to the path of ever-expanding liberalization. The same lack of accountability that allowed for many decades of liberalization might permit the imposition of more protectionist policies than would otherwise be supported by the general public and, in particular, ease the manipulation of trade policy in the service of other foreign policy goals.

To better understand the causes and implications of this situation, *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics* identifies unexamined predictors of trade sentiment that extend previous economic classifications based on skill levels and types of industries and thereby complicates the findings of earlier research on the influence of sociotropic concerns—beliefs about the benefits to others—on such opinions. As the following chapters argue, these newly identified predictors of trade policy sentiment are based on individual-level differences in race and gender, community-level differences and changes in the local population and economy, and national-level differences in beliefs about the global economic and security role of the United States that do not lend themselves to conventional political coalitions. As we shall see, these influences are numerous and scattered, sometimes overlapping, and at times contradictory. As this examination demonstrates, some trade sentiments are highly immovable, while others are easy to manipulate—perhaps too easily so—by providing new information. Furthermore, it reveals that these predictors of trade protection sentiment map uneasily onto current political interest groups or into new political interest groups. As a result, the book concludes, few voter-based political interest groups are actively involved in shaping current discussion or voter interest regarding trade policy, resulting in an increase in uncertainty among American voters and a de-emphasis on trade within public discourse, even as politicians continue to pursue and make potentially momentous decisions regarding trade policy. American trade preferences have largely become disconnected from politics.

Existing Literature and the New Contribution of *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics*

The specter of the voter—or at least of voting day—lurks in the background of almost all accounts of US trade politics. Previous scholars examining this topic have shined their spotlight on the role played by special interests, elites, and institutional arrangements in informing trade policy rather than on the role

of voters. Some scholars have largely dismissed voters as uninformed, uninvolved, and unorganized and their preferences as thus of little import, while others have presented voters as protectors of a public good, serving as a counterweight against private interests. *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics*, in contrast, seeks to better understand current American voters' beliefs, expectations, and preferences for trade policy and how those interests translate into political activities.

The focus of nearly a century of scholarship on the institutional involvement of special interests and congressional incentives was a pattern set by E. E. Schattschneider's seminal description of the creation of the 1930s Smoot-Hawley bill—an economically disastrous omnibus tariff bill that raised tariffs on more than 20,000 imported goods to record heights. In his *Politics, Pressures, and the Tariff* (1935), Schattschneider depicted powerful and concentrated special interest groups unhindered in their lobbying of Congress, making opposition “negligible” in the face of such powerful concentrations of special interests and the political incentives of “logrolling.” Yet Schattschneider's prediction that the bias in favor of erecting new tariffs was “politically invincible” failed its first out-of-sample test before the book was even published, when the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act of 1934 (a congressional-executive agreement to enable trade liberalization) was passed.

Nonetheless, the legacy of Schattschneider's focus on institutional arrangements remains dominant in the US trade literature. Scholars have detailed the players whose interests were privileged in the policymaking process (Lohmann and O'Halloran 1994; Bailey et al. 1997) and how the victors used those political debates to lock in policy gains achieved by pro-trade special interests (Grossman and Helpman 1994; Hathaway 1998; Milner 1988; Hiscox 1999). With few exceptions (e.g., Bailey 2001), the less demanding voice of the American public has been depicted as relatively muted against the intense interests of organized special-interest groups.

Scholars' assumption that voters play a limited role in trade politics diverges greatly from their understanding of policy formation in different policy areas, however. As American public opinion scholars have demonstrated, legislators almost universally track constituent opinion (Mathews and Stimson 1975; Bianco et al. 1996), even when the public is largely uninformed about the relevant issues, as they generally are about specific trade policies (Guisinger 2009). They have also shown that while the typical American may not have a strong or informed opinion about a topic, the aggregate opinion of the voting public as a whole tends to display a remarkable stability. That is, shifts in mass public policy opinions tend to respond predictably to changes in world events (Page and Shapiro 1992), and these shifts do in turn inspire lawmakers to change laws to reflect the electorate's interests (Bartels 1991; Clinton 2006). According to this research, all that is required to ensure this electoral connection between events, opinions, and legislation is that a subset of the electorate holds a preference and that political entrepreneurs mobilize that opinion. Although public opinion can also respond to changes in policy as well as external events

(Wlezien 1995; Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002), researchers agree that mismatches between policy and public opinion are rare and typically short-lived: either legislators change the rules to comport with public opinion or the public follows their legislators' lead. That trade policy has become increasingly oriented toward free trade while the electorate retains a distinctly protectionist bent is therefore a real puzzle, and one for which research on legislative politics regarding other issues is unlikely to offer easy explanations.

The gap between voters' preferences and elite opinion and legislative action in the area of trade that this book explores is neither new nor dissipating. As trade historians have shown, economic and political elites have largely supported increased free trade since the 1940s, while mass public opinion has continually lagged behind. When a 1953 Roper Poll asked a cross-section of people listed in *Who's Who in America* whether they would prefer to see the country import more goods from foreign countries or to put more restrictions on such goods, 67 percent favored reducing restrictions and just 11 percent favored increasing them. In contrast, a Gallup poll of citizens taken the same year found that only 26 percent of them favored more imports and that 37 percent supported greater restrictions (Bauer et al. 1972). Four decades later, Herrmann, Tetlock, and Diascro (2001) measured a similar gap in elite and mass support for trade openness, ranging from 20 percent to 30 percent depending on how the potential benefits were described. This continuing divide raises the related question of why recent political entrepreneurs have generally failed to capitalize on this untapped source of voter sentiment.

To better understand the American mass public's opinion on trade policy and the role it plays in American politics, *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics* combines insights from international and comparative political economy. The literature in these fields offers different and at times contrasting explanations for trade preferences and the importance of those preferences in the formation of trade policy. The international political economy (IPE) discussion of trade preferences is dominated by the investigation of individuals' economic circumstances, its principal debate being whether individual preferences are best determined by their class interests or by their ties to specific economic sectors and industries. Over the past decade, IPE scholars have gathered and analyzed survey data in the United States and overseas in their attempt to identify the strongest economic and other individual determinants of preferences. This work has also increased our knowledge about non-economic sources of demand for trade protection, such as neighborhood attachment (Kaltenthaler, Gelleny, and Ceccoli 2004; Mayda and Rodrik 2005), national pride and chauvinism (O'Rourke and Sinnott 2001; Mayda and Rodrik 2005), and values and ideology (Wolfe and Mendelsohn 2005). Such surveys have further highlighted the difference between individual and sociotropic factors (Mansfield and Mutz 2009), as IPE scholars have discovered what American opinion scholars have long known: that there is little support for

the assumption that voters are primarily motivated by economic self-interest (Citrin and Green 1990; Sears and Funk 1990).

The insight that voters incorporate sociotropic concerns about the benefits to others into their evaluations of government policies is now firmly engrained in the broader American public policy literature, though relatively unexamined in the area of trade policy. This relative inattention to sociotropic preferences and voting is paradoxical, as trade policy characteristically draws distinctions between effects on individuals and effects on the nation. Early work in this field that considered sociotropic influences, such as Mansfield and Mutz (2009), examined the broad dichotomy between perceived benefits to oneself and perceived benefits to the nation. Yet beliefs about national-level benefits are only one part of the equation considered by citizens: sociotropism also incorporates friends and family, neighbors and neighborhoods, communities and regions—groupings for which individuals can and do assess distinct economic outcomes (Niemi, Bremer, and Heel 1999). Economic theory predicts that while the nation as a whole benefits from freer trade in the long run, certain groups of individuals—particularly those with skill sets or in industries that are at a comparative disadvantage—pay the short-term costs. The losers of increased globalization are not uniformly distributed across the country, nor are individual perceptions of national benefits as uniform as might be expected.

Furthermore, for individuals to incorporate sociotropic considerations into their preferences requires that they also determine who matters to them. Here comparative political science offers a rich set of theories linking community characteristics to preferences regarding collective and public goods that have yet to be incorporated into discussions of trade policy. Trade policy is redistributive in that it creates economic winners and losers, and although individuals typically support some level of redistribution in response to inequality (see Davidson, Matusz, and Nelson 2006), the strength of that support varies across geographic communities. Comparing the policies of US states, for instance, Alesina and Glaeser (2004) have found that support for social spending, and specifically for welfare benefits, is lower in states with greater racial diversity. Yet the effect of community diversity—particularly racial diversity—on individuals' support for trade policy has not previously been explored.

Early work on trade policy opinion viewed trade policy as an extension of other foreign policies and thus examined whether the foreign relations positions of individuals, elites, and policymakers were more isolationist or internationalist, hard-liner or accommodationist, or liberal or realist (Bauer, Pool, and Dexter 1972; Wittkopf 1990; Holsti 1996). Yet ideological preferences regarding other foreign-oriented policies have been found unrelated to attitudes on trade (see, e.g., Holsti and Rosenau 1993; Herrmann, Tetlock, and Diascro 2001). Beliefs regarding the national impact of policies, however, do appear to strongly influence individuals' preferences (Mansfield and Mutz 2009), again raising the question of where these beliefs come from and how they are affected by discussions of the broader international economic

system—particularly by what people know and are told about the US policy position relative to other trading states.

To date, most scholarly explorations of American public opinion have employed standard survey tools to shed light on trends over time and variations across individuals and communities. Yet such traditional survey data does little to elucidate how individuals integrate information into their opinions. *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics* advances our understanding of opinion formation by applying survey methods that can directly measure how individuals react to new information about trade, trading partners, and trading partner behavior by randomly adjusting the information provided to respondents. In addition to its analyses of standard surveys of opinion, the book presents the findings of more than half a dozen survey experiments specifically conducted for this study to measure the impact of information on preferences. By analyzing 531 trade-related political ads, it also examines how political actors strategically constrain trade-related discussion by limiting trade-related advertising to specific locales and constituencies.

By identifying previously unexamined sources of trade preferences at the individual, community, and national level, *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics* offers new and original insights into the formation of American public opinion on trade within today's economy and its political implications. Better understanding the multifaceted nature of trade opinion also helps us to better understand the rising uncertainty among voters and the selective political engagement by political entrepreneurs that has characterized the post-NAFTA era. Specifically, this volume elucidates why so few legislators sought to diminish that uncertainty or to move the public closer to their own pro-trade position, leaving the political field open for outsider, protectionist politicians like Ross Perot in 1992 and Donald Trump in 2016.

The Plan of the Book

Because Americans' understanding of their own and others' connections to trade underpins their beliefs about trade's costs and benefits, chapter 2 investigates what Americans know—or think they know—about trade and trade policy. It examines how trade has reshaped post-NAFTA America and argues that the new economic conditions of postindustrial America require us to expand our analysis of factors shaping trade preferences beyond the traditional categories of skill level and industry. Changes in the composition of the US economy and manufacturing processes make determining the effects of trade liberalization both objectively more complicated and harder for the average person to get information about. This absence of clear information about trade serves as a prerequisite for the persuadability of individuals on the issue of trade policy and raises questions about what American opinion would look like if the information environment were different, who would benefit from changing the information environment, and what would be the impact on trade

politics. Currently, because trade policy ranks well behind other economic and ideological concerns in the decision-making of most American voters, they fail to hold politicians accountable for not reflecting their constituents' preferences on trade issues; the extent to which this offers an opportunity to political actors depends on how the American public would respond to a changed information environment.

Chapter 3 then investigates a primary argument of the book, which is that the severing of the direct link between trade and personal employment in most Americans' minds has led them to incorporate into their preferences a broader consideration of trade's impact on other individuals, on their community, and on the nation as a whole. These beliefs emerge not only from individual characteristics but also the information environment surrounding them. The chapter offers a novel theoretical model for incorporating a wide array of influences upon opinion formation and expressions of non-opinion and explores which components of opinion are malleable to information provided by political elites. In doing so, it highlights the difficulties faced by politicians and other political entrepreneurs in mobilizing potentially persuadable voters. It also argues that honing in on the precise effect of information on voters requires new survey methods, given that conventional survey data reveal broad trends across time and geography but cannot answer questions about what moves individuals' opinions.

The following four chapters then explore specific factors shaping trade policy preferences at the individual, community, and national levels, arguing that previous models provide limited predictive power for the current economic situations and do little to explain gender and racial divides in those preferences. At the individual level, chapter 4 provides an original explanation both for why women and minorities are more likely to express protectionist sentiments and for why those protectionist sentiments are not reflected in their voting. To do so, I extend the standard models of individual economic well-being to consider trade's effect not only on wages but also on employment volatility, which is increased by openness to foreign trade. The chapter argues that because of structural biases in the American economy, women and minorities may pay a higher cost from employment volatility that in turn makes them less responsive to pro-trade messages that implicitly suggest economic transformations. This identification of gender and race as predictors of protectionist sentiment not only improves models of preference formation but also provides insight into the lack of political action on behalf of these groups' sentiments regarding trade.

Although we already know that Americans are far more likely to believe that trade protection benefits others than themselves, chapters 5 and 6 argue that the extent and effectiveness of this incorporation of sociotropic concerns depends greatly on how easily individuals can tap into community concerns and how broadly or narrowly they define community. In our post-NAFTA economy, chapter 5 maintains, diminished concentrations of import-competing industries and increased community turnover have muddied traditional

sources of local information about economic impacts and increased the difficulty of individuals' determining what is best for their community. Using three decades of survey data, I show that individuals in highly mobile communities and in those with low concentrations of manufacturing are more likely to discount community concerns, leading to higher levels of uncertainty, lower levels of support for trade protection, and lower levels of interest in trade policy. Politicians in such districts therefore are able to take stances regarding trade in opposition to the majority of their constituents because voters rank other issues more highly when in the voting booth.

Examining the darker effects of sociotropic concerns, chapter 6 argues that the redistributive nature of trade policy also affects individuals' trade preferences. Earlier research has demonstrated that increased diversity within a community—particularly racial diversity—reduces support for redistributive policies. Trade protectionism differs from other such policies both in its mechanism for redistribution and the most common portrayal of its beneficiaries. An analysis of more than 500 trade-related political ads demonstrates that images of trade protection in such ads overwhelmingly present white workers as the beneficiaries of trade protectionism. My evidence indicates that in highly-diverse communities, white Americans may prefer trade protection over other redistributive mechanisms, such as welfare benefits, that are often seen (if incorrectly) as benefiting mostly black and other minority Americans. The chapter concludes that despite the strong effect of racial cues in the creation of trade preferences, they are more difficult to rally around in political discourse, at least for mainstream politicians.

Moving from the level of the community to that of the nation, chapters 7 and 8 explore the sources of individuals' beliefs about the national effect of trade and the influence of these on their trade preferences. Trade politics breaks the conventional wisdom that public opinion generally follows elite consensus on policy issues, particularly complicated policy issues. Yet, while academic elites have stressed the benefits of free trade and political elites have supported trade liberalization, the mass public continues to express a negative assessment of trade's economic impact on the United States. Chapter 7 explores how the framing of trade in public discourse—mass media and political campaigns—has supported the disconnect between mass and elite opinion. Chapter 8 asks whether changing the types of information provided to voters would sufficiently move public opinion to make such a strategy politically viable for political actors. Based on the results of three original survey experiments that explore the role of positive factual information, partisan factual information, and simple altruistic framing in shaping opinions, it concludes that although all three affected individuals' beliefs, those effects were not strong enough to overcome most participants' support for trade protection, supporting the decision of most politicians seeking re-election not to embrace such messages.

The book concludes with a reflection on the implications of the findings of these chapters for the future of trade policy electoral politics and applies the lessons to Donald Trump's success in the 2016 Republican primary and

presidential election. It explores what light this study might shed on whether trade policy has become a third rail or runaway train in American politics. It characterizes the type of actors and information that would be more likely to reignite public discourse on the vital issue of trade. And it considers if it is possible to restore elected officials' accountability to the electorate on a matter of such personal and national importance to so many. While the politics of trade are generally an unseen undercurrent in American politics, there are scenarios—some perhaps being catalyzed now at the start of the Trump presidency—where it could rise to the surface again.

CHAPTER 2 | The Changing Landscape of Trade and Trade Knowledge

A CLEAR GAP EXISTS between mass sentiment concerning trade and trade agreements and US policies supporting liberalization. However, for this gap between preferences and politics to be politically relevant, it must be possible for individual opinions to be mobilized. That is, could a stronger information environment help the convergence of opinion and policy either by moving individual opinion toward policy (a shift in mass opinion) or policy toward individual opinion (a shift in the politics of trade)? This book assumes that information (or the lack of information) interacts with individuals' characteristics to play a role in individuals' assessments of the benefits of trade and that a change in the information environment could change not only these assessments, but also the expression of preferences and the mobilization of Americans' opinions on trade. Thus, explaining why Americans as a whole might lack knowledge about trade, trade policy, and trade's effects is a starting point for thinking about how information access might vary across individuals and even within individuals' own assessments of the benefits of trade for themselves, others, and the country. Knowledge matters in the process of preference formation; without it, most Americans can neither form strongly held positions on trade policy nor hold their political representatives accountable for taking positions that differ from their own preferences. In this chapter, I argue that the complexity of and changing patterns in trade has created a more challenging environment for assessing the effects of trade, one that could, but is currently not, mitigated by information from either major political party or other political elites.

Trade and the Reshaping of the American Economy

The relationship between the impact of US trade policy and individuals' understanding of it is an anomaly. As trade has increased its relative importance in the broader US economy, it has become paradoxically more difficult for the mass public to assess trade's impact for themselves, others, and the

country. Although internationally, the postwar decades leading up to the 1970s were characterized by US-led liberalization of the international trading system, domestically the share of trade in terms of the total US economy was small in this early era of liberalization. After an initial burst of post-World War II US exports, trade flows had evened out as European and Japanese industrial infrastructures recovered. During the 1950s and 1960s, the United States' comparative advantage in capital-intensive and skill-intensive goods and services meant that it ran trade surpluses in capital goods, chemicals, and agriculture and trade deficits in consumer goods and non-agricultural industrial supplies and materials (US Department of Commerce 1970). Still, at the beginning of the 1970s, total trade was relatively small compared to the US economy, the equivalent of just 10 percent of US gross domestic product (GDP). Between 1970 and 1980, however, that amount had doubled, reaching 20 percent of GDP.

Since 1986, the United States has signed twenty-four free-trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), and is currently considering the even larger Trans-Pacific Partnership; entered into the new multilateral trade agreement of the World Trade Organization (1995); and experienced increased competition from the emergence of China in international trade markets and the strengthened cohesion of the European Union as both a trade and monetary union. Today, total US trade has grown to the equivalent of one-third of US GDP, a substantial component of the economy as a whole. Yet, Americans' understanding of trade has not grown apace with trade's increased ability to impact the economy. Although each agreement received substantial public attention, each one also accelerated large-scale changes in the impact of trade on the US economy starting in the early 1970s. Thus, each successive agreement has made it more difficult for Americans to clearly define the effects of trade.

One factor has been the changing role of exports compared to imports in the US economy. Figure 2.1 details the growth in US trade between 1960 and 2012, both in imports and exports and in goods and services. In the 1970s, the United States saw significant growth in exports of both goods and services, but particularly in capital-intensive exports such as chemicals, industrial machinery, civilian aircraft and parts, and military goods (Branson 1980). As a result, between 1970 and 1980, US exports in goods and in services grew from 4 percent to 8 percent and from 1 percent to 2 percent of GDP, respectively. However, while trade grew steadily, in 1980, a divergence emerged in the relative balance of trade flows. US exports as a percentage of the economy remained static while growth in US imports began to increase. As the automotive and household durable goods industries became relatively standardized and Japan and Europe returned as industrial competitors, the United States lost its predominance in these sectors and became a net importer (Branson 1980). Between 1980 and 1990, the relative share of imports to GDP doubled, while the share of exports changed little.

The 1980s thus saw the emergence of what would become a three-decade (and continuing) trade deficit. Figure 2.2 shows the US balance of trade—the value of exports minus the value of imports—as a percentage of GDP. In the 1960s, the United States exported far more in both goods and services than it imported. During the 1970s, the trade balance wobbled back and forth. By the

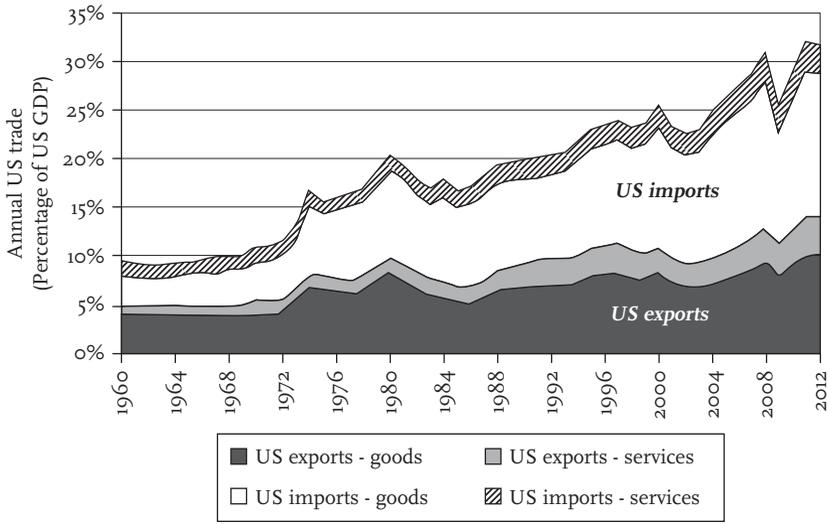


FIGURE 2.1 Total US trade as a percentage of US GDP (1960 to 2012)
 SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division. *U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services*.



FIGURE 2.2 US trade balance (1960 to 2012)
 SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division. *U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services*.

end of the 1970s, it appeared as though the gap between exports and imports might once again close, but instead, the 1980s saw a rapid rise in the trade imbalance, which in 1986 reached almost 20 percent of all trade and 3 percent of GDP. After a recovery in the early 1990s, the trade balance again fell into a period of decline, and in 2005 the trade imbalance exceeded 20 percent of all trade and 5 percent of GDP.

This trade balance, rather than other effects of trade, became central to American coverage of trade, especially in global terms. In 2005, at the height of the most recent trade deficit, *The Economist* trumpeted on its cover that “China runs the world economy,” and the US Senate scrambled (but ultimately failed) to impose 27.5 percent tariffs on Chinese goods.¹ During and after the 2008 global financial crisis, the trade deficit itself, rather than underlying influences on trade flows, again returned as a news story. First the “good” news of the recession was the initial shrinking of the US trade deficit as US consumers cut their spending faster than did foreign purchasers of US intermediate and capital goods. As a result, the US trade deficit returned to a more moderate 11–12 percent of total trade between 2009 and 2012, but primarily due to a drop in US consumption. Similarly, as the trade deficit re-emerged, the trend was portrayed as concerning even though it did so because US consumer confidence increased and because the US economy was rebounding more quickly than its main trading partners. As will later be shown in more detail, this focus on the trade balance as its own indicator, rather than as a result of multiple economic forces, has muddied the water for those assessing the impact of trade on the economy.

The increasing influence of trade on the US economy after World War II shifted the distribution of American employment. In 1960, almost one out of three non-agricultural jobs was in the manufacturing sector. Yet over time the standardization and diffusion of manufacturing, combined with cheaper foreign labor costs, diminished the competitiveness of many non-capital-intensive, non-skill-intensive manufactured goods that had been produced in many small American towns. Take, for example, the household television. In 1949, *Radio & Television News* listed 132 American television receiver manufacturers located across the country, including Brooklyn, New York (Air King), Passaic, New Jersey (DuMont), Dayton, Ohio (Delco), Quincy, Illinois (Motorola), Jackson, Mississippi (Sparks Withington), and Fort Wayne, Indiana (Farnsworth Television and Radio, Magnavox).² By 1995, only one of these US firms remained—Zenith—and it had only one domestic factory that produced tubes for assembly in Mexico. Even in high-skilled, more capital-intensive industries in which US manufacturing thrived, fewer workers were required for production. Starting in 1980, US employment in the manufacturing sector

¹ Senate Bill S.295, 109th Congress, 1st Session, February 3, 2005, <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=s109-295>.

² <http://www.TVhistory.tv>.

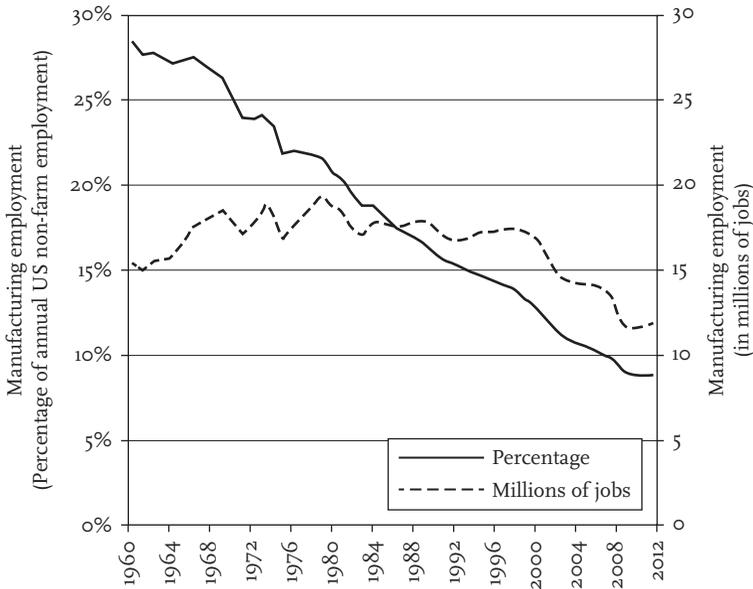


FIGURE 2.3 Manufacturing jobs in absolute numbers and as a percentage of total non-agricultural jobs (1960 to 2012)
SOURCE: US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

began to decline, in both absolute and relative terms (figure 2.3). By 2009, the share of manufacturing jobs in the non-agricultural labor force, once one in three, had fallen to less than one in ten. In 2012, 23 percent of American jobs were in education and health services, 14 percent were in retail, 12 percent in professional and business services, and less than 10 percent in manufacturing.

This decline in manufacturing reshaped American geography. Industrial cities both in and outside of the Rust Belt boomed in the 1950s. Towns like Rochester, New York, and Detroit, Michigan rose to their peak populations in the 1950s only to see numbers rapidly fall in the next two decades and then continue to fade away. Between 1960 and 2000, Detroit lost over 2,700 manufacturing firms and 213,000 manufacturing jobs net, a greater than 80 percent decline in each (US Census Bureau, various years). The decline in manufacturing jobs had downstream consequences for non-manufacturing jobs as well. Total employment within the city dropped by 60 percent in the same period, and today Detroit is one-half the size it was when US manufacturing thrived. Once the fifth-largest city in the United States, Detroit ranks at eighteenth and continues to fall. The population shift out of the Rust Belt during the 1970s and 1980s shifted American political geography as well. Rapidly growing states such as Texas and California gained the congressional districts that urban populations in the Northeast no longer warranted. Trade not only reshaped what America produced but where, and in doing so, trade changed and continues to change the composition of communities across the country.

Economic Sources of Uncertainty

Although these dramatic changes in the US economy may have made the influence of trade hard to miss, it also increased the complexity concerning the benefits of trade in general and also the difficulty in acquiring information to assess the benefit. As we shall see, rapid transformations in international trade and in the US industrial base have led to individuals holding erroneous beliefs about trading partners, having uncertain understandings about who benefits and who loses from trade protection, and even expressing ambiguity about the effect of trade on consumer prices, an aspect of trade that most theories incorrectly assume that consumers intuit naturally. This misinformation or lack of information offers an opportunity to use information to persuade and mobilize voters.

Unobserved Trade and Unobserved Trading Partners

As part of the Notre Dame module of the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), I asked 1,500 respondents to name the country with which the United States traded the most among Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, or Mexico. Almost 60 percent of respondents erroneously believed the answer was China. Relatively few (20 percent) gave the correct response: Canada. If understanding which countries the US trades with is a starting point for understanding the effect of trade on firms, employment, and prices, why did such a large share of respondents answer this question incorrectly?

The reason is that, for most Americans, the bulk of international trade is hidden in the form of firm-to-firm transfers of goods and services. Among US imports in 2005—which OECD (2010) data allow us to disaggregate by end use—more than half (56 percent) were in the form of intermediate goods (e.g., chemicals, construction materials, food materials for processing, communication equipment, electricity, gas, and water) and intermediate services (e.g., finance and leasing, telecommunications, transportation, construction, travel, and research and development). The remaining 46 percent were in the form of final goods, but more than half of these were not consumer goods but capital goods or other goods for use by US industries. Less than 20 percent of total imports were in the form of consumption goods (Miroudot et al. 2009). In other words, relatively few products involved in international trade can be directly purchased off the shelf by the consumer, let alone identified by a label on the bottom of the goods.

In particular, most of the trade between the United States and Canada occurs out of the view of consumers. Canada's exports to the United States are disproportionately in the form of intermediate goods, including concentration in crude oil and natural gas (32 percent), vehicles (17 percent), machinery (6 percent), and plastics (3 percent). In 2005, such goods accounted for

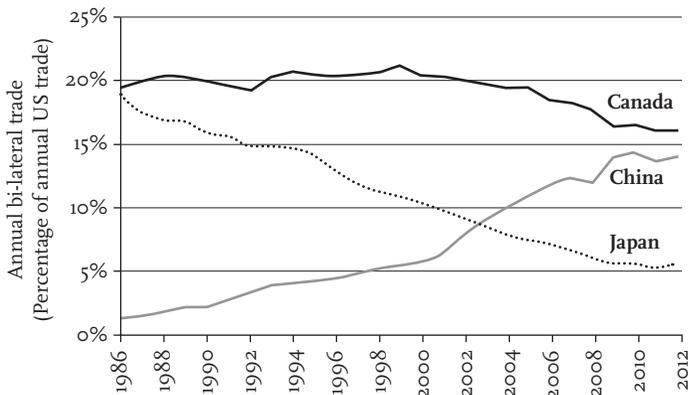


FIGURE 2.4 Comparison of Canada, China, and Japan in terms of percent of US trade (1986 to 2012)

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division. *U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services*.

61 percent of all imports from Canada but only 27 percent of those from China (OECD 2010). Perhaps for this reason, Canada’s position as the United States’ top trading partner, which it has held since well before 1986, has received relatively little notice by the media and other political commentators. More newsworthy has been China’s swift replacement of Japan as an influence on the US economy. Figure 2.4 shows the relative proportion of US trade with Canada, China, and Japan since the American National Election Studies (ANES) began asking Americans about their preference regarding trade protection. In 1985, the top five US trading partners were Canada, Japan, Mexico, Germany, and the United Kingdom, who together accounted for 54 percent of all US trade. China was ranked seventeenth, below Belgium, and accounted for just over 1 percent of US trade. In 2012, the top five US trading partners still comprised roughly half of all US trade (53 percent), but now China accounted for 14 percent of all US trade and ranked just below Canada. China’s rise was so precipitous and garnered so much media attention that the press itself became confused. For example, in 2009, the *Wall Street Journal* had to run a retraction noting that “Canada is the U.S.’s biggest trading partner”—not China, as the paper had incorrectly stated.³ Although imports from both Canada and China both significantly contribute to the US economy, for most of the period since 1986, Canada has accounted for twice as much trade as China.

Perceptions of which countries serve as primary trading countries for the United States matter when we ask questions about whether trade protection should be increased or decreased. Goods and services from developed

³ Kris Maher and Henry J. Pulizzi, “Chinese Slapped in Steel Dispute: Trade Panel Rules That Subsidized Imports Damaged the U.S. Industry,” *Wall Street Journal*, December 31, 2009.

countries such as Canada provide different products, influence different US industries, and affect different employment opportunities than do goods and services from developing countries such as China, thus leading to different conclusions about the benefits and beneficiaries of trade. The rapid change in US trading partners—as well as the apparent difference between the reality and popular perception of US trade—undermines many Americans’ ability to understand the role trade plays in their own economic circumstances, in their communities, and in the nation as a whole.

Trade Protection and Other People’s Employment

Understanding how trade affects a community and the nation has become more difficult as trade itself has reshaped US industry and industrial geography. The bilateral and multilateral reciprocal trade agreements of the post-war trading system created new opportunities based on America’s comparative advantage in capital-intensive and high-skilled goods and services, but came at the cost of many traditional US industries, particularly low-cost manufacturing and textiles. This transformation has created two sources of uncertainty for individuals seeking to assess the benefits of trade for others: first, changing preferences in industry, and second, the disappearance of import-competing firms as a center for protectionist sentiment.

In the early years of American liberalization, even while the US administration pushed trade liberalization at the international level, the initial strategy of most import-competing industries and their supporters was to lobby heavily for protection. This signal was clear in industry testimony to Congress, in local union halls, and in local newspaper editorials. As protection began to fall anyway, many US manufacturing industries began to adjust to the more liberalized trading arrangements, transforming their manufacturing processes to take advantage of their access to foreign manufacturing. In time, a new term developed to describe the change, “outsourcing.” While outsourcing need not occur across borders, the uptake in usage coincided with American industry’s increased access to foreign production. Using the term for the first time in 1984, the *New York Times* described the controversy brewing within the auto industry as firms sought to increase profitability by shifting production to Mexico or South Korea.⁴ Increased liberalization allowed for the opportunity.

Over time, these adjustments diminished the value of lobbying efforts and quieted a source of protectionist sentiment (Hathaway 1998). Footwear, textile, and apparel companies—all previously vocal opponents of free trade—now use imports to ensure competitive pricing along with American-specific designs and marketing (Hathaway 1998). Similarly, American toy companies such as Mattel and Hasbro have rapidly grown in revenues as they have moved almost all manufacturing abroad. One of the country’s largest consumer

⁴ John Holusha, “Auto Union Seeks Big Economic Gain,” *New York Times*, March 7, 1984.

electronics distributors, New Jersey-based Emerson Radio Corporation (founded in 1912), largely ceased US-based production in the mid-1970s, instead using factories in Seacaucus, New Jersey and Sun Valley, California, to assemble imported components. In 1980 it shuttered its last US-made product line—the phonograph—and increased sales and earnings in the following year. One of the United States' most recent corporate success stories, Apple, is also one of its most globally integrated. Apple produces the components of its popular iPhones in five countries (only one of which is the United States), assembles the iPhone in Shenzhen, China, and ships them around the world (Xing and Detert 2010). Even when these companies' goods are manufactured in China or elsewhere, additional goods and services supplied from US workers can be substantial. The local component of imported goods on average is about 36 percent and is 55 percent for US goods made in China (Hale and Hobijn 2011). If you live in or near High Point, North Carolina (the so-called Furniture Capital of the World) or Pawtucket, Rhode Island (home of Hasbro) or Cupertino, California (home of Apple), the ability for firms to outsource some aspects of production may underpin the competitiveness of the industry. As a result, trade protection that was once deemed necessary may now hurt your community—and by extension, your own employment, house price, and tax base.

Restructuring has also changed the industrial geography of the country, diminishing the number of small communities reliant on one or a handful of manufacturing facilities. High concentrations of import-competing firms or export-oriented firms make it easier for individuals in the community to understand the cost and benefits of trade protection to their community. However, it appears that increasingly few communities have such clear concentrations. The 1960s and 1970s saw the closing of many small-town manufacturing factories—Motorola in Quincy, Illinois; Studebaker in South Bend, Indiana—a trend that continues today. During the 1990s, in less than a decade, North Carolina lost 250,000 manufacturing jobs, many at small-town textile mills.

The census's annual County Business Patterns (CBP) tracks the number of firms located in each county by industry code and also provides mid-March employment figures. Cross-listing this information with a classification of manufacturing industries as import-competing or export-oriented (Schott 2010) provides for each county the share of employment in import-competing firms, export-competing firms, or other.⁵ Figure 2.5 displays the percentage of US counties in which export-oriented or import-competing manufacturing accounted for one in four local jobs. In the late 1980s, this percentage ranged between 21 percent and 27 percent. Since then, the proportion has precipitously declined. Starting in 1997, fewer than 10 percent of all counties clearly benefited from jobs in the import-competing sector. Export-oriented

⁵ The CBP only reports employment within firms and as such likely overstates the concentration of import-competing jobs and export-oriented jobs relative to other employment.

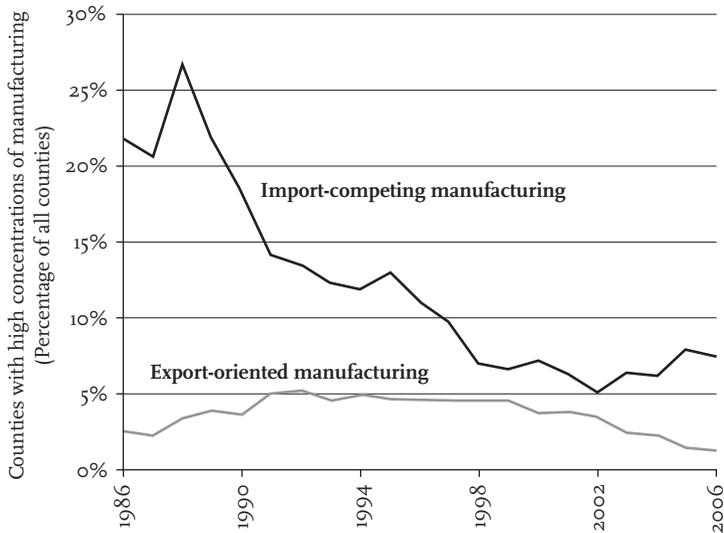


FIGURE 2.5 Percent of counties with high concentrations of trade-related manufacturing employment (1986 to 2006)

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, *County Business Patterns*; Schott 2010.

manufacturing is even more diffuse: At its height, it provided one in four jobs in just 5 percent of counties.

Although manufacturing today provides relatively few jobs, manufacturing trade has made up at least 70 percent of total US imports and exports since the 1970s.⁶ The demographic shift means not only that fewer individuals are directly concerned with trade protection but also that fewer communities have a reason to be directly concerned with increasing or decreasing trade protection. By 2006, in the majority of all counties, manufacturing accounted for less than 10 percent of employment. In half of these counties, manufacturing accounted for less than 5 percent of employment. In these counties, the community benefits of trade protection may not be readily apparent. Marc Busch and Eric Reinhardt (2000) show that high industrial concentration is linked with stronger preferences among regional workers, high contributions to political campaigns, and voter turnout. Increasingly low concentrations thus diminish a source of preferences.

Even where manufacturing remains important to communities, the benefit of trade protection may be unclear. In Elkhart County, Indiana—locally known as the RV Capital of the World—by the measures of the County Business Patterns reports, more than half of all jobs were linked to manufacturing between 1986 and 2006. Thirty percent of those jobs have been in firms producing goods narrowly defined as import competing, but 20 percent

⁶ Conconi et al., 2014.

are in firms producing goods that are competitive in international markets, in part because the local firms outsource much of the production abroad. Does trade protection (particularly on inputs necessary to the recreational vehicle industry, such as steel and components) help or hinder employment in Elkhart?

In short, the shift in what American industries seek in terms of trade protection and shifts in the geographic distribution of industry have made it harder for people to gauge how trade policy might affect their local economies.

Trade and Prices

Not all Americans produce goods and services, but they all consume them, and the potential for cheaper consumer goods as a result of increased trade might counter real income losses even for those whose employment prospects might be lessened (Alt and Gilligan 1994). For the majority of individuals who believe their employment is unrelated to or even aided by a liberal trade policy, the potential for cheaper, more diverse, and higher quality goods might be expected to move them from indifference to support (Hall, Kao, and Nelson 1998; Bailey 2001). Yet it is not clear that Americans expect trade liberalization to improve their consumption options.

The 2006 and 2008 University of Notre Dame modules of the CCES asked two survey questions concerning prices: what the effect of trade agreements is on the prices of goods in general and what the effect is on the prices of goods that respondents purchase.⁷ In both cases more than 50 percent of respondents either have no opinion or believe that trade agreements offer no benefit on prices. Twenty percent believe that trade agreements increase the price of goods that they and others purchase. Fewer than 10 percent believe that trade offers a real benefit in terms of consumer prices.

Why do many Americans fail to directly link trade liberalization with lower prices? On an individual good, market forces may have hidden the effects of liberalization. Initially, postwar imports were viewed as inferior to goods produced in America, but the quality of goods quickly increased. Today, foreign goods are no longer necessarily synonymous with cheap goods and may be found at the same price points as US-produced goods. The distinction has been further blurred as US producers have lowered their prices by assembling or rebranding imported goods. Thus, consumers may see US goods as no different from foreign goods in quality or in pricing.

To better understand how trade has affected consumption, Americans would need to look at overall prices of consumer goods. Here economists have statistical abilities that surpass what the typical American would observe.

⁷ Results from the University of Notre Dame modules of the 2006 and 2008 Cooperative Congressional Election Study.

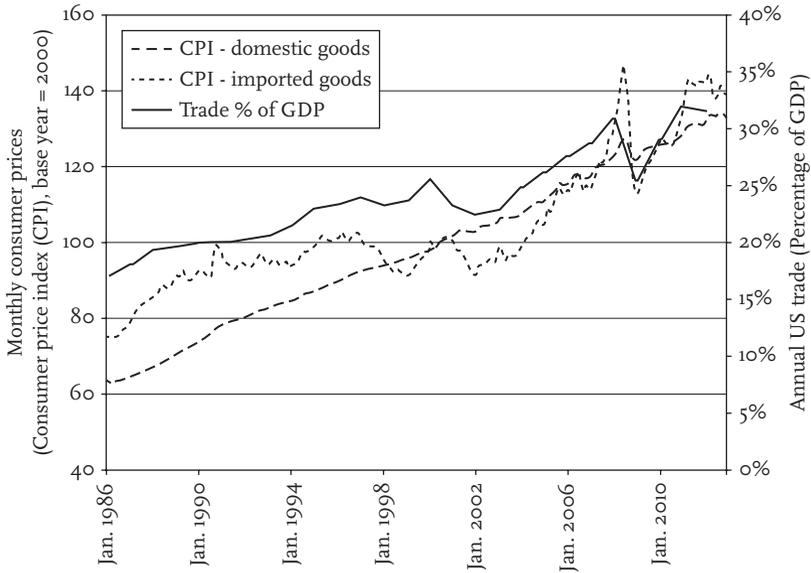


FIGURE 2.6 Trends in time: increased trade flows and increasing consumer prices (1986 to 2012)

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division; US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of International Prices; US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Consumer Prices and Price Indexes

Figure 2.6 overlays the consumer price indexes (CPIs) for domestic and imported goods with a measure of trade exposure (trade as a percentage of GDP). The CPI measure changes in the price for a basket of commonly purchased food and household items. The annual percent change in the CPI, a commonly used measure of inflation, here captures how a typical American would observe the trend in prices for goods. From 1986 to 2012, trade exposure (the dark line) has trended upward in parallel with the CPI for both domestic (dashed line) and imported goods (the dotted line). Where trade exposure is lower, the CPI is lower, and vice versa, particularly in relation to the CPI for imported goods. From an economist's perspective, there are many good reasons for this pattern, but for the average consumer, it would not appear that increased trade has decreased prices. There is thus some justification for Americans' confusion about the price benefits of freer trade: they do not see the benefits in their day-to-day lives.

Even as trade has grown to the equivalent of one-third of American GDP, the characteristics of imports has kept many common forms of trade out of the eye of the general public and has led to distorted perceptions of what countries America trades with and the effects of that trade. Yet economic ignorance need not correlate with a lack of opinion. Political entrepreneurs such as political parties typically have an incentive to educate the electorate or at the very least provide messages with cues to partisan preferences, especially on complex issues on

which individuals are more likely to seek guidance (e.g., Zaller 1992; Berinsky 2009). Yet, political signals have also been weak on the issue of trade policy.

Political Sources of Uncertainty

In the summer of 2005, Congress passed CAFTA by a 55-to-45 margin in the Senate and a 217-to-215 margin in the House.⁸ Although the economic effect of CAFTA was relatively small, the association with NAFTA and broader plans to expand free trade garnered it significant media coverage. Opponents to CAFTA ranged across the ideological spectrum. Liberal presidential spoiler candidate Ralph Nader,⁹ conservative presidential candidate Pat Buchanan,¹⁰ and Nobel prizewinning economist Joseph Stiglitz,¹¹ among others, all spoke out against CAFTA. The agreement was also referenced in a number of electoral campaigns. Yet in 2006, when the CCES asked respondents how their senators had voted on CAFTA, the majority did not know.

Table 2.1 compares Americans' knowledge of senatorial votes across seven proposals, all of which received a roll call (recorded) vote during the 109th Congress, that is, between January 3, 2005, and January 3, 2007: banning late-term abortion (Partial Birth), federal funding for stem cell research (Stem Cell), a timetable to withdraw from Iraq (Iraq), citizenship for illegal immigrants (Immigration), increasing the federal minimum wage (Minimum Wage), extending capital gains tax cuts passed in 2001 (Capital Gains), and ratifying a new free trade agreement between the United States and Central American countries (CAFTA). On average, Americans are pretty adept at knowing—or at least guessing—their senators' voting records. Fifty percent of the time, respondents answered correctly regarding how their senators voted. Relatively few individuals (on average 12 percent) answered incorrectly, although more than a third admitted to not knowing. When they did attempt an answer, people were more than four times as likely to be right. CAFTA significantly differed from all other issue areas on all dimensions. It had the highest percentage of individuals stating an incorrect answer (15 percent), the lowest number offering a correct answer (31 percent), and by far the highest number responding that they did not know (54 percent). In contrast to other issues, when people did hazard a guess, people were only two times as likely to be right. CAFTA compared poorly on this measure even compared to other economic issues, such as raising the federal minimum wage and extending capital gains taxes.

⁸ For both descriptive and analytic purposes, the paper uses the second Senate CAFTA vote, taken on July 28, 2005, for procedural reasons, which includes the supporting vote of the previously absent Senator Joe Lieberman.

⁹ The director of Public Citizens' Global Trade Watch, founded by Nader, described CAFTA as "a moldering corpse that needs burial" (*Washington Times*, May 28, 2005).

¹⁰ Patrick J. Buchanan, "CAFTA: Last Nail in the Coffin?," *American Conservative*, May 9, 2005.

¹¹ Joseph E. Stiglitz, on *Lou Dobbs Tonight*, CNN, July 27, 2005.

TABLE 2.1 Americans' knowledge of senators' votes by issue

ANSWER	PARTIAL	STEM		MINIMUM			CAPITAL	MEAN (%)	S.D. (%)
	BIRTH (%)	CELL (%)	IRAQ (%)	IMMIGRATION (%)	WAGE (%)	GAINS (%)	CAFTA (%)		
N/A "Don't Know"	34	34	32	41	35	37	54	38	7
Right	53	54	58	44	54	53	31	50	9
Wrong	13	12	11	15	11	9	15	12	2
Right to Wrong Ratio	4:1	5:1	5:1	3:1	5:1	6:1	2:1	4:1	

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content.

NOTE: Obs: Min. = 63,115, Max. = 72,464; 2 observations per respondent.

Trade-related legislation often resides in the minutiae of other, more expansive bills, obscuring representatives' positions on the trade-specific aspect of the bill. Atypically, the CAFTA legislation focused almost exclusively on trade issues, making interpretation of politicians' vote choices easier for voters. If voters did not receive a clear message about their representatives' preferences in a high-profile piece of trade legislation such as CAFTA, they are unlikely to do so for more typical bills. Why, in contrast to other policies, do voters lack the type of strong partisan cue that might diminish their own uncertainty about trade and trade policy?

Three characteristics of US politics have contributed to the obfuscation of elite messages on trade: the concentration of trade policy decision-making at the executive level, the switch in partisan preferences for trade, and the lack of cohesion within parties. As to the first of these, even before the end of World War II, the United States and Great Britain started plans to institutionalize a more integrated and open international global trading system. In this endeavor, President Harry Truman was aided by the continuation of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act (RTAA) of 1934. By law, trade policy is the purview of Congress, but the RTAA granted the president authority to negotiate bilateral, reciprocal trade agreements diminishing existing tariffs by up to 50 percent. Authorization in the original bill lasted only three years but was subsequently renewed and expanded to cover non-tariff barriers. The RTAA thus made concessions easier to negotiate abroad and limited the protectionist tendencies of Congress. Presidents could bundle negotiations to create packages that would be more attractive to Congress, and the final product required only a simple majority for approval. In contrast, repealing a tariff reduction required a supermajority, creating a high hurdle for protectionism. The extent to which a president's larger, national constituencies created additional political incentives for presidential liberalism, and thus presidential disposition to utilize

the authority to actively diminish inefficient, regionally specific protectionist policies in exchange for US access to international markets, remains debated (see, e.g., Lohmann and O'Halloran 1994; Hiscox 1999; Karol 2000; Davis 2003). But the original RTAA and subsequent renewals up to 1979 are widely credited as the primary institutional change permitting the expansion of US-led international trade liberalization (Schattschneider 1935; Bailey, Goldstein, and Weingast 1997). They also changed the dynamics of lobbying for trade policy, and thus, the importance of trade policy for senators and House representatives.

The core of the new liberalized trading system was the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) signed in 1947 by twenty-three member countries. The agreement called for both standardization of trade practices and progressive reductions of tariffs, quotas, and other restrictive measures. In eight successive rounds between 1947 and 1986, GATT members negotiated first tariff reductions, then non-tariff reductions, and finally the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which subsumed GATT in 2005. In essence, the specifics of US trade policy were now largely determined outside the direct control of Congress and the executive office.

Furthermore, President Truman had entered the country into GATT without congressional approval. However, further extensions of the Trade Agreement Act necessary for continued US membership did require approval. Each extension became increasingly laden with special interest protections, leading Truman to remark on signing the extension in 1951, "I am very much concerned at the fact that some of these new provisions single out particular types of products for special consideration. One of the basic principles of the trade agreements program, repeatedly enunciated in the Congress, is that the Congress should confine its legislative mandate in this field to general principles. The dangers of reverting to product-by-product legislation in the field of tariffs are obvious."¹² In essence, the RTAA and Trade Agreement Acts removed much of the political debate and lobbying from the congressional sphere for almost twenty years. Although subsequent acts weakened executive control of trade policy and at times returned more jurisdiction over trade policy to Congress, trade policy is still negotiated primarily at the executive level, with Congress exercising much less control than it does in other policy areas (Lohmann and O'Halloran 1994). As a result, the importance of the positions of congressional actors is simply less than when the Senate served as the primary generator of trade policy.

The postwar period also saw a shift in partisan attitudes toward trade, which is the second reason why politicians' positions on trade are ambiguous to most Americans. Up to and throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the Democratic Party, with its strong support from export-oriented southern farmers, was relatively less supportive of trade protection than the Republican Party (Bailey, Goldstein, and Weingast 1997). The 1912 Democratic Platform noted

¹² Harry S. Truman, "Statement by the President upon Signing the Trade Agreements Extension Act," June 16, 1951. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13806>.

constitutional limitations on the federal government: “We declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the Federal government, under the Constitution, has no right or power to impose or collect tariff duties, except for the purpose of revenue, and we demand that the collection of such taxes shall be limited to the necessities of government honestly and economically administered.” In contrast, the 1912 Republican Platform called for trade protection to support economic development, diversification, and higher standards of living. Early opposition to Truman’s liberal trade policies came primarily from Republicans (Milner 1997). Over time, however, votes for extension became less partisan (Hiscox 1999). In the 1950s and 1960s both the parties and their membership changed. The 1948 exodus of southern Dixiecrats from the Democratic Party over civil rights issues brought new free trade supporters into the Republican Party at a time when the Republican position itself was shifting. The year 1948 was also the year that the Republican platform dropped its opposition to the RTAA (Hiscox 1999). With the United States as the predominant industrial power after World War II, manufacturing industries’ protectionist sentiment faded away, taking away one of the main sources of the Republican Party’s anti-trade stance. By 1960, the percentage of House Republicans supporting free trade began for the first time to exceed the percentage of House Democrats who did so (Hiscox 1999).

A result of this realignment is that the two main political parties have largely converged on a free trade policy agenda. Both parties have collaborated on numerous free trade agreements. The US FTA with Israel, concluded in 1985, passed the House by a 422–0 vote. Negotiations on NAFTA began with Republican President George H. W. Bush and concluded with ratification and implementation by Democratic President Bill Clinton. Party platforms offer an alternative glimpse at the narrowing of the divide. Data from the Manifesto Project Database (Volkens et al. 2014), a compilation of content analyses of parties’ electoral programs since 1920 in the United States, allows for a comparison of parties’ positions on trade as well as the importance of trade policy in the platforms. The database decomposes party platforms into single-issue sentences or quasi-sentences and then codes them into one of fifty-six policy categories: for example, “welfare state expansion,” “privatization,” or “protectionism.” Because trade can be and is discussed in both negative and positive terms,¹³ each phrase is further coded for position on trade: “protectionism: positive” (per406) and “protectionism: negative” (per407). The total count for each category is standardized by the number of total sentences or quasi-sentences, in order to control for variation in length of party platforms. The net number of standardized pro-protection statements (per406–per407) provides a measure

¹³ Dolezal et al. (2014, 61) note that trade is one of a handful of issues coded for both negative and positive positional categories; for most categories, the issue alone indicates a party’s position. Budge (2001) has shown that for most issues such dual position categories are unnecessary, but that protectionism (406, 407) and military (104, 105) are the two exceptions in which real-world party manifestos mention both with near equal emphasis.

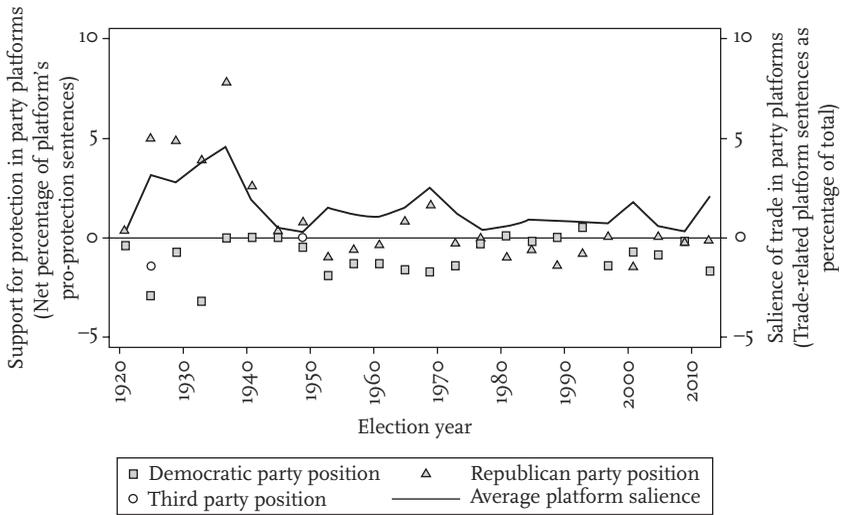


FIGURE 2.7 Party position and trade's salience in US elections (1920 to 2012)
 SOURCE: The Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2014).

of each party's position on trade: "Net percentage of platform's pro-protection sentences." The total number of standardized statements on trade policy ("Trade-related platform sentences as percentage of total") offers insight into the campaign salience of the issue. Figure 2.7 displays party position side by side with average salience (the unweighted mean of viable parties' trade salience measure) for each presidential election year from 1920 to 2012. The Manifesto Project collects data for all parties which won at least one seat, a decision rule that excludes Ross Perot's Independent Party platform in 1992 and the Reform Party in 1996 as well as some other unsuccessful third parties. The particular case of Ross Perot is discussed in depth in chapter 9. Here, the focus is on the position on and salience of trade for the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Republican and Democratic parties were clearly differentiated on trade, with the Republicans espousing primarily protectionist sentiment in contrast to the Democrats' free trade stance. During this period, in terms of platform coverage, trade salience was at its highest, comprising almost 5 percent of the platform. By the 1940s, the parties' trade positions had converged; and salience plummeted. As parties' positions diverged in the 1960s, trade rose in prominence, only to drop once again.

Low points in salience have in general been marked by little distinction between the parties. Note, for example, the 2008 presidential election in which the Manifesto Project Database finds no meaningful distinction between the trade position of the Republican Party platform and the Democratic Party platform. In 2008, salience is also low. As discussed in chapter 7, in 2008 both the Republican candidate John McCain and the Democratic candidate Barack Obama largely avoided trade-related campaigning. In 2008, Obama used only

nine trade-related ads; McCain used just one. Furthermore, McCain developed but did not air a strongly pro-free trade campaign ad. The issue briefly arose during the candidates' debate, but both took the position of supporting free trade (albeit with different conditions) before Obama rapidly moved the discussion away from disagreement over the Colombian FTA (which as president, Obama later signed) to the broader economy.

In 2012, in the wake of the US financial crisis and recession, candidates from both parties increased trade-related political campaigning from prior years, but both sides offered vague policy statements against “offshoring” by American companies and pledging to “get tough” with China. In comparison to 2008, Obama more than doubled the number of trade-related ads used by Democrats (21 in 2008 versus 9 in 2004). Romney ran 12 different ads, compared to McCain’s single trade-related ad. The 2012 rhetoric reiterated themes from the 2004 election in which Democratic challenger John Kerry sought to attack Republican incumbent President George Bush on perceived job losses from outsourcing. In 2004, the argument petered out as both campaigns publically denounced outsourcing and moved the debate toward strategy: whether providing tax cuts for returning production to the United States (Bush) or closing the tax loopholes abetting overseas production (Kerry) would be more effective.¹⁴ Despite the debate on specific policy, as the *New York Times* editorial board repeatedly pointed out throughout the campaign season, both candidates supported free trade. Both the Democratic and Republican Party platforms of 2004 voiced support for free trade and free trade agreements, albeit with nods to making such agreements “fair” and providing relief for affected workers.

In 2012, the outsourcing issue returned, but with party positions flipped. In 2012, the Republican challenger attacked the Democratic incumbent president for outsourcing job losses; Mitt Romney’s campaign ran a series of ads blaming half a million job losses in the United States on President Obama’s failure to “stop Cheaters” and in particular China from taking American ideas and production. As in 2004, both candidates were publically denouncing outsourcing, but Romney faced an additional hurdle, his prior association with outsourcing strategies during his professional career at Bain Capital. In a series of their own paid ads, the Obama campaign reran portions of Romney’s campaign ads juxtaposed with snippets from newspaper articles detailing Romney’s links to outsourcing US firms. The new ads dubbed Romney “Outsourcer-in-Chief.”

Thus, campaigns during the 2012 election partially revived outreach to protectionist sentiments; both the Democrats and the Republicans tried to position themselves as fielding the candidates best positioned to take action on outsourcing. But the similarity of the concern and the policy vagueness diminished both candidates’ and parties’ presentation of their position because there

¹⁴ In February 2004, President Bush and Republicans rushed to denounce statements by Gregory Mankiw, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, who argued that outsourcing jobs overseas was probably beneficial to the US economy in the long run.

was little contrast to be made with the opposition. When in 2012 and again in 2013, congressional Democrats introduced an outsourcing related bill called the “Bring Jobs Home Act,” the issue and the bill gained little traction with either party.

While the positions of the Republican and Democratic parties have converged, the parties remain divided within, and both parties display less cohesion on trade-related policy than on most other policies over the past few decades (Hiscox 1999). The uneven distribution of trade-oriented industries means that the constituent demands of certain regions differ from the position of the national party (Karol 2000). In the postwar period, representatives from both the Republican and Democratic parties have been elected from districts with a similar distribution of export- and import-competing industries (Hiscox 1999). The cross-cutting pressures on trade that result can be observed in both parties, in votes for specific trade bills and treaties. Figure 2.8 and figure 2.9 display the percentage of votes against¹⁵ and for key congressional bills from 1970 to 2012. In general, Democrats have been more supportive of trade limiting bills (figure 2.8) and less supportive of trade treaties (figure 2.9) than Republicans, but both parties show significant internal disagreements. On the last four key trade policy votes—the 2010 US Trade Currency Policy, the 2003 Importation of Prescription Drugs, the 1999 Steel Imports, and the 1990 Textile Trade Act/Veto Override—Republicans split their votes. The post-NAFTA Clinton presidency was particularly marked by Democratic Party infighting. House minority leader Dick Gephardt (D-Missouri) staunchly opposed NAFTA and any extensions to it, while vice president Al Gore was charged with expanding its purview. Both were future Democratic presidential candidates.

These shifting positions are true not only of the country’s elected officials and parties, but also of powerful organizations that have long represented the interests of labor and industry. For instance, the position of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organization (AFL-CIO), the United States’ predominant trade union, has also shifted across the decades. Once a supporter, albeit a weak one, of trade liberalization, the union turned against free trade as the postwar booms faded in the 1960s (Hiscox 2001). The AFL-CIO remains steadfastly against NAFTA, CAFTA, and the Korea Free Trade Agreement, but not all of its membership hold the same position. Since the AFL-CIO’s creation, the cross-industry nature of the organization has been a problem. Today it spans fifty-seven unions, from the Actors’ Equity Association to the Association of Flight Attendants to the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (the UAW). Not all the unions are similarly affected by imports. In fact, how strongly the AFL-CIO has pushed for trade protection has been linked to the home union of its leadership. Former AFL-CIO president John Sweeney rose to power through a service sector union representing janitors and hospital workers, and was seen as relatively weak on trade issues. In contrast, the current president, Richard

¹⁵ Abstentions coded as “Against.”

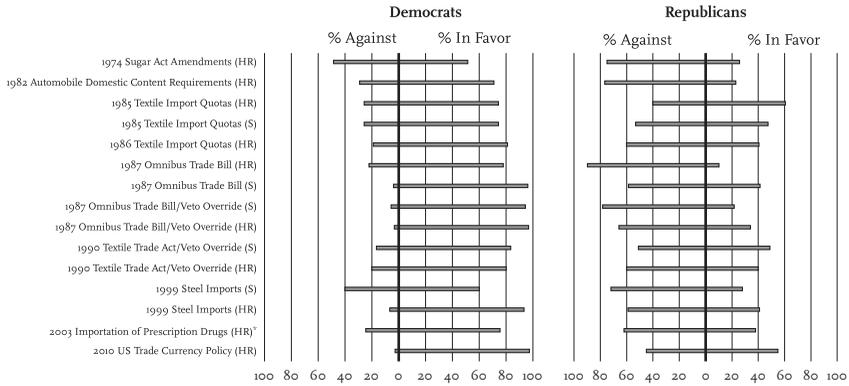


FIGURE 2.8 Vote on trade bills by party (key congressional votes, 1970–2012)
 * The 2003 Importation of Prescription Drugs bill is the only bill on the list which primarily liberalized rather than protected against trade.

SOURCE: US Congress, *The Congressional Record* (various); *Congressional Quarterly (CQ)*, various, “Key Congressional Votes”.

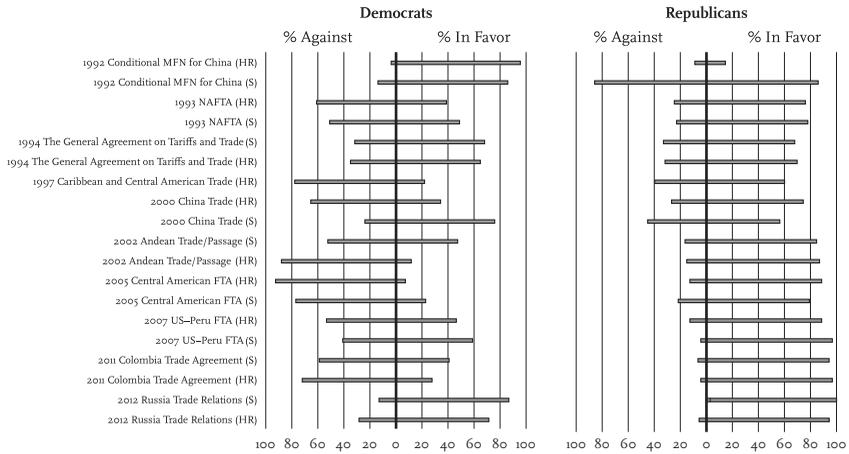


FIGURE 2.9 Vote on trade treaties by party (key congressional votes, 1970–2012)
 SOURCE: US Congress, *The Congressional Record* (various); *Congressional Quarterly (CQ)*, various, “Key Congressional Votes”.

Trumka, rose to power through the mine workers’ union and has quickly taken a stronger stance on trade policy.¹⁶

Taking a strong stance can be difficult at times when union interests—defined by industry—are in opposition. This is particularly the case when trade protection occurs in the intermediate rather than final good category. Limiting imports of intermediate goods can pit unionized workers and their respective unions

¹⁶ Steven Greenhouse, “Promising a New Day, Again,” *New York Times*, September 16, 2009.

against each other. Take, for example, the cracks which appeared among AFL-CIO workers during the Bush Era steel tariffs. During testimony over the consequences of steel tariffs, individual union members stepped forward to argue both for and against the tariffs' continuation. One steel tariffs opponent directly identified the conflict by noting that the tariffs employed to support steel workers' jobs threatened his union job at a steel drum corporation: "They say that these tariffs are supposed to help workers, to save steel jobs, but what about me? I don't understand why the union jobs of steel producers are any more important than my union job."¹⁷ More recently, the UAW supported a renegotiated version of the Korean Free Trade Agreement in 2010, in doing so splitting not only with affiliated unions such as the United Steelworkers (USW) and the International Association of Machinists (IAM) but the AFL-CIO as a whole.

The conflict within the union on trade protection has been great enough to cause a more permanent divide. In 2005, five major unions—including the Teamsters, the Service Employees International Union, and the United Food and Commercial Workers—walked out of the AFL-CIO to form the "Change to Win" coalition. Although other power issues also factored in the schism, the newer coalition's mission statement specifically distinguished its membership as being not directly affected by trade: "The central objective of the Change to Win Strategic Organizing Center is to unite the 50 million American workers who work in industries that cannot be outsourced or shipped overseas into strong unions that can win them a place in the American middle class."¹⁸

In a similar vein, divisions within manufacturing associations have arisen over trade protection. The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), a coalition of small and large manufacturers, supported George W. Bush's tempered push for Chinese revaluation of the yuan despite divisions between larger and smaller manufacturer members. Executives at NAM member Whirlpool were outspoken opponents of the Bush-era steel tariffs and attempts at Chinese revaluation, in part due to high imports of intermediate inputs and even final goods for sale in the US market. Smaller manufacturing firms lacking the scale to move operations overseas supported more active reform, some branching off to form Manufacturers for Fair Trade.¹⁹ Others have joined the Consuming Industries Trade Action Coalition (CITAC) to push for greater trade liberalization. Like political parties and unions, even industry organizations do not offer a unified story for their members or society more broadly to follow.

Ultimately, the greater uncertainty about the benefits of trade resulting from these factors has also led to the diminished political salience of trade policy. While it was once a policy around which parties formed, today trade

¹⁷ Testimony of Gordon Jones. Trilla Steel Drum Corporation. Hearing on Unintended Consequences of Increased Steel Tariffs on American Manufacturers before the House Committee on Small Business, July 23, 2002.

¹⁸ <http://www.changetowin.org/about>.

¹⁹ Louis Uchitelle, "What to Do about China and the Yuan," *New York Times*, October 12, 2005.

policy only minimally influences individuals' behavior in the voting booth. Take, for example, the topics of roll-call votes of the 109th Congress included in table 2.1: banning late-term abortion, federal funding for stem cell research, a timetable to withdraw from Iraq, citizenship for illegal immigrants, increasing the federal minimum wage, extending capital gains tax cuts passed in 2001, and ratifying a new free trade agreement between the United States and Central American countries. The 2006 CCES survey collected information on respondents' preferred vote on these issues, their representatives' recorded vote, and the respondents' self-reporting on whether they voted for the representative or an opponent in the 2006 election. Combined, this information allows the calculation of the change in the likelihood of a voter supporting an incumbent politician conditional on the incumbent's voting record.

The data show high built-in support for incumbents. The average probability of a CCES respondent voting for an incumbent in any given 2006 Senate race was 64 percent. The probability was higher (93 percent) when the incumbent matched the respondent's self-described partisan identification than when not (39 percent). However, matching on specific policies also mattered. Take, for example, the issue of Iraq. Matching on the issue of the withdrawal from Iraq generated a 27 percentage point shift in the probability of voting from the incumbent: from 49 percent for a non-match to 77 percent for a match. Figure 2.10 displays the series of predicted probabilities.

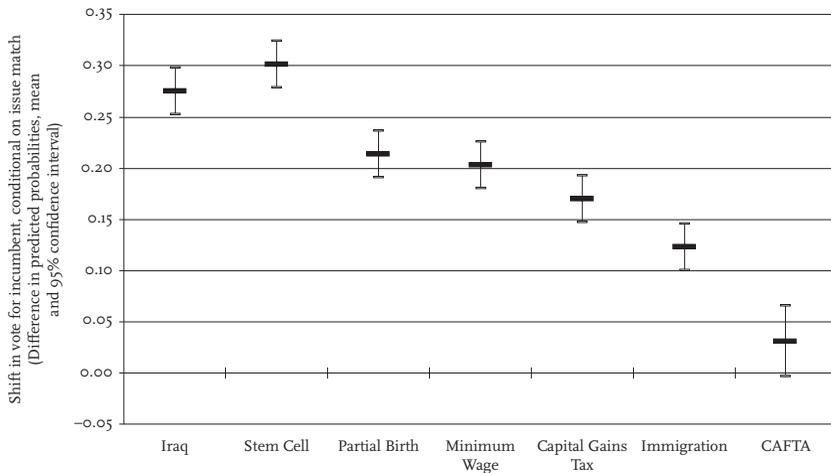


FIGURE 2.10 The salience of trade policy relative to other ideological and economic issues

NOTE: Baseline probability of voting for the incumbent is 64 percent. The center bars represent the difference in probability between voters whose opinions match their incumbents' roll-call vote on the issue and those voters whose opinions do not. Top and bottom whiskers represent the 95 percent confidence interval for this difference in the predicted probabilities.

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007).

On the bottom right is CAFTA. Not matching on the issue of CAFTA resulted in only a 3 percent shift in the probability of voting for the incumbent, much smaller than even other economic policies. This pattern holds even when controlling for common predictors of vote choice like partisan identification (see Guisinger 2009). Congruence between voters' preferences and representatives' behavior on trade policy matters less than congruence on a broad spectrum of other policies; in other words, representatives are held less accountable by the public on trade policy than on other policies.

Furthermore, in recent elections, US politicians appear to have successfully undertaken a slight of hand on trade policy. In the aftermath of the 2012 presidential and congressional election, the progressive interest group Public Citizen noted a large number of Republicans and Democrats who ran against the very trade liberalization policies they had supported during the prior Congress, noting that more than 40 percent of the House and Senate incumbents who campaigned on a protectionist platform had in fact voted in favor of free trade more often than not.²⁰

The following chapters identify the sources of trade's fall in salience by identifying the sources of individuals' preferences for protectionism, evaluating the incentives to mobilize these preferences, and testing whether a stronger information environment would change preferences and/or the relative salience of trade policy in today's political environment.

Conclusion

The irony that the US economy's increased reliance on trade has decreased rather than increased Americans' knowledge and certainty about trade and its effects is, therefore, the result of several factors. Divisions within political parties have limited elite-led messages about trade, placing the burden of information gathering on the individual. In other words, we cannot assume that individuals innately know their own economic interest, as is implicitly expected by models which seek to explain preferences on individuals' observed economic characteristics alone. As a result, the attempt to mobilize (or not) these interests becomes politically relevant. This information deficit also raises questions about how the absence of information influences beliefs generally but also for specific groups of individuals. First, would American opinion look different if the information environment were different—if that information environment told a different story about trade, trade protection, and trade protection's beneficiaries? Second, who would benefit from changing the information environment? And finally,

²⁰ Public Citizen, "Obama, Romney and Congressional Candidates Nationwide Used Trade-Themed Ads to Appeal to U.S. Majority Opposing Trade Status Quo, Reinforcing Public Anger and Building Expectations for Reform," November 7, 2012.

even if beliefs were shaped by changes in information, what would be the potential impact on politics? To answer these questions, we must first observe what Americans think about trade's effects, how they combine these effects into opinions about trade policy, and then explore how information would or would not change these beliefs and opinions.

CHAPTER 3 | Trade Preferences and Politics

TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE factors that shape Americans' opinions about trade and why those opinions seem to matter so little on Election Day, we must understand their beliefs about trade, how the information environment shapes those beliefs, and the manner in which individuals incorporate beliefs into preferences and convert preferences into politics. As discussed in the previous chapter, changes in the US economy and in the trade-related information accessible to Americans have made information acquisition more difficult, and we cannot assume that all individuals will seek and incorporate information similarly.

To explore this situation and its implications in more detail, this chapter opens by presenting data on how Americans perceive the economic benefits of trade for themselves and others, before turning to an examination of how these beliefs may be influenced by the types of information available, specifically how the content, quality, and influence of that information may vary across individuals. To answer the question of how Americans aggregate these perceived benefits and how the aggregation process might matter for political mobilization, I then introduce a new theoretical model of trade policy preference formation that integrates beliefs about the effect of trade on oneself and on others in the community and nation and that explicitly addresses the high levels of ambivalence expressed by Americans on the subject of trade policy. The chapter ends with a discussion of the multiple data sources on American opinion and the new survey methods and experiments which are used in following chapters to test and further tease out how changes in the current American information environment and political discourse might move American opinion and mobilize voters.

American Beliefs about Trade's Employment Effects

As part of the 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Surveys (CCES), I asked 1,800 survey participants how they thought trade affected their

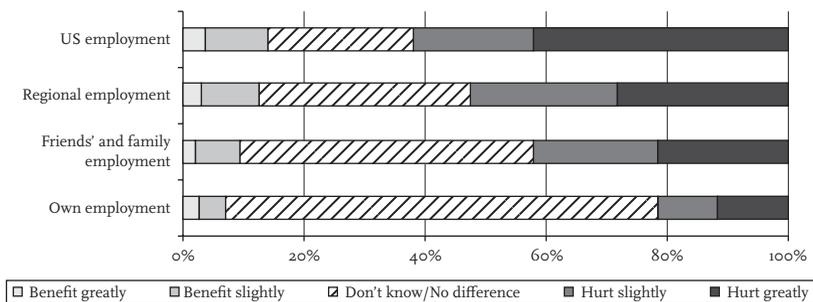


FIGURE 3.1 Americans' beliefs about the effect of trade on employment
 SOURCE: 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007, 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self), 1,800 observations.

own employment, the employment of friends and family, regional employment, and US employment.¹ As figure 3.1 shows, the majority of individuals viewed the effect of trade on employment as negative for the country as a whole; more than 60 percent believed that trade slightly or greatly hurt US employment. Only 14 percent of respondents believed that trade benefited (either slightly or greatly) national employment. In stark contrast, more than 70 percent of the respondents stated that trade either made no difference or they were unaware of the effect of trade on their own employment. However, more than 21 percent identified trade as hurting their own employment prospects, three times as many who identified trade as benefiting their prospects. Beliefs about the employment effects on friends and family and the effects on the region fell in between beliefs at the individual and beliefs at the national level. Just over half of those surveyed considered trade bad for regional employment; and just over 40 percent considered trade bad for their friends and family's employment. Broadly speaking, Americans hold far more negative views of trade's national effects and the effects of trade on the region, friends, and family than they do of the effect of trade on themselves.

These distinct evaluations—particularly the gap between beliefs about the personal employment effect of trade and those about the national employment effect—appear constant in the short term; even while the underlying distribution of beliefs show some malleability at the margins. Between the 2006 survey and the 2010 survey, the 2008 US financial crisis engulfed the US economy as a whole. The subsequent recession and doubling of the US unemployment rate increased attention on domestic economic conditions. Strikingly, in comparison with the 2006 responses, the 2010 survey responses show both diminished ambivalence about trade's effect and also continuity in the distribution of positive and negative beliefs. Figure 3.2 displays the change

¹ University of Notre Dame modules of the 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study. For 2010 data, results from control group only.

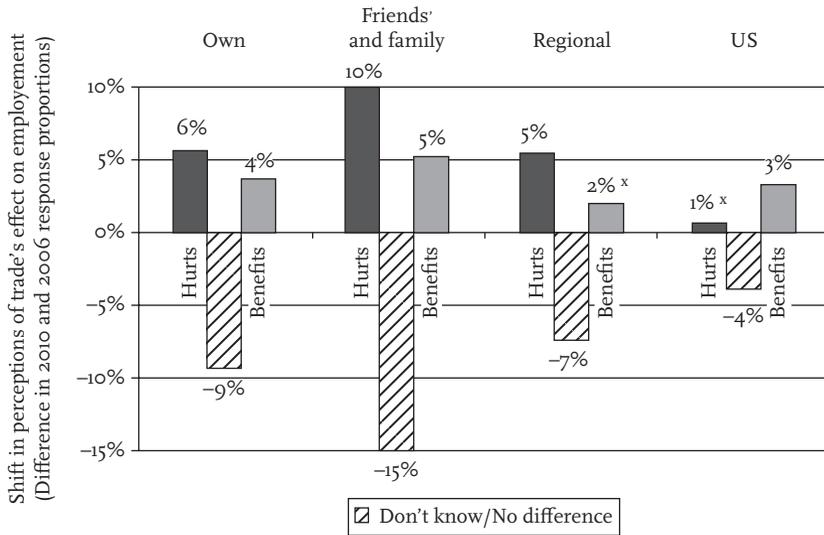


FIGURE 3.2 Post-2008 financial crisis beliefs about the effect of trade on employment

NOTE: For all but two responses, the differences between 2010 and 2006 were significant at the $p < .10$ level when using a 2-tailed test. ^x denotes the responses that were not significantly different.

SOURCE: 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007, 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self), 1,800 observations.

in response proportions at each employment level covered by the 2006 and 2010 CCES surveys. Note that the proportion of “don’t know/no difference” responses diminished across all levels of analysis. Yet, with one exception, the proportion of affirmative responses (either trade “hurts” or trade “benefits”) increased in similar proportions: roughly a ratio of 2 “hurts” to 1 “benefits.” Only at the national level, did 2010 responses show substantial change in the distribution of opinion compared to 2006. At the national level, the decline in the “don’t know/no difference” response proportion was far smaller (4 percent) and the rise in the affirmative response proportion occurred primarily in the trade “benefits” categories.² Even so, the takeaway remains the same: over 60 percent of those surveyed in 2010, just as over 60 percent of those surveyed in 2006, expressed a negative view concerning the potential effect of trade on US employment.

² Using a 2-tailed test of the difference in populations, the differences between 2006 and 2010 were significant at the $p < .01$ level for each response type to questions concerning own employment and employment of friends and family. For the question concerning regional employment, the decline in the “Don’t Know” or “No Difference” responses is significant at the $p < .01$ level, the increase in the “trade hurts” responses is significant at the $p < .05$ level, and the increase in the “trade benefits” responses is not significant. For the question pertaining to US employment, the decline in “Don’t

Individuals' distinct evaluation of the costs and benefits of trade for themselves versus for others also appears when trade concerns are framed as outsourcing. Overseas outsourcing—the use of foreign production facilities by domestic firms—gained political salience in the early 2000s. Public opinion polls exposed strong public disapproval of the practice and the firms engaging in it. A 2007 Gallup survey of over 39,000 members of its nationally representative household panel found that 77 percent thought that outsourcing was bad for the American economy.³ A 2010 *NBC/Wall Street Journal* poll⁴ found that more Americans blamed outsourcing for the continuing post-2008 financial crisis recession (86 percent) than health care costs (72 percent), bank loan requirements (64 percent), or high taxes (58 percent).⁵ As with more general trade concerns, the data I collected from the 2010 CCEs survey suggests that these concerns were more general than specific. For those concerned about trade's negative effect on their own employment (roughly one-quarter of the 2010 sample), only 33 percent agreed with the statement that their job could be easily outsourced; whereas for those concerned about trade's negative effect on national employment (roughly two-thirds of the 2010 sample), fully 71 percent were concerned about American jobs being outsourced. For the American public, concerns about outsourcing, like concerns about trade in general, are voiced at the national rather than individual level.

These beliefs run counter to the expectations of economists. Standard trade theory suggests that while trade is good for the country as a whole, it can create distinct individual winners and losers. Less than one-third of those surveyed in 2006 or in 2010 self-identified as a winner or loser from trade; yet many identified the country as a whole as suffering from negative employment effects of trade. This disconnect between beliefs about self and beliefs about others establishes that when thinking about the impact of trade, individuals are not simply extrapolating from their own circumstances; they hold distinct beliefs about the effect of trade on themselves and others. Furthermore, these beliefs vary greatly across circumstances and across communities. To better understand these beliefs, we need to think about how information influences these beliefs, more specifically how information availability might vary across individuals, creating sources of divergence and convergence in beliefs, and how information availability may interact with individual circumstances.

Know" or "No Difference" responses is significant at the $p < .10$ level, the increase in "trade benefits" is significant at the $p < .05$ level, and the increase in the "trade hurts" responses is not significant.

³ Bryant Ott, "Beware Your Customers Oppose Outsourcing," *Gallup Business Journal*, August 9, 2007, <http://www.gallup.com/businessjournal/28309/beware-your-customers-oppose-outsourcing.aspx>.

⁴ *NBC News/Wall Street Journal* Survey, Study #101061, September 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/WSJNBCPoll09282010.pdf>.

⁵ Not surprisingly 69 percent of the same sample thought that trade agreements cost jobs.

Additionally, we need to think about how individuals combine these disparate, countervailing beliefs into opinions about trade policy.

The Sources and Impact of Trade-Related Information

In the United States today, potential sources of trade information abound. Americans' homes, workplaces, cars, and ubiquitous electronics all silently offer insights into the role of trade in individuals' daily lives. An abundance of trade and trade-related information is collected, analyzed, and publically distributed by government and nongovernment entities. The 2014 version of the US Harmonized Tariff Schedule, for instance, runs to almost 22,000 lines of article descriptions and duty rates, and that only covers imports. The Commerce Department, the Census Bureau, the Congressional Budget Office, and the Department of the Treasury all make available data, projections, and white papers concerning current trade policy and the potential effects of trade agreements. Congressional votes are recorded in detail. Yet, most survey participants are unable to rank the top world economies, name the United States' main trading partner, or name the participants in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The very complexity and volume of information about trade means that for most Americans the specifics of trade and its effect on their own, others', and the nation's economic well-being will be provided by and filtered by others in the business, media, or political spheres.

Not surprisingly, many standard models of trade policy opinions are based on an assumption of almost complete voter ignorance about the topic. Some scholars have argued that many political actors have a vested interest in keeping voters largely in the dark about trade. For example, Stephen Magee and colleagues (1989) claim that lobbyists exploit the information asymmetry on trade policy in order to achieve a redistribution of the benefits of trade in favor of their clients. Politically, trade policy's relative obscurity provides cover for such transfers to special interests in return for electoral campaign support for candidates. Wolfgang Mayer and Raymond Reizman (1987), for example, have argued that industry groups and politicians may even privilege relatively inefficient forms of protection such as tariffs over more efficient forms such as subsidies because the visibility of subsidies provide too clear a signal about the nature of the transfer between political actors and those seeking redistribution from them.⁶ Voter ignorance, in other words, is easier to preserve with a more complex paper trail.

Among economists, one consistent theme is the idea that if voters were better informed about the benefits of trade liberalization, support for trade

⁶ A tariff benefits an industry by diminishing the competitiveness of foreign producers in the domestic market, generating an indirect transfer between consumers and domestic producers. A subsidy benefits an industry via a direct transfer between taxpayers and domestic producers.

protection would diminish. Some, like David Austen-Smith (1991), argue that a lack of economic education causes voters to be unaware of the economic costs for themselves and the nation associated with protectionist legislation. Others suggest that it is the poor visibility of trade policy itself that is to blame. In what Jagdish Bhagwati has termed the “Dracula effect” of information, exposure to increased economic information should cause protection to “shrivel and then die” (Ponzetto 2011). In short, the consensus among US economists is that fully informed voters would, like themselves, value the efficiency gains of free trade over other potential concerns.

The debate over whether voters are ignorant or informed and what effect either might have on their opinion overlooks both the possibility that individuals’ exposure to information varies greatly across the population and that different individuals may interpret the same information in different ways. If people react to pro-trade information in opposite directions, it is entirely probable that more information about policies, industries, and economic theory may not in fact result in greater support for free trade. Understanding the impact of information on American opinion requires, first, a consideration of the types of information individuals are likely to receive about trade and, second, predictions about how differences in individual circumstances affects the incorporation of that information.

We already know that individuals make distinct determinations of national, state, and individual economic interests. We also understand that trade’s impact varies across individuals, industries, communities, and regions. What is less understood is the link between the type of information available and these determinations of benefits, particularly with reference to trade. Americans may not be able to list all the signatories to the WTO, but they have still formed beliefs—often negative—about trade. As discussed next, this book argues that the attributes of the information providers and the characteristics of information acquisition shape what Americans have come to believe to be the benefits of trade.

Trade-Related Information Sources at the Individual, Community, and National Level

Individuals have ample and immediate information about their own general economic circumstances—their employability, their consumption needs, and their desires. The intimacy of this localized knowledge may cause them to downplay the role that international trade plays in their economic fortunes. Most of what they do know is likely to come from their own consumption habits, such as the national origin of common products such as cars, phones, computers, clothing, and some foods. Perceived threats can heighten this awareness, as in 2007, when a series of recalls of Chinese-produced foodstuffs (ranging from dog food to toothpaste) and toys led to a renewed focus in the media and among the public on all imports, but particularly those from China. At the height of the scandal, a Gallup survey found that 72 percent of the Americans

they polled agreed with the statement that they were “paying more attention to which country produces the products you buy,” and 64 percent went so far as to claim that they were willing to pay twice as much for a product made in the United States than the same product made in China.⁷ That year, books such as *A Year Without “Made in China”: One Family’s True Life Adventure in the Global Economy* may have led more Americans to inquire about the national origin of the products they buy, but in fact products stamped with a clear “Made in” label constitute but a small portion of US imports. As noted in the previous chapter, the rise in imports of product components and intermediary goods means that many American consumers may not fully understand the broader impact that trade has on their consumption choices and prices and may instead over-emphasize the dynamics of a small sliver of trade which is easily observable in daily life.

Individuals should have an informational advantage in understanding how trade affects their own employment over understanding its effects on others’ employment; but as with consumption, other factors might cloud the link between one’s own employment and trade. An endless number of factors directly determine an individual’s economic well-being, the vast majority of which are more causally proximate than pressures from international trade: a sick family member and financially crippling medical bills, the price a neighbor received for their house and its subsequent effect on one’s own ability to borrow against home equity, even the competence of a workplace manager or management. Individuals recognize their own economic characteristics—their abilities, their individual risk of being fired, and their ability to relocate and retrain. With the exception of those working in industries directly competing with imports, however, they may lack an awareness of how trade changes their economic circumstances.

Individuals who are employed may have the benefit of receiving information about trade from their workplace via colleagues, management, and industry-related magazines and newsletters, although this type of information provision will vary across employee type, sector, and time. Relatively few industries—the auto industry, the aerospace industry, the software industry, for example—merit publicly distributed magazines, newsletters, or similarly published media. As a result, individuals in management or close to management may have better access to both private and public information than floor workers. While company management has an incentive to inform workers about trade’s impact on the company, workers’ benefits might well diverge from management’s benefits, and workers may not necessarily take such information at face value (e.g., see Dean 2013).

Blue-collar workers in the past have received job- and industry-specific information from their unions. Research by John Ahlquist and colleagues

⁷ Gallup, “Americans Anxious about Imports from China,” August 30, 2007, <http://www.gallup.com/video/28558/import-anxiety.aspx>.

(2014) has shown that unions can inform and prime preferences, even in cases where individual workers' immediate interests may differ from those of the larger membership. They argue that individuals' memberships in networks and organizations "provoke" preferences. One of the most striking examples they provide is the case of unionized dockworkers, who are clearly winners from increased international trade but also retain their preference for protection. Ahlquist and colleagues (2014) attribute this divergence between material interests and policy preference to guidance from the union, which was trying to protect the jobs of workers in other industries.

However, union membership has been in steady decline since 1983. In 2013, just over 11 percent of all wage and salary workers were union members, compared to 20 percent in 1983.⁸ Given that union members have been found to have higher levels of political awareness (Bartle 2000), this decline is likely to result in informational loss for labor. Information acquisition, analysis, and distribution are also costly for unions, particularly for those suffering membership losses. Large unions have a benefit of scale when considering investing in such activities, but are also more likely to face internal division in terms of trade-related strategies, as discussed in chapter 2. Furthermore, just as management's preferences can diverge from labors', so can union leaders' objectives vary from those of members (for a review, see Masters and Delaney 1987). Thus, even workers involved in organized unions may see a decline in the volume and quality of the information they are provided.

Laid-off workers, particularly those looking to return to the same or similar jobs, have similar informational resources as those currently working. However, for those who are unemployed and without a specific industry link, information acquisition is more likely to be focused on the immediate availability of employment. This means unemployed workers will be scanning available jobs fitting their skills across industries and possible regions. In contrast, people with jobs are more likely to be narrowly focused on the prospects of their current industry and firm. Thus, those out of the workforce by choice, necessity, or retirement may have few additional insights into their own employment benefits from trade but a greater focus on benefits at the community and national level.

At the community and regional level, potential information sources increase in both number and diversity, and variation in the content of these sources and access to it influence individuals' beliefs and certainty about those beliefs. As explored in chapter 5, the extent to which individuals receive accurate, clear, and coherent information about trade's effect on their community will depend greatly on community characteristics such as economic diversity within the community and community turnover. Where local industries visibly compete against imports, the salience for individuals of trade policy and of trade tariffs

⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, "Union Members—2013," January 24, 2014, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/union2.pdf>.

specifically is likely to be higher. As discussed in the next section, adversity increases the salience of issues, and thus the potential for negative effects from foreign competition tends to generate an information bias in favor of import-competing industries rather than export-oriented industries. Additionally, where industries are heavily concentrated in a community or communities, a strong informational infrastructure is more likely. Rural areas often have active farm bureaus whose public affairs office provides information about the effect of government rule changes on farming through mailers, newsletters, websites, and even phone apps. City and state Chambers of Commerce can serve the same role, assuming they have a relatively limited number of industries to be researched. The more unified the economic base of a community, the easier for community-focused organizations to develop specific and uncontroversial recommendations and the more likely that those will be broadcast by local leaders and local media.

Local media, particularly print media, provide a different economic picture than do the national media (Goidel et al. 2010), which is not surprising given the different economic characteristics at the local and national level. Although local newspapers are dying off, where they remain, their economic focus can be narrow and deep. For instance, the *Elkhart Truth* of Elkhart, Indiana—the “RV Capital of the World”—has a regular section devoted to the RV industry, just as Kokomo, Indiana’s *Tribune* does regarding the auto industry. Kirby Goidel et al. (2010) find that local print news outlets are particularly important in structuring the business expectations of voters, such as those underpinning beliefs about trade. And where communities are more stable (i.e., neighborhoods have higher levels of homeownership and less housing turnover), exposure to local media has been found to be higher (Tichenor et al 1980; Shah et al 2001; Kang and Kwak 2003). Thus, expectations of individuals’ understanding of local issues should differ compared to individuals in regions with less concentration and higher turnover. The more diverse the economic region, however, the more diverse must be the coverage of local media. As coverage widens, readers, voters, and others in the community will face increasing complications in calculating the impact of government trade policy upon overall community-level economic outcomes. And as residency turnover increases, individual interest in community-level economic coverage is expected to fall and with it knowledge about the regional impact of trade.

Friends, neighbors, fellow school board members, civic groups, and religious organizations offer additional sources of direct and indirect information about trade’s benefits.⁹ Fellow community members’ expressions of their own individual assessments of trade policy serve to diffuse these evaluations throughout the community. The more unified the economy of the community,

⁹ A Canadian Election Study survey preceding the so-called “Trade Election” in 1988 found that 65 percent of respondents reported discussion at church about free trade (Johnston et al. 1988).

the more likely that these evaluations will be knit into a single, cohesive, and thus convincing narrative. Furthermore, the more stable the community, the more likely that these evaluations will be known to its members. Community turnover diminishes the likelihood not only of knowing the professions of one's neighbors and community members but also of knowing their opinions regarding trade policy's impact. Community turnover increases information acquisition costs and likely diminishes certainty about what policies would be best for the community as a whole.

Local leaders and politicians also can serve as a resource for community-level information about trade. Their own personal electoral interests provide additional incentives to overcome barriers in providing information, although their incentives to share information may also vary conditionally on community characteristics. In diverse economic communities, it is also more likely that community-level preferences will diverge. Given the potential distributional consequences of trade policy, as diversity increases, local leaders and politicians must also toe a more measured line. Thus, as discussed at length in chapter 8, limiting information may be as politically effective as supplying information.

The national level offers the widest variety of sources for evaluating the benefits of trade policy: economic educators and economic texts, government and international organizations' white papers, national news reports and other media, industry coalitions and unions, and national politicians and political parties. For instance, a 2012 survey of economic experts conducted by the University of Chicago's Booth School found that 95 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "freer trade improves productive efficiency and offers consumers better choices, and in the long run these gains are much larger than any effects on employment."¹⁰ This consensus is widely promulgated in mainstream economics textbooks, and a common expectation among economists is that those individuals who have taken an economics course in high school or college will have embraced a belief in the positive benefits of free trade. Using a national representative sample of 25,000 transcripts from 240 schools, William Walstad and Ken Rebeck (2000) estimated that enrollments in high school economics courses increased throughout the 1980s, reaching 44 percent in 1994. Since 1998, the Campaign for Economic Literacy has tracked an increase in the inclusion of economics in state educational standards, with 2014 the first year that all fifty states and the District of Columbia included economics in the K–12 standards.¹¹ That is not to say that all high school graduates have learned, or remember, the lessons equally, but many Americans will have received information about the benefits

¹⁰ Chicago Booth IGM Forum, "Free Trade," March 13, 2012, www.igmchicago.org/igm-economic-experts-panel.

¹¹ Council for Economic Education, *Survey of the States: Economic and Personal Finance Education in Our Nation's Schools 2014*, February 2014, <http://www.councilforeconed.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2014-Survey-of-the-States.pdf>.

of free trade via the educational system. For college students in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s, these lessons were likely reiterated: of those students who completed at least one year of college-level education, an estimated 40 percent took at least one economics course before they left (Siegfried 2000; Siegfried and Walstad 2014). Yet even those fully persuaded in the moment, like those unexposed to an economics course, will over time likely confront more contemporary and less theoretically based trade information.

For those individuals who are interested in reading them, white papers, statistics, and estimates on the cost and benefits of trade policy are readily available from both US government resources and from international institutions such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and even the United Nations (via the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD). In discussing the impact of trade on the US economy, these resources generally tout the long-term economic benefits of free trade, with some recognition of potential short-term, disruptive regional and industrial adjustments to trade liberalization. The Office of the United States Trade Representative Resource Center provides specific details about the United States' current and proposed trade agreements, complete with estimates of aggregate economic benefits. Most Americans will never click on the links themselves, but these papers do set the agenda for the media, politicians, and others seeking trade-related talking points. There may be an economic academic consensus on the positive effects of trade, but the broader public generally receives only a filtered view of this message.

Most Americans' information about trade's effects on the nation as a whole comes from the news media—be it on television, in the newspaper, on the radio, or increasingly via the Internet. In 2010, the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press estimated that the average American spent 70 minutes a day following the news, with almost half of that time spent watching TV news.¹² As will be shown in chapter 7, those watching the nightly national broadcast news, regardless of the program (*ABC World News*, *CBS Evening News*, or the *NBC Nightly News*) receive a decidedly negative view of trade. Common themes in these nightly news reports are health and safety concerns and job losses, all negative events designed to capture the attention of the viewer. These news reports highlight imports far more than exports. In fact, my coding of trade-related news suggests that for each story about trade and US exports, the national nightly news outlets ran four stories on imports, almost all of them negative.

Media coverage of the economy as a whole tends to overemphasize negative rather than positive conditions, a bias that appears to be correlated with public evaluations of the economy (Goidel and Langley 1995; Hester and Gibson

¹² "Americans Spending More Time Following the News," Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, September 12, 2010, <http://www.people-press.org/2010/09/12/americans-spending-more-time-following-the-news/>.

2003). According to Joe Hester and Rhonda Gibson (2003, 84), “when news personnel choose to do a free-standing story about an economic issue or event, it is likely to include some type of possible negative consequence for the consumer.” Trade seems no exception to this general rule. As the US trade balance nose-dived at the start of the 1980s, the frequency of trade-related articles in the *New York Times* doubled, from a 1970s average of 1.5 percent to just over 3 percent of total news stories (McGuire 2014). Struggles and problems create interest, so presentations of trade liberalization (or “globalization”) also tend to focus on the employment concerns or potential dangers to the consumer. In 2008, as the value of the dollar dropped globally, even hamburger giant McDonald’s jumped on the negative-slant bandwagon with its 30-second televised “Falling Dollar” commercial, whose subtext was that a declining dollar was bad for all Americans, except those buying off the dollar menu at McDonald’s.

National interest groups, politicians, and political parties also play a role in providing information, often via media but also through a variety of mechanisms such as ad campaigns, platforms, and speeches. These political-factors are far more likely to read, parse, and selectively distribute to the public economic analysis concerning the impact of trade agreements. That said, the quality and specificity of the information can vary substantially. Early twentieth-century political party platforms explicitly detailed tariff plans and rationale. For example, the 1912 Republican Party platform spelled out not only the argument for trade protection in terms of economic development, diversification, and standard of living but also noted the specific industries benefiting from tariffs and the national unemployment costs of removing protection.¹³ In contrast, both parties’ 2008 platforms offered a generic statement about the growth benefits of trade, with the Democratic Party platform stating some redistribution concerns and the Republican Party platform noting some security concerns. During the 1992 presidential campaign, Ross Perot’s campaign directed attention to the potential consequences of NAFTA. Not only did he provide a memorable and simplified explanation of the effect of trade agreements on jobs—the “giant sucking sound,” but Perot also created bi-weekly trade-related talking points to distribute to the media and produced and paid to run an infomercial explaining NAFTA to the American people (Mayer 1998).

Unions and other groups also promote their evaluations of and positions toward trade during national elections. In recent elections, the AFL-CIO and two business groups (the Business Coalition and the Business Round Table) have run competing issue ads concerning trade, American jobs, worker rights,

¹³ In an interesting contrast to current political discourse, the 1912 Democratic Platform noted constitutional limitations on the federal government: “We declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Democratic party that the Federal government, under the Constitution, has no right or power to impose or collect tariff duties, except for the purpose of revenue, and we demand that the collection of such taxes shall be limited to the necessities of government honestly and economically administered.”

and environmental conditions in China.¹⁴ Interest groups and think tanks also provide information briefs timed with major trade agreements. Major think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and the Brookings Institute have forums and web pages specific to trade issues, but attention to these information sources cycles with elections, major agreements, and downturns in the economy. As with government reports, the distribution of think tank reports depends substantially on the activities of the media and of politicians and other political entrepreneurs.

With widespread adoption of the Internet, new virtual communities have emerged. These communities are less bound by geographic considerations and are capable of disseminating information more rapidly and cheaply than many traditional information networks. Although initial expectations projected an Internet-catalyzed revolution in political communication, two decades after the Federal Networking Council first defined “the Internet,” the effect remains contested. The dominant “politics as usual” school suggests that in general, online networks and online politics mirrors offline networks and offline politics (Winston 1998; Margolis and Resnick 2000; Davis 1999, 2009); yet, direct empirical tests of the role of virtual communities in general and social networking sites specifically are still rare (Boulianne 2009; Gainous, Marlowe, and Wagner 2013). Traditional (offline) participation in political discussion within individuals’ communities appears to increase participation and acceptance of diverse political viewpoints (Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2004; McClurg 2006). Online, in the absence of geographic tethering, individuals could choose to filter out discordant messages and thus disengage from divergent ideas and new information. Or individual engagement could rise due to increased social contact. Empirical evidence to date does not strongly support either contention: while there is little evidence of a decline in civic engagement, positive impacts are currently small (Boulianne 2009) or indirect (Bode 2012).

Interaction on virtual networks is on the rise, but at this point in time, the distinctive effects of social networks seem to be on the margin rather than revolutionary. Pew Research Internet and American Life surveys (2008, 2012) identified a rapid increase in social networking and in political content on social networks. Between 2008 and 2012, the number of social network users more than doubled (from 33 percent to 69 percent of online users) and the proportion posting political content tripled (from 11 percent to 33 percent of social network users). On one hand, in terms of the total population, these political posters are relatively small: only 3 percent in 2008 and 11 percent in 2012. On the other hand, the same Pew survey finds that virtual networks are slightly more representative than traditional political networks, which skew toward high income and educational brackets (Gainous, Marlowe, and Wagner 2013; Smith 2013). Internet users appear to not strongly filter out discordant

¹⁴ The University of Wisconsin Advertising Project codes such ads as non-office related (Goldstein et al. 2011).

messages (Horrigan, Garrett, and Resnick 2004). In the longer term, this supply of more representational opinions may shift preferences and political behavior. According to the survey, 43 percent of social network users had “decided to learn more about a political or social issue” and 18 percent had decided to act because of something that they read about on a social networking site. Social network users are also more aware of undesirable events—such as job losses—among their friends and family (Hampton et al. 2015). In the short term, the impact of social networks appears primarily in limited populations: the young, the wealthy, and women. Compared to 13 percent of adults 65 or older, 67 percent of all 18–24 years-olds engaged in some form of political social network activity (Smith 2013). Furthermore, although the supply of information is more representative in social networks, the wealthy have more diverse networks and higher levels of political exchange, making the impact of virtual social networks more pronounced (Gainous, Marlowe, and Wagner 2013). Finally, while social networks increased all adults’ awareness of undesirable events, the effect was 50 percent greater among women than men (Hampton et al. 2015). If men and women differ in their uptake of information from social networking sites, this gap in information availability could influence not only their beliefs about the effect of trade policy on others but also their incorporation of such sociotropic concerns when forming their own preferences. However, the main takeaway from recent analysis of social networking sites is that at this date, Americans’ primary offline and online political communications differ only marginally (Smith 2013).

In summary, Americans have access to a vast supply of information at the individual, community, and national level. However, the quality and bias of the information supplied varies greatly depending on individuals’ personal circumstances, community characteristics, and choices by the national media and political and government elites. This variation in the information supplied is only one part of the equation; individuals’ demand for and interpretation of the information also influence the role information plays in individuals’ beliefs and preferences for trade.

Information Acquisition and Influence

Despite the prevalence of trade-related information resources, not all voters will acquire the same information nor will all information resources equally influence the population. Understanding potential variations in acquisition and influence can help explain observed differences in individual preferences and help in assessing the impact of alternative information environments.

As noted earlier, threats tend to serve as a strong incentive for information acquisition (Marcus and MacKuen 1993); this is true at the individual, community, and national level. Product recalls, factory closings, and security conflicts all increase the attention individuals pay to imported goods and these goods’ effects on their own lives, their communities, and the nation. A common expectation in international relations scholarship is that external threats—be

they security, economic, or other—will increase the salience of trade for the nation as a whole. But variations in trade’s salience across individuals could arise from variations in the perceived threat. Extending the basic logic of loss aversion (Tversky and Kahneman 1991), those likely to be negatively affected by trade agreements because of industry, skill, region, or other characteristics should be more aware of the details of current trade policy, including the actions of political actors, than for those for whom the effect of the agreement would be neutral or even positive.

Additionally, some citizens have social advantages—particularly in education and in income—that ease both information acquisition and internalization (Holbrook and Garand 1996). Poor economic training has been used by some researchers not only to explain why public opinion differs from elite opinion (Walstad and Rebeck 2002), but also why men and women differ in their preferences (Burgoon and Hiscox 2004). Stephen Bennett and Linda Bennett (1993) argue that even controlling for these factors, women and minorities may be at a disadvantage in acquiring and internalizing necessary economic information. Participation in a labor union or party politics may also decrease the costs of information acquisition. In many cases, the same characteristics that could influence information acquisition are also those predicted to affect preferences, making discriminating between the two causal logics difficult.

The potential for variation in incentives for acquiring information raises an important question about whether information will generate convergence or divergence in opinion. Economists’ assumption that more-informed voters would take an anti-protectionist stance ignores redistributive effects and automatically privileges aggregated economic benefits over other personal, local, or national policy goals. If underlying individual characteristics and their link to trade were truly different, then information may not drive convergence. For this reason, observing responses to new information can help identify the source of trade policy sentiment. Chapter 4 asks the question whether differences between white men and others are due to differences in “knowledge” or due to real, structural differences in economic characteristics. Priming respondents with similar information should help to answer this question. Similarly, an appearance of convergence could be generated by high costs of information acquisition. As discussed in chapters 5 and 6, certain conditions may simply make it less likely for individuals to have strong assessments of sociotropic benefits, thus removing a source of variation, and resulting in an apparent convergence of opinion. Here again, new information might generate less, not more convergence of opinion.

A second source of variation clouding the relationship between information and preferences is the extent to which information can influence beliefs. Individuals need not only acquire information but update their own beliefs because of it. This book explores two facets of this process: which beliefs are most malleable and which information resources are most influential.

Individuals often have the hardest time applying national economic trends to their own circumstances. Personal circumstances and the economic

circumstances of one's close friends and family appear unique and specific to well-known circumstances that are not often directly and explicitly linked to trade. At a distance, individuals may have an easier time perceiving the aggregate impact of trade on wages and employment in the United States. Yet the consequence of that distance is that individuals lack the specific knowledge to question and assess the quality of new information concerning trade's effect on general economic conditions. This generates an observed contradiction: individuals may appear to be more certain of trade's effects on others than themselves, but at the same time, individuals' beliefs about others may be more easily manipulated. Changing evaluations concerning individuals' own outcomes is made more difficult by individuals' ability to challenge the content of new information. Individuals know well their own particular circumstances, and thus updating these beliefs requires more specific information which "rings true" to their own prospects. In contrast, at the aggregate level, individuals have less reason to discount newly provided information. Thus, despite Americans' overwhelming belief that trade is bad for the US economy, promoting more positive evaluations of trade's national impact should be easier than promoting more positive evaluations of trade's personal impact. This expectation is tested in chapter 7.

Updating beliefs is both an issue of specificity and of trust. At the individual level, entities that have an incentive to provide specific enough information to voters may not necessarily be trusted by those individuals. Organized lobbies can use information as a currency between politicians and voters, offering to control the transmission of information rather than offering contributions to politicians (Ponzetto 2011). As previously noted, factory owners have significant interest in shaping their workers' beliefs and have tailored information at hand to do so; but, workers may not always trust their employers' evaluation, especially when divisions between capital and labor interests are already salient or when rival information providers such as unions are available. A coherent message across such entities could, however, create a strong enough signal to move beliefs at the individual level.

At the aggregate level—either community or national—there exist far more sources of available information, bringing to bear the question of which are trusted and which are heard. Evidence in the broader public opinion literature suggests that both informational content and partisan cue-taking are important in shifting mass attitudes (see, e.g., Malhotra and Kuo 2008; Bullock 2011; Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013). Much of the informational content arising from the media is negative. But political elites and particularly political parties could provide far more positive, more detailed, and more explicit depictions of the benefits of trade liberalization. Both political parties have promoted free trade agreements. Why then does the divide between mass beliefs and elite beliefs about the national benefits of free trade remain so wide? Is it that Americans distrust the information that these political elites could provide? Or is it the current failure of political elites to provide information that explains the continuation of these divergent beliefs?

That voters form trade-related policy opinions in a low-information environment is undisputed. The post-industrial modern economy has shielded many Americans from direct information about trade's effect on employment and consumption. Many Americans lack the requisite education or skills to acquire information about trade. Changing communities increase the cost of acquiring information. Media resources tend to focus on negative portrayals of trade, both biasing perceptions of benefits but also limiting discussion of trade policy during good economic periods. And political actors have of late shied away from explicit discussion of trade at the national level—in political platforms, advertisements, and speeches. Many of these conditions cannot or will not be changed in the short term. Manufacturing is not going to return as the base of the economy; individuals are not going to stop moving; and despite the best intentions of the Campaign for Economic Literacy, not all American voters will take an economics course.

However, the low-information environment does not necessarily make all Americans uniformly ignorant, unaware, and without opinion; many Americans express distinct beliefs about trade's effects on themselves and others. Instead the low-information environment raises interesting questions about how stable beliefs will be to new information, how disparities in the certainty of information influence individuals' incorporation of these beliefs, and why political actors don't do more to influence American beliefs about trade and thus mobilize opinion for political gain. Providing an answer to these questions first requires a preference model that integrates these different levels of beliefs and the uncertainty surrounding them.

Modeling Individual Preferences regarding Trade Protection

To understand the impact of beliefs regarding trade's impact at the individual, community, and national levels on Americans' opinions regarding trade protection necessitates a model that both incorporates different evaluations of trade's benefits at these levels and individuals' weighting of these components, particularly when information availability is low. As previously discussed, Americans are increasingly unclear about both the mechanics of trade and the benefits of trade for themselves and for others, yet they often make decisions with less than full information about both. The new model posited here disaggregates the standard preference model to note the many components that help explain that process. Doing so can also help us identify where information provision and processing might affect individuals' evaluation of costs and benefits and, ultimately, shape their preferences and voting behavior, especially in cases where evaluations of individual and sociotropic benefits conflict with each other.

Previous Models of Trade Opinion

Despite trade's wide-ranging implications for communities and nations, the bulk of past research on support for trade protection policies has focused primarily

on the effect of trade policy at the individual level. Some of this research has investigated the impact of trade policy on individuals as consumers. Individuals benefit economically from free trade through lower prices and a greater variety of goods, so as previous scholars have noted, most voters would favor increasing free trade if consumption concerns were primary (Bailey 2001). When voters are characterized by their consumption role alone, sources in variation in preferences are somewhat limited.¹⁵ More commonly, scholars who have examined individuals' trade preferences have focused on the benefits of trade related to their roles as producers of goods and services that are affected directly or indirectly by trade policy. When voters are characterized by the production role, scholars can identify more distinct groups of trade-policy affected individuals.

The commonly used Heckscher-Ohlin (H-O) model (Heckscher [1919] 1949) predicts that countries liberalizing trade will export goods whose production intensively uses a country's abundant resources and will import goods whose production intensively uses a country's scarce resources. One outcome of H-O trade is that domestic prices for scarce resources will fall while prices for abundant resources will rise, the so-called factor-price equalization theorem (Samuelson 1949). Owners of abundant resources would thus expect to see a benefit from trade liberalization, and owners of scarce resources, a loss (Stolper and Samuelson 1941). However, specifically who wins and who loses from changing trade policy depends greatly on how broadly these resources for production are defined. Early work in this area (such as Rogowski 1987) recognized three classes of resources—land, labor, and capital—and predicted cleavages in public opinion based on individuals' ownership of one class of resource or another. Other scholars followed Wolfgang Stolper and Paul Samuelson (1941) by differentiating between types of labor—primarily high-skilled and low-skilled labor (e.g., O'Rourke and Sinnott 2001; Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Beaulieu, Benarroch, and Gaisford 2011). Yet others differentiate between resources tightly tied to certain industries and those capable of moving (e.g., Hiscox 2001, 2002). As a whole, the literature offers clearly defined, testable predictions linking individual skill level and employment to trade preference in the United States and elsewhere. Furthermore, the groups defined by the H-O based theories fit neatly into existing American political interests groups be they defined broadly by classes or specifically by industry: labor parties, unions, and industry coalitions.

Nonetheless, numerous surveys conducted to test these models of individuals' preferences have shown that respondents' economic welfare narrowly defined can explain only a small portion of the variation in preferences for trade protection (Mansfield and Mutz 2009). The limitation of the prior models could be due to under-specification of individuals' economic welfare (as discussed in chapter 4) or could be due to an overly narrow assumption that individuals are primarily

¹⁵ In such research focused on individuals' preferences from a consumer perspective, scholars have primarily focused on individuals' taste for and consumption of exported and imported goods and individuals' role in household consumption.

concerned with their own interests. For many other economic policies (see Citrin and Green 1990; Sears and Funk 1990), evidence suggests a broader set of concerns, and an emerging literature on support for trade protection incorporates Donald Kinder and Roderick Kiewiet's (1981) original observations of sociotropic voting. Kinder and Kiewiet argue that national rather than personal economic experiences influence voting. In their analysis of preferences for protection, Edward Mansfield and Diana Mutz (2009, 448) find that individuals are at least as influenced by the "perceived effect of trade on U.S." as they are by the "perceived effect of trade on self." And Kenneth Scheve and Matthew Slaughter (2001) also found that Americans perceive trade protection as a trade-off between consumer prices and US jobs and therefore intuitively perceive trade protection as a form of redistribution that transfers wealth from consumers of import-competing goods to producers of such goods. However, none of these models consider how these beliefs might balance each other out and the effect of the balance on expressed opinion.

A New Composite Individual-Sociotropic Model of Trade Opinion

In contrast to earlier models, my proposed model assumes that individuals form preferences regarding public policy based on what they expect to be the costs and benefits for them personally, for people they care about, and for the country or the world (Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey 1987, 23). In its simplest form, this can be represented as:

$$U[\textit{policy}] = b_i + w_c b_c + w_n b_n, \quad (3.1)$$

where b_i is an individual's belief about his or her own net benefits from a policy, w_c is the weight of community benefits relative to the individual's benefits, b_c is belief about community benefits, w_n is the weight of the country's benefits relative to individual benefits, and b_n is belief about the country's benefits. The benefits of trade (b_i , b_c , and b_n) can be positive (i.e., b_i , b_c , or b_n greater than zero) or negative (i.e., b_i , b_c , or b_n less than zero). Similarly, individuals might value the benefits of trade to others in the community or others in the nation more highly than the benefit to themselves (i.e., w_c or w_n greater than one) or less highly than their own benefits (i.e., w_c or w_n less than one). In this way, equation 3.1 parsimoniously describes the incorporation of individuals' beliefs about one's own and sociotropic benefits from trade into their decision calculus about trade policy opinion.

The three-part division of benefits in the model mirrors the empirical reality that people hold distinct beliefs, grounded in their observations and knowledge of the economy, about the benefits of trade policy for themselves, their community, and the country. On average, survey participants were far more pessimistic about the benefits of trade for the country than for themselves; that is, for most individuals, $b_i > b_n$. In terms of employment outcomes, more than 60 percent of the approximately 1,600 respondents to the 2006 and 2010 CCES surveys discussed at the start of the chapter believed that liberalizing trade slightly or greatly

hurts the United States, but only one-third of those (approximately 20 percent) also believed that trade hurts their own employment. Among the smaller set of individuals who responded that trade benefited national employment, only one-third also responded that trade helped their own employment. Among those who responded that trade benefited their employment, close to a fifth thought that trade hurt US employment. The model thus incorporates voters' distinct, potentially countervailing, evaluations of trade's benefits.

Calculating the model described in equation 3.1 requires individuals to weigh these distinct benefits against one another. If we simplify these benefits into two groups—benefits for self (b_i) and benefits for others (b_o), then we can easily include a weight of the benefits to others relative to benefits to self (w_o). The Mansfield and Mutz (2009) finding that individuals' trade preferences are informed as much by their own economic circumstances as by others' would imply $w_o = 1$. If instead some people weigh the benefits to others more than themselves, then $w_o > 1$; and if some people weigh the benefits to self more than others' benefits, then $w_o < 1$. The new simplified expected utility of trade policy is then as follows:

$$U[\textit{policy}] = b_i + w_o b_o. \quad (3.2)$$

As is, this utility function offers a clear-cut (one might say artificially precise) divide between a negative and positive value from a proposed trade policy. To capture the potential for ambiguity, let us assume that individuals' expected utility calculations need to pass a certain threshold for individuals to translate their utility expectations into a stated opinion. Or more formally, let us posit that $U[\textit{policy}]$ needs to move away from 0 by at least d before a person forms a clear opinion. This creates two cut points for the survey response. If

$U[\textit{policy}] > d$, then support

$U[\textit{policy}] < -d$, then oppose

$-d \leq U[\textit{policy}] \leq d$, then provide a non-response.

Thus, in order for individuals to express an opinion, they must value the combination of the benefits to themselves (the x-axis, individual benefits) and the benefits to community and country (the y-axis, others' benefits) enough to move away from ambivalence. Individuals with a pair of values falling within this ambiguous zone ($-d < U[\textit{policy}] \leq d$) are most likely to offer an ambivalent non-response answer such as "don't know." However, the range of values for which the combined benefits provide ambiguous expectations depends on the weight individuals place on others' benefits. Figure 3.3 illustrates the proposed relationship between expected utility calculations and opinion expression and the particular problem of ascertaining the meaning of survey responses when individuals are assumed to incorporate multiple, independent, and potentially countervailing beliefs about benefits. Panel A shows the potential distribution of response categories when individuals value the benefits to others and the benefits to themselves equally. The dotted line delineates the theoretical border between support for trade protection

and opposition to trade protection if individuals equally weight their own and others' benefits—both community (w_o) and national (w_n)—as initially assumed. Given this assumption, the model posits that where individuals' estimates of benefits to self and benefits to others point in the same direction (bottom-left and bottom-right quadrants), even estimates of relatively small benefits for both can lead individuals to form an opinion. In contrast, where individual and other benefits point in opposite directions (top-left and bottom-right quadrants), large values of one or the other are necessary for individuals to voice a specific opinion.

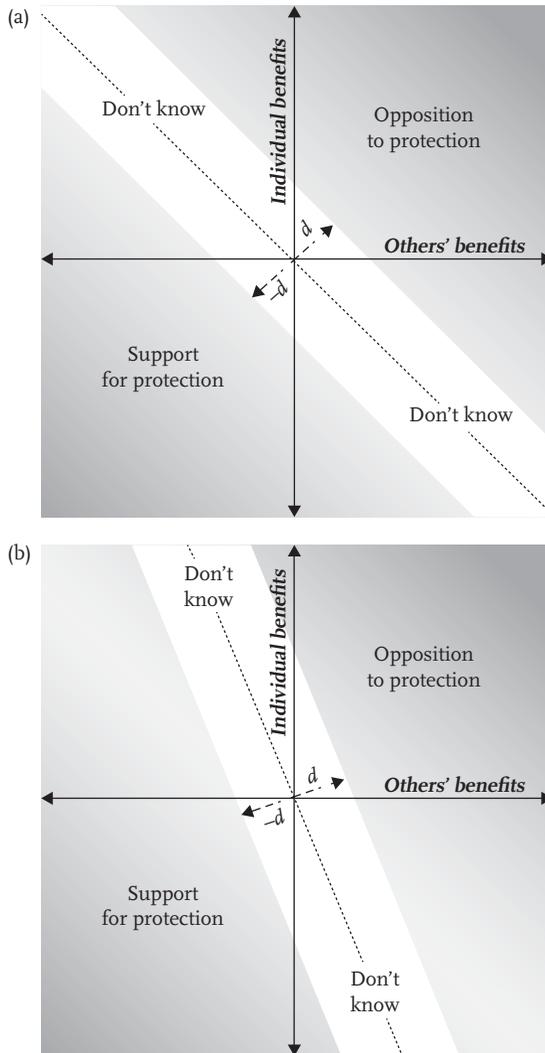


FIGURE 3.3 Perceived benefits from trade, ambiguity, and preferences for trade protection. A, Equal weight of others and self ($w_o = 1$). B, Higher weight for others than self ($w_o > 1$). C, Lower weight for others than self ($w_o < 1$).

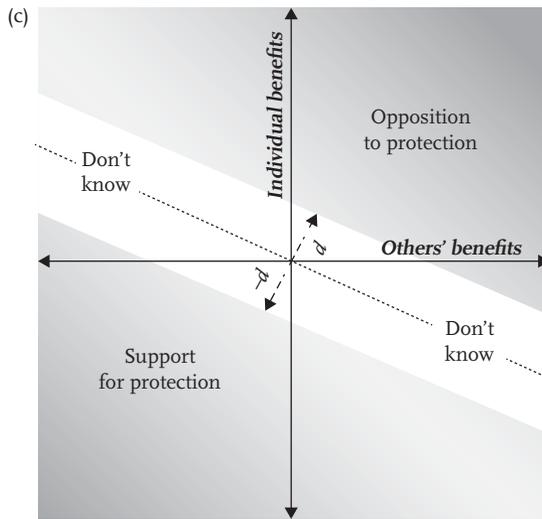


FIGURE 3.3 (Continued)

Panel B displays the potential distribution of response categories if individuals' weight of their own benefits were smaller relative to others' benefits (i.e., $w_o > 1$). The dividing line between positive and negative individual expected utility would be more vertical and the range of values for individual benefits in which individuals would be expected to offer a non-response answer much wider. In contrast to panel A, individuals would cross the threshold necessary to express an opinion at much smaller values of benefits to others, be they negative or positive. Those without a well-defined value for their own benefits of trade might still voice an opinion on policy and at relatively smaller values of sociotropic benefits, increasing the importance of understanding how individuals develop beliefs about these benefits to others.

If individuals' weight of their own benefits relative to others' were higher (i.e., $w_o < 1$) the dotted line would flatten, moving with it the area of ambiguous expectations. Panel C illustrates the relationship of responses to perceived benefits under the assumption of lower concern for others' benefits. Here, individual benefits primarily drive positive responses. If individual benefits are not strong, a non-response answer is likely across a broad swath of beliefs about sociotropic benefits. Furthermore, sociotropic benefits must be extreme (either negatively or positively) to override individual benefits so much as to support a positive policy response when beliefs about the benefits to self and benefits to others are countervailing.

These figures highlight a potential contradiction that can arise when individuals incorporate their own and sociotropic considerations: even in cases where individuals have fully informed beliefs both about their own and others' benefits: they may still provide a non-response answer such as "don't know." That is, if their calculation of their own benefits is countered by their calculation

of others' benefits—no matter how precise and certain their beliefs—they are likely to be left with ambiguous expectations about the benefit of a policy and thus express ambivalence in their support or opposition for the policy. This is important to recognize because many individuals have distinct and potentially countervailing beliefs at the personal and sociotropic levels, which helps explain why many survey participants respond with “no opinion” or “don't know.” This observed non-response may then be based on beliefs which have been developed and could potentially be manipulated or made more certain. Furthermore, a non-response answer about individual benefits or others' benefits does not necessitate a non-response about policy: many of those who are unsure of the benefits to themselves could voice strong support or opposition for trade protection if the weights placed on these benefits were sufficiently strong or the perceived benefits to others were sufficiently extreme.

While the benefit to self and others are conceptually distinct, they are likely to be correlated in practice. People who are in industries hurt by trade are likely to view the world in a particular way and interpret evidence about trade as harmful to others. Conversely, people who benefit from trade are likely to project this benefit onto other people. This correlation does not mean that the concepts are not separable. However, the correlation does mean that as an empirical matter, there will be few people in the purely off-diagonal quadrants. In other words, few people view trade as greatly harmful to themselves but greatly beneficial to the country and vice versa. Perceptual overlap creates a bias toward convergence. For this reason, it is particularly important to consider the distinction between the non-affirmative responses of “don't know” and “no difference” and affirmative responses that trade benefits or hurts and to investigate the link between these distinct responses and preferences for protection.

The complexity of the interaction is clearly illustrated by the distribution of responses to a question about trade policy included in both the 2006 and 2010 CCES, the same surveys in which I collected individuals' beliefs about trade's effect on employment at individual and sociotropic levels. The question asked of respondents was a version of the American National Election Studies long running trade question: “Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports—or haven't you thought much about this?”

Overall, in 2006, 47.5 percent of individuals supported increased protection, 30 percent opposed increased protection, and 22 percent stated that they didn't know. In 2008, the distribution of preferences was almost identical: 48 percent supported increased protection, 30 percent opposed, and 22 percent stated that they didn't know. Disaggregating the data by employment beliefs shows the importance of these beliefs and their interaction on the distribution of responses to the trade policy question. Figures 3.4 and 3.5 do so for 2006 and 2010, respectively. Responses are grouped along two dimensions: whether trade is believed to benefit US employment and whether trade is believed to benefit own employment. The bulk of responses paired in this manner fall along an s-shaped curve delineated by the two end points of “hurts own, hurts

Belief about trade's effect on US employment

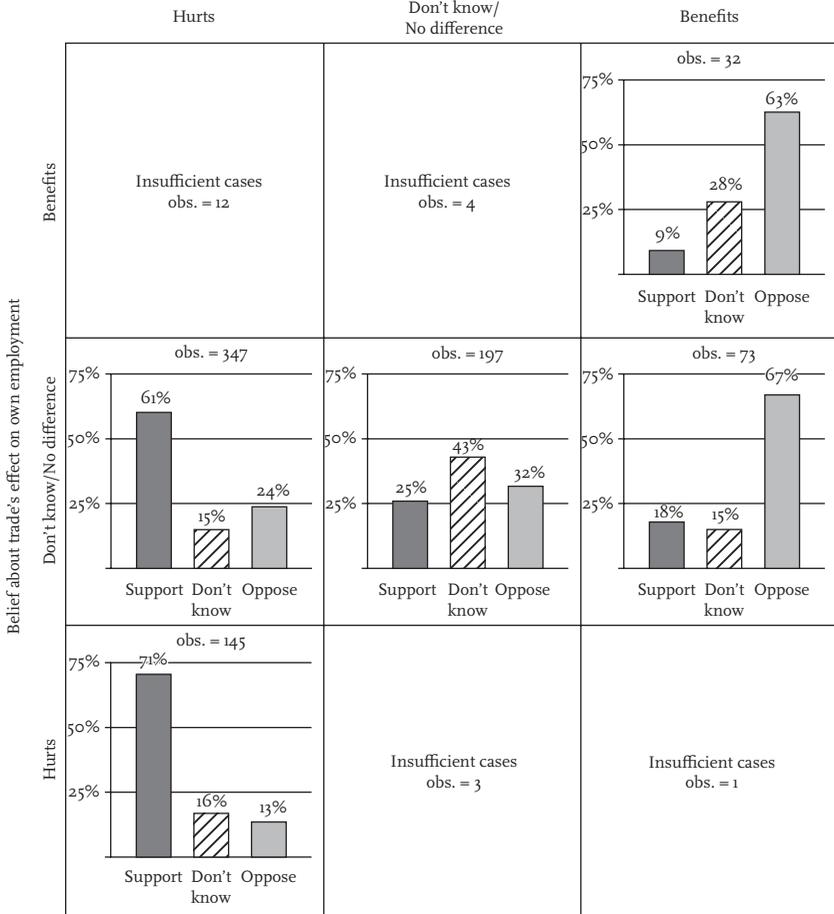


FIGURE 3.4 Employment beliefs and preferences for increased limits on trade, 2006 CCES

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007) and University of Notre Dame Module (self), 814 observations.

US” and “benefits own, benefits US” Across these cells, the varied distribution of responses to the trade policy question supports the contention that individuals are weighting both individual and broader societal concerns.¹⁶

In 2006, comparing across the set of individuals who believe that trade hurts US employment (left-middle and left-bottom-panels of figure 3.4), support for protection increases 10 percentage points and opposition to trade protection drops 10 percentage points among those who additionally believe that trade hurts their

¹⁶ In both 2006 and 2010, the overall chi-squared test of differences between types identified by the two dimensions is significant at $p < .001$.

own employment. For those with more positive beliefs about the benefits of trade for the nation, individual distinctions similarly matter: holding constant the positive beliefs about trade and national employment (right-middle and right-top panels of figure 3.4), individuals who additionally believe that trade positively benefits their own employment are 9 percentage points less likely to support trade protection (the change in opposition is not significant). Among the set of individuals with neither positive nor negative beliefs about their own benefits (middle panels of figure 3.4), beliefs about national benefits are strongly correlated with preferences for policy. On one end of the spectrum (the left cell of the middle row) individuals who hold negative beliefs about trade's effect on US employment (middle-left panel) are overwhelmingly supportive of increased trade protection (61 percent compared to 24 percent in opposition); whereas those with a positive belief about the effect of trade on US employment (middle-right panel) are overwhelming in opposition to increased trade protection (67 percent oppose compared to 18 percent in support). The highest level of non-response answers is found in the center panel of figure 3.4, where individuals are uncertain about the benefits of trade both for themselves and others. What is most telling is that certainty over own outcomes is unnecessary for an opinion, but instead is one, albeit very important, factor driving responses. The distribution of responses provides strong evidence of individuals' incorporation of their own and others' benefits.

Responses in 2010 (figure 3.5) show a similar pattern, with one notable exception. Individuals who believe that trade is bad for the national economy are in general more supportive of trade protection, and this support rises substantially among those who also believe that trade is bad for their own economic outcomes (left-middle panel versus left-bottom panel). Among those individuals with neither positive nor negative beliefs about their own benefits (middle panels of figure 3.5), preferences are strongly correlated with beliefs about the national effect: opposition to increasing trade protection is double among those who believe that trade is good for national employment compared to those who think that trade is bad for national employment (middle-right panel versus middle-left panel). One unexpected finding is that among those who think that trade is good for national employment (right panels), support for trade protection is higher among those who think that trade is also good for themselves than those who say they don't know or see no difference for their own employment (right-top versus right-middle panels). Theoretically individuals with positive beliefs both for self and for others should unambiguously oppose increased trade protection, and yet the 2010 sample shows otherwise: those who think trade helps their own and the country's employment appear both more likely to support (48 percent to 27 percent) and less likely to oppose (36 percent to 55 percent) increased limits on trade than those who are ambiguous about trade's effect on their own employment. Since figure 3.5 doesn't control for other sociotropic concerns such as beliefs about the effect on the region or friends and family, those factors could be driving the difference; however, this is also true of figure 3.4 in which the "benefit/benefit" group (top right) does not show such idiosyncratic behavior. Alternatively, in the aftermath of a financial crisis which served to highlight

Belief about trade's effect on US employment

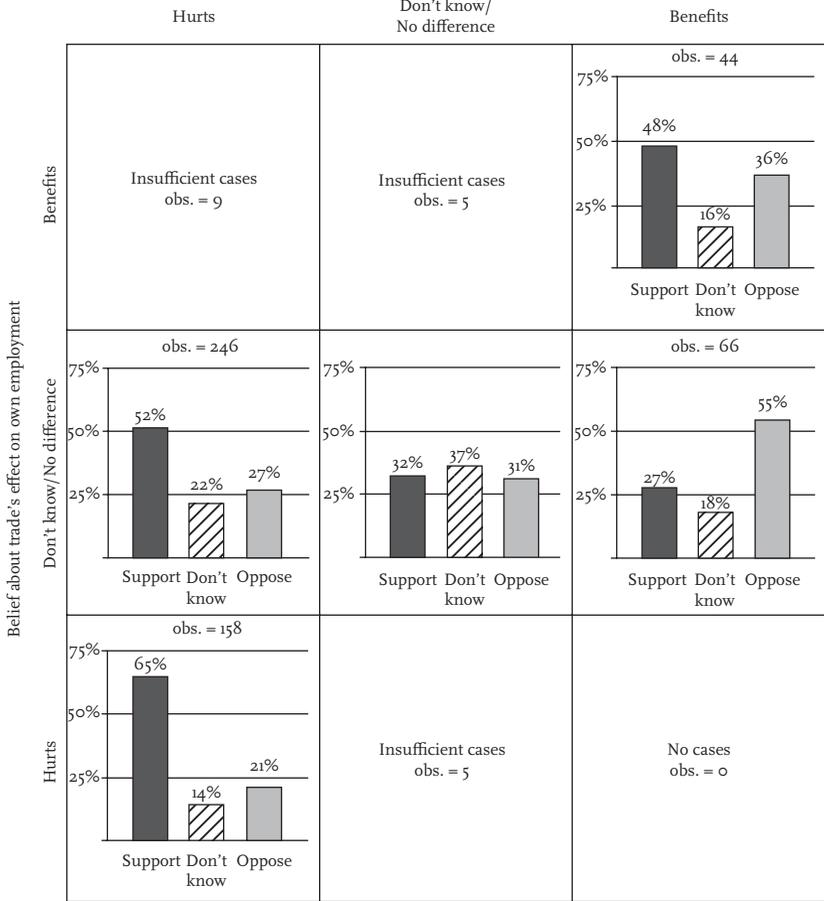


FIGURE 3.5 Employment beliefs and preferences for increased limits on trade, 2010 CCES

SOURCE: 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self), 668 observations.

within country disparities in income and wealth, those clearly perceiving themselves as “winners” might express more willingness to soften the blow from the policies which they see making them and the country more wealthy. Hence, the crisis might be responsible for why this cell in particular looks different from theoretical expectation and from responses from the same type of individual in 2006. More pragmatically, the sample size for both cells is small (44 and 66), making this possibly the result of sampling. Regardless, the broader picture matches that of 2006 in showing the importance of the interaction between own and sociotropic (here national) concerns on expressed preferences for policy.

The data also provide a snapshot of what an average individual’s weight between own and others’ trade-related employment concerns might look like,

at least at one point of time. Table 3.1 displays a necessarily parsimonious model (with or without additional individual characteristics) analyzing the CCES data in 2006. Responses for each belief (own, regional, and US) are scaled similarly from “Hurts” to “Benefits,” but note that coefficients for “own” employment are around half the size of the coefficient for “regional” or “US” employment. Thus, the analysis finds that sociotropic employment concerns are almost twice as influential as individual employment concerns on trade policy opinion, regardless of whether sociotropic concerns are measured by regional concerns or national concerns. Note, however, that the analysis is limited to 2006, the period prior to the US financial crisis. In a perfect world, I would have been able to include in the model and interaction additional factors that I assume influence this weight. However, to reach the precision I have on later tests of egocentric and sociotropic-based policy preferences alone has required using multiple, national data sources and a variety of specialized survey experiments. The former are necessary to properly address variety across the population; the latter are necessary to capture causality. Neither lends themselves well to precisely answering the weighting issue in a variety of conditions. This is not to downplay the importance of the data presented in figures 3.4 and 3.5, or the analysis in table 3.1, but instead to highlight the reality that weighting could range over different periods and within different populations. As a result, broader consideration of potential weighting will need to be discussed.

The model and empirical evidence highlight three aspects of trade policy opinion formation and expression: first, that understanding the source of sociotropic beliefs is as important as understanding the source of individual beliefs; second, that individuals’ weight on these sets of beliefs can influence the expression of opinion; and third, that non-responses need not arise from the same source and can be interesting manifestations of conflicting concerns.

Uncertainty and the Weight of Perceived Benefits

First, the components of the weight placed on the benefits of trade for self versus others must be unpacked to understand opinion about trade. As shown in figure 3.3, this weight can influence the distribution of positive responses (both support and opposition) as well as non-responses. Even under assumed conditions of full information, the weighting of individual and other’s benefits can generate a wide set of benefits for which individuals would be unlikely to express either a pro-trade or pro-protection sentiment. As discussed later, this generates a different interpretation of non-responses that is not only theoretically interesting but also has important ramifications for political contestation: even fully informed voters could lack an expressed sentiment by which to assess political actors’ platforms or to hold incumbent politicians accountable.

Of course, few if any individuals possess full information about trade, which leaves most to operate with some degree of uncertainty. Therefore, existing preference models assume that people have predispositions, if not certainties, to which they add information about themselves, the community, and

TABLE 3.1 Relative influence of trade beliefs on preferences for trade protection

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT FOR INCREASED TRADE PROTECTION (BASE RESPONSE = OPPOSE)	BASE COMPARISON				BASE WITH INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS			
	OWN V. REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT BELIEFS		OWN V. US EMPLOYMENT BELIEFS		OWN V. REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT BELIEFS		OWN V. US EMPLOYMENT BELIEFS	
	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE
Support								
Benefit to own employment (-2 Hurts to 2 Benefits)	-0.43	0.16***	-0.39	0.16**	-0.46	0.16***	-0.42	0.16***
Benefit to regional employment (-2 Hurts to 2 Benefits)	-0.82	0.11***			-0.79	0.11***		
Benefit to US employment (-2 Hurts to 2 Benefits)			-0.88	0.10***			-0.86	0.10***
3 pt. political id (Dem.-Rep.)					-0.17	0.10*	-0.18	0.10*
Male					-0.55	0.18***	-0.58	0.19***
Age					0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Constant	-0.14	0.10	-0.37	0.12***	0.29	0.39	0.07	0.41

Don't Know

Benefit to own employment (-2 Hurts to 2 Benefits)	-0.32	0.18*	-0.22	0.18	-0.37	0.19*	-0.28	0.18
Benefit to regional employment (-2 Hurts to 2 Benefits)	-0.08	0.12			-0.05	0.12		
Benefit to US employment (-2 Hurts to 2 Benefits)			-0.15	0.10			-0.15	0.10
3 pt. political id (Dem.-Rep.)					-0.24	0.11**	-0.24	0.11**
Male					-1.35	0.21***	-1.37	0.21***
Age					-0.02	0.01**	-0.02	0.01**
Constant	-0.35	0.10* **	-0.38	0.11***	1.58	0.43***	1.58	0.43***
Observations	814		814		814		814	
Pseudo r-squared	0.09		0.10		0.12		0.14	

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, University of Notre Dame module.

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

the country. Yet the extent, specificity, and cognitive processing of information that they have regarding each level vary significantly. The model predicts that even with the benefits of aggregation and cue providers, individuals are likely to retain considerable uncertainty regarding the benefits of international trade. Thus, in addition to information's role in underpinning individuals' perceptions of the benefits of a trade policy to themselves, b_i , community, b_c , and the nation, b_n , this new model assumes that information accessibility also conditions the relative weights that individuals place on the benefits for each, w_c and w_n (see equation 3.1).

To think about the effect of uncertainty more formally, let u_i represent individuals' uncertainty about their own benefits and u_o uncertainty about others' benefits. Again for simplicity, I combine both community and national benefits into this single measure of uncertainty. Since we care about the relative weighting of certainty, let k represent the ratio of a respondent's uncertainty about the benefits of trade to others, u_o , to the benefits of trade to themselves, u_i . That is, $k = \frac{u_i}{u_o}$.

Given all that people know about their personal circumstances, we can assume that $u_i < u_o$ for most individuals. Thus, k is bounded at the high end by 1, which would mean that the respondent is equally uncertain about the benefits of trade to their personal circumstances and the community. While k can never equal zero, since $u_i > 0$, as u_o increases, k decreases and approaches zero. We incorporate this k term into the simplified equation that collapses concern for the nation and the community into a single term designated as concern for others:

$$U[\text{policy}] = b_i + kw_o b_o. \quad (3.3)$$

If uncertainty about benefits is the same at the individual and community level, then k equals 1 and relative certainty plays no role in the standard model. However, if uncertainty about others' benefits (u_o) is greater, then the effective weight of others' benefits ($w_o b_o$) diminishes because the respondent is highly uncertain whether the benefits, b_o , will manifest. Why should a respondent weight the benefits to others highly when she has little certainty that the policy will actually be beneficial to them? To test this assumed role of uncertainty on the weighting of sociotropic concerns and explore its ramification, chapter 5 investigates the role of community transitions and turnover on uncertainty and this uncertainty on beliefs.

Nationally, a relatively higher level of uncertainty about sociotropic benefits (benefits to others) is likely to increase the likelihood of individuals expressing no opinion. Many Americans appear to believe that trade is bad for the country—at least in terms of US employment—but the weaker the information environment, the less important this negative impression and the more likely that the combination of little individual concern and weak but negative societal concern will result in an ambiguous utility for trade policy (either protectionism or free trade). A stronger information environment could over time shift the evaluation of benefits but would also serve to strengthen the incorporation of the currently negative sociotropic concern. Chapter 8 explores the

potential catch-22 faced by politicians because of this relationship. While elite messaging may over the long run move public opinion closer to current policy, in the short run such messages may offer voters enough informational fodder to hold incumbents accountable for veering from constituent preferences.

Information, Opinion, and Non-Opinion

Second, this new sociotropic model offers a new interpretation of the significance of non-opinion holders. In the previous literature, non-opinion holders have been variously characterized as avoiding stating socially undesirable opinions, stalling for more time, or being unwilling or unable to make the necessary effort to form an opinion. For instance, Jon Krosnick et al. (2002, 376) suggest that in a survey environment, “the cognitive demands of doing this work to ‘optimize’ may sometime exceed a respondent’s motivation or ability.” In the case of trade, the likelihood of respondents being worried about voicing a socially undesirable opinion seems limited, given that both pro-trade and pro-protection sentiments are commonly espoused in surveys and in public by the public and elites. And given that even political elites such as political parties, industry groups, and unions are divided internally on the issue of trade, most individuals should be free of social pressures on this survey question.

The second possibility, that individuals are unwilling to undertake the mental work of forming an opinion, seems more of a possibility. Americans receive few coherent elite cues about trade that they might adopt rather than undertaking their own cost-benefit analyses (e.g., Berinsky 2007). Furthermore, most trade preference models assume that individuals undertake the calculations themselves, incorporating a variety of different components that may be specific to the individuals’ circumstances. Such models assume that preferences, attitudes, and opinions are manifestations of underlying dispositions (Krosnick et al. 2002) or considerations (Zaller 1992; Zaller and Feldman 1992), upon which individuals draw to process information when forming an opinion. Where the work of opinion forming has been done already or is easily undertaken, individuals can rapidly offer up an opinion; otherwise, voicing an opinion takes more effort. Such effort is always cognitively demanding, and perhaps particularly so for trade policy, and many people may simply be unwilling to undertake the calculations (Krosnick et al. 2002).

This new model, however, offers a third explanation for non-opinion: even fully informed and willing respondents could be conflicted about their opinion if they have countervailing beliefs about the benefits of trade at different levels of concern to them. This ambiguity, I argue, is meaningful theoretically, empirically, and politically. Theoretically, it suggests that while new information can move some individuals to have an opinion, it may also lead others to hold a combination of beliefs which results in ambiguous expectations and expressed ambivalence. Fully informed voters, in other words, do not necessarily translate

into fully opinionated voters. Empirically, it argues against excluding or otherwise removing “don’t know” responses from empirical methods or analyses, as will be discussed at more length. Politically, because people are less likely to act on ambivalent opinions, those who do not have strong preferences on an issue are unlikely to vote for or against their elected representatives based on whether those candidates’ positions comply with their own.

As to this last point, the model speaks more generally to the potential hazards that mobilizing voters via trade policy holds for politicians. Although free-traders may take solace from evidence provided in chapter 8 that sociotropic concerns are easier to move with new information, in the short term, attempts to do so run the risk of increasing the political salience of sociotropic protectionist sentiment. For their part, politicians with a protectionist bent would seem to benefit from the prevalence of protectionist sentiment, but if individuals weight their own benefits equally or higher than those of others, protectionist politicians would need to strongly influence voters’ beliefs regarding trade benefits to themselves, which have previously been argued to be less easy to manipulate. Perhaps more politically interesting are the non-opinion holders, who might be viewed not only as potentially persuadable voters but as politically neutral voters in terms of trade who are unlikely to break for or against politicians on trade-related issues.

Empirical Analysis of Opinion and Non-Opinion

The analytic question of what to do with non-response is made all the more important by the trend in public opinion concerning trade toward an increasing proportion of non-response answers. In 1986, just before the start of negotiations over the NAFTA, the American National Election Studies (ANES) began tracking Americans’ opinions regarding trade policy, every two to four years asking a version of the same question: “Should the US increase or decrease limits on imports?” Despite the economic transformations wrought by NAFTA and other free trade agreements, in the period since then, the major shift in the opinions tracked by ANES has been that more and more Americans have simply become unsure of their position.⁷

As figure 3.6 shows, between 1986 and 1990, support for increasing trade protections—that is, for limiting imports—declined by more than half, and from a majority position (52 percent of respondents) to a minority one (25 percent). By 1992, however, the debate surrounding NAFTA and the anti-NAFTA plank in the platform of Ross Perot’s presidential campaign that year remobilized support for increased trade protection for a few years, but since 1996 this support has hovered around 32 percent. But support for the opposite position

⁷ In 2012, the ANES collected data on trade preferences using two different modes—Face to Face and Internet. In this chapter and elsewhere, I have constrained the 2012 ANES sample to the face-to-face mode (the standard data in prior ANES surveys) to ensure comparability.

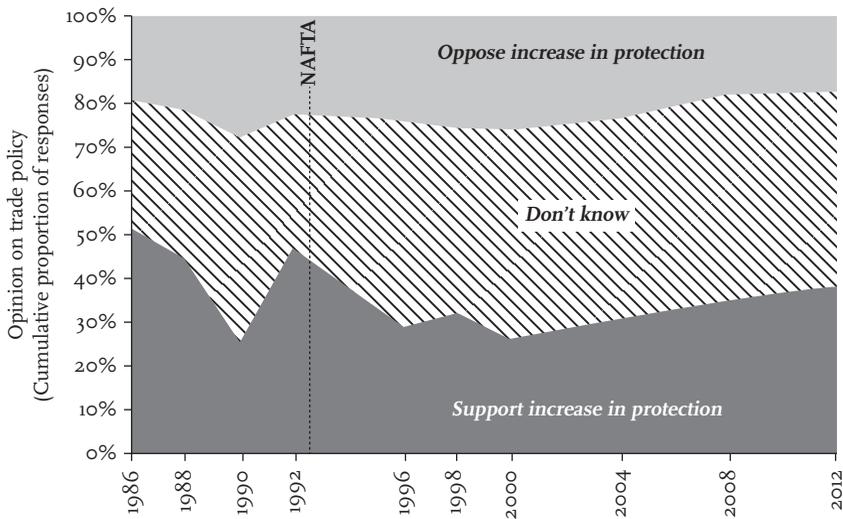


FIGURE 3.6 American opinion on trade policy (1986 to 2012)

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2012), Time Series Study. Weighted, 2012 summary statistics incorporate face-to-face sample only for consistency with prior ANES survey years.

also saw a decline during this period. In 1990, the level of opposition to trade protections peaked, at 28 percent; in 2008, only 18 percent of respondents stated an opposition to increasing trade protection. Declines in both support and opposition to limits on imports have propelled the non-response choice “haven’t thought much about this” to the majority response since 1996.¹⁸ Whether the trend will continue is debatable. In 2012, the proportion of individuals selecting a non-response category slightly declined from 47 percent to 44 percent. This mirrors the similar small decline between the 2006 and 2010 CCES surveys. But the timing of the shift in response proportions suggests that this slight jump in respondents’ willingness to state an opinion is likely an outcome of increased focus on the state of the national economy during and after the 2008 US financial crisis. Whether 2012 is a turning point or just noise on the downward trend will not be clear until 2016 and distracts from the broader picture that non-opinion responses are relatively high. In comparison, a similar question about Social Security received non-responses from an average of less than 40 percent of participants across the same period.

¹⁸ Opinions on individual trade agreements are stronger but still manifest high levels of non-responses among a large segment of the population. A question concerning support for the Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement garnered “Don’t Know” responses from 22.5 percent of the approximately 36,000 respondents of the 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES 2007). On a similar question concerning NAFTA in 2008, 35 percent out of the almost 33,000 individuals surveyed by the CCES responded “Don’t Know” (2011).

These results highlight an assumption of the theoretical model. Some of the non-responses are a result of having no opinion on the effect of trade on the respondent or more broadly. Such non-responses would correspond to the center panel in figures 3.4 and 3.5. Roughly 40 percent of individuals who can't identify a distinct effect of trade on their own or others' employment similarly fail to offer a distinct preference for trade policy. But many non-responses appear to be the result of ambiguity resulting from differing beliefs about the effect on self and the effect on others. For example, in 2010 roughly 21 percent of individuals who were unsure about trade's effect on themselves but stated a clear position on trade's effect on the country also offered an ambivalent non-response on policy. Within the sample, these types of individuals with distinct employment beliefs and ambivalent policy responses in fact slightly outnumbered those with jointly uncertain employment beliefs and ambivalent policy responses.

Thus, it is necessary to not just ignore these individuals but instead acknowledge that expressed ambivalence can be a manifestation of the difficulties in integrating beliefs about own and others' benefits into a single opinion on trade policy. Politically this distinction is important. On one hand, it reaffirms that political actors could move opinion either by aiding in individuals' assessment of their own benefits or by changing individuals' assessments at the national level or both. On the other, it also highlights the difficulties in pushing individuals past an expression of ambivalence and into political action. Political messaging could aid voters in being more informed, but if some individuals' informed beliefs are at odds, ambiguity and thus ambivalence could be sustained or even strengthened.

To return to the empirical implications of this model's alternative explanation of the reasons behind statements of non-opinion, most analyses of survey data have largely treated non-opinion holders as a nuisance or source of potential bias in the data. Some research has demonstrated that, in response to social pressures, individuals without opinions may select a strategy to appear opinionated, such as randomly selecting answers or always selecting the first (or middle or last) answer listed (Converse 1964, 1970). Given that the first of these strategies adds unnecessary noise and the second adds structural bias to the underlying relation between individual characteristics and opinions, survey researchers have responded by providing an opt-out answer, such as "don't know" or (as on the ANES survey) "haven't thought much about this" so as not to contaminate the relation of true opinions by responses of those with non-opinions. Although the intentions behind providing an opt-out answer to a survey question can differ, it is useful that so many surveys follow the format because it means that these "don't know" responses exist today to be treated as an informative response.

However, this format generates a second concern of its own: how to distinguish individuals who truly have no opinions from those who are seeking an easy means to answer the question (Krosnick et al. 2002). Some scholars worry that the existence of a non-opinion option actually induces some respondents

with opinions to opt out of providing them, for reasons already discussed. If respondents have not previously thought much about a question before a survey asks it, Krosnick et al. (2002) argue that the cognitive costs of optimizing might outweigh the perceived benefits of providing a real response if the opt-out response is available. In other words, this view assumes that there is a set of individuals who will not state an opinion unless they are forced to do so by the absence of a non-response option.

The question remains whether forcing respondents to state an opinion, however weak, is analytically useful. Krosnick et al. argue that “if respondents had found themselves in a voting booth, asked to cast a vote on the Monetary Control Bill [a fictitious bill], their inferences about its purpose may well have shaped their behavior. If so, encouraging respondents to abstain from reporting their opinions would have foregone the opportunity to measure these attitudes” (Krosnick et al. 2002, 398). Yet, I would contend, this metaphor is of limited usefulness. Respondents frequently find themselves in voting booths, but at that time are asked to vote on candidates about whom they have collected information on policy issues, gauged the extent to which they agree with those candidates, and, barring a perfect match, decided on which issues agreement is most important. Forcing a preference ignores the fact that for many people not having an opinion is a rational choice, and one that affects their political behavior, whether that be avoiding the voting booth altogether or once in it discounting certain issue concerns in favor of other issue concerns.

Therefore, the analysis of the effect of information in later chapters uses non-opinion responses such as “don’t know” or “haven’t thought much about it” as a category in its own right, with determinants that need to be understood, especially when considering the role information plays in preference formation and salience. To provide one example of how much that category matters, in 2000, ANES randomly limited individuals’ ability to answer “haven’t thought much about this” to the question of whether they favored or opposed new limits on imports, although individuals could still select the “don’t know” response. Of the 910 respondents who had both non-opinion options available, 402 (44 percent) chose one or the other. Of the 910 respondents who had only the “don’t know” option available, only 112 (12 percent) chose the non-opinion option, meaning that more people expressed an opinion, and we can guess that removing the “don’t know” option would lead even more people to provide an answer. Empirically, Krosnick et al. appear to be correct that a large number of people would offer a response if pressured to do so (see also Berinsky 2004), but it is not clear theoretically what their responses would tell us.

If we are concerned with understanding the effect of information on trade preferences, why those individuals had not thought about trade becomes important. Perhaps their own circumstances or those of their community have prevented them from having formed an opinion before the survey. People who do not have clear opinions may be important for opinion molders because they may be more easily influenced by external sources of information. And if individuals do not have their own opinions, they cannot compare their opinions with those of political candidates, an important component of holding politicians accountable.

Furthermore, the people who state a position on trade only because they are forced to do so are likely to have very weak preferences. The weakness of the preference means that the topic is unlikely to be an important factor in their vote calculus, which gives elected representatives a lot of leeway on policy. In fact, it creates a space where elected officials can take leadership roles and shape public opinion. Just how much impact political messaging can have is explored in chapter 8.

Measuring American Opinion, Voting Behavior, and the Impact of Information

Much of what this and other investigations of trade preferences want to know—about who supports trade restrictions, who opposes them, who has no opinion either way—can be gleaned from the ANES using traditional survey analysis techniques. To understand how information influences those opinions and how opinions in turn influence voting behavior, however, requires employing other surveys tailored more specifically to elicit information about that aspect of opinion formation and other experimental techniques. Therefore, the following chapters will combine insights from ANES data, CCES, and more than half a dozen survey experiments, each of which is first discussed briefly.

As noted earlier, every two to four years since 1986, the ANES has asked respondents from across the country whether the United States should increase or decrease limits on imports. The broad question and the comprehensive data collected by the ANES allow investigators to both track opinion over time and link opinion to individual factors that tend to remain relatively stable over time, such as educational level or union membership. Using the ANES data on Americans' opinions on trade policy can therefore help us understand how preferences and knowledge are distributed through the electorate, provide valuable insight into the role of trade in politics, and establish the basic parameters of the relations between perceived economic interests, social context, information levels, and personal characteristics. In chapter 4, ANES data allows us to track a consistent gap between men and women as well as whites and nonwhites, controlling for a variety of individual circumstances, including occupational skill level and individuals' information about trade. In chapters 5 and 6, observational data allow us to link community characteristics, such as industrial concentration, residential turnover, and racial diversity, to preferences for trade protection. In chapter 7, the data suggest a connection between negative perceptions in the national economy and a preference for trade protection.

At the same time, the ANES data tell us little about what individuals do with the opinions or how they came to hold them. Fortunately, in 2006 the first Cooperative Congressional Election Survey collected individuals' candidate choices as well as politically relevant information about individuals' preferences on a series of roll-call votes, including the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). Although for only a single trade policy case—that

of CAFTA—the data collected supplied investigators with not only the voters' preference for the policy, but their knowledge about representatives' behavior, and voters' subsequent support for the representative on election day. Although temporally limiting, this survey of 36,000 individuals offers a rare insight into how trade opinions are or are not transformed into voting behavior. Additionally, the smaller University of Notre Dame module collected information revealing potential sources of the preference: beliefs about employment benefits for self and others as well as beliefs about trade's effect on prices. From the 2006 data, we can measure the impact of trade policy on voting behavior not only conditional on gender, race, and community characteristics but also on individuals' own beliefs about trade and their knowledge about the candidates' positions.

The Utility of Survey Experiments

However, there are limits to what the ANES and CCES data can tell us about the role of information and perceptions in forming trade preferences, the most important of which is trying to discern cause from effect. They do not, for instance, tell us if people with strong opinions on trade policy—whether for or against—have these opinions because they are well informed, or if they are well informed because they hold opinions and are motivated to learn more. Similarly, they cannot reveal if people without opinions about trade policy are uninformed, if they simply do not care about the subject, or if a lack of information causes ambivalence. They may indicate that whites have higher levels of support for trade protection in racially diverse areas, but not whether that is due to racial sorting or some other confounding factor linked to racial diversity. These causal knots are impossible to untie convincingly using traditional observational data.

Randomized experiments are one way to get around the causal conundrum. In such experiments, subjects are randomly assigned to different treatment conditions, such as reading arguments for or against trade liberalization or information about what groups are helped and hurt by trade liberalization. Randomly assigning participants' exposure to these treatments ensures that their pre-existing characteristics are likely to be equally distributed across the pro and con treatment conditions. The group receiving pro-trade messages and the group receiving anti-trade messages are, for instance, equally likely to be union members, work in the service sector, support welfare programs, attend church, and to vary in similar ways by gender, age, and education. As the only systematic difference between the treatment groups is the information supplied in the treatment, any differences in attitudes about trade policy or information processing can be assumed to be directly related to the treatment itself.

The following example makes the benefits of experimentation clear. Suppose we would like to know the effect of being exposed to expert opinion (i.e., economists) arguing that the US economy is on balance helped or hurt by trade

liberalization. People are exposed to this information in the broader population, so a traditional survey would be able to find variation in people's exposure to these arguments. However, we should be concerned that people are not equally likely to hear these messages. For instance, people employed in export-oriented industries may be more likely to hear messages supporting trade liberalization. Conversely, people employed in import-competing or low-skilled industries may be more likely to hear messages opposing trade liberalization. Determining whether differences in opinion on trade policy are due to structural economic interests or exposure to the pro or con arguments is very difficult. We can attempt to control for all the observable structural economic factors, but we can never be certain that we accounted for all the relevant factors or that we have modeled the relationship properly. Thus, our inferences about the role of exposure to expert opinion will be limited and subject to important caveats.

In contrast, an experiment could be conducted to isolate the causal effect of the exposure to expert opinion. Survey respondents could be randomly placed into two treatment groups. One group is exposed to the pro-trade messages while the other group is exposed to the anti-trade message. Because the conditions were randomly assigned, people employed in export-oriented industries are equally likely to hear either message. The same can be said for people in import-competing industries or low-skilled workers. In fact, any trait you think may be important, regardless of whether or not we can measure it, will be distributed equally across the two groups in expectation. Given a sufficiently large number of subjects in the experiment, any imbalances between the two treatment groups will be slight. This balance allows us to conclude that differences in opinion on trade policy are directly attributed to the assignment to the treatment condition. Since the only difference between the two groups is the treatment itself, we can deduce a causal relationship between, say, exposure to expert views on trade and respondents' opinion about trade.

The ability to directly manipulate the treatment is especially useful when trying to distinguish differences between groups. Observational data shows us that men and women consistently differ on preferences for trade, even controlling for individual characteristics. It is unclear why this is so. Men and women may differ in information exposure, or perhaps they respond differently to that information, or both. How individuals actually perceive their circumstances is hard to directly observe. Individuals with shared characteristics may still interpret information in different ways. Men and women holding the same kind of job may have different opinions, and change their opinions differently, because of other unobserved differences in their economic situations. A survey experiment can help distinguish whether it is exposure to different information or, in fact, different responses to the information that drive the observed preference gap between these groups. The survey experiment in chapter 4 allows for this type of direct observation via two different types of treatments: one which provides information about trade which aligns individuals' knowledge about trade partners to evaluate the impact of specific information on preferences and a second which provides a broad positive message about trade to evaluate the impact of broad information on preferences. The survey experiments in

chapter 6 verify that the racial portrayal of trade beneficiaries in political ad campaigns matters. Survey experiments in chapter 7 offer three different types of treatment—again a positive message about trade, a positive message about trade institutions with differing partisan attributions, and a manipulation of question ordering to test the influence of altruism on preferences.

As with all methodologies, there are limits to the types of experiments that can be run on international trade. Most importantly, respondents come to research projects with preconceptions and beliefs. We cannot wave a magic wand and randomly assign survey respondents to hold particular beliefs about the state of the world. Recognizing this limitation and embracing it leads to the more interesting and practical research question of how respondents respond to and incorporate new information. The vast majority of political decisions take place in environments where voters have an understanding of the world and competing campaigns attempt to persuade the voter to support their side. How voters respond to this contest of ideas and process the information is a fundamental question about democratic politics. The experiments in chapters 4, 6, and 7 take the pre-existing view of the subject as the starting point of the experiment.

The same logic applies to processing factual information rather than making ideological decisions, but the interpretation changes slightly. When people make political decisions, basic facts are crucial to determining the final outcome. A voter who staunchly opposes abortion may know that abortion rights are the most important factor in determining his vote choice, but to make an informed decision, he needs to know which candidate supports abortion rights and which one opposes them. Without this information, the voter's preferences are unstable and potentially meaningless. A similar lack of information is present with regards to trade policy. As we will see in chapter 4, a large percentage of people think the majority of our trade is with China rather than Canada. Whether or not our primary trading partner is a high-wage, industrialized democracy or a low-wage, rapidly industrializing autocracy could very well make a difference in how someone thinks about the benefits and costs of trade policy. We cannot snap our fingers and cause the respondent to possess accurate information about trade policy, but survey questions can at least equalize access to information. The experiments in chapter 4 first ask respondents about a fact, and then randomly assign some people who provide an incorrect answer to a condition that corrects the misperception. I thus create two randomly assigned states of the world: one where information remains uncorrected and one where misperceptions about trade policy are corrected. In this way, the experiments can estimate the extent to which correcting misinformation changes the person's opinion on trade.

Another limitation of experiments is an ethical duty to not harm subjects. It might be interesting to see how subjects respond to a fictitious trade war between China and the United States, but leaving subjects with the mistaken belief that China has unilaterally raised tariffs on certain products if it is in fact false is ethically dubious (Hey 1998; McDaniel and Starmer 1998). Even if subjects are debriefed afterward, the misperception introduced in an experiment can persist (Bullock 2007; Nyhan and Reifler 2010). Research scientists have a

duty to educate the public rather than disseminate falsehoods, and deception should only be used when it is absolutely necessary in an experiment. It is not necessary here; all of the information provided to subjects in the experiments described in the book is truthful and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

That said, where general messages are provided concerning the costs and benefits of trade, the messages tend to be pro-trade or pro-trade supporting institutions (e.g., the World Trade Organization). Most economists would not take issue with a pro-trade slant. Even while quibbling on the size of the benefits, economic orthodoxy is that free trade is the most efficient growth strategy, particularly for developed countries such as the United States. Yet for sets of individuals, free trade may not be optimal, particularly in the short run. For this reason, care was taken to discuss only the general benefits of trade. As discussed in chapter 2, US trade liberalization led to significant transition costs for many individuals, particularly those in import-competing manufacturing industries. The pro-trade messages presented in this study are not meant to ignore the individual reality of costly transitions. In fact, for the gender and racial gaps in trade preferences, the use of a pro-trade message helps identify a specific source of disparity between groups of individuals: economic vulnerability.

Conclusion

Information is the foundation of policy preferences. It shapes perceptions of the benefits of policy, for self, community, and country. Lack of information—or uncertainty—can cause individuals to discount certain types of benefits. It can change how individuals behave in the political sphere, particularly when and if they hold political actors accountable. However, the role of information is difficult to understand from observational data alone. Evaluating how individuals process information, particularly if they differ in their processing, requires new techniques. The chapters ahead use both observational and experimental data to tease out information effects, focusing on how information moves those without opinions to form preferences that are strong enough to be politically salient. In doing so, they highlight the potential pitfalls for political entrepreneurs attempting to mobilize trade policy sentiment.

Appendix A: ANES Trade Questions from 1986 to 2012

1986

- Some people feel that importing too many goods from foreign countries is a problem for the U.S. Other people aren't very concerned. Is this an issue that you have thought much about, or not?
- Some people have suggested placing new limits on imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer

prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor placing new limits on imports, or not? (Not asked if answer to prior question was “No”)

1988, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2004, 2008, 2012

- Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports—or haven’t you thought much about this?

1990

- Version A: “Some people favor increasing limits on foreign imports a lot in order to protect American jobs. Suppose these people are at one end of the scale, at point number 1. Others favor decreasing the limits a lot in order to lower consumer prices and help American exports. Suppose these people are at the other end of the scale, at point number 7. And, of course, other people have opinions in between at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven’t you thought much about this?”
- Version B: “Some people favor increasing limits on foreign imports a lot in order to protect American jobs. Others favor decreasing the limits a lot in order to lower consumer prices and help American exports. Do you favor increasing the limits on foreign imports, decreasing these limits, should these limits remain the same as they are now, or haven’t you thought much about this?” And then according to first answer: “Do you favor increasing limits on imports a lot or a little?” or “Do you lean toward increasing limits on imports, decreasing limits, or do you oppose any change in current limits?” or “Do you favor decreasing limits on imports a lot or a little?”

2000

- Version 1 (as in 1988, 1992, 1996, 1998): “Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports, or haven’t you thought much about this?”

Version B excludes “haven’t you thought much about this” option: “Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports?” (Not used).¹⁹

¹⁹ No trade question in 1994 and 2002; no ANES survey in 2006. ANES utilized two survey modes in 2012: the traditional face-to-face and an Internet survey. Due to comparability concerns, analysis including 2012 data draws on face-to-face observations only.

THE FIRST OF THREE chapters offering new predictors of individuals' preferences regarding trade protection and their potential for political mobilization, this chapter specifically explores the under-studied and under-theorized impact of gender and race on those preferences and on voting behavior. Although previous research has found that women are more likely than men to favor trade protections, this chapter demonstrates that nonwhites are also more likely than whites to share women's preference for protectionism. Expanding existing models of preference formation among different groups of Americans, I argue that the higher support for trade protections among women and nonwhites reflects a rational response to concerns about the employment volatility that also accompanies trade liberalization; this argument is a natural and important extension of the Bhagwati-Dehejia hypothesis.

A commonly accepted explanation for women's consistently higher level of support for trade protection has been that women tend to have less knowledge about economic issues than men, and thus may simply lack the information necessary to understand their own or the nation's economic interests. Although the gap in preferences between men and women and between whites and nonwhites can be demonstrated by conventional analyses of survey data, they cannot tell us whether knowledge is the actual cause of that gap. By conducting new survey experiments to measure the effect of information about trade on participants' preferences, I find that these differences are explained not by the amount of information individuals have about the potential benefits of trade but by distinct differences in their economic concerns.

The finding that gender and race are distinct predictors of trade sentiment also has important if largely unrecognized implications for attempts by politicians and political groups to mobilize voters around their concerns and interests regarding trade. Industry and labor groups have natural interest groups to organize and lobby around trade issues. Women and nonwhites do not. The result can be observed in the electoral disconnect between women's and nonwhites' preferences and their voting behavior. This chapter offers

analysis of election data showing how a lack of information diminishes voters' ability to hold politicians accountable and how this disconnect may influence incumbents' and others' campaign strategies.

Examining the Influence of Gender and Race on Individual Preferences for Trade Protection

A large body of previous research has focused on individual characteristics (particularly economic characteristics) that appear to make Americans more or less supportive of trade liberalization. A common assumption of such studies is that individuals' interests are tied to their role in production (e.g., Stolper and Samuelson 1941; Samuelson 1949). Indeed, US trade over the past several decades has been characterized by the exporting of goods that require a great deal of capital and high-skilled labor to produce (e.g., pharmaceuticals, heavy industrial goods, grains, high-technology goods) and the importing of goods that use a great deal of labor (e.g., hand-picked agricultural products, textiles and footwear, light manufactured goods). The predictable result has been an increase in the real profits of holders of capital and skilled labor and a decline in the real wages of low-skilled labor (Freeman 1995; Feenstra and Hanson 2001).

As a result, most models of trade preferences examine these wage effects via two intertwined characteristics: skill level and income level. As a group, low-skilled labor is expected to be less supportive of imports than high-skilled labor, given that increased levels of imported goods are more likely to negatively affect low-skilled wages and employment (e.g., Kaltenthaler, Gelleny, and Ceccoli 2004). By contrast, those with higher levels of income are expected to be more likely to benefit from higher returns on capital, to have enough resources to weather potential economic transitions generated by increased trade competition, and to be more likely to purchase imported goods and thereby benefit from lower limits on imports (Gabel 1998). Some models, such as those of Scheve and Slaughter (2001), Beaulieu (2002), Mayda and Rodrik (2005), and Blonigen (2011), also incorporate industry affiliation and industry trade exposure to account for sector-specific competition from trade; others incorporate factors affecting an individual's ability to move to where jobs are located, such as homeownership (Scheve and Slaughter 2001) or neighborhood attachment (Kaltenthaler, Gelleny, and Ceccoli 2004). Still others incorporate an individual's political attitudes on other issues (O'Rourke and Sinnott 2001; Kaltenthaler, Gelleny, and Ceccoli 2004) and consumer tastes (Baker 2005).

A consistent finding across these and other studies (e.g., see also Guisinger 2009, 2016; Mansfield and Mutz 2009) has been that women tend to be more protectionist in their trade sentiments than men. Although this gender-based empirical discrepancy has often been noted, by disaggregating results from the American National Election Studies (ANES), I uncovered a parallel gap between white and nonwhites that has heretofore been overlooked.

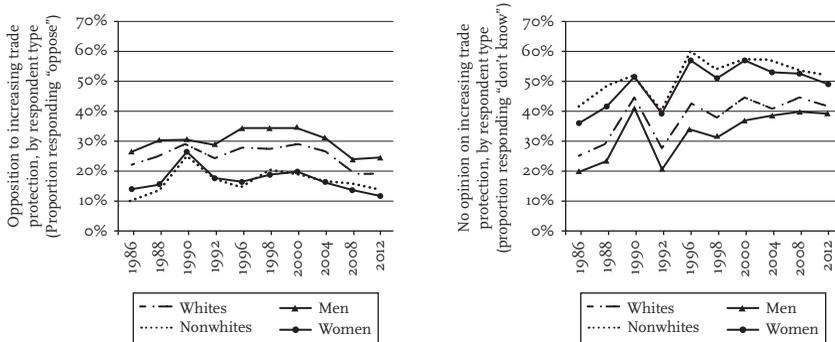


FIGURE 4.1 Economic vulnerability and preferences for trade protection (1986 to 2012)

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2012), Time Series Study. 2012 face-to-face surveys only.

Figure 4.1 displays average responses among women, men, nonwhites, and whites from 1986 to 2012 to the ANES’s standard trade protection question:

Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports—or haven’t you thought much about this?

As figure 4.1 shows, the average responses for women and for nonwhites track closely: both groups are consistently more likely to answer “don’t know” and less likely to support liberalization than either men or whites.¹ Furthermore, 2012 responses show an increase in both the racial and gender divide in preferences.

This divide holds even after controlling for other factors. Table 4.1 presents a multinomial logistic analysis of the ANES trade question responses (i.e., support an increase in the limits of imports, support a decrease in the limits on imports, and “don’t know” or “haven’t thought much about it”) from 1986 to 2008 that accounts for a variety of individual economic characteristics, including skill level, income level, unemployment, age, political identification, homeownership, and union membership, as well as community-level characteristics that will be further discussed in chapters 5 and 6. (Analysis incorporating 2012 data

¹ For the 2012 survey and accompanying “Cumulative Data File, 1948 to 2012,” the ANES changed its coding of race and ethnicity from one that treated Hispanic self-identification as an overlay to race-based groupings to a coding that separated “White, non-Hispanic” and “Black, non-Hispanic” from “Other.” Thus, in analysis of ANES data, “White” includes only non-Hispanic whites and “Nonwhites” all others including Hispanics. In contrast the CCES retains ethnicity as an overlay to racial categories. For the CCES data, self-identification as “Hispanic” is thus additionally controlled for in the analysis.

TABLE 4.1 Analysis of individual preferences for limits on trade (ANES 1986–2008)

MULTINOMIAL LOGISTIC ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES (1986 TO 2008)	LIMITS ON TRADE			
	INCREASE		“DON’T KNOW”	
	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE
Skilled	-0.63	(0.06)***	-0.94	(0.06)***
Mid-income group	0.03	(0.07)	-0.25	(0.07)***
High-income group	-0.30	(0.08)***	-0.62	(0.08)***
Unemployed (0/1)	-0.01	(0.10)	0.01	(0.10)
7 pt. political id (Dem.–Rep.)	-0.05	(0.01)***	-0.02	(0.01)
Age	0.00	(0.00)*	-0.01	(0.00)***
Female (0/1)	0.37	(0.05)***	0.90	(0.05)***
Nonwhite (0/1)	0.12	(0.07)*	0.46	(0.07)***
Owns house (0/1)	0.13	(0.06)**	0.00	(0.06)
Union household	0.32	(0.07)***	0.09	(0.07)
C.D. Racial HH index	0.49	(0.24)**	0.14	(0.24)
C.D. Residency HH index	-0.74	(0.32)**	-0.55	(0.32)*
C.D. Income inequality	-1.98	(1.46)	0.12	(1.46)
C.D. % Rural	0.86	(0.17)***	0.54	(0.17)***
Political South (ANES)	-0.08	(0.06)	0.00	(0.07)
Year 1986	1.71	(0.55)***	-0.38	(0.56)
Year 1988	1.42	(0.55)***	-0.33	(0.56)
Year 1990	0.60	(0.55)	-0.22	(0.56)
Year 1992	1.45	(0.55)***	-0.43	(0.56)
Year 1996	0.25	(0.14)*	0.09	(0.13)
Year 1998	0.25	(0.14)*	-0.08	(0.13)
Year 2004	0.27	(0.15)*	0.10	(0.14)
Year 2008	0.72	(0.14)***	0.42	(0.13)***
Constant	0.92	(0.61)	1.16	(0.62)*
Observations	13,119			
Prob > F	0.00			

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2008).

NOTE: Base Response “Decrease.” Model is multinomial logistic.

* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

appears in appendix table 4.A1.²) These data reveal that even after accounting for a variety of observable economic characteristics, race and gender remain strongly significant predictors of both support for trade liberalization and propensity to respond with “don’t know.” *Ceteris paribus*, women are 12 percentage points (SE 0.02, *p* value < .00) less likely to support decreasing limits on imports than men; nonwhites are 5 percentage points (SE 0.02, *p* value < .00) less likely to support a decrease than whites.

These patterns raise the question of why gender and race appear to so strongly determine trade preferences in the United States. One proposed explanation is occupational segregation. Throughout the twentieth century, race and gender persisted as strong determinants of employment allocation in the United States (King 1992; Padavic and Reskin 2002). Although occupational dissimilarity between whites and blacks has declined, occupational segregation between Hispanics and non-Hispanics notably increased during the 1980s and 1990s (Queneau 2009). Yet the central focus of most previous studies on job types, industry, and skill levels as the source of differences in individual trade preferences means that many have already controlled for differences in skill and occupation and nonetheless found a gap. Similarly, in the analysis of the ANES responses shown in table 4.1, the gender and racial gap in preferences stands even after accounting for income, skill level, and other observable socioeconomic indicators. Furthermore, to the extent that international trade leads to growth in US service and non-tradable industries, traditional gender and racial segregation trends in the United States would tend to disadvantage lower-skilled American men, not women (Anker 1998) and whites rather than nonwhites (Queneau 2009),³ which runs counter to empirical findings that it is women and minorities who express greater concern over trade liberalization.

A more credible and commonly hypothesized explanation is the aforementioned knowledge gap among women and nonwhites in terms of their expressed knowledge about the facts and mechanics of trade.⁴ Previous examinations of trade policy preference formation have demonstrated gender- and race-associated knowledge gaps at both the general economic policy level and

² In 2012 the ANES collected data on trade preferences using two different modes—face-to-face and Internet. In this chapter and elsewhere, I have constrained the 2012 ANES sample to the face-to-face mode (the standard data in prior ANES surveys) to ensure comparability. Additionally, the 2010 Census did not collect updated five-year residential turnover data, a community factor theoretically and empirically linked to preferences in chapter 5. To facilitate the inclusion of 2012 data, I have matched 2012 ANES survey respondents with updated Census 2010 community data when available (community racial diversity, income diversity, and percent rural) and Census 2000 data when not available (residential turnover). In light of the continuity issues, when analyzing 2012 data, I henceforth provide duplicate analyses, displaying results from 1986 to 2008 in the main text and results incorporating 2012 in supplemental tables.

³ With the notable exception of Hispanics’ over-representation in the import-competing segment of the farming sector.

⁴ For a review of this literature, see Mondak and Anderson 2004. For an alternate argument that women are less likely incorporate individual economic concern into their policy opinions see Gidengil 1995.

the trade-specific level. Burgoon and Hiscox (2004) have found women to be 27 to 30 percent less likely than men to be able to correctly name all three signatories of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Guisinger (2009) has similarly found that men and whites were significantly more likely than women and nonwhites to correctly identify their senator's policy position on trade, and that men were less likely to answer "don't know." This gap is important because better informed respondents have been found to have different policy preferences than less informed respondents and because disparities in policy-specific information have been shown to be particularly influential in preference formation (Gilens 2001). If this is the case, greater education on trade and trade policies, such as might be provided by political entrepreneurs, would presumably close the knowledge gap and thus the preference gap.

But based on the economic volatility that has also accompanied trade liberalization in the United States, I posit a third explanation: that the gender and racial gaps in trade preferences reflect a greater concern about economic and employment vulnerability.⁵ A corollary to orthodox trade theory's expectation that increased liberalization generates increased growth is that increased liberalization also increases economic uncertainty, volatility, and risk (Ramey and Ramey 1995; Garrett 1998; Rodrik 1998; Kose, Prasad, and Terrones 2006; Giovanni and Levchenko 2009).⁶ More specifically, policies resulting in trade liberalization are linked to both short-term employment adjustments and longer-term increased volatility of employment (Beaulieu, Dehejia, and Zakhilwal 2004). Because of historical employment practices, these employment adjustments disproportionately affect women and minorities and therefore could be predicted to cause them to express higher levels of concern and uncertainty over the potential individual-level benefits of trade liberalization.

Lowering trade barriers typically forces internationally uncompetitive sectors to shrink, shedding workers and generating periods of unemployment. Displaced workers need to seek re-employment, possibly incurring the costs of relocation and retraining as well as lost wages. Indeed, workers with little aptitude or few skills for other employment may face insurmountable difficulties in re-entering the workforce. Although economists have concluded that the aggregate costs to these workers are relatively small compared to the gains from liberalized trade (Matusz and Tarr 2000), the costs of unemployment are on average a net loss for affected workers. During the height of US manufacturing adjustments, for instance, Jacobson, LaLonde, and Sullivan (1993) valued the

⁵ While the trade preference scholarship has tended to ignore such a characterization, politics has not. A now infamous (in Canada) confrontation between Liberal opposition leader John Turner and Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney during the 1988 Canadian Leaders' Debate sparked when panelist Pamela Wallin turned the conversation from women's wage and employment inequality issues toward the controversial US-Canada FTA by noting that "women feel particular vulnerable under the free trade deal" (C-Span, Canadian Leaders' Debate, October 25, 1988, <http://www.c-span.org/video/?4331-1/canadian-leaders-debate>).

⁶ For a discussion of similar effects from liberalization of foreign direct investment, see Jensen et al. 2012.

average losses of laid-off workers in Pennsylvania at \$80,000, and these losses disproportionately affected women's incomes (Couch and Placzek 2010).

Even after short-term adjustments, trade liberalization can continue to generate higher volatility in employment. The “Bhagwati-Dehejia hypothesis” (Bhagwati and Dehejia 1994) predicts increased labor turnover in highly liberalized economies because industries are “footloose” in response to small shifts in comparative advantage from one country to another (Beaulieu, Dehejia, and Zakhilwal 2004). The availability and stability of employment are related but distinct from wage-related economic concerns typically controlled for in preference models.

Which Americans are most likely to be affected by volatility is closely linked to structural biases in domestic employment. Historical racial and gender bias in US employment generates higher risks for women and minorities facing an increase in volatility than for white men. Research has demonstrated that women and minorities face disadvantages in recruitment processes (Padavic and Reskin 2002) and retention practices (Hall 1972; Ureta 1992; Diebold, Neumark, and Polsky 1997).⁷ Additionally, women have been found to be less supportive of the idea that people should move to regions where employment is more available (Gidengil et al. 2003). Researchers have found that women, who tend to serve as primary caregivers even in dual-income families (Presser 1994), report being more concerned with securing jobs compatible with family life than are men (Darian 1975; Glass and Camarigg 1992). For all of these reasons, it can be assumed that the higher labor turnover resulting from trade liberalization will disproportionately affect women and minorities, an expectation that should influence preferences as much as skill level or industry affiliation. Economic vulnerability concerns could influence individuals' support for tariffs, since their imposition directly affects both labor market prices and labor volatility. Heterogeneity in economic vulnerability could explain the post-financial crisis expansion of the gender and race gap in preferences for protection shown in figure 4.1. Between 2008 and 2012, the proportion of women and nonwhites opposing trade protection dropped substantially, while white opposition stayed relatively constant and the proportion of men opposing protection slightly rose. However, the concerns could additionally manifest in support for other trade-related policies that contend more narrowly with the potential for trade to increase labor market volatility, such as increased unemployment and retraining benefits or worker rights regulations.

As will be shown via the description and analysis of CCES survey responses below (e.g. figure 4.2 and table 4.2), compared to white men, woman and nonwhites do in fact voice more protectionist sentiment across a

⁷ Following Hall (1972), Ureta (1992) calculated that men are 22 percent more likely than women to reach five or more years of employment tenure, a greater retention divide than between whites and blacks. Sheeran (1975–1976) notes that while the application of Title VII in the United States increased new employment opportunities for women and minorities, its failure to adjust workers' seniority status left women and minorities more vulnerable during economic downturns.

broad spectrum of trade-related policies including that of limits on imports. Observing such a gender and racial divide across a broader set of trade-related policies, particularly those more directly linked to the vulnerability of US workers, bolsters the claim that economic vulnerability and not just wage concerns underpin some expressions of protectionist sentiment. Yet, as noted earlier, the knowledge and economic vulnerability explanations for differences in trade preferences cannot be easily distinguished by analyzing traditional survey data such as that collected by the ANES, as comparisons of responses by gender and race provide evidence that could support either logic. Furthermore, since race and gender are the categories facing disadvantages in the labor market, it would be difficult to derive a proxy that includes the employment dimensions of the classifications while excluding other dimensions such as knowledge differences. To test the explanatory power of these hypotheses, I thus conducted two survey experiments that attempted to equalize the information available to individuals. One survey focuses on information about US trading patterns and in particular whether China or Canada is the United States' primary trading partner. The second survey focuses on information concerning the economic benefits of trade. If the knowledge gap hypothesis is correct, information provision should generate convergence of opinion among otherwise like individuals and diminish the gender and race gap in preferences. If instead, the economic vulnerability hypothesis is correct, information should play a limited role in diminishing the gender gap and could exacerbate the gap. Combined, the two survey experiments directly counter the knowledge hypothesis and provide indirect support for the economic vulnerability hypothesis.

Survey Experiment 1: The Provision of Specific Trade Information

The first survey experiment sought to explore how differences in specific trade information—in this case trading partners—affected preferences. Standard trade policy preference questions typically ask respondents to consider generic trade protection measures without reference to specific countries. For example, the standard ANES question simply asks “Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports?” To answer such a question, individuals must call on beliefs about trade, including their understanding of what American trade looks like. However, both theoretically and empirically, the effect of a change in policy would depend on which type of country the respondent is imagining. Trade with Canada looks different and affects different industries and types of individuals than trade with China. So beliefs about trading partners and the primary type of trade halted by trade protection measures should influence an individual's opinion about the impact of such measures. If men and women and whites and nonwhites differ in their knowledge about trading partners, this difference could explain the observed differences in their responses to the question. If differences in knowledge

are driving the difference in responses, then diminishing this knowledge gap should diminish the gap in preferences. If instead, differences in economic vulnerability are driving the difference in responses, diminishing this divide should have little effect.

A survey experiment embedded in the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) allows us to look at the difference in responses as related to knowledge and observe how ensuring respondents have the same information about how trade partners affects—or does not affect—responses. Fifteen-hundred respondents were asked to select the trade partner with which the United States traded the most: Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, or Mexico. A randomly selected half of the 60 percent of respondents who incorrectly selected China were then informed that Canada was in fact the United States' largest trading partner.

All respondents then received a battery of questions concerning trade-related policies. Specifically, they were asked to select “agree,” “somewhat agree,” “somewhat disagree,” “disagree,” or “don't know” to respond to whether the US government should take any of the following trade policy actions: increase limits on imported goods and services (LIMITS ON IMPORTS), increase subsidies to affected industries (SUBSIDIES), do more to stabilize the dollar (STABILIZE DOLLAR), increase unemployment benefits and retraining programs (INCREASE BENEFITS), and ensure its trading partners protect the basic rights of workers (WORKER'S RIGHTS). Answers were coded on a five-point scale (–2 to 2) from “disagree” to “agree,” with “don't know” coded as 0.⁸ While the import measure offers a direct comparison with the preponderance of the literature, answers to other trade-related policy alternatives offer a window into the broader relationship between trade and economic vulnerability. From a US worker's perspective, subsidies, foreign worker rights, and dollar stabilization (in the face of a rising dollar) provide insulation from eroding domestic competitiveness. Similarly, while increasing unemployment benefits and retraining programs do not stop the flow of goods, from a worker's perspective such policies can mitigate vulnerability concerns arising from trade, an issue at the crux of this chapter.

Combined, the five items generate a composite measure of trade protection (INCREASE PROTECTION), also scaled from –2 to 2—that is, from disagreeing with all five forms of increased protection to agreeing with all five forms of increased protection. The Cronbach's alpha, a score to assess the internal consistency of a summative rating, is .63 for this composite measure of support for increased trade protection.⁹ Averages of these measures of respondents' support for protection can then be compared, both to examine differences between preferences of those initially responding “China” and initially responding “Canada,” as well

⁸ An alternative treatment separating out the “don't know” responses did not result in substantial changes to the upcoming analysis.

⁹ Factor analysis suggests a single dimension across the items: there is a steep drop from the eigenvalue of the first factor (1.2) to the second (.1). Factor loadings are all positive and range from .30 for STABILIZE DOLLAR to .58 for INCREASE SUBSIDIES. The loading for LIMIT IMPORTS is midway at .45.

as to compare averages across groups when all respondents share the same information about Canada's and China's importance in US trade.

The misconception that China is the United States' primary trading partner is common—selected by almost 60 percent of respondents—while relatively few (20 percent) gave the correct response: Canada. It must be noted, however, that the erroneous response was disproportionately selected by women and nonwhites. Women were less likely than men to correctly identify Canada as primary (14 percent of women compared to 29 percent of men) and more likely to incorrectly select China (65 percent of women compared to 54 percent of men). Similarly, nonwhites were significantly less likely than whites to identify Canada as primary (12 percent of nonwhites compared to 24 percent of whites) and slightly more likely to incorrectly select China (62 percent of nonwhites versus 59 percent of whites). Understanding which countries the US trades with is the starting point for understanding the effects of trade on business entities, employment, and prices, and thus theoretically underpins individuals' trade policy preferences. Indeed, on average, respondents who failed to correctly identify the United States' top trading partner were 6 percent more supportive of protectionist policies. However, in a surprising twist, the evidence does not suggest that receiving correct knowledge diminishes the preference gap.

To test the effect of knowledge on preferences, I compare averages of both the composite measure (INCREASE PROTECTION) and the specific response to the limits on imports question (LIMITS ON IMPORTS) by gender and racial groupings. While the former captures a broader spectrum of protectionist policies, the latter most closely replicates the question as commonly asked in similar surveys, particularly the ANES, thus ensuring comparability with prior research and ANES-based analysis in this book. Table 4.2 presents the average response grouped by gender and by gender and race combined.

Overall, those who initially believed that China is the United States' primary trading partner were substantially and significantly more supportive of trade protection—both in general and specifically in terms of limiting imports—than those who initially believed that Canada is the United States' primary trading partner. On average, those who thought the trading partner was Canada were slightly supportive of increasing protection broadly (.34 on the -2 to 2 scale) but indifferent to increasing specific limits on imports (.02). Those who thought the main trading partner was China more strongly supported increasing protection (.55) and weakly supported increasing limits on imports (.30).

Separating responses by gender shows that while men are, on average, less supportive of increased trade protection than women, trading partner beliefs still correlate significantly to relative support for trade protection among men. Men who thought that China was the main trading partner of the United States were three times as supportive of protection in general than men who thought that Canada was the main trading partner of the United States (.44 versus .14). On the issue of import limits specifically, the difference between the two groups was not only larger but in fact crossed over the neutral point. Men who

TABLE 4.2 Support for trade protection by gender and race

SUPPORT INCREASED PROTECTION (-2 DISAGREE TO 2 AGREE)	ALL TYPES			MEN			WOMEN			WHITE MEN			WOMEN AND NONWHITES		
	CANADA	CHINA	DIFF.	CANADA	CHINA	DIFF.	CANADA	CHINA	DIFF.	CANADA	CHINA	DIFF.	CANADA	CHINA	DIFF.
	Composite Measure (SE)	0.34 (0.08)	0.55 (0.04)	-0.22** (0.09)	0.14 (0.10)	0.44 (0.07)	-0.30** (0.12)	0.70 (0.13)	0.65 (0.05)	0.06 (0.13)	0.12 (0.11)	0.41 (0.08)	-0.28** (0.13)	0.60 (0.12)	0.64 (0.05)
Imports (SE)	0.02 (0.14)	0.30 (0.07)	-0.28* (0.15)	-0.28 (0.17)	0.11 (0.12)	-0.40* (0.20)	0.60 (0.21)	0.45 (0.09)	0.15 (0.22)	-0.32 (0.18)	0.06 (0.13)	-0.38* (0.22)	0.45 (0.19)	0.44 (0.09)	0.02 (0.20)

SOURCE: 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, University of Notre Dame Module.

NOTE: Average response by group.

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

thought Canada was the main trading partner of the United States did not, on average, support limiting imports.

Women were more protectionist on average than men, but this protectionism did not show any relationship to their knowledge about trading partners. Women who thought China was the main trading partner of the United States had an average preference for protection very similar to those who thought Canada was the main trading partner (.65 to .70 for the composite measure and .45 to .60 for the import limit measure).

Accounting for race simply exacerbates the divide. For white males, the conditional difference on support for general protectionist measures was $-.28$, an order of magnitude larger than the conditional difference for all nonwhite males combined ($-.03$). For limits on imports specifically, the conditional difference for white males was even larger ($-.38$) and again an order of magnitude larger than the conditional difference for all nonwhite males (0.02). The takeaway from an overview of the control group is that initial beliefs about trade partners clearly matter, but only among a small subset of individuals—white males.

Results from the experimental component of the survey support the observational finding that information about trading partners matters primarily for white males. Recall that half of the individuals who incorrectly answered “China” were provided a correction. Comparing the control group with the corrected group provides an indication of what the gender and racial gap would look like if these groups shared the same information about trading partners. Figure 4.2 displays the difference in average responses between the control group (those who answered “China” and were not provided a correction) and the treatment group (those who answered “China” and were subsequently informed that Canada was in fact the United States’ largest trading partner). The average response of those who correctly answered Canada is offered for comparison.

For the population as a whole, the correction very slightly diminished support for protectionist policies, bringing averages closer to that of individuals who initially answered Canada, but the difference is not significant. The treatment had little influence on women nor on the larger group of all respondents not classified as white males (“Women and Nonwhites”). Since these groups’ beliefs about trading partners did not elsewhere correlate to significant differences in support for protectionist policies, the lack of a treatment effect is not surprising. In comparison, the treatment effect had a strong influence on men, and more specifically, on white men. In fact, correcting white men’s beliefs about the United States’ primary trading partner served to halve the difference in overall trade policy preferences between those who initially answered “Canada” and those who initially answered “China.”

So, in one sense, the knowledge gap hypothesis is correct. Providing individuals similar information does close a preference gap: that among men. More fully informed men are more cohesive in their stated preferences for trade protection, all else equal. However, providing respondents with more accurate information about trade partners had the perverse effect of increasing—rather than eliminating—the gender and racial divide visible in attitudes toward trade

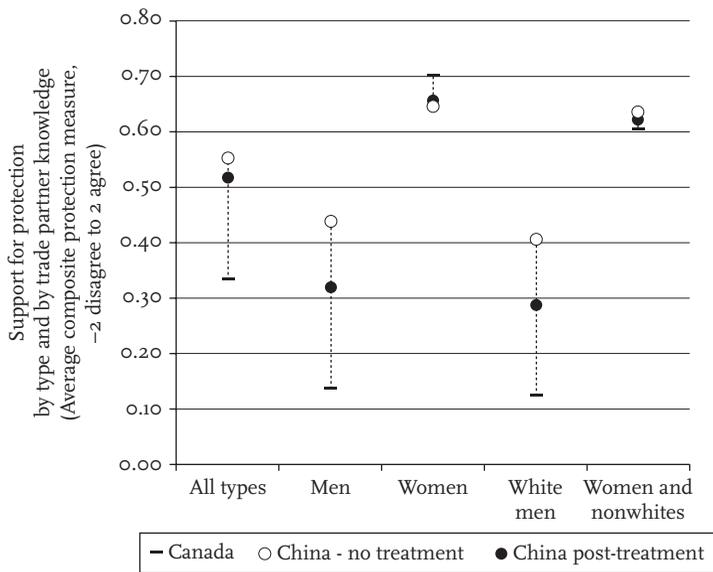


FIGURE 4.2 Impact of trade partner knowledge on preferences for protection, from 2010 survey experiment

SOURCE: 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self).

policy. Men and women, white and nonwhite preferences were even more different when all individuals shared common information.

One takeaway is that political entrepreneurs sharing information about trade would make the preference divide clearer. Male opinion would be more cohesive. Women and minority opinion would also be more distinctive, separate from men’s. In one sense, these groups would be easier to identify. On the other hand, mobilizing such race and gender-based coalitions might not suit other political goals. To win in the United States requires a majority, in some locations losing the minority vote may not lose the election but losing a significant portion of either male or female vote would be difficult to overcome.

Survey Experiment 2: The Provision of General (Positive) Information

The second experiment focused on how individuals differed in their response to the type of general, mainly positive, information found in government documents, pro-trade editorials, and think-tank websites. As with survey experiment 1, it seeks to see whether women’s and minorities’ responses are linked to their prior information about trade by providing a subset of respondents with general information. However, survey experiment 1 focused on the very specific information of trading partners. As such it assumed that individuals holding such information could and would work through the analytic steps from country name to

type of trade to individual concern over such trade. In this second experiment, the information provided in the treatment is already analyzed for the survey respondent, lowering the complication of integrating the new information.

This second survey experiment differs from other trade surveys by purposely offering no economic context in the control version of the trade policy question. Typically, surveys such as the ANES provide at the very least generically written pros and cons. The ANES survey questions raise three issues—protecting American jobs, raising consumer prices, and hurting American exports—before asking individuals to support or oppose changing the level of protection. As such, it provides an informational prompt as part of the question. The control version of survey experiment 2 attempts to avoid any specific economic context, since the question at hand is how information influences different groups of individuals.

As before, the survey was embedded in the 2010 CCES, but in a different wave from the prior survey. Fifteen-hundred respondents were randomly selected to receive either the control or treatment version of the trade policy question. The control version provided very little information, simply that “The U.S. government continues to expand opportunities to trade through bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements with foreign countries” before being asked to answer a set of four questions concerning how international trade affected their employment, the employment of friends and family, employment in their region, and employment in the United States. To answer each question, respondents could choose between “benefit greatly,” “benefit slightly,” “no difference,” “hurt slightly,” “hurt greatly,” and “don’t know.” Again, answers were coded on a five-point scale (–2 to 2) from “disagree” to “agree,” with “no difference” and “don’t know” coded as 0.

The initial descriptive data from the control portion of the survey suggest that when asked a trade policy question with almost no information about economic effects of trade, men and women and whites and nonwhites initially differ minimally. Figure 4.3 displays a breakdown of responses from the control group to the question of the effect of trade on “your employment” by individual type: low skilled, high skilled, male, female, whites, and nonwhites. With minimal economic context provided in the control version of the question, beliefs are fairly uniform across differing types of individuals, including across men and women. Disaggregating the data by groups results in only minimal variations: compared to high-skilled workers, low-skilled workers are slightly more likely to think that trade hurts employment, more likely to think it makes no difference, and less likely to think it helps. Compared to women, men are more likely to think trade helps their own employment while women are slightly more likely to think that trade makes no difference to their own employment prospects. Nonwhites are slightly more positive about the benefit of trade to their employment compared to whites. Overall, this initial descriptive data offers little in the way of even demonstrating, much less explaining, the trade protection gender gap observed in the ANES and many other surveys or the newly identified racial gap.

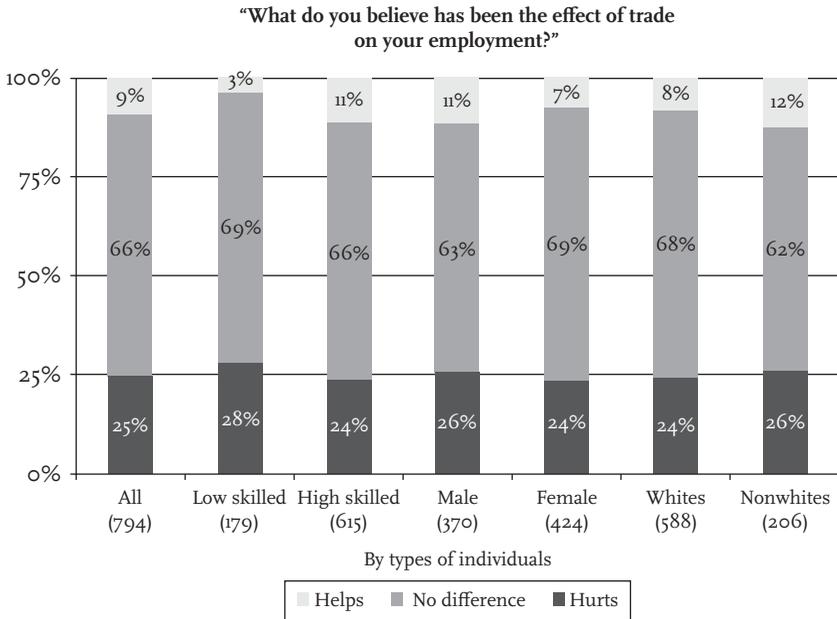


FIGURE 4.3 Beliefs about the effect of trade on own employment
 SOURCE: 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self).

In contrast, those selected for the treatment group received positive, but factual, information about the rank of the United States as the largest trading country in the world which highlighted the link between exports and jobs in both the service and manufacturing sectors:

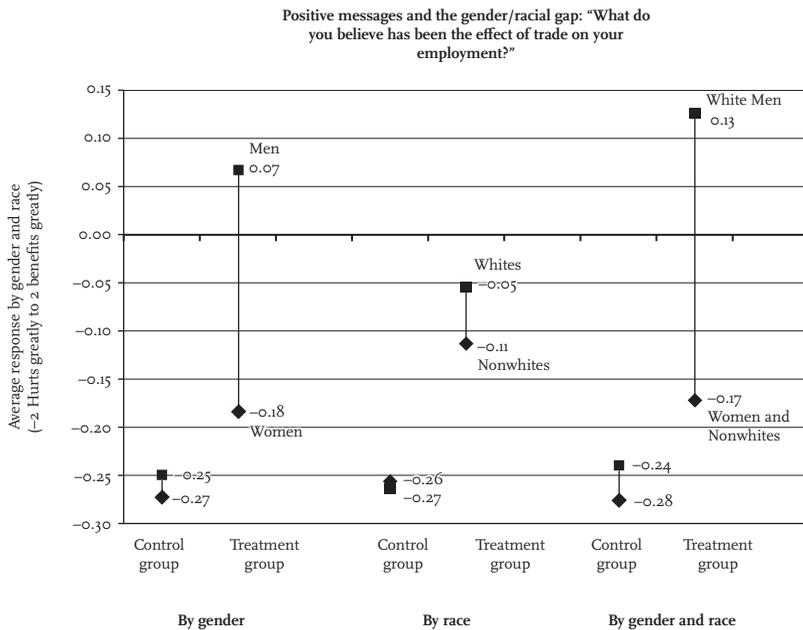
The U.S. continues to rank as the largest trading country in the world. In the service sector, the U.S. dominates the international market, exporting more than the next two countries combined. U.S. exports in services more than doubled between 1998 and 2008 and service exports are estimated to support at least 3.5 million U.S. jobs. Even in the manufacturing sector, where the U.S. faces stronger competition, more than 1 in 5 jobs are dependent on exports.¹⁰

As with the control group, all treatment group participants were then informed that “The U.S. government continues to expand opportunities to trade through bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements with foreign countries” before being asked to answer a set of four questions concerning how international trade affected their employment, the employment of friends and family, employment in their region, and employment in the United States. Only

¹⁰ The treatment prompt has an average US grade-level at just below the 9th grade (8.98) or the equivalent of nine years of education (Google Code Project: php-text-statistics).

now with the comparison of the treatment group to the control group does the data begin to provide insights about group differences in the influence of new information. Because individuals are randomly assigned to treatment and control groups, receiving pro-trade information is uncorrelated with all the observed and unobserved causes of opinions about the effect of trade on employment. Simply comparing the average responses of the treatment and control groups yields unbiased estimates of the effects of the positive information treatment.

Figure 4.4 presents a comparison of control and treatment responses grouped by gender (men versus women), by race (whites versus nonwhites), and by both (white males versus women and nonwhites). A square marker denotes the average response by the men, whites, and white males, respectively. The diamond marker denotes the average response by women, nonwhites, and women and nonwhites, respectively. The lines between the two markings denote the difference between groups. A short line would mean that differences between groups are small and a large line would indicate a substantial difference. For



By gender	Treatment effects							
	Mean	SE	By race	Mean	SE	By gender and race	Mean	SE
Men	0.32	0.07***	Whites	0.21	0.05***	White Men	0.37	0.08***
Women	0.09	0.06	Nonwhites	0.14	0.09	Women and Nonwhites	0.10	0.06*
Difference	0.23	0.09**		0.07	0.10		0.26	0.10***
Overall treatment effect: +0.19 (SE 0.05***)								

FIGURE 4.4 Impact of a positive message on beliefs about trade

SOURCE: 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self).

each comparison, average responses from the control group are on the left and average response from the treatment on the right. Details about the estimated treatment effects and their significance are located below the figure.

Note that within the control group (the left side of each comparison grouping), differences by gender, by race, and by the combination of both race and gender are minimal. In fact, within the control group, none of these differences are large enough to be considered significant differences. Within the treatment group (the right side of each comparison grouping), the gaps between groups are wide enough, in all but one case, to be considered significant at the $p < .05$ level or below. Despite the broad, nationally focused content of the treatment message, the positive information contained within it had a very heterogeneous impact on perceptions. In other words, the provision of pro-trade facts such as might be used to persuade voters created potentially politically difficult divisions within them.

One such division in beliefs about the individual benefits of trade emerged between men and women. In the control group, men's average response on the benefits of trade to their own employment was only 0.02 more positive than women's (-0.25 compared to -0.27), a difference that is not statistically significant. However, the treatment (the positive message about the economic impact of trade) affected men far more than women. Men's average response rose by 0.32 (SE 0.07, p value = 0.000), not only a statistically significant amount but also enough to shift the average male response from a negative perception to a positive perception about the benefits of trade on their own employment. The treatment effect for women was far smaller, 0.09 (SE 0.06), not significant, and too minimal to lift the average response from negative to the positive side of the scale. Even those women exposed to the positive information about trade still held, on average, negative beliefs about the effect of trade on their own employment. Such findings run counter to the expectations of experimental economists and psychologists that women's preferences are more situational and their social preferences more malleable than men's (e.g., Croson and Gneezy 2009). Here, men's not women's beliefs are the more malleable in the face of positive trade information. The significant difference in treatment effect of 0.23 (SE 0.09, p value = .01) creates a gender gap in beliefs not observed in the control group and in doing so pinpoints a source of difficulty for an elite opinion maker attempting to pull the American public as a whole toward a more positive view of trade.

A similar divide between whites' and nonwhites' responses also emerged among those in the treatment group. Within the control group, whites and nonwhites held statistically indistinguishable beliefs about the effect of trade on their own employment, -0.27 (SE 0.04) and -0.26 (SE 0.06), respectively. Again the treatment affected one group (whites) more than the other (nonwhites) but the difference in the treatment effects was not statistically significant (0.07, SE 0.10). However, it was not argued that race is the single dimension for vulnerability; white women also face challenges in the employment process.

My expectation is that it is the more economically vulnerable groups—women and minorities—who will respond differently from the less economically vulnerable category—white men. The third comparison of figure 4.4 (“by Race and Gender”) contrasts white male beliefs with all others: white women, nonwhite women, and nonwhite men. In the control group, white men’s beliefs (-0.24 , SE 0.05) are slightly more positive than those of women and nonwhites (-0.28 , SE 0.04); but while seemingly larger than the gender or racial divide, at -0.04 (SE 0.06), the difference is not significant. Again, the treatment—a positive message about trade—generates a wide gulf in beliefs about trade’s effect on own employment. White men in the treatment group had an average belief 0.37 (SE 0.08) higher than men in the control group, vaulting them from a negative to a positive perception about the benefit of trade on their own employment. The treatment effect for women and nonwhites was also positive and significant ($+0.10$, SE 0.06) but so minimal as to leave the average woman and nonwhite with a negative view of trade on their own employment. The difference in treatment effects (0.26 , SE 0.10) is statistically significant and interesting, as is the political implication. Positive messages concerning the benefits of trade—the type that could move individuals’ preferences closer to current trade policy—result in the creation of two distinct groups whose different beliefs about the individual benefits of trade should lead them to different preferences for trade policy. Additionally, being based on gender and racial distinctions, these groups would offer a socially divisive base constituency for a party.

Like survey 1, survey 2 constitutes a blow to the knowledge hypothesis that if women (and minorities) acquired information like white men, they would respond similarly when asked about trade policy (all else equal). But it provides only indirect evidence to support the economic vulnerability hypothesis. The results matched my expectation that given meaningful differences to the economic volatility generated by trade liberalization, women’s and nonwhites’ responses would not match that of men, but this data alone cannot offer insight into the cause of the divergence.

For this, I turn to follow-up questions asked of both the control group and the treatment group. Individuals were prompted to explain why they thought that trade benefited or hurt either their own employment or US employment, and were provided four set answers and the opportunity to offer an open answer. Over three-quarters used one of the four set answers, which focused on: (1) individual skills; (2) company competitiveness; (3) industry competitiveness; and (4) the willingness to relocate or find new employment. Although at this level of disaggregation, group sizes are small, a few patterns emerge from comparing men’s and women’s responses from both the control and treatment groups. Of those who viewed trade as positively benefiting their employment, men were far more likely than women to explain their individual employment benefits in terms of their own skills: 37 percent versus 22 percent (p value = $.04$ for 1-tailed test of means). Of those who viewed trade as hurting their employment, women were more likely than men to cite difficulties in changing jobs or

relocating as the reason that trade would hurt their job: 29 percent to 20 percent (p value = .06 for 1-tail test of means). This secondary evidence supports the assumption that, on average, women feel structurally less capable of taking advantage of potential gains from trade and more vulnerable to the possible volatility caused by increased exposure to the international market. Consistent with this, nonwhites were more likely than whites (30 percent compared to 23 percent, p value = .11 for 1-tail test of means) to state that trade hurts their own employment prospects because it would be difficult to relocate to find other work due to geographic constraints or the portability of job skills. In contrast, white respondents were more likely to link potential problems with trade to competition challenges facing their industry (24 percent compared to 14 percent, p value = .08 for 1-tail test of means), rather than to their own willingness to move, their company, or their own abilities. These responses suggest that transition issues may weigh less heavily on whites—and particularly male whites—allowing new general, positive information about trade to be more easily incorporated into their overall attitudes toward trade.

The theoretical takeaway is that the gender and racial divide in preferences for trade is not easily removed by the provision of new information. This offers support for the argument that these classifications organize meaningful economic differences rather than simply being the artifact of differences in economic knowledge. Women and minorities have different opinions, even controlling for other similarities.

The political ramifications are more complex. One takeaway concerning American opinion on trade is that incumbent politicians trying to match their rhetoric to their pro-trade legislative history would move primarily white men and not other voters toward their own position; furthermore, doing so would generate rather than minimize cleavages in their coalitions. The influence would be similar for the national parties as well. Information would somewhat diminish the distance between elite and mass opinion on trade, but at the cost of highlighting divisions within the party. A second takeaway concerning the political impact of this potential opinion shift depends on how strongly the gender- and race-based sentiments affect voting behavior, which is the topic of the next section of this chapter.

Political Implications of Promoting Greater Trade Knowledge and Opinion among Voters

For trade preferences to have a material effect on politics however, Americans must take action, and specifically must vote accordingly. At the polling booth, the absence of an opinion and a lack of knowledge about politicians' positions and actions can make that difficult. There are few opportunities to gather detailed national level voting behavior concerning trade policy. Fortunately, the timing of the first CCES, just one year following the congressional vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), offers such an opportunity.

The 2006 CCES, a nationally representative survey of 36,000 respondents, was undertaken in two waves, before and after the 2006 US Midterm elections.¹¹ As part of the common content section, respondents were surveyed on seven proposals, all of which received a roll-call (recorded) vote during the 109th Congress (January 3, 2005, and January 3, 2007): banning “late-term” abortion (Partial Birth), federal funding for stem cell research (Stem Cell), a timetable to withdraw from Iraq (Iraq), citizenship for illegal immigrants (Immigration), increasing the federal minimum wage (Min. Wage), extending capital gains tax cuts passed in 2001 (Capital Gains), and ratifying a new free trade agreement between the United States and countries in Central America (CAFTA). After each proposal description, they were asked to identify first how they would have voted if given the choice (“For,” “Against,” and “Don’t Know”) and second how they thought their senators voted (“For,” “Against,” and “Don’t Know”).¹² Thus, for an exceptionally large sample of the American population, the CCES data offers not only individuals’ preferences concerning the prior year’s signing of CAFTA but also what individuals knew about their representative’s vote on CAFTA and also their self-reported vote for that incumbent. Analysis of this data allows for a measure of trade policy in terms of its impact on voters’ likelihood of casting ballots for an incumbent. Following Guisinger (2009), I generate prediction of voting for an incumbent from a model which includes an individual’s own preferences on these roll-call votes, whether the individual knew the incumbent’s roll-call vote, and whether or not an individual’s own preference and the behavior of the incumbent matched. Note that because of the six-year electoral cycle for senators, not all incumbent senators were up for re-election, thus the sample for the model is smaller than the set of respondents. The underlying probit model is included in the appendix (table 4.A1). Table 4.3 displays a summary of the predicted vote conditional on a voter’s preference matching (or not matching) the incumbent’s vote history. These predictions derived from the model’s estimates offer a measure of how accountable politicians are on differing electoral issues and how that accountability may vary.

Incumbents tend to receive high levels of support. In 2006, the predicted likelihood of a voter supporting the incumbent was 64 percent, *ceteris paribus*. The issue that moved this likelihood the most was partisan position. Voters are far more likely to vote for an incumbent from their own party than that from another party (89 percent v. 29 percent). Furthermore, in that election year, incumbents’ positions on abortion (Partial Birth), medical funding (Stem Cell), and a timetable for withdrawing from Iraq (Iraq) also strongly influenced voting behavior. A voter

¹¹ Starting from a pool of over 150,000 “opt-in” respondents, a panel of 36,500 adults were selected using proximity matching to a stratified subsample drawn from the US Bureau of the Census; 2004 American Community Study (ACS) (Ansolabehere 2007).

¹² For each proposal, survey respondents were offered single-sentence descriptions, explanations of support, and explanations of opposition. When asked how they thought their representatives voted, respondents were provided with a name prompt. For the full script, see Ansolabehere 2008b.

TABLE 4.3 Effect of issue match on probability of voting for the incumbent

VOTER POSITION AND INCUMBENT VOTE	CAFTA		PARTIAL BIRTH		STEM CELL		IRAQ		IMMIGRATION		MINIMUM WAGE		CAPITAL GAINS		PARTY	
	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE	MEAN	SE
Match	0.65	(0.01)	0.74	(0.01)	0.75	(0.01)	0.76	(0.01)	0.70	(0.01)	0.71	(0.01)	0.71	(0.01)	0.89	(0.01)
Don't Match	0.62	(0.01)	0.52	(0.02)	0.45	(0.02)	0.49	(0.02)	0.57	(0.02)	0.52	(0.03)	0.54	(0.02)	0.29	(0.01)
Difference	0.03	(0.02)	0.22	(0.02)	0.30	(0.02)	0.28	(0.02)	0.13	(0.02)	0.19	(0.03)	0.17	(0.02)	0.60	(0.01)

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content.

NOTE: All differences are statistically significant.

matching the incumbent's vote history on those issues were 22 to 30 percentage points more likely to vote for the incumbent than those who did not match. In comparison, the predicted likelihood increased only 3 percentage points when the incumbent's position on trade matched the individual voter's preferred trade policy regarding the vote on CAFTA. While perhaps important on the margins, trade policy's salience in the 2006 elections was slight relative to the incumbent's position on other economic issues such as capital gains tax (which, when it did not match a voter's opinion, decreased that voter's probability of supporting the incumbent by 17 percentage points) and the minimum wage (19 percentage points).

One source of the low political accountability on trade policy is the relatively high proportion of individuals who have no stated opinion on trade, and the additionally low proportion of individuals who know their representatives' positions on trade. In the 2006 elections, 22 percent of respondents claimed to have no opinion about CAFTA. Compare this to other issue areas, in which the percentage of respondents claiming no opinion ranged from a high of only 12 percent (on capital gains tax) to a low of 5 percent (on minimum wage). In the comparison of issues by respondents' knowledge of the positions of their elected representatives, CAFTA was the only issue for which the majority (54 percent) of voters responded "don't know" when asked their senators' positions. Less than one-third of voters (31 percent) correctly identified their senators' positions on CAFTA, and 15 percent of respondents provided an incorrect answer when asked about their senator's positions on CAFTA—a higher proportion of incorrect responses than on any other issue.¹³

Of course, political entrepreneurs could seek to educate voters on trade issues to help them make better informed voting decisions choices based on their own preferences and the policies and legislative behavior of their representatives. As hypothesized in chapter 3, to have an effect at the individual level, however, the provided information would need to be detailed and specific to the individual's industry, geographic location, and other unique concerns. Incumbent senators and representative are well placed to provide specific information for their district and of their own behavior. Incumbents, unlike challengers, have the staff and resources to provide specific district information concerning the effects of trade. Incumbents also have a voting history on which they could campaign, although they may have incentives not to do so. American legislative scholars have long noted that incumbents are concerned with the potential electoral implications of their legislative behavior in general but especially of their decisions on roll-call (recorded) votes (Mayhew 1974; Mathews and Stimson 1975; Kingdon 1989; Arnold 1990). Not only are legislators more risk-averse (Fiorina 1974; Mayhew 1974; Arnold 1990), they are also thought to behave strategically when announcing or publicizing a position

¹³ The smaller sample of 1,000 was also asked to identify the record of their representative on CAFTA. The results were substantially identical to the analysis using the identification of senators' votes.

(Arnold 1990). Although incumbents have the advantage of being able to use appearances, press releases, and their franking privilege to publicize the issue and their response (see Mayhew 1974; Cover and Brumberg 1982), there are also times—as was the case with CAFTA—during which many legislators choose not to publicize their vote.

To better understand why so few incumbents seek to inform the voter of their positions regarding trade, further analysis of 2006 election data (table 4.4) shows that support for the incumbent was conditional on both the voter's opinion and knowledge of senator's positions. For each roll-call issue (Partial Birth, Stem Cell, Iraq, Immigration, Minimum Wage, Capital Gains, and CAFTA), the table displays the probability that a voter would vote for the incumbent under different six different conditions: (1) the voter doesn't have an opinion on the issue and doesn't know the incumbent's position either, (2) the voter doesn't have an opinion on the issue but does know the incumbent's position, (3) the voter has an opinion on the issue but is unaware that it does not match the incumbent's, (4) the voter has an opinion on the issue but is unaware that it matches the incumbent's, (5) the voter has an opinion on the issue and is aware that it doesn't match the incumbent's, and (6) the voter has an opinion on the issue and is aware that it matches the incumbent's. For the issue of CAFTA, the table additionally displays prediction for subgroups defined by race and gender.

Looking first at the individuals with no opinion and no knowledge of the incumbent senator's position, the range of predicted probability for voting for the incumbent under this condition is fairly small (63 to 67 percent) across these different issues. We can think of this as a baseline for each issue—the probability voters would support the incumbent with no information about their own or the incumbent's position. In this, the baseline for CAFTA (65 percent) looks much like the baseline for other issues. That said, there is one important difference to keep in mind. On the issue of CAFTA, almost half the sample falls into this condition: 47 percent of those surveyed had no opinion and could not correctly identify their senator's position. Compare this, for instance, to the capital gains tax, for which only 37 percent of the sample had no opinion and could not correctly identify their senator's position.

Given that incumbents can generally depend on relatively high support by a near majority of individuals who lack either opinions about or knowledge of trade, what benefits might they gain from increasing opinion formation and knowledge about trade? Take the best case, in which the opinion formed matches that of the senator and voters know the position of the senator. On the issue of partial birth abortions, this type of individual is 7 percentage points more likely to vote for the incumbent. On the issue of stem cell, such a voter is 13 percentage points more likely to vote for the incumbent. The average increase in the propensity to vote for the incumbent between a voter with no opinion and one whose opinion not only matches but who knows it matches is 11 percentage points. Compare this type of gain from an informed and matching voter to the gain on the

TABLE 4.4 Opinion, knowledge, and support for the incumbent

PROBABILITY OF VOTING FOR INCUMBENT	OTHER ISSUES						CAFTA				
	PARTIAL BIRTH	STEM CELL	IRAQ	IMMIGRATION	MINIMUM WAGE	CAPITAL GAINS	ALL	WOMEN	MEN	NONWHITES	WHITES
No Opinion											
Does not know senator's position	0.65	0.64	0.67	0.66	0.63	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.65	0.72	0.63
Does know senator's position	0.50	0.52	0.45	0.52	0.49	0.47	0.53	0.55	0.53	0.60	0.51
Opinion											
Does not match and does not know	0.61	0.53	0.62	0.62	0.60	0.64	0.66	0.67	0.65	0.68	0.65
Does match and does not know	0.70	0.66	0.68	0.62	0.61	0.64	0.62	0.63	0.61	0.69	0.59
Does not match and does know	0.46	0.41	0.40	0.48	0.46	0.45	0.54	0.56	0.52	0.55	0.53
Does match and does know	0.72	0.77	0.78	0.75	0.74	0.76	0.65	0.68	0.62	0.69	0.63
Gain from Opinion and Knowledge: Best case with opinion (does match & does know) – Best case no opinion (does not know)	+ 0.07	+ 0.13	+ 0.11	+ 0.09	+ 0.11	+ 0.11	-0.01	+ 0.04	-0.03	-0.03	-0.00

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content.

NOTES: Simulated results using Clarify (Tomz et al. 2001; King et al. 2000). All other factors kept at mean. Standard errors range from .01 and 03.

issue of CAFTA. The probability of an informed and matching voter voting for the incumbent is 65 percent, the observational equivalent to that of the uninformed and uninformed voter (rounding hides the actual net loss of 1 percentage point). From an incumbent senator's position, the effort required to support opinion formation and disperse information relevant to CAFTA would net no increase in the probability of a voter supporting the incumbent at the voting booth.

Disaggregating voting behavior by gender and race suggests in fact that matching, informed men and nonwhites would be less inclined to vote for the incumbent, although informed women who match would be more likely.¹⁴ However, there is a danger in treating these equivalently. Given women's higher protectionist sentiment, it is far more likely that an informed woman would not match the incumbent's position, which is something to be considered when making general statements.

To this point, a second potential strategy for incumbent senators might be to simply increase awareness of the incumbent's own position. For all other issues with the exception of partial birth abortion, an informed voter with a matching opinion is at least 10 percentage points more likely to vote for the incumbent than an uninformed voter with a matching opinion. However, for trade the increase is only 3 percentage points, from 62 to 65 percent. Furthermore, the incumbent would need to assume a strong firewall between groups of voters. For all issues, informed voters with differing opinions are less likely to vote for the incumbent, but partitioning messages for specific groups is easier when groups are largely defined by specific issues. A general message on CAFTA has the potential to gain few men and lose a number of women. In fact, the incumbent is slightly better off with uninformed voters who don't match (66 percent). Without strong firewalls between groups of voters, providing information is a high-risk, low-rewards strategy more likely to marginally diminish than to substantially increase the likelihood of any given voter supporting an incumbent senator's re-election. In this case, the probability that they would support the incumbent drops among opinionated women voters who don't match the incumbent's position.

Of course, other politically active groups could also raise awareness of trade policy issues. Earlier in this chapter, women and nonwhites were shown to be more cautious in regard to opinion formation on trade: both groups are more likely to offer no opinion and more likely to support protection in general. The survey experiments suggest that increased information to these groups could further solidify the divide. The disaggregated probabilities displayed in table 4.4 show that opinionated and informed women and minorities would noticeably change their voting behavior. However, as noted by Rusciano (1992), there are dangers in conflating potential political awareness with actual political behavior.

¹⁴ The finding that matching matters more for women runs counter to some prior evidence that suggests that women are less likely to vote in line with their economic interests than in line with sociotropic concerns (e.g. Welch and Hibbing 1992).

The types of groups focused on women and nonwhites have other more immediate issues. As one of its six major planks, the National Organization for Women (NOW) has been outspoken on the issue of economic justice including equal pay and an increase in the minimum wage, but trade policy is in the fine print. Similarly the NAACP does take a stance on trade policy but generally as part of an effort spearheaded by others, such as the AFL-CIO.

In 2002, both NOW and the NAACP joined with the AFL-CIO as part of a 135-group coalition opposing the Baucus/Grassley Trade Promotion Authority bill (a version of fast track). The NAACP released a statement specifically noting the impact of free trade on the African American community in particular: “unlimited free trade contributes to the rise in income inequality and downward pressure on wages. . . . [T]rade deals that lower wages and cost jobs hurt the African American community, where median wages are lower and overall unemployment is significantly higher than among white workers.”¹⁵ But the NOW statement by then President Kim Gandy focused only on the problems liberalization creates for women in developing countries, not in the United States: “NOW stands firmly against the Baucus/Grassley bill and any international trade policy that does not protect women workers around the world.”¹⁶

Specifically for CAFTA, the NAACP raised its opposition during the 2004 convention. Yet with the exception of some talking points put out by organizers—for example, GlobalLocalPopEd.org’s “Top 3 Ways that CAFTA (the Central American Free Trade Agreement) Would Hurt the Black Community”—the resolution gained little attention and little promotion. The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) nationally took a stance against CAFTA, but some state-level chapters broke ranks and individually offered support. In particular, noting the many inland and sea ports, President Roger Racha argued that “CAFTA is good for Texas” (Hero and Preuhs 2013). The congressional Hispanic Caucus experienced a similar geographic division. Thus, minority groups received relatively limited and often mixed signals from interest groups organized around their interests.

According to the CCES survey data, on voting the nonwhite voters differed little from whites in terms of their propensity to have an opinion on CAFTA and in knowledge about their representatives’ behavior. However, women were twice as likely as men to state a non-opinion on the issue of CAFTA (29 percent versus 14 percent) and were also less likely than male respondents to correctly identify their senator’s position on CAFTA (27 percent versus 40 percent).

¹⁵ AFL-CIO, “NAACP Joins Opposition to Fast Track,” <http://www.aflcio.org/issuespolitics/globaleconomy/ns07152002.cfm>.

¹⁶ AFL-CIO “Coalition of 135 Groups Voice Opposition to Fast Track: Letter to Senate Calls Push for Fast Track “Backwards-Looking,” <http://www.aflcio.org/Press-Room/Press-Releases/Coalition-of-135-Groups-Voice-Opposition-to-Fast-T>.

A stronger case could be made for supporting opinion formation among female voters specifically. Female voters without an opinion and without knowledge of the incumbent's position were likely to vote for the incumbent (64 percent), but those matching and with knowledge supported the candidate more (68 percent): a net 4 percentage point improvement. However, unless that process is gender-specific, it runs the potential of losing support for the incumbent among male voters, who are more likely to support the candidate when they are unopinionated and uninformed than they are when they match and know they match (65 percent versus 62 percent). Similarly, with nonwhites, a move from unopinionated and uninformed to matched and knowledgeable generates a potential 3 percentage point loss in support.

This suggests that any attempt to support opinion formation and improved knowledge about representatives in matters of trade policy must be carefully crafted and precisely targeted. The largest potential opportunity for increasing support appears to be with women voters. However, women are more likely to start as protectionist and their opinions—or lack of opinions—appear less subject to the influence of new, positive information about trade. Efforts to increase female voters' support via accountability on trade issues could easily backfire, especially for politicians with a history of pro-trade votes; and at best offer few overall gains to candidates, compared to the support they typically receive from uninformed and opinionated voters. As a result, and as detailed in later chapters, political campaigns tend to tread carefully when it comes to promoting voter awareness of trade issues, limiting outreach to very specific groups, particularly ones defined by region—and to a lesser extent by gender and race. In particular, current political outreach via trade-related campaign ads is primarily directed at white males, as discussed in more depth in chapter 6.

Conclusion

Are certain types of individuals more accepting of protectionism simply because they lack information? Lower rates of political and economic knowledge have been a common explanation of protectionist sentiment, especially when attempting to explain women's consistently higher levels of support for protection. I have argued and found evidence that instead women's higher support for protection represents a rational response to employment concerns and potential economic adjustments to trade liberalization. And furthermore, I have argued that this preference should be reflected in minority preferences as well. Previous individual preference-models have accounted for the divergent wage effects generated by trade liberalization but not the divergent employment effects. The “Bhagwati-Dehejia hypothesis” (Bhagwati and Dehejia 1994) predicts increased labor turnover in highly liberalized economies, thus those who are disproportionately disadvantaged in the labor market will incur higher costs from trade

liberalization. In the United States, women and minorities have historically faced disadvantages in both the labor recruitment and retention process, and as a result, their preferences should be expected to differ, on average, from those of white men.

Unfortunately, simply demonstrating a gap in preferences does not distinguish whether the gap is due to gender- and race-based differences in employment concerns or gender- and race-based differences in employment prospects: the labels on the comparison groups are the same, even if the reason is different. Thus, after showing the preference gap using conventional analysis of survey responses, I used two survey experiments that provided facts about trade to a random subset of individuals. If knowledge is at the heart of the gender (and racial) gap in preferences, then providing similar information should have closed the divide between men and women, whites and nonwhites. It did not; in fact, the gap became larger. I thus argue that women and minorities have meaningful, distinct economic concerns compared to white men when considering the potential benefits of trade policy.

That gender and race are distinct determinants of trade sentiment is politically important. First, providing these groups more information will not, as often imagined, result in their behaving more like otherwise similar men. Second, these identity groups are not typically organized in terms of trade policy; NOW, NAACP, and other such race- and gender-based groups traditionally privilege other policy issues and rarely focus on trade policy. This misalignment generates one source of the gap between American preferences on trade and trade politics. Without interest groups to promote gender- and race-based trade interests, these sentiments are not mobilized on Election Day.

TABLE 4.A1 Analysis of individual preferences for limits on trade (ANES 1986–2012)

MULTINOMIAL ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES (1986 TO 2012)	LIMITS ON TRADE			
	INCREASE		“DON’T KNOW”	
	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE
Skilled	-0.65	(0.05)***	-0.97	(0.05)***
Mid-income group	0.05	(0.07)	-0.25	(0.07)***
High-income group	-0.31	(0.07)***	-0.63	(0.07)***
Unemployed (0/1)	-0.03	(0.10)	-0.04	(0.10)
7 pt. political id (Dem.–Rep.)	-0.04	(0.01)***	-0.01	(0.01)
Age	0.00	(0.00)*	-0.01	(0.00)***
Female (0/1)	0.43	(0.05)***	0.91	(0.05)***
Nonwhite (0/1)	0.13	(0.07)*	0.44	(0.07)***
Owens house (0/1)	0.12	(0.06)*	-0.03	(0.06)
Union household	0.33	(0.07)***	0.11	(0.07)
C.D. Racial HH index	0.28	(0.23)	0.02	(0.23)
C.D. Residency HH index	-0.78	(0.31)**	-0.72	(0.32)**
C.D. Income inequality	-0.65	(1.41)	1.00	(1.40)
C.D. % Rural	0.79	(0.17)***	0.45	(0.17)***
Political South (ANES)	-0.05	(0.06)	-0.03	(0.06)
Year 1986	1.21	(0.54)**	-0.71	(0.53)
Year 1988	0.91	(0.54)*	-0.66	(0.53)
Year 1990	0.10	(0.54)	-0.55	(0.53)
Year 1992	0.95	(0.53)*	-0.75	(0.53)
Year 1996	0.25	(0.14)*	0.10	(0.13)
Year 1998	0.25	(0.14)*	-0.08	(0.13)
Year 2004	0.27	(0.15)*	0.09	(0.14)
Year 2008	0.72	(0.14)***	0.44	(0.13)***
Year 2012	0.94	(0.15)***	0.51	(0.14)***
Constant	0.41	(0.60)	1.02	(0.60)*
Observations	14,764			
Prob > F	0.00			

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2008); 2012 Face-to-Face surveys only.

NOTE: Base Response “Decrease.”

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

TABLE 4.A2 Roll-call votes, preferences, and electoral support for the incumbent

PROBIT REGRESSION:		BASE MODEL		INTERACTIVE MODEL	
VOTE FOR SENATE					
INCUMBENT = 1	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE	
Party					
Match	1.79	(0.04)***	1.58	(0.05)***	
Third party	0.77	(0.03)***	0.73	(0.04)***	
CAFTA					
Match	0.09	(0.03)***	-0.11	(0.05)**	
No opinion	0.13	(0.04)***	-0.02	(0.05)	
Answered correctly			-0.31	(0.05)***	
Know match			0.38	(0.08)***	
Partial Birth					
Match	0.58	(0.03)***	0.24	(0.05)***	
No opinion	0.21	(0.05)***	0.10	(0.06)*	
Answered correctly			-0.38	(0.05)***	
Know match			0.45	(0.07)***	
Stem Cell					
Match	0.81	(0.03)***	0.34	(0.05)***	
No opinion	0.45	(0.06)***	0.29	(0.06)***	
Answered correctly			-0.30	(0.05)***	
Know match			0.63	(0.07)***	
Iraq					
Match	0.75	(0.03)***	0.18	(0.05)***	
No opinion	0.29	(0.06)***	0.13	(0.07)**	
Answered correctly			-0.56	(0.05)***	
Know match			0.85	(0.07)***	
Immigration					
Match	0.34	(0.03)***	0.00	(0.05)	
No opinion	0.19	(0.06)***	0.10	(0.07)	
Answered correctly			-0.36	(0.05)***	
Know match			0.73	(0.07)***	
Minimum Wage					
Match	0.51	(0.03)***	0.02	(0.05)	
No opinion	0.27	(0.08)***	0.07	(0.08)	
Answered correctly			-0.36	(0.06)***	
Know match			0.71	(0.07)***	
Capital Gains					
Match	0.47	(0.03)***	0.00	(0.05)	
No opinion	0.34	(0.05)***	0.05	(0.06)	
Answered correctly			-0.47	(0.05)***	
Know match			0.83	(0.07)***	

(Continued)

TABLE 4.A2 (Continued)

PROBIT REGRESSION:		BASE MODEL		INTERACTIVE MODEL	
VOTE FOR SENATE					
INCUMBENT = 1	COEFFICIENT	SE	COEFFICIENT	SE	
Male	-0.02	(0.03)	0.04	(0.03)	
White	-0.12	(0.04)***	-0.03	(0.04)	
Family income					
2Q: \$30,000-\$49,000	0.01	(0.05)	0.09	(0.05)*	
3Q: \$50,000-\$69,000	-0.02	(0.05)	0.07	(0.05)	
4Q: \$70,000-\$79,000	0.01	(0.05)	0.12	(0.06)**	
5Q: > \$80,000	0.03	(0.05)	0.12	(0.06)**	
Education					
High School degree	-0.02	(0.10)	0.03	(0.11)	
Some college	-0.02	(0.10)	0.10	(0.11)	
2-year college degree	-0.03	(0.10)	0.05	(0.11)	
4- year college degree	0.02	(0.10)	0.11	(0.11)	
Post-graduate degree	-0.05	(0.11)	0.10	(0.12)	
Year eligible to vote	0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)	
Constant	-2.43	(0.12)***	-0.88	(0.13)***	
Number of observations	14,391		14,165		
Pseudo r-squared	0.55		0.63		

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content.

* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

CHAPTER 5 | Community and Trade Preferences

BEYOND THE SELF AND before the nation lies an individual's local community: neighbors, colleagues, bowling league partners who form a civic, cultural, economic, and political environment distinct from the broader nation. Sociotropic models of policy preferences assume that individuals incorporate concerns for their communities into their evaluations and opinions of public policies not just because their own benefits are tied to community benefits but because they value benefits for others in the community. For community-level concerns about trade policy to influence individuals' opinions, however, they must both form beliefs about trade's effect on the community and weigh these effects relative to individual and national benefits. Key to this process, as this and the following chapter will argue, is how easily individuals are able to gain information on community impacts and concerns and how narrowly or widely they define community.

Individuals' beliefs about the community-level effects of trade are clearly different from those about individual- and national-level effects. Of 1,000 individuals that I surveyed, for instance, half thought that trade hurt regional employment, a far higher percentage than the less than 20 percent who thought trade hurt their own employment and lower than the 60 percent who thought trade hurt US employment nationally. But even though many individuals do hold specific beliefs about trade's effect on their community, almost as many, nearly 40 percent, provided a non-opinion answer, expressing their uncertainty about trade's relationship to regional employment.

Gathering the information to make an informed judgment about the benefits of trade liberalization or protection on their community requires an investment of time and attention for anyone. Obviously, individuals have a variety of community-level sources for this information: friends, neighbors, local media, and local political coverage and advertisements. This chapter, however, focuses specifically on two aspects of a community that, according to the model of preference formation here proposed, influence individuals' information-gathering costs: the concentration of import-competing jobs and residential turnover. As it will show, a high concentration of import-competing

employment lowers those costs for individuals. As discussed in chapter 3, bad economic news gains more attention than good economic news, generating an informational bias in favor of protecting import-competing industries that can be observed in individuals' beliefs about trade's benefits for their region. It will also demonstrate that a high turnover of residents increases individuals' information costs. New residents' needs and preferences will be relatively unknown, so rapid changes in the composition of a community's population make established residents' previous information obsolete, requiring constant updating to integrate new information. As a result, the model predicts that individuals in high-turnover communities are less likely to hold a clear belief about the benefits of an economic policy such as trade reform on their community, while individuals' beliefs about such matters will be stronger in low-turnover communities.

A community-specific influence on beliefs and preferences is politically important because of the geographic organization of Congress. Both senators and representatives respond to their regionally prescribed constituencies, and thus it can be assumed that preferences derived from community characteristics have a clearer link to political representation preferences than those derived from individual characteristics. By examining three decades of public opinion data, this chapter demonstrates that in communities in which relatively few individuals work in industries threatened by imports and in which new residents frequently replace old residents, individuals express greater uncertainty about the regional benefits of trade protection, as measured by both the preferences themselves and the strengths of those preferences. Such differences in regional characteristics mean that while a few representatives pay a high cost for trade policy decisions counter to their constituents' preferences, most do not. I again turn to the comprehensive data provided in the 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) on individuals' trade opinion and knowledge of their incumbents' trade policy voting history, to test the implication of residency turnover on trade-related electoral accountability. My analysis shows that voters in high turnover communities are less likely to punish senators who diverge from the voters' preferences. The chapter therefore concludes that increasing the difficulty of obtaining relevant information tends to diminish the importance of sociotropic economic concerns in people's evaluations of the benefits of free trade, which in turn helps explain the seemingly paradoxical disconnect between the generally pro-protection mass preferences of most Americans and the pro-trade positions adopted by their elected representatives.

Community Characteristics and Beliefs about Trade's Benefits

Geographically defined communities—towns, cities, counties—link individuals not by shared ideas (particularly not by ideas about trade policy) but by

shared spaces (streets, playgrounds, schools, and places of worship), shared immediate economic prospects (commerce and production), and shared government (locally and regionally). These attributes shape not only what individuals know about trade and its impact on their communities but also how well they know it and how much they care.

Trade preference models incorporating sociotropic concerns are relatively new. Where researchers have expanded past individuals' economic concerns, the focus largely remains on individual characteristics, such as neighborhood attachment, national pride and chauvinism, and values and ideology. An individual's environment has generally remained outside of the scope of research. One exception is a study by Mansfield and Mutz (2009), which incorporates Kinder and Kiewiet's (1981) original observations of sociotropic voting—that is, voting based on the role of national economic experiences instead of personal economic experiences. In quantitative analysis of two different surveys, Mansfield and Mutz find that individuals are at least as influenced by the “perceived effect of trade on the U.S.” as they are by the “perceived effect of trade on self.” Yet, Mansfield and Mutz (2009, 453) recognize one potential source of these national perceptions as arising from local information in the form of local media, local economic conditions, and “interpersonal contact and casual conversations.” This book and this chapter in particular differentiate between local knowledge and national knowledge.

Individuals make distinct determinations of national, state, and individual economic circumstances that are firmly based in economic reality (Niemi, Bremer, and Heel 1999); and trade theory provides reasons to believe that trade's effect could be different at each of these levels. While theoretically the nation as a whole benefits from freer trade in the long run, some individuals and some industries will gain more and some will lose more. Since neither the winners nor losers of increased globalization are uniformly distributed across the country, individuals' assessments of trade's effect on their community should vary. And empirically they do.

Of the 1,000 individuals I surveyed as part of the 2006 CCES, 50 percent thought that trade hurt regional employment, 40 percent answered that they didn't know or that trade had no effect, and only 10 percent thought that trade benefited their region. Since most Americans believe that trade has no impact on their own employment, these evaluations were not simply extensions of their own economic well-being but beliefs based on their understanding of their community. The question becomes what characteristics support these community-level benefits and how strongly do these beliefs influence individuals' opinions about trade.

Local communities are rich with potential sources of information about the region's economic prospects. Neighbors, colleagues, civic leaders, local media, and politicians all could convey messages about the current and future economic prospects of the town, but how closely those prospects are related to trade and how coherent the message depends a lot on the characteristics of the community and, in particular, its economic and residential characteristics.

Concentration of Import-Competing Employment and Beliefs about Trade

The effect of trade spreads across the economy, influencing employment, wages, and consumer prices. Yet it is trade's negative effects for the import-competing sectors of the economy that garner the most attention. Threat serves as a strong incentive for information acquisition (Marcus and MacKuen 1993). For American firms at a comparative disadvantage in the international market because of their intensive use of labor, imports serve as that threat and trade policy an obvious solution. The nature of potential employment adjustments further highlights the negative effects of trade over the positive. Individual psychology privileges losses over gains (Tversky and Kahneman 1991) and thus the threat of job losses has greater pull than job openings. But the relative use of labor in import-competing sectors versus the labor use in export-oriented and non-tradeable sectors exacerbates job loss concerns. Although economists argue that employment losses in the labor-intensive import-competing sectors are ultimately balanced by employment gains in the export-oriented and non-tradeable sectors (see for a review Matusz and Tarr 2000), the immediate perception of trade-generated adjustments between the sectors is that of large job losses compared to small and diffuse job gains. In many small towns, job losses have been substantial as manufacturing factories closed down. In less than a decade, North Carolina lost 250,000 manufacturing jobs, many at small-town textile mills. Such numbers not only garner individual attention but also the media's. News articles are quick to make the connection between trade and job losses, but less often tout cheap imports as a source of expanding American employment opportunities in the service sector. Such informational bias likely explains why so few Americans have positive beliefs about trade at the regional or national level.

However, the forces of comparative advantage have reshaped both industrial geography and political geography so that fewer Americans live in communities where imports put at risk a large share of firms and employment opportunities. Jobs in sectors in which the United States is a net importer, particularly in the manufacturing sector, no longer comprise a large share of total employment. Manufacturing jobs once accounted for one in every three US jobs, but now account for less than one in ten, and are increasingly concentrated in fewer locations.

The low concentration of import-competing jobs has many ramifications. Friends, neighbors, and the person sitting adjacent in the dentist's waiting room are less likely to be employed in that sector. Personal and professional contacts are less likely to reference these jobs and particularly how trade policy might affect employment. Local government and civic institutions have less incentive to consider trade policy over other economic policy concerns. Lower concentration also diminishes local media coverage of firms and their policy needs and forces industry organizations and unions to be more regional than local, reducing the local specificity of the information they convey. In many

small ways, a low concentration of import-competing employment subdues the availability of information concerning the costs and benefits of trade policy.

At the extremes, high and low concentrations are easily recognizable. Counties with high concentrations of import-competing employment are small towns reliant on single companies, such as Garden City, Kansas and Dakota City, Nebraska (both dependent on a Tyson plant), or single-industry towns. Kokomo, Indiana, shows the effects of information efficiencies that come with a high concentration of import-competing employment. More than a quarter of its residents are employed in the automotive industry, many at one of its four Chrysler and General Motors Delphi plants. Its current mayor is a past union leader for the local steel factory. Its visitor center touts its automotive heritage and houses an automotive themed museum. Quarterly Chrysler sales figures are breaking news for the newspaper, the *Kokomo Tribune*. *CNN Money* has used Kokomo as a bellwether town for discussing both the financial crisis and the auto industry bailout. Information about the auto industry cuts across the entire town's cultural, political, and civic spheres.

As a point of contrast, Washington, DC, and surrounding counties in Virginia have extremely low concentrations of import-competing employment, as the bulk of all jobs are in various service sectors. The 2011 County Business Survey reports that more than 33 percent of employment in Fairfax, Virginia, is in professional, scientific, and technical services. A further third spans administrative and support services, health care, information, and financial and insurance services. Trade tangentially affects all of these industries, but the variety of activities and the indirect effect of trade likely limits ease in determining how trade policy affects this community. Arlington's primary identity is that of a suburb to a city lacking in a specific industrial (though not political) identity.

To see how concentration affects certainty, I combine survey responses about trade's effect on regional employment with US census data on the local economy. For individual beliefs, I use both the data collected in 2006, described before, as well as additional data collected in the 2010 CCES survey, creating a combined sample of just over 1,355 responses. Responses were coded into three opinion categories: trade "benefits," trade "hurts," and "no difference or don't know." To this, I marry a measure of the concentration of import-competing industries created by combining US census data with Schott's (2010) classification of industries. The census's annual County Business Patterns (CBP) tracks the number of firms located in each county by industry code and also provides mid-March employment figures. Cross-listing this information with a classification of manufacturing industries as import-competing or export-oriented (Schott 2010) provides for each county the share of employment in import-competing firms, export-competing firms, or other.¹

¹ The CBP only reports employment within firms and as such likely overstates the concentration of import-competing jobs and export-oriented jobs relative other employment.

The share of employment in import-competing firms has been in steady decline across the board; one result has been to diminish the number of geographic districts for which the import-competing sector is central. For example, a town like Kokomo has one-quarter of its employment in the automotive sector, a clear import-competing industry. In the late 1980s, almost a quarter of US counties were like Kokomo in that at least one in four jobs was in an import-competing industry. Starting in 1997, fewer than 10 percent of all counties clearly benefited from jobs in the import-competing sector. More common today is the reverse. In 2005, 25 percent of US counties had concentrations of import-competing employment at levels of less than 3 percent. Many individuals now live in communities where the threat of imports simply doesn't resonate in their immediate community.

To see how community composition effects beliefs, I plotted individuals' responses to the regional employment question against the import-concentration measure for their county. Figure 5.1 displays this Lowess plot which depicts the probability that an individual provides one of the three answers (hurts, help, don't know/no difference) conditional on the concentration of import-competing employment in that individual's county. The concentration of import-competing employment increases from left to right. In all communities, few individuals express the belief that trade "helps" regional employment; the important shift is between certainty that it "hurts" and uncertainty. Starting at the right-hand side of figure 5.1, it is clear that, at very high

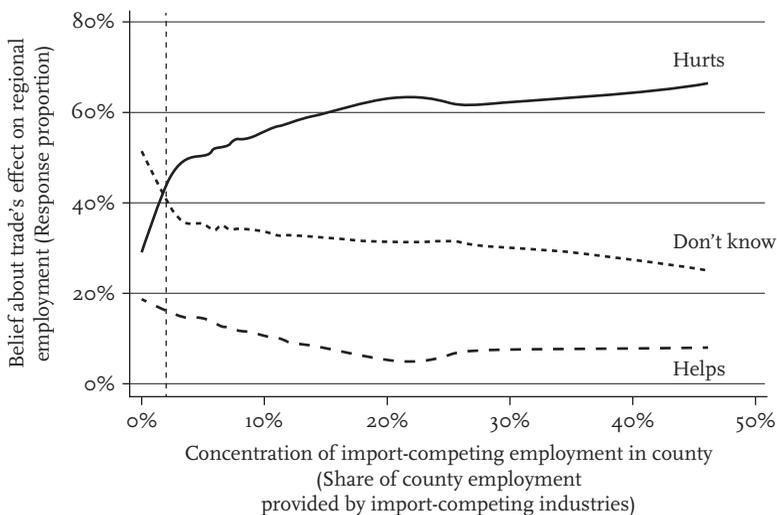


FIGURE 5.1 Responses to the question “How does trade affect employment in your region?” conditional on the concentration of import-competing employment in the community

SOURCES: 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Studies, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007, 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self); *County Business Patterns* (US Census Bureau 1986–2008); Schott 2010.

levels of concentration of import-competing employment, the vast majority (over 65 percent) believe that trade hurts regional employment. Only 25 percent respond that they “don’t know.” As the share of import competition in the community’s economy declines, these propensities converge and then switch. At very low levels of concentration of import-competing employment, the majority respond “don’t know.” Quite simply, individuals in communities with low concentrations of import-competing jobs express greater uncertainty than those in communities where employment still relies heavily on import-affected firms. And these communities are the new norm. Roughly a quarter of Americans live in communities with negligible employment ($< .05$) in import-competing manufacturing industries.

Residential Turnover and Beliefs about Trade

Not only has the economic composition of communities changed over the last few decades but also individuals within them. Cities like Detroit and Rochester have seen dramatic declines in population while other town and cities have faced an influx of new residents. And the overall trend since 1948 (excepting the period following the 2008 financial crisis) has been of increasing mobility.² While the cause of residential turnover may differ, these communities share similar characteristics in terms of information aggregation. Community turnover makes information about the community obsolete faster and increases the variety and complexity of information to be gathered and processed when calculating the benefits of trade policy to others in the community. Making a fully informed calculation means integrating knowledge about new residents, and collecting this knowledge is costly; at the same time, entry of new individuals lowers the value of prior information collected. Conversations at the neighborhood block party, church coffee hour, and little league baseball game provide more information to be integrated even as they limit the value of prior conversations. Furthermore, research has shown that interest in local news is a function of community stability (Tichenor et al. 1980; Shah et al. 2001; Kang and Kwak 2003); communities with higher housing turnover tend to have lower average exposure to local news outlets.

As an alternative to self-determination of community needs, individuals may rely on others’ aggregate calculations, but the same costs influence these. Collective memory is likely to be degraded with high percentages of new residents, and collective calculations will also find integrating the needs of new residents costly. These costs are exacerbated by the expansion of commuter counties. The geography of industries to be considered expands with increases in commuters, increasing not only costs but also uncertainty about how community and

² US Census Bureau, “Table A-1. Annual Geographical Mobility Rates, by Type of Movement: 1948–2013,” <https://www.census.gov/hhes/migration/data/cps/historical.html>.

regional interests are best defined. With rapid community turnover, individuals may simply accept lower certainty about the community benefits of many policies, including trade policy.

Rapidly changing communities can be found on the periphery of many major cities. The outskirts of Washington, DC, again, exemplify high-turnover counties. Alexandria City, Falls Church, and Arlington, Virginia, all have greater than 40 percent shares of residents who have lived in the county for less than five years. But not all high-turnover counties rank low in import-competing employment. Rapidly growing Collins County—home of Plano, Texas—has one of the highest shares of new residents in the country, but just below the median concentration of import-competing employment. Neighboring Tarrant County, home of Arlington, Texas, and a regional center for aerospace manufacturing, has new residents composing more than one-fourth of all residents, but an above-median concentration of import-competing employment that equals Wayne County, home of Detroit. Similarly, many but not all low-turnover counties are post-industrial centers. Rural areas tend to have low turnover, although migration patterns varied substantially, with rebounds in population during the 1970s and 1990s (Johnson and Cromartie 2006).

To see whether community turnover influences beliefs about trade's effect on the region, I again turn to the trade belief data collected in the 2006 and 2010 CCES survey, a combined sample of just over 1,355 responses. As before, responses to the question of what an individual thought was the effect of trade on regional employment were coded into three opinion categories (trade "benefits," trade "hurts," and "no difference or don't know"). Turnover is here defined as the share of the population that has resided in the community for less than five years.³ To calculate this measure, I consolidate the census's ten-fold classification of residency in the prior five years into two groups: "same county" and "outside the county."⁴ From these two groups, I generate a measure of residency turnover ("RESIDENCY TURNOVER") equal to 1 minus the share of those residing in the same county five years ago. As the measure approaches 1, a greater proportion of the population is new to the county. By the measure,

³ Community is a flexible term. Recent empirical evidence suggests that individuals rely on geographic reference groups. At the sub-state level, the US Census recognizes two major, overlapping, but distinct legal geographic entities: "counties and statistically equivalent entities" and congressional districts. Counties and their equivalents are the oldest American sub-state administrative divisions, and unlike congressional districts, counties are not gerrymandered. Historically, the US Census collects regional employment and business data at the county level. In order to analyze the information effects of residential turnover side by side with this regional employment data, I utilize county-based groupings for the analysis presented in the main text of this chapter; but the results using congressional district groupings do not materially differ (see robustness checks section).

⁴ An alternative specification used a more complicated measure distinguishing four groups: "same county," "same state," "other US state," and "abroad." The results were largely similar and are available on request.

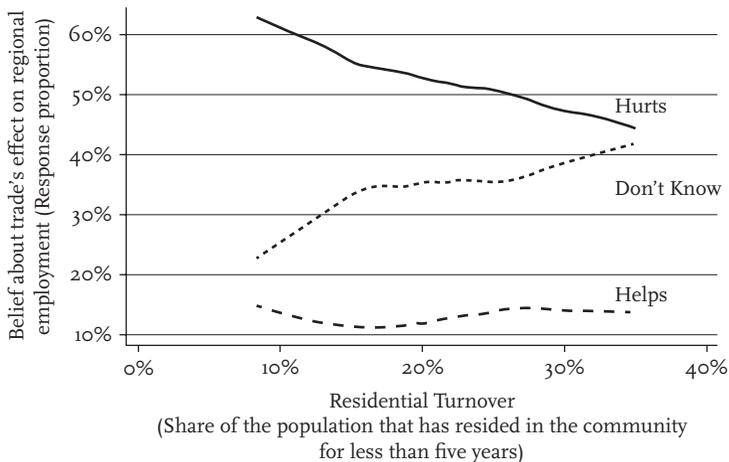


FIGURE 5.2 Responses to the question “How does trade effect employment in your region?” conditional on residential turnover in community

SOURCES: 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Studies, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007, 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self); 2000 *Census* (US Census Bureau 2000); 2010 *Census* (US Census Bureau 2010).

according to the 1990 census, no county was formed primarily of new residents; the highest level of new residents recorded was just less than 45 percent. In the 2000 census, less than 0.3 percent of counties had a majority of new residents.

To see how turnover effects beliefs, I plotted individuals’ responses to the regional employment question against the turnover measure for their county. Figure 5.2 displays this Lowess plot which depicts the probability that an individual provides one of the three answers about the regional employment effects of trade conditional on residential turnover. Turnover rates increase from left to right. In the 2000 US census data, the median turnover at the county level was 20 percent. At low levels of turnover (share of new residents < 10 percent), the probability of answering “don’t know” is also very low, at just over 20 percent. Between 10 percent and 20 percent turnover, a 1 percent increase in turnover is matched by a more than 1 percent increase in the probability of answering don’t know or no difference. At high shares of new residents (> 30 percent), the probability of responding “don’t know” exceeds 40 percent.

Residential turnover appears to have little correlation with answers that trade “helps” employment in the region. Some might expect that high numbers of individuals entering a community might provide a positive signal of current economic policy in general but also to the success of the community in the new global economy. However, such a link is not apparent from individuals’ responses. Instead, it appears that higher residential turnover simply decreases the probability of thinking that trade hurts employment and increases the chances of not knowing whether that is the case.

Increasing Uncertainty at the Community Level

The role of uncertainty in individuals' preferences for trade has been raised before, but very generally: voters are assumed to be uncertain as a group. In contrast, the takeaway from the Lowess plot is not only that voters vary in their certainty but also that their variation in uncertainty can be predicted based on their unique geographic circumstances. As a result, political actors will face varying constraints depending on the residential composition of their districts, with voters in high turnover districts less likely to hold strong beliefs about trade's effects at the local level. To ensure that this newly identified relationship is robust and also specific to regional beliefs, I analyzed all three levels of trade and employment beliefs using a logit design which could incorporate additional potential predictors of individuals' propensity for uncertainty.

Table 5.1 presents the results of this logit analysis, with each column offering distinct estimates of the relationship between the individual and community characteristics and uncertainty for each level of belief (own employment, regional employment, and US employment). The dependent variable is coded 1 if an individual offered a non-opinion response of "no difference" or "don't know," and is coded 0 otherwise. Thus, positive coefficients related to increased uncertainty and negative coefficients decreased uncertainty. The model includes both community characteristics such as share of import-competing jobs and residency turnover as well as individual characteristics such as skill level, income, unemployment, political affiliation, age, gender, race, and participation in a union.

One benefit of the logit analysis is that it controls for potential correlations between variables, including other characteristics, and offers a measure of the strength of the relationship. While import-competing employment concentration and residential turnover appear descriptively linked with individuals' growing uncertainty about trade's effect on the community, the Lowess graphs neither control for other explanations for beliefs nor demonstrate that these relationships have influential correlations with the probability of responding "don't know." However, they themselves are not highly correlated in the data set of survey responses (-.19).

Residential turnover uniquely affects responses to the regional question, not the question about own employment or US employment. Community turnover was neither substantially nor significantly correlated with an increased propensity to answer "don't know" to the latter two questions, suggesting that people in low- and high-turnover districts are equally likely to have an opinion on trade effects in general.⁵ In contrast, there was a strong, significant relation at the regional level: the coefficient for residency turnover was 1.57 with a standard error of 0.92 (p value < .09) for answering "no difference"

⁵ Coefficients were respectively 60 percent and 40 percent smaller, with 5 percent to 10 percent larger standard errors.

TABLE 5.1 Effect of residential turnover and import-competing employment concentration on beliefs about trade's effect on regional employment

LOGIT ANALYSIS "EFFECT OF TRADE"	NO DIFFERENCE/DON'T KNOW		
	OWN	REGIONAL	US
County			
Share jobs import-competing (fine)	-4.29*** (1.63)	-2.65* (1.61)	-2.90 (1.79)
Residency turnover (0 to ~1)	0.58 (0.98)	1.57* (0.92)	0.96 (1.04)
Income inequality (0 to ~1)	-1.50 (2.51)	1.05 (2.37)	-0.58 (2.66)
Racial HH index (0 to ~1)	0.64 (0.49)	-0.33 (0.47)	-0.10 (0.53)
Percentage Rural	0.23 (0.33)	-0.06 (0.31)	-0.02 (0.35)
Border state	0.06 (0.13)	0.22* (0.12)	0.10 (0.14)
Skilled	0.10 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.13)	0.01 (0.14)
Inc. P2: 17 to 33 percentile	0.04 (0.20)	-0.41** (0.18)	-0.53*** (0.20)
Inc. P3: 34 to 67 percentile	-0.09 (0.20)	-0.53*** (0.19)	-0.66*** (0.21)
Inc. P4: 68 to 95 percentile	-0.06 (0.22)	-0.39* (0.21)	-0.72*** (0.23)
Inc. P5: 96 to 100 percentile	-0.15 (0.22)	-0.80*** (0.21)	-0.99*** (0.24)
Unemployed (0/1)	-1.12*** (0.25)	-0.65*** (0.29)	-0.23 (0.31)
7 pt. political id (Dem.-Rep.)	0.04 (0.03)	0.07** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)
Age	0.00 (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.01)
Female (0/1)	0.36*** (0.13)	0.27** (0.12)	0.49*** (0.14)
White (0/1)	0.34** (0.16)	-0.08 (0.16)	-0.06 (0.17)
Owns house (0/1)	0.19 (0.16)	-0.01 (0.15)	0.06 (0.17)
Union household	-0.32** (0.13)	-0.38*** (0.13)	-0.38*** (0.14)

(Continued)

TABLE 5.1 (Continued)

LOGIT ANALYSIS "EFFECT OF TRADE"	NO DIFFERENCE/DON'T KNOW		
	OWN	REGIONAL	US
Year 2010	-0.54*** (0.13)	-0.39*** (0.13)	-0.39*** (0.14)
Constant	1.18 (1.15)	0.19 (1.08)	0.32 (1.21)
Observations	1,353	1,355	1,350
R-squared	0.05	0.06	0.07

SOURCES: 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies; US Census Bureau, County Business Reports; Schott 2010.

NOTE: Dependent Variable = 1 if response is "No Difference" or "Don't Know." Due to a handful of extreme observations on share of import-competing employment, this analysis uses truncated sample of the central 90% of observations.

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

or "don't know."⁶ Community turnover increases the uncertainty surrounding the regional benefits of trade protection, but not the uncertainty surrounding individual or national benefits, and this relationship is not affected by other community characteristics, including other types of diversity or the coding of the dependent variable.

The share of import-competing jobs affects certainty about both individual and regional employment benefits, which is not surprising given that high levels increase the likelihood that the respondent works in an import-competing industry. Whether the share of import-competing jobs also affects individuals' evaluations of trade's effect on US employment is unclear. The coefficient is larger, but so is the standard error. Unlike residential turnover, information spillover effects can be expected from a high share of import-competing employment, making it additionally important to control for individual characteristics. However, including these characteristics does not substantially change the relation of these community-based measures to the likelihood of responding with an uncertain answer, providing further evidence that these information pathways are specific to the community rather than the individual. These results suggest a need for a more nuanced incorporation of sociotropic concerns that considers the availability of community information.

⁶ A secondary analysis differentiated "no difference" from "don't know." In the results for "don't know," the coefficient for residency turnover increased, but so did the standard error: 1.85 with a standard error of 1.22 (p value $< .13$). Disaggregation weakens the significance but does not substantially change the result that higher levels of residency turnover are correlated to higher levels of uncertainty surrounding trade's benefits to one's local community.

Community Beliefs, Uncertainty, and Preference Formation

The prior analysis showed that—all else being equal—community characteristics can influence both individuals' beliefs about trade's benefits, for better or worse, but also whether they have them. The model in chapter 3 assumed that individuals incorporate such beliefs in their calculation of their utility from trade policy. Recall equation 3.1 which assumed that individuals combined their perceptions of the benefits of a trade policy to themselves, b_i , community, b_c , and the nation, b_n . Formally:

$$U[\text{policy}] = b_i + w_c b_c + w_n b_n$$

Beliefs about community benefits of trade policy (b_c) have been shown to vary depending on the concentration of import-competing industries. However, the increased uncertainty about the regional effects of trade provides neither a positive nor negative value of b_c . Instead, this uncertainty is incorporated in the weighting of sociotropic concerns (k) as in equation 3.2:

$$U[\text{policy}] = b_i + k w_o b_o$$

where b_i is an individual's beliefs about his own net benefits from the policy, w_o is the weight of others' benefits, b_o is beliefs about others' benefits, and k is the ratio of uncertainty surrounding those beliefs. The model in chapter 3 assumed that due to varying costs in gathering information, individuals may differ in their uncertainty about their own benefits, u_i , and about others' benefits, u_o . Residency turnover appears to offer one source of this uncertainty, with higher levels of residential turnover linked with higher levels of uncertainty at the community level.

The outcome of diminished sociotropic concerns depends very much on the distribution of beliefs at the other levels. Fortunately, the CCES survey responses about beliefs offer insight into an average composition of beliefs about trade and thus the expected benefits from trade protection. For most individuals b_i is close to 0 and both b_c and b_n are positive.⁷ Thus, diminishing the influence of b_c would bring the expected utility of trade protection for most individuals simply closer to 0. Recall also that the model in chapter 3 assumed that individuals' expected utility from a policy ($U[\text{policy}]$) needs to move away from 0 by at least d before the person provides a meaningful response. This created two cut points for the survey response:

$$U[\text{policy}] > d, \text{ then support,}$$

$$U[\text{policy}] < -d, \text{ then oppose,}$$

$$-d \leq U[\text{policy}] \leq d, \text{ then provide a non-response.}$$

⁷ Other surveys offer similar findings. Caplan (2002) notes that the majority of Americans think that trade at best makes no difference to employment and at worst costs the US jobs.

Thus for a typical distribution of beliefs about trade's effects, increased uncertainty at the community level would decrease $U[\textit{protection}]$ making it more likely the expected utility fell below the cut off point for support ($U[\textit{protection}] \leq d$) and thus increase the probability of an individual providing no response. For the small minority of individuals with positive beliefs about their own benefits from trade, however, increased uncertainty could remove the negative counterweight to their own personal benefits and allow for the expression of opposition to increased trade protection ($U[\textit{protection}] < -d$).

Note though that the reverse is also true. For individuals in communities with high concentrations of import-competing industries or with low turnover, the positive expectations of benefits from trade protection at the community level should be linked with higher levels of support for trade protection, especially if these individuals held positive beliefs about their own benefits from trade (above measured as negative expectations of trade's effect on own employment). Although a small group, 10 percent of the individuals surveyed as part of the 2008 and 2010 CCES evaluated trade's effect on their own employment as worse than trade's effect on regional or US employment in general. For this group, strong negative community perceptions about trade would increase the positive expectation from trade protection, potentially pushing the utility of protection past the point of indifference, $U[\textit{protection}] > d$.

In summary, for those who view trade protection as more important for others than for themselves—as is typical in the United States—such a rebalance would shift trade policy preferences toward indeterminate or anti-protection preferences and weaken the strength of those preferences. Sociotropic concerns are conditional: where community benefits are clear, individuals consider them, but as these benefits become more uncertain, their influence on preferences wanes. Thus, individuals in communities with low levels of import-competing employment or those in high levels of community turnover are less likely to support protection.

To test the theory's prediction that community characteristics affect information flows and thus mediate the integration of sociotropic concerns, I incorporate both identified influences—concentration of import-competing jobs and residency turnover—into a standard class-based (i.e., Stolper-Samuelson-based) model of individual trade preferences as was seen previously in chapter 4. As before, the dependent variable comes from the standard American National Election Studies (ANES) question concerning support for placing new limits on imports:

Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports—or haven't you thought much about this?

Participants have three response options: “oppose new limits,” “favor new limits,” and “haven’t thought much about this.”

The model to predict individuals’ responses incorporates four community-level measures: share of import-competing jobs, share of export-oriented jobs, percent rural, and residency turnover. Prior discussion focused primarily on the role of import-competing industries in a community. Arguably, individuals could be motivated by the potential for exports to expand community employment opportunities. I have argued that both negative information bias and the concentration of employment in import-competing industries make this sector more salient, but I include the share of employment for both sectors. Percent rural is included because in recent decades some of the strongest public opinion dissent for free trade agreements has emerged from rural areas. For example, a 2015 NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll to identify issues that divide rural Americans from those in urban and suburban areas found a 32-point anti-trade difference between rural Americans and non-rural Americans.⁸ Since rural areas have tended to experience low turnover in the period analyzed, omitting a control for high protectionist sentiment within rural areas might result in an overestimation of the influence of low residency turnover on a preference for protection. Thus, I include a measure of the proportion of a community considered rural in the analysis and later briefly discuss the special case of rural protectionism. Residency turnover as calculated above is the final community measure.

Since the employment share measures rely on business data only available at the county-level, the test of the model is constrained to the years that the ANES supplied trade opinion data with county identifiers (1986 to 1998). After 1998, to protect the anonymity of respondents, observations were geographically coded using congressional districts (as well as larger aggregated areas). Residential turnover results could be tested over a wider number of years (1986 to 2008) if community is expanded to the congressional district level. These results are discussed at the end.

The prior discussion predicted that high concentrations of import-competing industries would raise perceived benefits of protection at the community level and thus increase the likelihood of supporting increased protection. Expectations concerning residential turnover were more nuanced. To the extent that residential turnover diminishes certainty about community benefits from trade protection (generally perceived as positive), then increased turnover should be linked to a shift toward greater uncertainty about trade policy as a whole and perhaps greater opposition to trade protection.

To observe these expected relations, we must also account for other predictors. Replicating the preference model from chapter 4, I include as potential predictors of preferences income and skill level, current employment status, relative immobility due to homeownership (Scheve and Slaughter 2001), gender, age, and race (discussed in more detail in chapter 6). I also include a

⁸ Shawna Thomas, “NERDScreen: The Rural America Divide,” *Meet the Press*, June 27, 2015.

measure of the perception of the national economy to separate national from regional effects. More specifically, to model individual determinants, I draw upon the extant Stolper-Samuelson-based individual preference models for trade which focus on an individual's skill level, typically manifested by educational level. Here, as is common, "Skilled" denotes that the respondent has achieved at least a two-year college degree. As a developed, capital-rich country, the United States is generally considered to be at a competitive disadvantage in the production of goods that intensely use low-skilled labor (such as textiles, manufactured goods, and labor-intensive agricultural products). Thus, low-skilled labor is expected to be less supportive of imports than high-skilled labor, since imports are likely to harm their wages and employment. To the extent that "Skilled" indicates greater levels of education, it should decrease the propensity to answer "don't know" (Francis and Busch 1975). Income level may capture additional dimensions of skill. Kaltenthaler, Gelleny, and Ceccoli (2004) argue that those at lower income levels may already perceive their inability to prosper in current levels of market competition and thus oppose policy measures that increase competition. Those with higher levels of income may have greater resources to weather economic transitions, and may be more likely to purchase imported goods, and thus they may perceive the benefits of lower limits on imports (Gabel 1998). To ensure comparability across the longer time frame of the ANES data, I use the ANES's own percentile-based classification, which separates individuals into five groups by percentiles: 0 to 16, 17 to 33, 34 to 67, 68 to 95, and 96 to 100. Because of the twenty-year span in the data, the dollar values of the incomes composing each group shift.

The extant literature has also identified a variety of other individual economic circumstances linked empirically and sometimes theoretically to trade preferences. I include a dummy variable for unemployment to account for those who might explain their joblessness in terms of trade competition. Unions in the United States have traditionally opposed trade liberalization, although divisions have grown in recent years as American manufacturing increasingly depends on imported inputs. Thus, individuals who are union members or are in a household with a union member ("Union household") are more likely to be against trade liberalizing policies in general. Characteristics that limit mobility by increasing the transition costs of changing employment are also predicted to diminish support for freer trade. One measure of diminished mobility is homeownership. As discussed extensively in chapter 4, race and gender are also strongly correlated with a preference for protection thus the model incorporates dummy variables for "White" and "Female." I include the standard seven-point model of political identification ("PID7"), which scores individuals from 1 ("strong Democrat") to 4 ("independent or other") to 7 ("strong Republican"). Finally, I include two additional controls: recent mobility into the community and perceptions of national economy. The former ensures that the estimates for residency turnover are not about an individual's own mobility. The latter ensures that estimates are not overly influenced by national level perceptions.

Table 5.2 presents three versions of the analysis with each model incorporating an additional concept. Starting from the left, the first column (model 1) displays results with community economic conditions alone (share of jobs in the import-competing and export-oriented sectors and percent rural). The middle column (model 2) displays results with the addition of residential turnover. The column on the right (model 3) displays the results of a robustness check which includes national economic perspectives. All three analyses use multinomial logit, which does not impose an ordering assumption on the responses: “favor new limits” = 0, “haven’t thought much about it” or “don’t know” = 1, and “oppose new limits” = 2. The protectionist stance serves as the base category, and thus positive (negative) coefficients should be read as increasing (decreasing) the likelihood of pro-trade sentiment or the likelihood of providing a non-opinion response (don’t know or haven’t thought much about this).

Model 1 in table 5.2 offers the results of the first factor assumed to influence information about trade protection: concentration of industry. It includes two measures of employment concentration—the county’s share of import-competing jobs and the county’s share of export-competing jobs—and as predicted, “County: share jobs import-competing” significantly reduces the propensity to oppose new limits on imports. This provides further evidence that these community beliefs translate into opinion and create real divisions across the political landscape.

Additionally, how rural the county is also appears to diminish opposition to trade protection, and the size of the effect is relatively substantial. Moving from the minimum share to maximum share results in a 4 percentage-point change in the predicted probability of opposing trade protection, roughly one-sixth the size of the mean predicted probability of 23 percent. Individuals in rural areas are also slightly more certain of their opinions; the estimated change in probability from the minimum percent rural to the maximum percent rural is a small but significant 2 percentage-point change. The flip of decreased opposition and decreased propensity to respond with a non-response is an increase in support for limits on trade in areas with a high percentage of rural population: moving from the minimum share to maximum share results in a 6 percentage point increase in support for new limits on trade.

The finding that individuals in rural areas are more certain of their preferences fits with the initial primary hypothesis that individuals in low-turnover areas are more likely to have information about the effect of trade policy in their region. Rural areas tend to have low turnover, allowing for cheaper information gathering. Rural areas also tend to be dominated not only by a particular sector of the economy (namely, agriculture) but also by specific products within the sector such as grains or cattle. Furthermore, a number of interest groups, including the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Farmers Union, disseminate information pertaining to rural areas and thus serve to decrease the cost of gathering information. However, the finding that individuals in rural areas are less likely to oppose protection, while matching the results of other public opinion polls, runs counter to expectations based

TABLE 5.2 Information, community characteristics, and preference for trade policy

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS	ECONOMIC (MODEL 1)		RESIDENTIAL (MODEL 2)		ROBUSTNESS CHECK (MODEL 3)	
(BASE = "FAVOR NEW LIMITS")	OPPOSE	NO OPINION	OPPOSE	NO OPINION	OPPOSE	NO OPINION
County						
Share jobs import-competing	-0.70** (0.32)	-0.12 (0.27)	-0.56* (0.33)	-0.01 (0.28)	-0.55* (0.33)	-0.03 (0.28)
Share jobs export-oriented	0.25 (0.49)	0.66 (0.44)	0.26 (0.49)	0.67 (0.44)	0.22 (0.49)	0.65 (0.44)
Percentage Rural	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.18* (0.11)	-0.31** (0.12)	-0.20* (0.11)	-0.30** (0.12)	-0.19* (0.11)
Residency turnover (0 to ~1)			0.75** (0.33)	0.50 (0.31)	0.75** (0.33)	0.49 (0.31)
Skilled	0.55*** (0.06)	-0.29*** (0.06)	0.55*** (0.06)	-0.29*** (0.06)	0.53*** (0.06)	-0.30*** (0.06)
Inc. P2: 17 to 33 percentile	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.30*** (0.08)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.30*** (0.08)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.30*** (0.08)
Inc. P3: 34 to 67 percentile	0.06 (0.10)	-0.42*** (0.08)	0.06 (0.10)	-0.41*** (0.08)	0.06 (0.10)	-0.42*** (0.08)
Inc. P4: 68 to 95 percentile	0.22** (0.11)	-0.53*** (0.09)	0.23** (0.11)	-0.53*** (0.09)	0.22** (0.11)	-0.54*** (0.09)
Inc. P5: 96 to 100 percentile	0.43*** (0.15)	-0.61*** (0.15)	0.43*** (0.15)	-0.61*** (0.15)	0.41*** (0.15)	-0.62*** (0.15)
Unemployed (0/1)	0.00 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.09)	0.00 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.09)	0.02 (0.11)	0.00 (0.09)

7 pt. political id (Dem.–Rep.)	0.06*** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.06*** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.05*** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)
Age	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)
Female (0/1)	-0.34*** (0.06)	0.53*** (0.05)	-0.34*** (0.06)	0.54*** (0.05)	-0.31*** (0.06)	0.56*** (0.05)
White (0/1)	0.09 (0.09)	-0.41*** (0.07)	0.09 (0.09)	-0.41*** (0.07)	0.09 (0.09)	-0.42*** (0.07)
Hispanic (0/1)	0.01 (0.13)	-0.01 (0.11)	0.02 (0.13)	0.00 (0.11)	0.01 (0.13)	-0.01 (0.11)
Owns house (0/1)	-0.13* (0.07)	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.12* (0.07)	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.12* (0.07)	-0.08 (0.06)
Union household	-0.36*** (0.07)	-0.26*** (0.07)	-0.35*** (0.07)	-0.26*** (0.07)	-0.35*** (0.07)	-0.26*** (0.07)
New to community (< 5 years residency)	0.04 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.06)	0.02 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.06)	0.02 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.06)
Perception of national economy (-1 to 1)					0.25*** (0.04)	0.18*** (0.04)
Constant	-1.10*** (0.17)	0.15 (0.14)	-1.29*** (0.18)	0.02 (0.16)	-1.26*** (0.19)	0.06 (0.16)
Year dummies not shown						
Observations		10,048		10,048		10,044
Prob > F		0.00		0.00		0.00

SOURCES: American National Election Studies (1986–1998); US Census Bureau, County Business Reports; Schott 2010.

NOTE: Base Response “Favor New Limits.”

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

on the traditional Stolper-Samuelson assumptions discussed in chapter 4. Currently the United States has a global comparative advantage in capital-intensive agriculture, particularly wheat, soybeans, and cotton. Since 1960, the United States has run an agricultural trade surplus, that is agricultural exports each year have exceeded agricultural imports.⁹ The export-oriented nature of US agriculture has led many agricultural lobbyists to support US efforts to diminish agricultural tariffs globally. Why then do agricultural populations not strongly oppose domestic protection which might endanger US agreements abroad?

Starting in the 1930s, the United States developed a two-track trade policy by simultaneously shedding trade-restricting policies on manufacturing goods while enacting import restrictions and price supports for agricultural goods (Skogstad 1988; Goldstein 1989). Initiated in the wake of the post-World War I decline in the agricultural industry, this agricultural exceptionalism continued for three decades past US agriculture's transition to export-orientation in the 1960s. Not until the 1996 farm bill, the Federal Agricultural and Improvement Reform (FAIR) Act, were export-oriented needs explicitly cited in overturning the long-run pattern of agricultural protection. In the intervening years, beliefs about the need for agricultural support seemingly became increasingly cemented in the American conception of the agricultural industry. As Judith Goldstein (1993) notes in her book *Ideas, Interests, and America Trade Policy*, ideas surrounded by a "protective belt" of "other policies, institutions, and/or social groups" are particularly resilient.

Disproportional production across farm units supports a continued American mythos of the small farmer and provides additional bulwarks to the belief that farmers and rural areas need protection from volatile international markets. There exists a stark policy-need difference between globally competitive, large, often corporate farms using capital-intensive farming mechanisms and small, primarily family, farms struggling to turn a profit. Most small farmers require additional sources of income including government subsidies. By number, small farms (Gross Cash Income < \$350,000) swamp all other categories. In 2011, small farms accounted for almost 90 percent of all farms, but the majority netted less than \$10,000 in income. Combined, these small farming units comprised just one-quarter of US production.¹⁰ Mid-sized farms (6 percent of total farms) accounted for an additional quarter of production. Large-scale (2 percent of total farms) and nonfamily (corporate) farms (3 percent) accounted for the remaining half of all agricultural production. The large number of small farmers serves to skew perception of rural area's needs. Most small farms remain in existence in part because of a tradition of government

⁹ US Department of Agriculture—Economic Research Service, "Value of U.S. trade—agricultural and total—and trade balance, by calendar year," <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/international-markets-trade/us-agricultural-trade.aspx>.

¹⁰ US Department of Agriculture—Economic Research Service and US Department of Agriculture—National Agricultural Statistics Service, "2011 Agricultural Resource Management Survey."

price supports and other policies to diminish farmers' vulnerability to global agricultural price volatility (and also the willingness of small farmers to seek secondary employment). So while it is true that the capital-intensive, export-oriented farms producing wheat, soybeans, and cotton benefit from liberalization, many rural families do not.

Additionally, increased fragmentation within agriculture and agricultural bureaucracies has moved agricultural policy lobbying and policy generation behind the closed office doors of congressional representatives. The result is a proliferation of narrowly focused, protective rules and subdued discussion of national agricultural policy and overall tariff levels (Bonnen, Broene, and Schweikhardt 1996). Without public debate over a unified, national policy, the cracks in agricultural interests seldom rise to prominence in a forum that would influence beliefs about rural needs and the appropriate trade policies for these, allowing prior beliefs to linger.

If protectionist sentiment in rural areas persists because of small farming and lack of national debate, rural preferences are ripe for revision. The 2012 Agricultural Census identified a 4.3 percent decline in the number of farmers and an overall increase in the average farm size.¹¹ A change in the characteristics of rural farming may overturn prior beliefs about how best to support the agricultural industry. Furthermore, while tariff policies have not risen to national debate, the issue of food labeling has reignited the debate about trade protection for agriculture. The 2002 Farm Bill required a country of origin label (COOL) on meat and in doing so set off national and international debate about whether such labels served to protect consumers or instead to protect producers from foreign competition. An upsurge in demand for other labels concerning food protection methods—particularly genetic modification and pesticide use—has further served to highlight divisions between exporting, import-competing, and import-processing agricultural interests. Across the country, state legislatures have faced a surge of labeling or counter labeling initiatives. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, in 2014, 110 GMO-related bills were introduced in thirty-two states; and in 2015, 101 in twenty-nine states. Although relatively few bills have been enacted (only 15 percent of those initiated in 2015, according to the National Conference), the debates have stirred local media coverage and may affect future beliefs about trade protection. While pro-labeling groups have generally framed support for such labels in terms of the rights of consumers and the importance of transparency, the threat of tariff retaliation by American trading partners—especially Canada and Mexico—has drawn attention to the importance of exports for rural economic stability and may catalyze a revision of rural individuals' beliefs about the benefits of trade protection for rural communities.

Looking beyond the identification of specific community characteristics—be they manufacturing or agriculturally related, Model 2 expands the first model

¹¹ US Department of Agriculture, "2012 Census Full Report," May 2, 2014, http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/#full_report.

to include residential turnover. As expected, increased residential turnover is strongly correlated with increased opposition to trade protection, as well as an increased propensity to answer “don’t know.” Here a change from the minimum level of turnover to the maximum level results in the 7 percentage point difference in the predicted probability of opposing new trade protection and a 3 percentage point difference in the predicted probability of answering “don’t know.” The multinomial logit format can make results difficult to interpret, but the combined effect makes it clear in this case. Higher levels of residential turnover shift average public opinion away from support for protection toward both non-opinion and opposition to protection. I have argued that the shift is due to individuals lessening the weight of sociotropic expectations of benefits. Since these expectations tend to be negative, a decreased weight on sociotropic concerns brings own benefits to the fore.

Model 3 offers a robustness check by further incorporating a measure of the individual’s perception of the national economy, to isolate community perceptions in the results. While I assume that community characteristics influence information costs, they also could influence perception of the national economy. Those who perceive that the national economy is doing well would be less likely to risk damaging growth by imposing new limits on trade; whereas those with a negative view would be more likely to support increasing trade protection in an attempt to reverse or mitigate what they perceive as a worsening economy. If benefits are not independently determined, there could be a danger of tautology in that these national perceptions could arise from community perceptions and thus be influenced by factors already in the model. Previously, I argued that they are in fact different but as a precaution add in the national perceptions separately.

As expected, better perceptions of the national economy are correlated with greater opposition to trade protection as well as less uncertainty concerning an individual’s preference. Yet including the measure neither changed the positive relation between residency turnover and pro-trade preferences nor the negative relation of the concentration of import-competing jobs and more pro-trade preferences. The correlation between perceptions of the national economy and residency turnover is minimal (.05), removing a potential concern that turnover affects preferences through attitudinal effects. The correlations between the perception of the national economy and a county’s share of import-competing and export-oriented jobs are also low (–.02 and –.06, respectively), offering additional proof that individuals separate local from national economic trends.

Additional robustness checks are included. Individuals with high personal mobility may be better positioned to take advantage of new economic conditions created by higher degrees of trade openness. Such individuals also may be more likely to live in areas with high levels of turnover. To ensure that this relationship was not driving the findings, I included measures of personal mobility in the form of binary variables to capture whether the respondent had moved into the community within the past five or ten years. This did not change the results, and the variables are themselves not significant, strengthening the argument that community characteristics affect individual opinions about trade. Second,

reorganizing the data by congressional district rather than county division not only offers a robustness check on the selection of geographic grouping, but also, because of recent changes in ANES reporting procedures, allows for the expansion of the time series an additional ten years to 2008.¹² These results are not shown, but across all three models, the use of congressional district groupings rather than county groupings results in similar, albeit slightly smaller, estimates for residency turnover, though the share of import-competing jobs cannot be tested at the congressional district level. That effect size would be somewhat smaller is unsurprising considering that in most cases the use of congressional districts greatly increases the size of the community under consideration. Finally, excluding years in which the ANES substantially altered the wording or format of the question resulted in no substantial changes.

As a secondary check on the information mechanism, I use the same model to analyze individual responses to the question of who they think will be the presidential candidate winner in the state. Although for theoretical purposes, I am primarily concerned with the relationship between residency turnover and individuals' information about the effect of economic policy on local economic conditions, it is useful to note that a similar growth of uncertainty occurs in individuals' beliefs about community political characteristics. The ANES regularly asks individuals to predict the presidential winner in the state. Analyzing these beliefs about community political conditions results in similar predictions: individuals in the highest turnover communities are almost three times as likely to respond "don't know" as those in the lowest turnover communities (20 percent to 7 percent).

Appendix table 5.A1 shows results of the analysis of individuals' responses to the question of who they think will be the presidential candidate winner in the state. The dependent variable is 0 for those responding "don't know" and 1 for those providing a prediction. As with the analysis on employment beliefs, the analysis on political beliefs included community characteristics—residential turnover, community income inequality, racial diversity, and ruralness—as well as individual characteristics such as race, skill level, income, and party identification. The coefficient for residential turnover is negative, substantial, and significant: higher levels of turnover decrease the likelihood of respondents providing a prediction. That turnover is correlated with uncertainty over both political and economic conditions is important. While one could posit alternative mechanisms linking community turnover to economic uncertainty (and thus a change in expressed preferences for trade protection); the information mechanisms—possibly uniquely—could also explain the change in political uncertainty.

¹² Congressional districts are meaningful as a political aggregation units and offer more comparable district sizes. The population within congressional districts varies between just under half a million to just over a million, with the mean district including approximately 645,000 inhabitants. In comparison, the approximately 3,300 counties vary in size from 100 residents to more than 9.9 million.

Effect Size in Comparison

Community characteristics are one aspect of preference formation, but as shown by the effect on predicted probabilities, they are important. Results from any multinomial logistic regression model can be difficult to translate into meaningful effect sizes; using the results to generate predicted probabilities can help put the various factors in perspective. For comparison of effect sizes, figures 5.3 and 5.4 provide for each of the significant variables the change in the simulated probabilities for an individual with mean characteristics of opposing limits on imports or answering “don’t know.” The figures show estimates for the discrete variables coding income, skill level, gender, year, race, residence in a union household, and homeownership. For the continuous variables coding political identification, county income inequality, county racial heterogeneity, county residency heterogeneity, percent jobs import-competing, whether a county is rural, and perception of the national economy, the figures show estimates for minimum and maximum values. Variables are ordered according to the relative effect size based on these changes and are only shown if significant for at least one response type.

As denoted by the dark horizontal line in figure 5.3, the predicted probability of opposing new limits on imports for an individual with mean characteristics is low, a mere 23 percent. Residential turnover, national economic perception, and the share of import-competing jobs in the county generate the three largest determinants after income, skill level, year, and gender. Those in the highest turnover districts are 7 percentage points more likely to oppose new limits than those in the lowest turnover districts. Those with the most positive perceptions of the nation’s economy are 6 percentage points more likely to oppose new limits than those with the poorest opinion. And those in counties with the lowest share of import-competing jobs are 5 percentage points more likely to oppose limits on trade than those in districts with the highest concentrations, about the same as the difference between whites and nonwhites. Partisan identification ranks only eleventh as an explanatory factor, after union household and rural nature of the community.

Figure 5.4 offers similar comparisons for the predicted probability of answering “haven’t though much about this.” Here the mean tendency is higher, at 36 percent. Income is by far the biggest determinant, with a difference of 18 percentage points between those of the lowest and highest income groups. With the exception of gender, race, and skill level, most other community and individual characteristics are at least an order of magnitude smaller in their effect. Residential turnover falls just short of significance (p value = .11), and offers a small change in predicted probability (3 percentage points) of answering “don’t know.” But, the unshown predicted change in support for trade protection is strong and significant: Those in low residential turnover areas are 10 percentage points more likely to favor new limits on trade than those in higher turnover areas (43 percent versus 33 percent).

These figures show that both residential turnover and share of import-competing industries function as strong predictors of individuals’ stated preference for trade protection. These predictors are potentially influential because of the regional organization of politics in the United States, especially at the congressional district level. The results suggest that politicians could face very

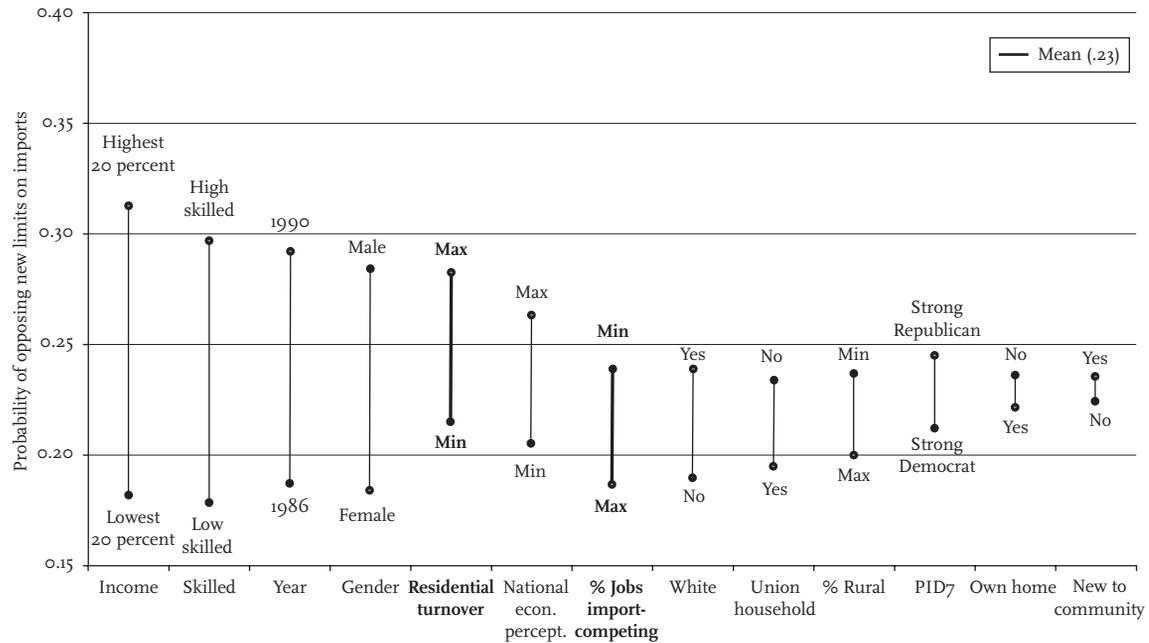


FIGURE 5.3 Marginal effect of significant variables (model 3) on the probability of opposing new limits on imports
 SOURCES: Time Series Study (American National Election Studies 1986–1998); *County Business Patterns* (US Census Bureau 1986–2008); Schott 2010.

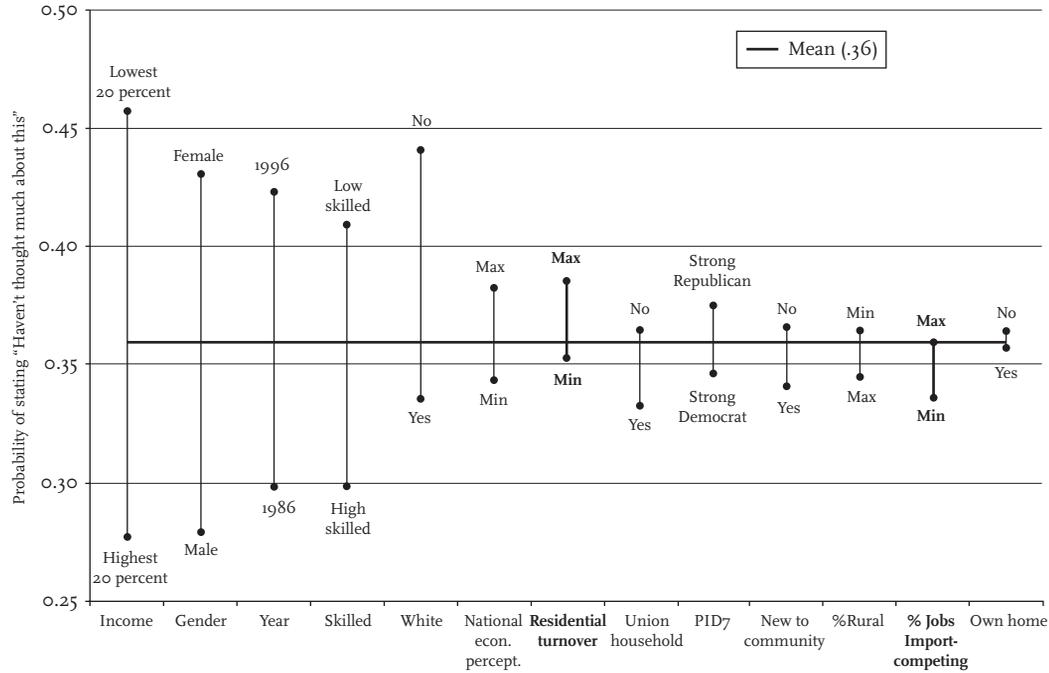


FIGURE 5.4 Marginal effect of significant variables (model 3) on the probability of responding “no opinion”

SOURCES: Time Series Study (American National Election Studies 1986–1998); *County Business Patterns* (US Census Bureau 1986–2008); Schott 2010.

different pressures from the constituents simply on the basis of geographic characteristics. While the concentration of import-competing employment as a source of sentiment has been identified by others previously (Busch and Reinhardt 2000), residential turnover is newly identified. With these findings in hand, the next step is to explore the potential effects on politicians.

Community-Based Preferences and Political Ramifications

As a practical matter, the analysis of trade preferences suggests what many might find already intuitive, there is a role for both individual and sociotropic concerns, but community conditions regulate the balance between these concerns. Because of the standard belief that trade hurts others' employment more than one's own, on average, diminished consideration of the benefit of trade protection to others lessens the importance of support for trade protection—making individuals more likely to have no opinion or to oppose trade protection. But the flip side of diminished support for trade protection is not necessarily strong support for free trade. Sixty percent of Americans surveyed are simply indifferent about the effect of trade on their own employment, thus a diminished weight of the sociotropic benefits of trade protection does not automatically equate with a strong support for trade liberalization. What then is the political impact of residency diversity on trade policy itself?

In chapter 4, preferences arising from individual characteristics were not necessarily linked with political coalitions. While preferences based on skill-level or employment in economic sectors are organized via existing interest groups, the newly identified gender- and race-related preferences are not promoted by interest groups that serve these communities. Community-based preferences have less need for organization via interest groups. Geography does much of the work for individuals, since political representatives' constituents are generated by geographic boundaries. Thus, these community-based preferences should be more easily mobilized to hold politicians accountable. On the other hand, one of the major findings of the analysis both on beliefs about community benefits and how those are integrated into preferences is that uncertainty at the community level is highly correlated with uncertainty over preferences. If individuals express uncertainty, then they are less likely to hold politicians accountable: voters not knowing their own preferences have less of a basis for comparing their representative's behavior. As a result, I expect that residential turnover should influence how tightly politicians are held accountable on trade policy.

One rough indication of the impact is the correlation of county residency diversity with support for "free-trading" senators. Take, for example, a comparison of an incumbent senator's support in New York and Texas. Both are large states, with high levels of variation in residency tenure across states, and in both cases, the incumbent senators are identified as "internationalists" by Cato even while they differ in party identification. If increased residency diversity within counties lowers the salience of trade policy issues among those constituents, then support for free-trading senators should be higher in highly diverse counties and lower

in less residency diverse counties. For Republican Senator John Cornyn of Texas support during the 2008 election should have been higher in the high turnover areas of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex and the Austin-Houston Corridor and lower in those areas with low levels of tenure fractionalization such as El Paso and the Brownsville-Corpus Christi area. In fact, the average vote for Cornyn in low-tenure diversity counties (defined as those falling more than one standard deviation below the mean) was only 55 percent compared to 67 percent in high-tenure counties (defined as those exceeding more than one standard deviation above the mean).¹³ Similarly, for incumbent Democratic senator of New York, Chuck Schumer, re-elected in 2010, his support was far higher in New York City (82 percent) than outside New York City (60 percent). More specifically, counties with low-tenure diversity (less than one standard deviation below the mean) had on average 4 percent less support than counties with high-tenure diversity (more than one standard deviation above the mean).¹⁴

Testing whether voters' behavior is in fact influenced by community characteristics requires more detailed information about individual preferences, policy knowledge, and votes. For this, I again turn to analysis of the 2006 CCES, which for 36,000 individuals we know: their own preference for implementing the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA); their senators' positions on the bill; whether the individual knew their senators' positions; and whether they voted for that senator in the election. Thus, we can directly test how important trade issues are for voters conditional on a variety of characteristics, including those of the communities in which they live.

The CCES common content asked respondents their opinions on seven proposals, all of which received a roll-call (recorded) vote during the 109th Congress: banning late-term abortions (Partial Birth), federal funding for stem cell research (Stem Cell), a timetable to withdraw from Iraq (Iraq), citizenship for illegal immigrants (Immigration), increasing the federal minimum wage (Minimum Wage), extending capital gains tax cuts passed in 2001 (Capital Gains), and ratifying CAFTA. For each issue area, I coded two characteristics: whether a respondent stated a preference ("Issue: no opinion") and whether this stated preference matches the incumbent's prior policy positions ("Issue: match"). The policy matches were then regressed on vote choice in the

¹³ Organizing counties in terms of congressional districts results in even stronger differences. The counties of the top five fractionalized congressional districts (TX-6, TX-22, TX-8, TX-21, and TX-26) had an unweighted average vote for Cornyn of 62%, fully 20 percentage points more than the unweighted average of the counties of the least five fractionalized congressional districts (TX-29, TX-16, TX-27, TX-15, TX-20). That his Democratic challenger, Rick Noriega, was a popular Hispanic representative no doubt exacerbates the division between these primarily white and primarily Hispanic districts; however, Cornyn's support was also lower than average in TX-25, a primarily white, low-tenure diverse district covering Central Texas.

¹⁴ Again, organizing the counties by congressional districts results in an even larger divide. The counties of the top five fractionalized congressional districts (NY-22, NY-26, NY-15, NY-8, NY-14) had an unweighted average vote for Schumer of 65 percent compared to the unweighted average vote of 57 percent for the counties in the least fractionalized congressional districts (NY-29, NY-3, NY-1, NY-28, NY-2).

election, specifically, whether the individual voted for the incumbent senator or not (results in chapter 4, appendix table A4.1).

Party identification was a strong predictor. Individuals were 54 percentage points less likely to vote for an incumbent senator from a different party. Votes also appeared to be primarily influenced by matching on ideological issues, such as shared beliefs about abortion, stem cell research, and the schedule for a withdrawal from Iraq. The change in the predicted probability for not matching on these areas ranged from 21 percentage points to 30 percentage points. Economic issues all were second-order concerns. Figure 5.5 displays the effect of ideological and economic issue matching on the probability of voting for the incumbent. For each issue, the center bar marks the difference between the predicted probabilities of support for voters whose opinion matches their incumbents' roll-call voting behavior and that for voters whose opinion differs from their incumbents' roll-call voting behavior. The top and bottom whiskers represent the range of the 95 percent confidence interval. The largest difference among the economic issues occurs on the issue of minimum wage for which there is a 20 percentage point difference in the predicted probabilities for each type of voter. The difference for CAFTA in comparison is very slim—approximately 3 percentage points—until residential turnover is considered. In low-turnover districts (those one standard deviation below the mean), the salience of matching on trade policy

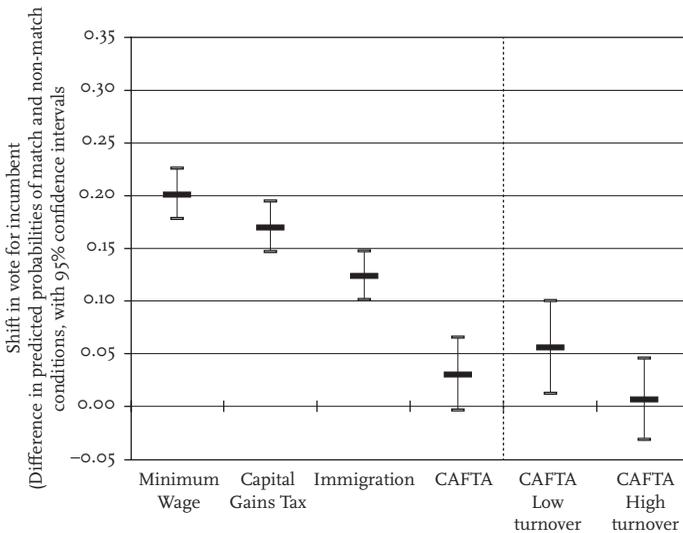


FIGURE 5.5 Conditional effect of voter and incumbent issue match on the voter support for the incumbent

NOTE: Baseline probability of voting for the incumbent is 64 percent. The center bars represent the difference in probability between voters whose opinion match their incumbents' roll-call vote on the issue and those voters whose opinions do not. Top and bottom whiskers represent the 95 percent confidence interval for this difference in the predicted probabilities.

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007); *County Business Patterns* (US Census Bureau 1986–2008).

is substantially higher than in high-turnover districts. In the former, the probability of voting for an incumbent drops 6 percentage points on average when the incumbents' votes did not align with the individuals' own preferences. In comparison, in high-turnover communities, the predicted probability is almost 0.

Trade matters, but only in a few select districts. In others, there is almost no concern about the incumbents' matching on trade policy. The result suggests that in many political districts, those with high levels of turnover, politicians are simply not held accountable for their trade policy decisions. This provides yet another explanation for the continued disconnect between individuals' opinion about trade policy and politicians actions. Politicians in many districts are freer to consider other political incentives without concern of an electoral cost. In contrast, politicians in select districts must tread carefully if they are to follow the generally free trade policies of their party without angering their constituents.

Conclusion

Access to information not only strongly predicts the certainty of beliefs about the relation between trade and the economy but also shapes preferences and the strength of these preferences. Changes in the economy have created large constituencies of people with limited direct connection both to those whose employment is directly affected by trade and to their communities generally. As a result, the salience of trade policy has diminished, leaving limited locations where information is widely available, shapes opinions, and influences political choices. This disparity generates an uneven map for trade politics and campaigns focusing on trade as will be further explored in chapter 8.

TABLE 5.A1 Certainty about state-level presidential campaign results and residency turnover

LOGIT ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENT'S WILLINGNESS TO PREDICT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WINNER IN OWN STATE (0 = "DON'T KNOW," 1 = POSITIVE RESPONSE)		
	POSITIVE RESPONSE	
	COEFFICIENT	SE
County		
Residency turnover (0 to ~1)	-1.51	(0.52)***
Income inequality (0 to ~1)	2.87	(1.70)*
Racial HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.61	(0.37)*
Percentage Rural	-0.32	(0.20)
Skilled		
Inc. P2: 17 to 33 percentile	0.23	(0.15)
Inc. P3: 34 to 67 percentile	0.31	(0.14)**
Inc. P4: 68 to 95 percentile	0.36	(0.17)**
Inc. P5: 96 to 100 percentile	0.25	(0.30)
Unemployed (0/1)	-0.31	(0.15)**
7 pt. political id (Dem.-Rep.)	-0.08	(0.02)***
Age		
Female (0/1)	-0.55	(0.11)***
White (0/1)	0.38	(0.13)***
Owens house (0/1)	0.22	(0.11)**
Union Household	-0.11	(0.14)
Year 1992	-0.89	(0.17)***
Year 1996	-0.90	(0.16)***
Constant	2.15	(0.72)***
Observations	5,383	
Prob > F	0.00	

SOURCES: American National Election Studies (1986-1998); US Census Bureau.

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

Racial Diversity and White Americans' Support for Trade Protection

THE CONCLUSION THAT MANY individual Americans value trade protection principally for its perceived benefits to others, as discussed in the previous chapter, leaves unanswered how Americans' understanding of who these beneficiaries actually are may influence their preferences regarding such protections. This is an issue worth investigating because trade protection not only affects the economic conditions of the community as a whole but also redistributes wealth both within that community and nationally. I will argue that the pattern and presentation of trade's redistributive nature influences individuals' trade preferences. Thus a full understanding of how sociotropic preferences are affected by and play themselves out within communities requires identifying perceived dividing lines within communities, evaluating the salience of the in- and out-groups they create, and recognizing that individuals tend to ascribe specific social policies to the influence of these perceived groups.

In the United States, race is a major dividing line that affects various Americans' views of government policies. Previous research has found that racial diversity in US communities is generally correlated with lower support for such redistribution, at least when that redistribution is perceived to benefit minorities disproportionately (e.g., Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote 2001). Since the late 1960s, for instance, the American media have consistently depicted the poor using images of black Americans, and most Americans erroneously believe that blacks constitute the majority of welfare recipients.

In contrast, the mass media and trade-related political advertisements typically portray working whites as the primary beneficiaries of trade protection. I will show that these differing portrayals create a divide in many individuals' support for redistribution: support for trade protection increases (and support for welfare declines) as community-level racial diversity increases. As a result, many political candidates find that narrowly tailoring the discourse surrounding trade protection to its benefits to white workers may be necessary to retain many whites' support for trade protection policies, even though doing so also limits its appeal to other constituencies at both the local and national level,

particularly women and minorities who are on average more sympathetic to protectionism.

By examining the content of over 500 trade-related television political advertisements and by evaluating viewers' responses to such ads via two survey experiments, the first main section of this chapter presents evidence that racial cues matter in individuals' assessment of trade policy and that recent trade protection advertisements characterize American trade protection beneficiaries as primarily white workers. The second section offers an expanded sociotropic policy preference model that incorporates the interaction of racial diversity with expectations about which members of the community benefit from a redistributive policy. The final section provides two tests of the influence of race-based concerns. The first uses three decades of American National Election Survey (ANES) data to provide side by side analysis of the relationship of community-level racial diversity to white individuals' support for trade protection and welfare. The second uses the extensive 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Survey (CCES) to test the robustness with reference to a specific trade policy and across a broader set of individuals. Both offer strong evidence in support of the newly identified race-based component of trade preferences.

Television, Television Ads, and the Portrayal of American Beneficiaries of Trade Protection

Each campaign season, US airwaves are inundated with political ads. In close-up monologues, earnest candidates tout their own expertise, demean their opponents, and pledge to serve the interests of their constituents. When those interests concern trade policy, the images in such ads frequently include a panorama of hard-working Americans in factories, offices, and construction sites. One such ad was "A Couple of Miles," a trade-related television advertisement for Sal Pace, an unsuccessful Democratic challenger in Colorado's 3rd congressional district in 2012. In the ad, a steelworker narrates how Pace changed regulations to prevent non-American steel from being used in Colorado building projects as the ad provides visual images of the narrator himself, a bridge built with Chinese steel, and multiple shots of American steelworkers, including those in figure 6.1, all of whom are white.

Challenger Pace faced an uphill battle campaigning in Colorado's 3rd district. Not only are incumbents in the House of Representatives very rarely unseated, but voters in the district typically lean Republican, favoring George W. Bush both times he was elected and narrowly favoring John McCain over Barack Obama in 2008 (49.9 percent to 48.4 percent). (In 2012, they would give Mitt Romney a 6-point victory over Barack Obama, 51.8 percent to 45.8 percent.) Given that traditional "big government" Democratic policy proposals were unlikely to resonate with voters in this conservative, rural district on the Western slopes of the Rocky Mountains, the ad's focus on trade protection



FIGURE 6.1 Colorado-03: Sal Pace “A Couple of Miles”
SOURCE: Sal Pace for Congress.

was a calculated move. The primary beneficiaries of trade protection in this particular instance would be people working in the steel mill. Pace’s claim that he had provided workers with protection from the specter of foreign competition from China served to mask who the losers of these policies would be—namely, taxpayers footing the bill for a more expensive bridge. Therefore, his pro-trade protection stance offered Pace a way to present himself as fighting for the interests of the district in ways that did not immediately invoke big-government policies unpopular with most voters in his district.

Do Trade-Related Campaign Ads Sway Opinion?

Given the lopsided Republican majority in his district, that Sal Pace ultimately lost the election does not necessarily mean that this ad failed to work as intended and to effectively persuade voters. To determine whether “A Couple of Miles” and similar political ads that focused on trade protection were effective in shaping voters’ trade preferences, I conducted a 2014 survey experiment of 500 adults from across the United States.¹ Respondents were randomly assigned to two conditions. Participants in the treatment condition watched

¹ The survey was conducted in May 2014 with 500 voluntary participants via Mechanical Turk. Individuals were offered a small payment to participate in what was advertised as a three-minute public opinion survey. Those agreeing to participate were randomly assigned to a treatment or control group. Non-responses after opt-in comprised less than 7 percent of the sample. The Mechanical Turk pool of workers has been found to deviate from the general adult population with regards to

the ad before answering the survey questions, which those in the control condition also answered but without seeing the ad. The assumption was that if “A Couple of Miles” was successful, it would prime respondents to be more supportive of trade protection. The survey question of greatest interest to the discussion in this chapter came from the standard ANES question concerning trade policy:

Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. What do you think? Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports—or haven’t you thought much about this?

Table 6.1 compares the responses of those who first watched the ad (the treatment group) to the responses of those who did not (the control group). As it reveals, those who watched the advertisement were 14.1 percentage points more likely to support limits on trade and 5.2 percentage points less likely to oppose new limits on trade protection than those who did not watch the advertisement—nearly a 20-point difference in favor of trade protection, which strongly suggests that the ad resonated with voters and was very effective.

How do we explain the seeming strength of the appeal in this ad? Given that steel manufacturing is currently responsible for just .04 percent of US employment (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014), very few of the respondents were likely to directly work in the steel industry. Although the ad was tailored

TABLE 6.1 Effect of watching a pro-protection campaign ad on trade policy preferences

PERCENT RESPONDING	CONTROL	TREATMENT	DIFF. (%)	SE	SIGN.
	GROUP	GROUP			
	NO AD (%)	SAL PACE AD (%)			
Oppose new limits	26	20	-5	(0.04)	*
Support new limits	38	52	14	(0.04)	***
Haven’t thought much about it	37	28	-9	(0.04)	**
Number of observations	219	250			

SOURCE: Mechanical Turk Survey, May 2014.

NOTE: Pearson $\chi^2(2) = 9.4087$ Pr = 0.009; individual significance calculated using 1-tailed test of significance.

age and education but to be comparable on other factors (Christensen and Glick 2013), although they have been much more representative of the general population than most in-person convenience samples (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012). The self-identified racial composition of this pool was 82 percent white, 9 percent black, and 9 percent other specified.

for the Colorado’s 3rd congressional district, the respondents were drawn from a nationwide sample, suggesting that its effectiveness in creating broad appeal for trade protection cannot be attributed simply to local knowledge.

A partial answer as to why the ad is effective is provided by survey participants’ responses to the other questions asked. One of these was “When you think of limits on foreign imports, what do you think is the impact on the following groups of Americans?” The percentage of those responding that limits on imports greatly help blue-collar workers jumped from around 23 percent among the control group to about 37 percent among those who had watched “A Couple of Miles,” which is not surprising given the ad’s focus on blue-collar steel workers. But this still fails to explain why increasing awareness of trade’s effect on blue collar workers would lead to a 20-point gain in support for trade protection, given that the majority of those surveyed were not themselves steelworkers. They did, however, share another characteristic with those shown in the ad—that of race. Of my survey sample, 75 percent self-identified as white.

Race and Redistribution

Whether government policies benefit or are perceived to benefit minority groups has been found to influence perceptions of the value of the policy. For example, income-based redistribution has historically disproportionately benefited African Americans and other minorities (Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote 2001) in the United States. In fact the (erroneous) belief of most Americans surveyed in 1999 was that African Americans were the primary recipients of welfare (Gilens 1999). And political and media frames continue to shape perceptions of who benefits from welfare (Hancock 2004; Lee and Roemer 2006; Winter 2008; Schram, Soss, and Fording 2010; Harell, Soroka, and Iyengar 2013). This racial component of income-based redistribution in the United States may explain why, in Gilens’s terms, “Americans hate welfare” but widely support non-income-based social programs such as Social Security (see also Goren 2008).

Trade protection’s allocation mechanism is different from that of policies and programs such as welfare and Social Security in that it is targeted toward products and industries, not individuals. Such industry-based transfers may be more acceptable to many white voters than transfers that are widely perceived as primarily accruing to minorities. The industry bases that such policies protect disproportionately employ whites, and media portrayals exaggerate this characteristic. Farms, for instance, are disproportionately owned by whites, with fully 95 percent identified in the 2007 agriculture census as owned by an individual identifying as “white” (USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service 2007). According to the most recent census, employment in the types of machine and metal manufacturing (NAICS 331, 332, 333) that have typically been presented in trade protection ads, television shows such as *Roseanne*, and movies such as *Roger & Me* is 80 percent white. Employees in textile mills, such

as those who were portrayed in the film *Norma Rae*, are 63 percent white (2010 Census). Starting in 2004, campaigns expanded the depiction of trade-affected employment to include those in information and technology (IT) industry which across multiple job levels also has to date employed disproportionately few women and non-Asian minorities. Both these employment realities and the portrayal of them undoubtedly shape people's preferences regarding trade protection.

Race in Trade-Related Campaign Ads

My analysis of 531 trade-related political ads suggests that the “A Couple of Miles” portrayal of workers is not atypical among campaigns that choose to promote trade protection: the face of trade protection in such ads has been overwhelmingly white, working-class, and male. This analysis included 385 political ads identified as having a trade theme by the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project, which compiled, transcribed, storyboarded, and indexed congressional, gubernatorial, and presidential campaign advertisements running in the country's largest media markets during the 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2008 election cycles. To this compilation, I added 146 ads identified by the Public Citizens organization as highlighting trade during the 2012 election cycle.² For this study, I hired two independent coders to count the perceived race of any American worker depicted in each of these 531 ads, categorizing them into three categories: white, black, and other nonwhite. Workers were defined as persons identified as workers either through direct description or by being shown in a workplace.³ The focus was on perceived race, the equivalent response to someone glancing at a political ad; we obviously cannot claim to know the actual racial mix of the individuals referred to or shown in the ad.

Based on that analysis, political ad campaigns in the last three decades have overwhelmingly presented working-class whites as the beneficiaries of trade protection policies. Coders reported a white-to-black ratio of 9 to 1 during the 2000, 2002, and 2003–4 election cycles; an 8 to 1 ratio during the 2008 cycle; and a 9 to 1 ratio during the 2012 cycle.⁴ The category of other nonwhites turned out to be largely meaningless, constituting less than 1 percent of the sample.

² Trade-related ads from this 2012 cycle came from 2 presidential, 58 House of Representatives, and 19 Senate candidate campaigns.

³ Individuals who were shown in coffee shops, street corners, or other non-workplace locations were excluded from the count unless the text explicitly referred to their job. For ads included in the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project, my coders counted individuals in the screen-captures taken every fourth second of the ad. For the Public Citizen identified ads, my coders counted individuals in each unique scene. Thus, for comparison, I utilize ratios rather than absolute numbers.

⁴ More specifically, whites comprised 89 percent of all workers shown in 2000, 89 percent in 2002, 88 percent in 2003/2004, and 84 percent in 2008. The standard deviation across the years is just over .02. The average difference between coders was 4 percent; the standard deviation of these differences was .02.

Nonetheless, the analysis indicated that Asian faces were almost exclusively excluded from depictions of American workers, although they were predominant in pictures of persons identified by narration or text as foreign workers. These ratios may by themselves overstate the incidence and potential effect of nonwhite faces among representations of American workers, as their distribution was not uniform across the ads but rather highly skewed, with minority workers heavily concentrated in only a handful of ads. Across the five election cycles, the majority of trade-related ads (from a low of 55 percent in 2000 and a high of 68 percent in 2008) included only white American workers.

One might argue that this 9 to 1 ratio only slightly overrepresents actual US population distributions during the studied time period, given that according to the US Census, during the 1990s blacks comprised 13 percent of the population and whites 80 percent, a ratio of whites to blacks in the population closer to 7 to 1. But it must also be kept in mind that most Americans surveyed during that period believed that blacks constituted a much larger portion of the population, ranging from estimates of 23 percent to 31 percent (Gilens 1999); in other words, most respondents perceived the white-to-black ratio among the general population as 4 to 1 or even 3 to 1. In this context, the representation of whites in trade protection ads is all the more disproportionate, especially when one considers that 60 percent of the trade protection ads showed no minority workers at all, presenting an entirely white view of the policy. “A Couple of Miles,” for example, was designed to support a candidate in a district in which self-identified non-Hispanic whites constituted only 73 percent of the population, a stark contrast to the uniformly white cast of the ad.

The depiction of trade protection beneficiaries in these ads thus differs considerably from the political and media portrayal of the beneficiaries of other forms of redistribution, particularly welfare benefits. Although the anti-poverty campaigns of the 1960s included both black and white faces of poverty, since the 1970s the American media have employed primarily blacks' faces to represent the poor; according to Gilens (1999), between 1967 and 1992, blacks comprised almost 60 percent of the poor people pictured in *U.S. News and World Report*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*. The reverse was also true: stories about black Americans increasingly focused on black impoverishment, with *Newsweek* averaging one mention of black poverty per issue during the similar time span of 1967 to 1994 (Kellstedt 2003). The leap of imagination from impoverished blacks to welfare recipients is not a long one, but here too the media play a role. Quadagno (1994), Gilens (1999), Kellstedt (2000), and Williams (2003) have all found that the beneficiaries of welfare are disproportionately portrayed as black in the mainstream media, leading to the aforementioned erroneous belief that African Americans are in fact the primary recipients of welfare benefits. And even though it is true that income-based redistribution does disproportionately benefit African Americans and other minorities, this perception far outstrips reality.

These perceptions are psychologically and politically important, as experiments have shown that racial depictions, either verbal or pictorial, can lead

individuals to perceive social problems and value social policies differently.⁵ Early evidence of the power of racial cuing arose unexpectedly in a 1983 experiment by Iyengar and Kinder (1988), who had set out to estimate the relative persuasiveness of news stories using impersonal descriptions of national problems and of news stories highlighting real-life examples. Their experiment offered respondents two versions of a “vivid” presentation of the plight of the unemployed, one describing the life of a young unemployed man in Chicago, the other the life of a middle-aged father, and a “pallid” alternative for each that provided aggregate national information about unemployment issues. Conditions were randomly assigned and embedded in a collection of television news stories. Participants watching the vivid version of the news story with the middle-aged father were both more likely to judge unemployment as an important national problem and rank it more highly among problems than those who had watched the “pallid” alternative of the story. In contrast, those watching the vivid version of the story about the young man from Chicago were almost 20 percentage points less likely to name unemployment as a serious national problem. The researchers presumed that the inadvertent variable affecting the participants’ responses was race: the young man in Chicago was black, the father white. Further experiments which used a white sample and alternative depictions replicated the finding: the racial depiction of the unemployed individual strongly influenced how important white respondents deemed national unemployment (Iyengar and Kinder 1988).

Almost two decades later, Gilens (1999) similarly identified race-related conditional support for public policy, this time welfare policy. Merely by hearing a description of a welfare mother as black rather than white, respondents provided a poorer assessment of the woman in question and lower support for welfare spending. Gilens’s conclusion was that whites’ attitudes toward blacks were intertwined with their attitudes toward welfare recipients, with the negative stereotypes of both reinforcing each other. The creation of the public image of a “welfare queen” has solidified prior stereotypes (Hancock 2004) and has wound tightly together perceptions of beneficiaries with policy choices, with the effect lasting even well after welfare policy reforms (Dyck and Hussey 2008).

That whites are more likely to discount the importance of issues when they are presented with black rather than white faces is now well documented. In this regard, the contrast between the portrayal of welfare beneficiaries and trade protection beneficiaries is blunt. Trade protection is portrayed as protecting jobs—particularly the white and male jobs of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. In the terms of popular media, trade protection is depicted as supporting Detroit auto workers instead of welfare queens. However, despite the stark difference in the portrayals the distinction is also subtle, showing but not

⁵ For example, when African Americans (as opposed to whites) were presented as suspects in a crime, white survey respondents were more likely to judge them as guilty and advocate for a harsher punishment than for white suspects (Peffley, Shields, and Williams 1996; Peffley, Hurwitz, and Sniderman 1997; Peffley and Hurwitz 2002; Hurwitz and Peffley 2005).

invoking the in-group attribute of trade protection. In fact, the visual cue is such that the audience (and perhaps to date the reader of this book) is unlikely to have directly recognized the cue. Yet it is such implicit racial cues that Mendleberg (2001) and others (see, e.g., Valentino et al. 2002) think are most effective.

Racial Presentation of Beneficiaries and Support for Trade Protection

How much does the portrayal matter? Would the impact of “A Couple of Miles” differ if the ads portrayed more diversity? The paucity of trade-related television campaign ads with noticeable diversity makes a head-to-head comparison difficult. To answer this question, I conducted a survey experiment to introduce random variance in the race of beneficiaries of trade protection. I created a brief newspaper-style article from various news sources in the spring of 2008, entitled “Data Shows Struggling Manufacturers, Costly Imports and Gloomier Consumers.” Condition A (the control version) provided no individual depiction of effected workers and was illustrated with a picture of a factory floor (see figure 6.2). Conditions B and C (the two treatment versions) incorporated the same text but also included a brief description of a recently laid-off worker:

[Name] worked for Delphi auto parts until being laid-off last month. His union job once earned him \$50,000 a year, enough to support his family comfortably and send his oldest daughter to college. “At my age I don’t know if I will be able to find a different job and I don’t have the savings some do. I just don’t know what I am going to do now,” said [Name].

Conditions B and C differed only in the name of the worker and the illustration of the effects of trade on employment (see appendix figure 6.A1 for accompanying photos). Condition B named the laid-off worker “Cedric Washington” and the accompanying picture was of two unnamed, middle-aged black men at an employment fair. Condition C named the laid-off worker “Randy Snyder” and the accompanying picture was of two unnamed, middle-aged white men at an employment fair. The conditions were randomly assigned to respondents in an independent survey pool of volunteers via Amazon Turk.⁶ The difference in responses across the three conditions was striking.

Table 6.2 displays the distribution of responses—for white participants only—by each condition A, B, and C as well as the statistical differences between the conditions for each specific response type. The effect of the survey experiment as a whole was strongly significant: the Pearson $\chi^2(4) = 9.92$, with a p value of .04. As expected from previous, similar experiments such as Iyengar and Kinder’s 1983 employment experiment, identifying specific

⁶ Survey conducted in May 2014 with 850 volunteers via Mechanical Turk. 80% of the sample self-identified as “white” alone.

Data Shows Struggling Manufacturers, Costly Imports and Gloomier Consumers

Published: February 16, 2008



Jobs in the U.S. manufacturing sector have declined as imports have doubled.

The U.S. manufacturing sector once accounted for one out of every three non-agricultural jobs. But today the manufacturing sector accounts for less than one out of every ten non-farm related jobs. During this time, imports of manufactured goods to the United States have more than doubled.

A fresh batch of data released on Friday revealed an economy in distress, as manufacturers struggled, import prices rose, and consumer confidence continued to erode.

“Companies are responding remarkably rapidly to signs of weakness by cutting their production and cutting back on hiring,” said Edward E. Yardeni, an investment strategist. “If we’re not careful we may push ourselves into a recession.”

FIGURE 6.2 Text and photo from condition A (control) for race and trade preference survey experiment 2

individuals (Cedric Washington and Randy Snyder) had the effect of diminishing concern for national policy response.⁷ Although more “vivid” in Inyengar and Kinder’s terms, calling out a specific individual can narrow perceptions about the generality of the problem. Participants in both condition B and condition C were less likely to support trade protection than those in the condition A (the control group). In this way, this survey experiment differs from the prior survey experiment using the campaign advertisement “A Couple of Miles” because the video showed workers in aggregate rather than individually.

With individuals specified both in the text and in the photos, the effect of the treatment is to diminish support for trade protection, but in a way that distinctly differs across the racial presentation. Participants who read the condition B version of the news story, which included a quote from Cedric Washington and a picture of two black men, demonstrated higher opposition to increased trade protection than those who read condition C (36 percent to 29 percent). This

⁷ For a similar use of name manipulation in an experimental survey setting, see Domke et al. 2000.

TABLE 6.2 Effect of reading a trade-related newspaper article on trade preferences

PERCENT RESPONDING	COND. A	COND. B	COND. C	BLACK VS. CONTROL			WHITE VS. CONTROL			BLACK VS. WHITE		
	CONTROL	BLACK	WHITE	DIFF.	SE	SIGN.	DIFF.	SE	SIGN.	DIFF.	SE	SIGN.
Oppose new limits	26	36	29	10	(0.04)	**	3	(0.04)		7	(0.04)	*
Support new limits	54	41	45	-13	(0.05)	***	-9	(0.05)	**	-4	(0.05)	
Haven't thought much about it	20	23	26	3	(0.04)		6	(0.04)	*	-3	(0.04)	
Number of observations	229	230	247									

SOURCE: Mechanical Turk Survey, May 2014

NOTE: Pearson $\chi^2(4) = 9.9203$ Pr = 0.042; significance of condition to condition response comparison calculated using 1-tailed test of significance.

7 percentage point difference is significant at the $p < .05$ level. Similarly, support for new increased trade protection was lower (41 percent to 45 percent). Overall, those in the C group were 11 percentage point more protectionist than those in the B group. The reaction to the presentation of beneficiaries suggests that the whiteness of trade protection advertisements functions to retain and reinforce support for these policies in a way that functions directly counter to the portrayals of other redistributive policies, particularly that of welfare.

Information about Beneficiaries and Preference for Trade Protection

Racial prejudice in the United States is well documented (for a survey, see Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote 2001), and the psychology literature provides many different explanations for it. Experiments have shown that people of different races are more likely to cheat each other (Glaeser, Laidson, Scheinkma, and Soutter 2000). It is thus perhaps unsurprising that trust and participation in social activities is higher in more racially homogeneous communities (Alesina and LaFerrara 2000, 2002). Public opinion scholars believe this type of inter-group awareness drives the within- and between-country patterns linking increased community diversity with decreased support for welfare programs and other policies that broadly support the community. Cross-nationally, within countries, and within the United States, racial diversity correlates with lower individual support for redistribution and social welfare spending (Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Easterly and Levine 1997).

Understanding the interaction between racial diversity and beliefs about who benefits from redistribution is vital to understanding the sociotropic component of trade preference formation. Trade protection via tariffs or quotas is simply a specialized form of redistribution: It transfers wealth from consumers of import-competing goods to producers of such goods. A straightforward combination of the support for social spending literature and the new sociotropic trade policy preference literature would suggest that support for trade protection declines as racial diversity increases. Trade protection, whether in the form of tariff barriers, quotas, or subsidies, financially benefits some of the population at a cost to the broader population. Thus, trade protection is broadly redistributive and should follow typical patterns regarding increased community diversity and declining support for social spending. However, the specific dynamic of trade protection suggests an alternative theory.

Theory

As previously, I assume that preferences for public policy are “judged in terms of expected costs and benefits for the individual and benefits for his or her family, friends, favored groups, and the nation or world as a whole” (Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey 1987, 23). In general, this means the utility from public

policies have two primary components: an individual's self-regarding benefit (i.e., egocentrism) and the benefits accruing to everyone else (i.e., sociotropism). However, with trade policy, support for restrictions on trade is caused almost entirely by the latter (benefits to others). The majority of Americans think that trade at best makes no difference to employment and at worst costs the United States jobs (Caplan 2002). However, most Americans believe that the jobs lost are not their own. Of the individuals surveyed as part of the 2008 and 2010 CCES, only 10 percent evaluated trade's effect on their own employment as worse than trade's effects on regional or US employment in general. Thus, explanations for variation in levels of support for trade protection need to focus on sociotropic concern for the benefits to others.

One could offer a purely probabilistic explanation for the link between an increase in racial diversity and a drop in support for redistribution (e.g., Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999). If diversity serves to diminish the size of "in-groups," then the probability of individuals within one's own "in-group" benefiting from redistribution diminishes. However, such a theory would call for a prediction of a uniform change in preferences across redistribution policies. A key component of the existing literature on diversity's effect on preferences for social policies is that it is specific beliefs about who benefits that link increased diversity to diminished support for some policies—such as welfare—but not others such as Social Security. Put more bluntly, increases in diversity decrease support for welfare policy because the wrong people are benefiting (Luttmer 2001; Alesina and Glaeser 2004; Alesina and Giuliana 2009).

Defining the "wrong" people combines two distinct concepts: first, that of transfers between "them" and "us," more formally "in-group" and "out-group," and, second, an evaluation of the worthiness of each group. Perceptions of worthiness encompass not only need but also culpability. Groups perceived as not responsible for their need of government assistance—children, the elderly, the disabled—receive more sympathy than those presumed to be responsible for their own condition, particularly the condition of poverty (Harell, Soroka, and Iyengar 2013). In the US context, race and worthiness are tightly intertwined in the public's perception (Gilens 1999) and affect attitudes toward differing social policies. Whether individuals are "deserving" of government aid is difficult to untether from pervasive stereotypes about minority groups. However, a comparison of three different types of redistributive policies—welfare, Social Security, and trade protection—can aid in unraveling them.

Welfare benefits are frequently portrayed as accruing to the "undeserving," those unwilling to find employment (Gilens 1999). In contrast, both Social Security and trade protection are implicitly linked to working members of American society. Social Security payments grow (within limits) not only in proportion to years of employment but also wages earned in that employment, and thus function as a monetary manifestation of "deservedness." The benefits of trade protection accrue almost exclusively to people working in protected industries, or at least those recently employed. The public understands the exogenous

nature of trade shocks and how jobs may be lost in certain industries due to no fault of the people employed in those areas (Davidson, Matusz, and Nelson 2006). So even without a racial angle, we may expect higher levels of support for redistribution through trade protection than through welfare policies, but these levels of support would be untied to community-level racial diversity.

Welfare policies are perceived and portrayed to benefit racial minorities (Gilens 1999; Kellstedt 2000), “the out-group” for many white Americans. As the next section demonstrates, the beneficiaries of trade protection are typically perceived and portrayed in political discourse as white, their “in-group.” This shift from the winners of the policy being members of the in-group (trade protection) instead of the out-group (welfare) may cause the relationship between trade protection and racial diversity to be the opposite of the relationship noted between welfare and racial diversity. As an age-based rather than income-based policy, Social Security is neither explicitly an in- or out-group transfer, although implicit assumptions about race and employment may skew perceptions of its primary beneficiaries towards the white majority. It is possible that increased diversity may still decrease an individual’s interest in such redistribution for probabilistic reasons, but a racial component neither increases nor decreases sentiments about Social Security.

As in chapter 5, the starting point for incorporating others’ benefits into an individual’s calculation of trade preferences is the weight placed on others’ benefits relative to one’s own (w_o). The standard argument of those who believe that heterogeneity decreases support for redistribution or public goods is that the weight placed on others’ benefits (w_o) is already a function of diversity. As diversity decreases, the benefits of a nondiscriminatory policy are more likely to accrue to similar individuals and thus the value placed on those benefits will increase, and vice versa.

However, some policies benefit some groups more than others. Where these groups can be categorized by race, the calculations must also incorporate a measure of the racialization of the policies (r_p) into the calculation. Formally,

$$U[\textit{policy}] = b_i + w_o(1 - r_p)b_o$$

where b_i is an individual’s beliefs about his own net benefits from the policy, w_o is the weight of others’ benefits as a function of racial diversity, r_p is a measure of the racialization of the policy in question, and b_o is the belief about others’ benefits. The variable r_p is normed to 0 and ranges from -1 to 1. Where policies are highly racialized in favor of an individual’s group, then $r_p < 0$. Where policies are highly racialized in favor of another group, then $r_p > 0$.

In such an expanded format, any increase in diversity is still assumed to diminish the weight of others’ benefits, since that diversity makes it less likely for an individual’s family, friends, and favored groups to receive benefits. However, the characteristics of the policy itself strengthen or weaken the relation between diversity and support for the policy. With welfare highly racialized, I assume that r_p is on average positive for whites, causing a diminishing weight of others’ benefits as racial diversity increases. As a result, I predict

a negative relation between racial diversity in a white person's community and support for redistribution via welfare. In contrast, with trade being linked to white workers, I assume r_p is on average negative for whites, causing an increasing weight of others' benefits as racial diversity increases. Thus I predict a positive relation between racial diversity in a white individual's community and support for redistribution through trade protection.

One caveat is that such weightings are likely to be most influential in outcomes when the policies themselves are not directly at issue. In 1992, trade policy—specifically, preventing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)—became the central plank of billionaire Ross Perot's third-party candidacy and shorthand for a particular way of governing. Since the passing of NAFTA, trade policy has diminished in salience. With the exception of the George W. Bush steel tariffs, it has not been central to political debate. Moreover, as discussed extensively in chapter 2, parties and other sources of trade-related messages are increasingly divided within themselves on trade policy. As these voices have quieted, people are less led by party identification in formatting their views, leaving other factors to manifest higher levels of influence on opinion.

Does Diversity Matter?

To test the theory that racial diversity lies at the divide between relatively high public support for trade protection and relatively low public support for welfare, I contrast white individuals' preferences for these redistribution mechanisms conditional on the racial diversity in their community. To do so, I turn again to the ANES and available census data. As a measure of support for redistribution through trade protection, I again use responses to the standard ANES question about whether limits on imports should increase.

To measure support for income-based redistribution, I use responses from a section of the ANES survey that asks respondents about federally funded programs. The section begins with a common framework:

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, for which programs would you like to see spending increased and for which would you like to see spending decreased?

It follows each item with an identical question:

Should federal spending on [ITEM] be increased, decreased or kept about the same?⁸

⁸ The federal programs included and their order has varied across individual years. In addition, in some years, the series was administered with a break in the sequence.

I utilize individual responses for “welfare programs” available in 1992, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2008. Individuals were asked to select “increased,” “same,” “decreased,” or “don’t know,” but for certain items interviewers also accepted and differentiated the volunteered category of “cut out entirely.” For compatibility with the trade question discussed later, I recoded the answers to create three categories: “support increase” for those responding “increased”; “support decrease,” which included those responding “cut out entirely” as well as “decreased”; and “indecisive,” which combined “same” and “don’t know” and most closely mimics the form of the trade-related question.

Support for redistribution policies varies greatly. Figure 6.3 provides a snapshot of white individuals’ opinion in 1996, a midpoint in the data and also a year in which both questions were asked in the same ANES survey. The proportion supporting an increase in welfare is low (9 percent) and vastly outweighed by those seeking a decrease (61 percent). In contrast, support for an increase in trade protection (30 percent) slightly outweighs support for a decrease in trade protection (27 percent), although the most common responses are “haven’t thought much about it” and “don’t know” (42 percent). However, the question at hand is not the difference in support between the policies, but the contradiction between the same individuals support for different forms of redistribution. In 1996, of those wanting to decrease federal spending on welfare, a full 32 percent supported increasing trade protection. Among those wanting to

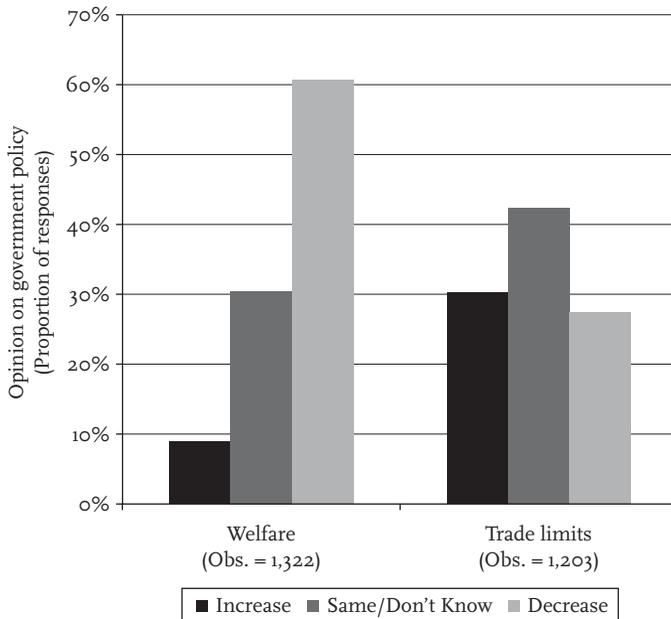


FIGURE 6.3 Opinion on redistributive policies (ANES 1996, white, non-Hispanic respondents)

SOURCE: Time Series Study (American National Election Studies 1996)

increase federal spending on welfare, only 31 percent also wanted to increase trade protection. What explains such contrasting support for redistribution programs?

Data on the primary independent variable of interest, the racial diversity of the community, come from the 1990 and 2000 census. The 1990 census data were matched to observations in a ten-year span around 1990 (1986, 1988, 1990, 1992) and the 2000 census data to the observations from 1996 on (1996, 1998, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010). Census characterizations of racial division have varied over the years. To ensure compatibility, I use the five primary categories provided by the 1990 census: white; black; American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut; Asian or Pacific Islander; and other, which includes those specifying two races in 2000.⁹

In terms of residency, I consolidate the census's tenfold classification of residency in the prior five years into four groups: "same county," "same state," "other U.S. state," and "abroad." To calculate racial diversity in each congressional district, I use the standard Herfindahl–Hirschman-type fractionalization index: $1 - \sum_{i=1}^N s_{ij}^2$, where s_{ij} is the share of group i congressional district j .

The index ranges from 0 to $1 - \frac{1}{N}$, with higher numbers representing higher levels of heterogeneity and lower levels representing greater homogeneity. Theoretically, a Herfindahl–Hirschman-type fractionalization index allows for any specified groups to form homogeneous clusters and for any combination of groups to generate high levels of heterogeneity. However, as an empirical matter, in the United States during the period under review, types of homogeneous congressional districts are constrained. Higher levels of racial homogeneity mean that congressional districts are either primarily white or primarily African American in terms of the census racial divisions.¹⁰

Other types of diversity might also affect the importance of sociotropic concerns. As mentioned before, residential diversity may increase the informational costs of forming preferences and thus diminish support for protectionist policies; hence, the residency measure. Income inequality, as measured by a Gini coefficient, may also generate group divisions within communities. Because the census provides only bands of income, the incomes for each of the fourteen provided groups were imputed before being incorporated into the standard Gini calculation.

⁹ For the 2000 census, I thus merge "total population: Asian alone" and "total population: native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone" and reclassify "total population: two or more races" as "other." The census treats Hispanic origin as an overlay to these categories.

¹⁰ In 1990, 391 congressional districts were composed primarily by those identifying themselves as "White," 27 districts were composed primarily of those identifying themselves as "Black," and only 3 districts were composed primarily by those self-identifying as one of the other racial categories.

On all three measures, congressional districts within states vary widely. The measures are also not highly correlated at the congressional district level.

Individual characteristics are modeled as before (see chapter 3) and include variables for income, age, gender, skill level, employment status, Hispanic self-identity, homeownership, union members in a household, and partisan identification. All data are drawn from the ANES directly. To ensure comparability across the longer timeframe of the ANES data, I use the ANES's percentile-based classification recoding the data into three income groups: low (0 to 32 percentile); middle (34 to 67 percentile); and high (> 67 percentile). This allows for the inclusion of the 2002 survey, the income categories of which were too broad to include in the ANES's original groupings. Because of the twenty-year span in the data, incomes comprising each group shift.

Table 6.3 offers a side-by-side comparison of the results of multinomial logistic analyses of support by whites for the redistributive programs: “welfare” and “limits on trade.”¹¹ Although the analysis also included an indeterminate category of those responding “don’t know,” “same,” or “haven’t thought much about it,” the major comparison is between those seeking increased redistribution and those opposing or seeking to reduce redistributive policies. Thus, table 6.3 reports only the portion of the results comparing those who supported increases with those who supported decreases. Additionally, for presentation purposes, the table excludes the generally significant estimated coefficients for the set of binary variables capturing year effects. The full table is available in the appendix (table 6.A1) as is an extended table including 2012 data (table 6.A2).

The results in table 6.3 describe a nuanced relation between racial diversity and redistribution. When the question is specific to welfare, racial diversity is strongly and negatively correlated with support for increased federal spending (-0.68 , $SE = 0.40$). This finding mirrors prior studies and aligns with expectations that increased diversity decreases support for redistribution (e.g., Alesina and Glaeser 2004). However, it contrasts starkly with the positive relation between racial diversity and support for increasing trade protection. When redistribution is presented in the form of trade protection, the coefficient on racial diversity is positive and significant ($+0.68$, $SE = 0.28$), in the reverse direction as that for welfare. In the years after NAFTA, during which the salience of trade policy declined, the relation is even stronger ($+1.49$, $SE = 0.45$). These findings support the hypothesis that the link between diversity and preference for redistribution is mediated by the racialization of the policies. Support for welfare is negatively linked to racial diversity. Support for age-based Social Security (not shown) has no correlation with diversity. Support for trade-protection—a policy portrayed as benefiting employed whites—has a strong positive correlation with racial diversity.

Other community and individual characteristics have a more consistent relation with preferences for redistribution. Skilled workers and individuals

¹¹ Although the argument suggests that the divergence in preferences would most directly manifest in whites, contagion effects might lead to roll-over influence on nonwhites (full table available on request).

TABLE 6.3 Support for redistribution policies (ANES 1988 to 2008, white, non-Hispanic respondents)

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF RESPONSE: “INCREASE”	FEDERAL	LIMITS ON TRADE	
	SPENDING ON WELFARE	ALL YEARS	POST-NAFTA
C.D. Racial HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.68* (0.40)	0.68** (0.28)	1.49*** (0.45)
C.D. Residency HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.02 (0.53)	-0.85** (0.36)	-2.89*** (0.68)
C.D. Income inequality (0 to ~1)	2.61 (2.49)	-2.91 (1.80)	-8.69*** (2.50)
C.D. % Rural	-0.84*** (0.29)	0.93*** (0.20)	1.37*** (0.34)
Political South (ANES)	-0.13 (0.11)	-0.10 (0.07)	0.14 (0.13)
Skilled	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.75*** (0.06)	-0.93*** (0.11)
Mid-income Group (34 to 67 percentile*)	-0.62*** (0.11)	-0.05 (0.08)	0.07 (0.13)
High-income Group (> 68 percentile*)	-0.73*** (0.12)	-0.35*** (0.09)	-0.49*** (0.14)
Unemployed (0/1)	0.49*** (0.15)	0.02 (0.13)	-0.04 (0.21)
7-pt. political id (Dem.–Rep.)	-0.34*** (0.02)	-0.05*** (0.01)	-0.02 (0.02)
Age	-0.01*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)
Female (0/1)	0.44*** (0.09)	0.43*** (0.06)	0.62*** (0.10)
Owns house (0/1)	-0.51*** (0.10)	0.12 (0.07)	0.23* (0.12)
Union household	-0.21* (0.12)	0.28*** (0.08)	0.15 (0.13)
Constant	0.54 (1.03)	1.38* (0.74)	3.72*** (1.07)
<i>Year dummies not shown</i>			
Observations	7,774	9,561	4,147
Prob > F	0.00	0.00	0.00

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2008).

NOTE: Base Response “Decrease.” Full results including third “Indecisive” category in chapter appendix table 6.A1.

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

with high incomes are in general less supportive of Social Security and trade protection, as would be expected by their relatively lower expected benefit from such policies. Women are across the board more supportive of the redistributive policies, a familiar gender gap in the study of American politics (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). Some exceptions to uniformity exist. Unemployed individuals (not including retirees), perhaps unexpectedly, do not support redistribution through trade protection, though they do support welfare, a policy that may provide both more immediate and long-term assistance. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, union household support for trade protection has declined since the passage of NAFTA. As discussed in chapter 2, post-NAFTA US manufacturing increasingly relies on imports of materials and parts. This trend has created division within the manufacturing industry (such as those exposed by the Bush-era steel tariffs) making it difficult for both unions and industrial coalitions to send a single message on trade protection. As a result, “union member” no longer equates to a clear preference for protection based on individual employment concerns nor does it connote participation in an organization providing a cohesive and strong message concerning protection.

The cleavage that racial diversity can create is striking, particularly since NAFTA implementation. Figure 6.4 presents the predicted probability of support for redistribution. The left side shows estimates using the model based on three decades of data; the right side shows estimates using the model based on data since NAFTA passage. Each chart compares support for welfare with support for trade protection, holding other variables constant at the mean for white, non-Hispanics in 2000. Each shows the gap increasing as community racial diversity increases. While the marginal effect of community racial diversity on each individual policy is relatively small, combined, they create a substantive difference in opinion on redistribution issues. Moving from a community one standard deviation below the mean in diversity to a community one standard deviation above the mean is predicted to result in a 1 percentage point decrease in the probability of supporting an increase in federal spending for welfare (13.1 percent to 11.9 percent) and a 3 percentage point increase in the probability of supporting an increase in trade protection (26.1 percent to 29.3 percent). The effects together explain 4 percentage points of the 15 percentage point gulf in between support for redistribution via welfare and redistribution via trade protection in 2000. Since NAFTA, the explanatory power has grown. Using estimates from the post-NAFTA model, the same shift in communities results in a 7 percentage point shift in opinion on trade protection: the probability of support for trade protection increases from 24.4 percent to 31.5 percent.

In terms of predicting support for increasing welfare, community diversity is on par to slightly lower than unemployment or income. A change from unemployed to employed decreases support for welfare by a predicted 4 percentage points (16.0 percent to 12.2 percent). A change from low to medium income results in a predicted 5.5 percentage point decline (16.3 percent to 10.6 percent). In terms of predicting support for increasing trade protection, community racial diversity far outweighs income and partisan effects.

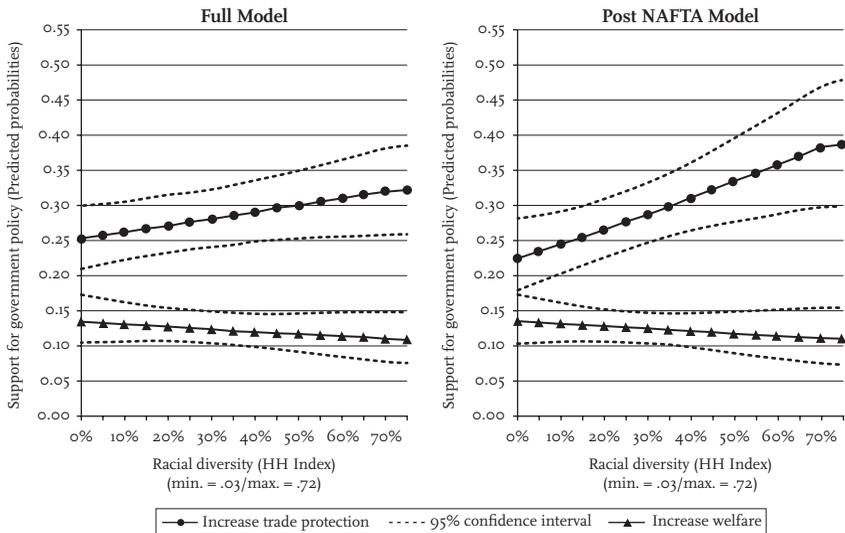


FIGURE 6.4 Predicted probability of support for redistribution (white, non-Hispanic respondents)

NOTE: Prediction based on mean values for white, non-Hispanic sample in 2000.

SOURCE: Time Series Study American National Election Studies (1986–2008).

The Robustness of the Effect of Racial Diversity on Preferences for Trade Protection

The finding that racial diversity diminishes whites’ support for welfare fits easily into the standard story about the influence of diversity on preferences for redistribution. In contrast, the finding that diversity increases support for trade protection—also a redistributive program—overturns conventional wisdom and thus calls for additional validation. To do so, I focus on a specific trade agreement—the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)—and use the responses of over 36,500 adults who participated in an online survey conducted by Polimetrix both before and after the 2006 US midterm election (Ansolabehere 2007). The change in data set allows for a test of the robustness of the effect on an actual rather than hypothetical trade policy. The larger sample size permits the inclusion of additional measures for perception of the national economy and for community trade exposure.

Survey participants received the following background information about CAFTA:

This year Congress also debated a new free trade agreement that reduces barriers to trade between the U.S. and countries in Central America.

Some politicians argue that the agreement allows America to better compete in the global economy and would create more stable democracies in Central America. Other politicians argue that it helps businesses to move jobs abroad where labor is cheaper and does not protect American producers.

Then they were then asked:

What do you think? If you were faced with this decision, would you vote for or against the trade agreement?

Of the total 36,217 responses, 26 percent stated that they supported ratification, 51 percent stated that they were against it, and 22 percent responded that they did not know. Table 6.4 displays a multinomial logistic analysis of responses by whites for diversity data organized at the congressional district level (left side) and at the county level (right side). The former most closely replicates the prior analysis of the ANES data; the latter allows for the inclusion of an additional measure of the community's exposure to trade. The theory predicts that as racial diversity increases, the probability that white individuals support CAFTA, a measure that would remove trade protections, declines. And indeed, in all four models, which will be discussed in greater detail, the coefficient for the racial diversity measure ("Comm: Racial HH Index") is negative and significant.

The analysis displayed in models 1A–3A uses congressional district-level measures of diversity and mostly retains the same individual economic and community characteristic determinants as in the prior analysis of the ANES. Model 1A most exactly replicates the prior analysis. In model 2A, a CAFTA-specific regional designation—residency in a state deemed especially affected by CAFTA ("Res. of CAFTA-affected state")—replaces the ANES defined residence in the "political south." Model 3A incorporates a measure of an individual's perception of the national economy ("Perception of national economy"), which arguably may greatly influence an individual's current preferences for trade protection; respondents' perceptions are ranked on a five-point scale from "gotten much worse" (0) to "gotten much better" (4).

In all three models, the racial diversity coefficient was large (–.30 to –.41), negative, and significant, again suggesting that whites' support for trade protection is higher when racial diversity is high. Including in the model a measure of residence in a CAFTA-affected state only slightly increased the effect of racial diversity, while including a measure of perceptions of the national economy more substantively increased the coefficient of interest. Inclusion of the perception measure removed the previously significant effect of partisan identification.

Model 3B (on the right side of table 6.4) displays the results of analysis using county-level measures of racial diversity, residency, and income inequality to describe an individual's community characteristics. Counties and their equivalents are the oldest US substate administrative divisions,

TABLE 6.4 Support for CAFTA conditional on racial diversity

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT FOR CAFTA (BASE = "AGAINST CAFTA")	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT LEVEL						COUNTY LEVEL	
	MODEL 1A		MODEL 2A		MODEL 3A		MODEL 3B	
	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW
Comm: Racial HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.30** (0.15)	-0.13 (0.16)	-0.32** (0.14)	-0.28* (0.16)	-0.41*** (0.15)	-0.33** (0.16)	-0.31** (0.15)	-0.25* (0.15)
Comm: Residency HH index (0 to ~1)	0.65*** (0.25)	0.16 (0.26)	0.56** (0.23)	-0.20 (0.25)	0.46* (0.24)	-0.25 (0.25)	0.38* (0.22)	-0.18 (0.20)
Comm: Income inequality (0 to ~1)	0.82 (0.82)	-0.41 (0.96)	0.60 (0.79)	-0.98 (0.96)	0.69 (0.80)	-0.90 (0.95)	0.47 (0.76)	-0.71 (0.78)
Comm: % Rural	-0.70*** (0.11)	-0.35*** (0.13)	-0.72*** (0.11)	-0.44*** (0.13)	-0.74*** (0.11)	-0.44*** (0.13)	-0.64*** (0.09)	-0.32*** (0.09)
Political South (from ANES)	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.19*** (0.05)						
Resident of CAFTA-affected state			0.02 (0.04)	-0.07* (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)	-0.08* (0.04)	0.00 (0.04)	-0.09** (0.04)
Perception of national economy (0 to 4)					0.44*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)	0.44*** (0.02)	0.24*** (0.02)
County: Import-competing (0/1)							-0.03 (0.10)	0.18* (0.09)
Skilled	0.37*** (0.04)	0.00 (0.04)	0.37*** (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)	0.38*** (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)	0.38*** (0.03)	0.00 (0.04)

2nd Q income (\$Current)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.09* (0.05)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.11** (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)
3rd Q income (\$Current)	0.05 (0.05)	-0.11** (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)	-0.11** (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.07 (0.05)	-0.18*** (0.05)
4th Q income (\$Current)	0.14*** (0.05)	-0.10* (0.06)	0.14*** (0.05)	-0.10* (0.06)	0.03 (0.05)	-0.16*** (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)	-0.17*** (0.06)
5th Q income (\$Current)	0.60*** (0.05)	0.05 (0.06)	0.60*** (0.05)	0.05 (0.06)	0.48*** (0.06)	-0.03 (0.06)	0.46*** (0.05)	-0.05 (0.06)
Unemployed (0/1)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.22** (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.22** (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.16* (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.14 (0.09)
7-pt. political id (Dem.-Rep.)	0.17*** (0.01)	0.09*** (0.01)	0.17*** (0.01)	0.09*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Age	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.02*** (0.00)
Female (0/1)	-0.36*** (0.03)	0.75*** (0.03)	-0.36*** (0.03)	0.75*** (0.03)	-0.26*** (0.03)	0.81*** (0.04)	-0.27*** (0.03)	0.83*** (0.04)
Hispanic (0/1)	0.47*** (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)	0.47*** (0.05)	0.04 (0.06)	0.50*** (0.05)	0.06 (0.06)	0.49*** (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)
Owns house (0/1)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.16*** (0.04)	-0.16*** (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.04)
Union household	-0.38*** (0.03)	-0.41*** (0.04)	-0.38*** (0.03)	-0.39*** (0.04)	-0.37*** (0.03)	-0.39*** (0.04)	-0.37*** (0.03)	-0.38*** (0.04)

(Continued)

TABLE 6.4 (Continued)

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT FOR CAFTA (BASE = "AGAINST CAFTA")	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT LEVEL						COUNTY LEVEL	
	MODEL 1A		MODEL 2A		MODEL 3A		MODEL 3B	
	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW	FOR CAFTA	DON'T KNOW
Constant	-1.23*** (0.36)	-0.25 (0.41)	-1.11*** (0.34)	0.17 (0.41)	-1.25*** (0.35)	0.08 (0.41)	-1.15*** (0.35)	-0.24 (0.35)
Observations	25,679		25,679		25,654		26,483	
Pseudo r-squared	0.06		0.06		0.08		0.08	

SOURCE: 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study; US Census Bureau.

NOTE: Clustered standard errors by community (Congressional District or County) in italics below coefficients.

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

and they are the level at which the US census collects regional employment and business data. The census's annual County Business Patterns (CBP) report provides, for each county in a state, mid-March employment, first-quarter and annual payrolls, and establishments by industry code, the Standard Industrial Code (SIC) until 1998 and the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) from 1998 to 2005. I use these data to calculate a measure of community sensitivity to trade protection issues ("Import-competing county"). For each county, I classify the reported manufacturing jobs as import-competing or export-oriented at both fine (SIC 4 and NAICS6) and broad levels (SIC3 and NAICS5) on the basis of net trade flows in the prior year using the manufacturing-focused data set in Schott (2010). Where the ratio of import-competing manufacturing jobs to export-oriented manufacturing jobs in a district exceeds 1 at either the fine or the broad level, I consider the county to be import-competing in terms of employment and thus "Import-competing county" = 1. While only one in five jobs is classified as manufacturing-oriented, manufacturing trade has made up at least 70 percent of total US imports and exports since the 1970s. However, to account for sensitivity surrounding raw agricultural trade, which falls outside of the Schott data set, I additionally create from the census data a measure of the percentage of the population in each county/congressional district identified as living in a "rural" area ("County: % rural").

The use of county-level data as well as the inclusion of "Import-competing county" diminishes the size of the estimated effect of racial diversity on preferences by about one-third; however, the coefficients for racial diversity remain negative and significant. Analysis of the CAFTA results—particularly that using county-level data—suggest that the link between racial diversity and greater support for trade protection by whites is not idiosyncratic to the question asked or the data organization method, but likely shows an underlying relation between racial diversity and preferences for certain types of redistribution.

Conclusion

Current trade-related political ads disproportionately present trade protection beneficiaries as white workers, distinguishing the policy from other forms of redistribution. In direct contrast to their preferences for welfare, American whites appear more supportive of trade protection when they live in more racially diverse communities. These results suggest an important caveat to the standard expectation that diversity diminishes support for redistribution. Where redistribution is perceived to privilege certain individuals over others, diversity may encourage support for a policy.

In the American context, the sums involved are not small. In 2009, redistribution via trade protection approached \$130 billion—about half as much

as welfare (approximately \$360 billion), but a substantial sum of funding.¹² Organized in terms of products and industries, redistribution through trade protection is also relatively more diffuse than redistribution through direct transfers. Individuals typically believe that trade protection aids others more than themselves, making who those others are perceived to be an important contextual component to sociotropic preferences.

These findings offer an additional improvement on current models of individual preferences for trade protection, which could be more broadly tested in a non-American context, particularly where identity-based divisions are strong. More generally, the findings provide a wrinkle for the comparative literature linking diversity with diminished support for redistribution and other public goods. Depending on how public the public goods are perceived to be, diversity may have an unexpected relation with majority support for the policies.

Community-level racial diversity as a determinant of preferences for trade policy creates difficulties for political entrepreneurs. First, it exposes an uncomfortable reality of race-driven preferences, ones that only fringe political leaders are today willing to directly address. It runs counter to the standard American narrative that it is others—not whites—who receive benefits from redistributive policies. Third, the impact varies across the country. As a result, attempts, conscious or not, to take advantage of such race-driven sentiments are location-specific and display but do not explicitly state the advantage of trade protection as social policy. As such, direct and national mobilization based on this source of preferences is not typical.

¹² Estimate based on the World Bank's Trade TRI Index in 2009 of 6.5 percent on \$1,962 billion in imports.

(conditions B)



(conditions C)



FIGURE 6.A1 Photos accompanying conditions B and C of race and trade preferences experiment 2. *Condition B*, the “Black” trade protection beneficiaries condition in which the news article named the trade-injured worker “Cedric Washington,” and the accompanying photo was of two unnamed, middle-aged black men at an employment fair; *Condition C*, the “White” trade protection beneficiaries treatment in which the news article named the trade-injured worker “Randy Snyder” and the accompanying photo was of two unnamed, middle-aged white men at an employment fair. *Condition B*, Photo credit: AP Photo/Ric Francis. *Condition C*, Photo credit: AP Photo/Paul Sancya.

TABLE 6.A1 Support for redistribution policies (ANES 1988 to 2008, white, non-Hispanic respondents), full version of table 6.3

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF WHITE RESPONDENTS 1986 TO 2008)	FEDERAL SPENDING ON WELFARE		LIMITS ON TRADE			
			ALL YEARS		POST-NAFTA	
	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INCREASE	INDECISIVE
C.D. Racial HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.68 *	-0.66 **	0.68 **	0.34	1.49 ***	0.64
	(0.40)	(0.27)	(0.28)	(0.29)	(0.45)	(0.44)
C.D. Residency HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.02	0.49	-0.85 **	-0.64 *	-2.89 ***	-1.76 ***
	(0.53)	(0.38)	(0.36)	(0.38)	(0.68)	(0.66)
C.D. Income inequality (0 to ~1)	2.61	-1.15	-2.91	-2.60	-8.69 ***	-3.83
	(2.49)	(1.62)	(1.80)	(1.90)	(2.50)	(2.43)
C.D. % Rural	-0.84 ***	-0.49 **	0.93 ***	0.60 ***	1.37 ***	0.73 **
	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.34)	(0.33)
Political South (ANES)	-0.13	0.07	-0.10	-0.08	0.14	0.00
	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Skilled	-0.10	0.06	-0.75 ***	-0.96 ***	-0.93 ***	-1.11 ***
	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Mid-income Group (34 to 67 percentile*)	-0.62 ***	-0.29 ***	-0.05	-0.33 ***	0.07	-0.29 **
	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.13)	(0.13)
High-income Group (> 68 percentile*)	-0.73 ***	-0.43 ***	-0.35 ***	-0.67 ***	-0.49 ***	-0.75 ***
	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Unemployed (0/1)	0.49 ***	0.31 **	0.02	-0.02	-0.04	-0.30
	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.20)
7-pt. political id (Dem.–Rep.)	-0.34 ***	-0.16 ***	-0.05 ***	0.00	-0.02	-0.01
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)

Age	-0.01 *** (0.00)	0.01 *** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 *** (0.00)	0.01 ** (0.00)	-0.01 *** (0.00)
Female (0/1)	0.44 *** (0.09)	0.16 *** (0.06)	0.43 *** (0.06)	0.95 *** (0.06)	0.62 *** (0.10)	1.10 *** (0.09)
Owns house (0/1)	-0.51 *** (0.10)	-0.10 (0.07)	0.12 * (0.07)	-0.02 (0.07)	0.23 * (0.12)	0.03 (0.12)
Union household	-0.21 * (0.12)	0.02 (0.08)	0.28 *** (0.08)	0.07 (0.08)	0.15 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.13)
Year 1986			2.01 *** (0.68)	0.53 (0.72)		
Year 1988			1.76 *** (0.68)	0.62 (0.72)		
Year 1990			1.00 (0.68)	0.89 (0.72)		
Year 1992	-1.10 (0.93)	0.19 (0.61)	1.84 *** (0.68)	0.61 (0.72)		
Year 1994	-1.56 * (0.93)	-0.22 (0.61)				
Year 1996	-0.99 *** (0.16)	-0.89 *** (0.10)	0.22 (0.15)	0.06 (0.14)	0.23 (0.16)	0.06 (0.15)
Year 1998			0.34 ** (0.15)	-0.05 (0.15)	0.34 ** (0.16)	-0.04 (0.15)
Year 2002	0.83 *** (0.18)	0.54 *** (0.12)				

(Continued)

TABLE 6.A1 (Continued)

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF WHITE RESPONDENTS 1986 TO 2008)	FEDERAL SPENDING ON WELFARE		LIMITS ON TRADE			
	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	ALL YEARS		POST-NAFTA	
			INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INCREASE	INDECISIVE
Year 2004	0.67 *** (0.16)	0.23 * (0.12)	0.24 (0.16)	0.07 (0.16)	0.26 (0.17)	0.09 (0.16)
Year 2008	0.76 *** (0.15)	0.16 (0.11)	0.81 *** (0.16)	0.52 *** (0.16)	0.83 *** (0.17)	0.56 *** (0.16)
Constant	0.54 (1.03)	1.18 * (0.67)	1.38 * (0.74)	2.26 *** (0.78)	3.72 *** (1.07)	3.16 *** (1.05)
Observations	7,774		9,561		4,147	
Prob > F	0.00		0.00		0.00	

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2008).

NOTE: Base Response “Decrease.”

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

TABLE 6.A2 Support for redistribution policies (ANES 1988 to 2012, white, non-Hispanic respondents)

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF WHITE RESPONDENTS (1986 TO 2008)	FEDERAL SPENDING ON WELFARE		LIMITS ON TRADE			
			ALL YEARS		POST-NAFTA	
	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INCREASE	INDECISIVE
C.D. Racial HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.35 (0.38)	-0.56 ** (0.26)	0.41 (0.28)	0.25 (0.28)	0.85 ** (0.43)	0.37 (0.42)
C.D. Residency HH index (0 to ~1)	-0.03 (0.52)	0.43 (0.38)	-0.92 ** (0.37)	-0.83 ** (0.38)	-2.80 *** (0.66)	-1.89 *** (0.61)
C.D. Income inequality (0 to ~1)	1.37 (2.37)	-1.60 (1.63)	-1.12 (1.78)	-1.56 (1.84)	-5.44 ** (2.40)	-2.06 (2.29)
C.D. % Rural	-0.79 *** (0.28)	-0.56 *** (0.20)	0.83 *** (0.20)	0.52 ** (0.20)	1.16 *** (0.32)	0.58 * (0.31)
Political South (ANES)	-0.12 (0.11)	0.06 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.07)	-0.15 * (0.08)	0.16 (0.13)	-0.13 (0.12)
Skilled	-0.09 (0.09)	0.03 (0.06)	-0.78 *** (0.06)	-1.00 *** (0.06)	-0.96 *** (0.10)	-1.16 *** (0.10)
Mid-income Group (34 to 67 percentile*)	-0.64 *** (0.10)	-0.39 *** (0.08)	-0.04 (0.08)	-0.34 *** (0.08)	0.06 (0.13)	-0.30 ** (0.12)
High-income Group (> 68 percentile*)	-0.73 *** (0.12)	-0.46 *** (0.08)	-0.37 *** (0.09)	-0.68 *** (0.09)	-0.51 *** (0.14)	-0.76 *** (0.13)
Unemployed (0/1)	0.63 *** (0.15)	0.32 *** (0.12)	-0.01 (0.12)	-0.10 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.19)	-0.37 ** (0.19)

(Continued)

TABLE 6.A2 (Continued)

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF WHITE RESPONDENTS (1986 TO 2008)	FEDERAL SPENDING ON WELFARE			LIMITS ON TRADE		
	ALL YEARS			POST-NAFTA		
	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INDECISIVE	INDECISIVE
7-pt. political id (Dem.-Rep.)	-0.36 *** (0.02)	-0.17 *** (0.01)	-0.03 ** (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Age	-0.01 ** (0.00)	0.01 *** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 *** (0.00)	0.01 ** (0.00)	-0.01 *** (0.00)
Female (0/1)	0.43 *** (0.08)	0.21 *** (0.06)	0.49 *** (0.06)	0.94 *** (0.06)	0.71 *** (0.09)	1.07 *** (0.09)
Owens house (0/1)	-0.57 *** (0.10)	-0.12 * (0.07)	0.12 * (0.07)	-0.03 (0.07)	0.22 * (0.12)	0.00 (0.11)
Union household	-0.13 (0.12)	0.06 (0.08)	0.30 *** (0.08)	0.10 (0.08)	0.20 (0.13)	0.06 (0.13)
Year 1986			1.34 ** (0.67)	0.15 (0.70)		
Year 1988			1.09 (0.67)	0.23 (0.70)		
Year 1990			0.33 (0.67)	0.50 (0.70)		
Year 1992	-0.64 (0.89)	0.37 (0.61)	1.17 * (0.67)	0.23 (0.70)		

Year 1994	-1.09 (0.89)	-0.04 (0.61)				
Year 1996	-1.01 *** (0.17)	-0.89 *** (0.11)	0.23 (0.15)	0.06 (0.14)	0.23 (0.16)	0.07 (0.15)
Year 1998			0.34 ** (0.15)	-0.05 (0.15)	0.34 ** (0.16)	-0.04 (0.15)
Year 2002	0.84 *** (0.18)	0.56 *** (0.12)				
Year 2004	0.68 *** (0.17)	0.24 ** (0.12)	0.23 (0.16)	0.06 (0.16)	0.25 (0.17)	0.07 (0.16)
Year 2008	0.75 *** (0.15)	0.18 (0.11)	0.81 *** (0.16)	0.55 *** (0.16)	0.84 *** (0.17)	0.60 *** (0.16)
Year 2012	-0.32 * (0.17)	-0.21 * (0.12)	0.97 *** (0.17)	0.57 *** (0.17)	1.00 *** (0.17)	0.61 *** (0.17)
Constant	0.98 (0.99)	1.47 ** (0.69)	0.70 (0.74)	2.06 *** (0.76)	2.53 ** (1.05)	2.74 *** (0.99)
Observations	8,571		10,318		4,904	
Prob > F	0.00		0.00		0.00	

SOURCE: American National Election Studies (1986–2012).

NOTE: Base Response “Decrease.”

* $p < .10$

** $p < .05$

*** $p < .01$

TRADE POLITICS VIOLATES A core finding of public opinion in representative democracies. Public opinion generally follows elite consensus on most policy issues. While individual voters have personal areas of expertise and important insights into the political process, becoming informed about the gamut of policy areas is simply not feasible. When elites have consensus on the optimal policy to implement, the mass public generally adopts this opinion. The elite consensus on the benefits of free trade for the United States has been firmly in place for at least the past thirty years. Yet, the public remains very suspicious of trade liberalization and a plurality prefer trade protection as a guiding principle.

Previous chapters have explored and explained variance in public opinion on trade policy, but cannot fully account for why there exists a strong pro-protectionist sentiment. Chapter 4 pointed out that women and nonwhites are more protectionist than whites—in part because of economic vulnerability. However, even among white men there exists a notable pro-protection slant. Chapter 5 examined the types of communities that provide clear signals about the costs and benefits of trade and trade protection. However, in recent decades, relatively few communities were found to send clearly pro-protection signals, so this dynamic cannot account for the distinctly negative national view. Chapter 6 offered an explanation for why some white men may prefer trade protection over other redistributive policies but not why they have a negative perception of the national economic benefits of trade. So while individual- and community-level characteristics are strong predictors of variation in opinion on trade protection, there remains a substantial and surprising anti-trade public sentiment running counter to the elite consensus to be explained.

This chapter offers a straightforward answer to the question of why the mass public is not following the lead of the elites; namely, the elites may agree on the benefits of trade for the nation, but they communicate the downsides of trade more loudly, more clearly, and more frequently. Economic textbooks may all agree that trade is optimal and maximizes growth; but the presentation

of these issues in public discourse—where people most frequently encounter them—does not reflect that consensus. In fact, the public discussion more often has a negative frame on trade. My analysis of the content of TV news coverage of stories about international trade and political campaign ads that mention trade makes it clear that the messages communicated to the mass public differ from the academic and elite consensus.

Beliefs about Trade and the Nation

US trade policy since World War II has been primarily characterized by increasing trade openness, implemented through a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements. Since 1986 the United States has signed twenty-four free trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), as well as entered into the new multilateral trade agreement of the World Trade Organization in 1995. Although much of the liberalization occurred during periods of congressionally authorized, presidential fast-track negotiating authority (in effect between 1975 and 1994 and again from 2002 to 2007), the most prominent agreements still needed to be—and were—passed by a majority of both houses of Congress.

Even as major trade liberalization measures have enjoyed widespread congressional support, public support for trade liberalization has lagged behind, at times even declining sharply. The elite—including members of Congress—have been observed to be consistently more liberal than the general public in their opinions about trade. In a series of survey experiments about trade policy, Herrmann et al. (2002) found the elite to be 20 percentage points more likely to support trade than the mass public in ordinary cases, and 32 percentage points more likely to support trade when relative gains were portrayed as benefiting countries other than the United States. On the specific issue of the WTO, between 65 percent and 66 percent of elites surveyed supported unrestricted trade via the instrument of the WTO. It is worth noting that Herrmann et al. explain that they chose not to survey the mass public on the WTO on the grounds that at the time they conducted the survey the WTO “had not received much public attention, and we felt the general public would not be familiar with it.” Ten years later, the WTO has received broader, but still arguably limited, political attention and mass opinion has still not converged to the favorable elite consensus. In my data from the 2012 CCES survey, less than one-fifth of those surveyed supported expanded use of the WTO to promote trade. In fact, demonstrating a continued protectionist inclination counter to WTO principles, almost two-thirds of those surveyed supported imposing tariffs on Chinese goods to retaliate for perceived currency manipulation. In Congress, resolutions on this latter subject have been limited and so far failed to find final approval—again suggesting a divide between elite consensus and the American public.

It is important to note that the divide is not solely on policy. Prior chapters provide ample explanation for difference in terms of preferred policy outcomes—employment concerns due to gender and race, clarity of regional benefits, and preferences for forms of distribution. The divide is on the national benefits of trade, the aspect of trade that elites—especially from the economics field—are arguably most unified in viewing as positive. As detailed in chapter 3, economists overwhelmingly view trade as beneficial; the platforms of both major political parties acknowledge the national benefits; and these national benefits comprise much of the logic supporting the proliferation of trade agreements. In comparison, the mass public has held a consistently negative view of the national benefits of trade.

Since 1997, the Pew Research Center and the Council on Foreign Relations have asked a nationwide sample of adults the following question: “In general, do you think that free trade agreements like NAFTA, and the policies of the World Trade Organization, have been a good thing or bad thing for the United States?” Positive responses reached a high in 2001, with 49 percent saying that the impact of free trade agreements on the country was positive, but numbers dipped to 35 percent in both 2003 and 2008. Entering into the US 2008 recession, the majority of individuals still either held that the agreements were negative for the country (48 percent in 2008) or that they didn’t know (17 percent in 2008).¹ Other surveys suggest that American opinion on specific agreements is similarly mixed. In 2004 a survey conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs found that only 42 percent of those surveyed felt that NAFTA was good for the US economy, while almost 70 percent thought NAFTA was good for the Mexican economy.² Ten years later, Americans appeared more positive: 50 percent of those surveyed now thought that NAFTA was good for the US economy; however leaving 50 percent unconvinced of the benefits.

Couched in terms of employment, Americans appear even more negative. As part of the 2006 and 2010 CCES, I asked respondents what they thought the impact of trade was on employment. As noted in chapter 2, responses differed dramatically at the individual and national level. While at the individual level 71 percent thought that trade made no difference and just 21 percent thought trade hurt their own employment; at the national level the ratio flipped with 62 percent stating that that trade hurt national employment either slightly or greatly and only 24 percent saying no difference. This negative perception runs deep across different societal divides. Figure 7.1 displays perceptions of national employment benefits first by all observations (a total of 1,770 out of 1,800 survey responses) and then disaggregated by gender, race, skill level, and political self-identification. Male respondents were more negative than

¹ The Pew Research Center, “Support for Free Trade Recovers despite Recession,” April 28, 2009, <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/511.pdf>.

² Dina S. Smeltz and Craig Kafura, “At NAFTA’s Platinum Anniversary: American Attitudes toward Cross-Border Ties,” March 2014, <http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/Surveys/Mexico-USReport.pdf>.

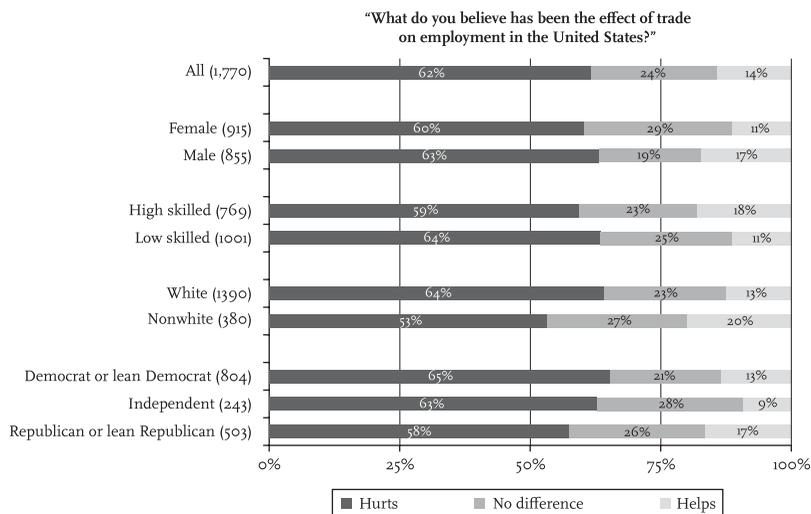


FIGURE 7.1 Perceptions of trade’s national benefit

SOURCE: 2006 and 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2007, 2010) and University of Notre Dame Module (self). Number of observations for each group in parentheses.

female (63 percent vs. 60 percent), low-skilled workers more negative than high-skilled workers (64 percent to 59 percent), whites more negative than nonwhites (64 percent vs. 53 percent) and Democrats more negative than Independents or Republicans (65 percent vs. 63 percent and 58 percent, respectively).³ Interestingly, at the national level nonwhites are more positive than whites, the reverse of individual level beliefs. Yet, while all differences between groups were significant (for all Pearson chi-squared tests of differences, p values $\leq .01$), regardless of categorization, the majority of those surveyed hold a negative perception of trade employment benefits. In short, mass opinion—across the board—has been and continues to be at odds with elite opinion about trade’s national benefits.

A common expectation in the political behavior literature is that over time mass opinion should converge upon elite opinion. Much of this scholarship sees an especially important role for elite cues in this process (see, e.g., Herrmann, Tetlock, and Diasco 2001; Hiscox 2006; Berinsky 2009; Trager and Vavreck 2011; Levendusky and Horowitz 2012). Gathering political information is costly (Downs 1957), and an elite cue can serve as a convenient shortcut especially for issues which are complex and seem distant from everyday life, such as trade and trade policy. People do not directly experience (at least

³ Not shown is the categorization by ethnicity. Survey respondents who self-identified as Hispanic were the least negative about trade’s national effects with only 50 percent stating it hurts national employment and 24 percent stating that it helps.

not in any comprehensive sense) the state of the national or regional economy. And though ample information may be available from government websites, white papers, and economic journal articles, most Americans will not wish to take the time and effort to access such resources and may lack the technical ability to interpret what they read even if they did so. For more complicated and abstract economic beliefs and particularly those which require integration of a causal mechanism, individuals are expected to borrow an “off-the-shelf” belief from experts (Kinder and Mebane 1983; Lau and Sears 1984; Caplan 2006). Yet, those surveyed express strong beliefs about the national economic effects of trade, opinions which are distinct from the elite consensus. Either the American public is not responding to elite cues or those cues diverge from the elite consensus on trade policy. To understand which, I analyze two common sources of Americans’ economic knowledge—the national media and federal-level political campaigns.

Trade, Media, and Public Opinion

In determining national economic perceptions, individuals are more reliant on the media than they are when determining individual- or even community-level perceptions (McCombs and Reynolds 2008). Whereas personal experience—or experiences of friends, family, and community members—can help to inform individual and local economic assessments; trade deficits, national unemployment rates, national growth rates are economic patterns observed outside people’s daily lives. On these types of arm’s-length issues, the media has been shown to have strong effects on individuals’ “pictures in their heads” (McCombs and Shaw 1972, Weaver et al. 1981; Iyengar and Kinder 1988; Mutz 1992; Tedesco 2001; Roberts, Wanta, and Dzwo 2002; McCombs 2004). And importantly the media can inform not only what individuals think about (Cohen 1963) but also how they think about it.

Some Americans have been found to care very much about the economy and thus seek out economic forecasts and other relevant economic news (Parker 1997), at least during poor economic times (Haller and Norpoth 1997).⁴ Many others may simply receive economic news incidentally from following the general news (Arts, Takeshita, and Becker 2002) or inadvertently from waiting for other programs on television (Robinson 1976). Thus choices made by the media can influence what Americans know and think about the economy. Starting in the early 1970s, the relative proportion of economic news grew rapidly, especially on television (Reese, Daly, and Hardy 1987). However, all media must balance economic issues against other competing issues of

⁴ From analysis of the University of Michigan’s “Survey of Consumers during the 1980s,” Haller and Norpoth (1997) report the startling statistic that in good economic times, over 50 percent of those surveyed reported getting no economic news. However, the proportion of no-news respondents falls with the economy.

the day. This selection process is one mechanism by which the media sets the agenda for public opinion, making some issues appear more important than others (McCombs 2004). Furthermore, for certain issues, this selection process can also affect attitudes. If coverage is linked to particular characteristics of events, then the media's influence over "what" Americans think about blurs into "how" they think about it.

Aggregate national economic data are generated on a regular basis but not all new information is reported on the same schedule. The media has a real choice of when to increase coverage and which components of the economy to highlight in that coverage. Multiple scholars have found that the media's selection of coverage-worthy stories appears to privilege bad news over good news (Wood 1985; Harrington 1989; Goidel and Langley 1995; Hester and Gibson 2003; Fogarty 2005), possibly because journalists—like the mass public—are more responsive to negative information (Soroka 2006) or because bad news makes for better press (Haller and Norpoth 1997) or simply because it is the media's job to hold others accountable (Soroka 2006). As a result, an increase in media coverage of economic issues is highly correlated with negative news about those issues. Furthermore, free-standing stories about the economy are very likely to include mention of possible negative consequences for the consumer (Hester and Gibson 2003) or an anecdote highlighting individual impact (Reese, Daly, and Hardy 1987), both of which reinforce negative effects.

This built-in bias between coverage and negative news appears in turn to influence the public's evaluation of the economy and subsequent political behavior (e.g. Howell and Vanderleeuw 1990; Hansen 1999). In analysis of the 1992 US presidential contest between incumbent George H. Bush and challenger Bill Clinton, Heatherington (1996) found that the mass media's negative economic reporting continued well after the economic recovery; combined with increased coverage of economic issues, he argues that these reports so shaped voters' retrospective economic assessments as to influence the election outcome (see also Blood and Phillips 1995). The negative nature of the news is further magnified by the public's asymmetric response to information; Soroka (2006) finds that the effect of negative news is stronger on public opinion than the effect of positive news. Scholars have found evidence (see, e.g., Goidel and Langley 1995; Gavin, Sanders, and Farrall 1996; Hester and Gibson 2003) that on economic issues, the media have set both the agenda and the attitudes of public opinion.

As a subset of economic news, news on international trade seems to follow the same pattern in terms of the frequency of coverage, the bias toward negative stories, and the incorporation of consumer and individual narratives, particularly when these are negative. For example, when the US trade deficit shot up at the start of the 1980s so did the frequency of trade-related articles in the *New York Times*, doubling from a 1970s average of 1.5 percent to just over 3 percent (McGuire 2014). Presentations of trade liberalization or "globalization" tend to focus on the problems of opening trade. Specific headlines or stories—for example, the discovery in the summer of 2012 that the US Olympic team's

uniforms had been made in China—are designed to capture the attention of viewers or readers and further raise popular concerns about trade.

In a three-month period from October to December 2003, ABC's evening news ran three trade-related stories under their trademark segment *A Closer Look*: "A Closer Look: Exporting Jobs to China," "A Closer Look: Steel Wars," and "A Closer Look: Made in China."⁵ The only "positive" story running in the same period was that the high price of prescription drugs was causing states (Illinois, in particular) to consider purchasing drugs from Canada, which could offer medications for up to 80 percent less. Yet, as a counter to an "imports could save money" frame, the story included the Bush Administration's statement that importing drugs is illegal and dangerous; the Food and Drug Administration's characterization of imports as including drugs that are expired, unrefrigerated, mislabeled, and counterfeit; and an estimate that the US pharmaceutical industry loses as much as \$750 million a year to cross-border prescriptive drug transactions.⁶ Canada is the United States' main trading partner and in this particular year the two stand-alone stories on Canadian trade were about possibly dangerous prescription drugs and the US government's ban on Canadian beef imports because of fears over mad cow disease.⁷ For those watching, the takeaway would likely be that trade liberalization and trade itself is fraught with economic and other dangers.

In 2011, ABC ran a 23-minute, five-part series entitled *Made in America* whose premise was to investigate the costs and benefits of replacing foreign-made home furnishings with domestically produced equivalents. As noted by media analyst Andrew Tyndall, not only did the series disregard price disparity and relative scarcity of US replacements in many categories, particularly consumer electronics and appliances, but also the series provided misleading calculations linking current consumer habits to high US unemployment.⁸ A repeated frame of the series was that buying American would ignite new hiring and that these new jobs would be created with a minimum cost to the consumer, a mere 18 cents a day for 200,000 jobs. Via this frame, the newscast laid post-financial crisis unemployment at the door of trade, not financial sector meltdown, even during a period in which the trade deficit was in fact closing. Furthermore, the series promoted limiting imports as an almost costless solution to unemployment even though Tyndall calculated that extrapolation

⁵ "A Closer Look: Exporting Jobs to China," ABC News Transcripts, October 10, 2003; "A Closer Look: Steel Wars," ABC News Transcripts, November 11, 2003; "A Closer Look: Made in China," ABC News Transcripts, December 9, 2003.

⁶ "RX: Canada Drugs Prescription Drugs," ABC News Transcripts, September 15, 2003; "Prescription Canada Americans Cross Border for Drugs," ABC News Transcripts, December 10, 2003.

⁷ "Ban on Beef: US Government Bans Canadian Beef Imports because of Fears over Mad Cow Disease," ABC News Transcripts, May 20, 2003.

⁸ Andrew Tyndall, "ABC's Mercantilist Fairy Tale on Snow White Drive," March 7, 2011, <http://tyn-dallreport.com/comment/20/5325/>.

of ABC's own estimates would in fact sum to an annual cost of \$6,570 a year per household to eliminate unemployment via import reduction.⁹

Trade-related news not only continues the negative bias expected in economic news but also the tendency to link general economic news to national employment concerns or to consumer concerns. In newspapers, for instance, statistics about the balance of trade are frequently placed side by side with statistics about employment. In a 2012 article, for example, Reuters framed a drop in unemployment claims as the result of a surprising narrowing of the trade deficit.¹⁰ Even this positive news drove home a negative story about imports—that they cost jobs. In terms of the consumer focus, trade-related terminology aids in such a story line. A fall in the value of the dollar abroad is branded a “weak” dollar because of consumers lost purchasing power for imports; common use of this value-laden “term of art” serves to suppress awareness of the potential benefits of a depreciated dollar for US exporters. In other words, when the media highlights economic issues, the picture it paints tends to be negative.

Trade on the Nightly News

To better understand trade-specific news patterns, I coded and then analyzed depictions of trade in the nightly news, first using a cross network sample starting in 2006 and then using a single network sample starting in 1984, two years before the American National Election Studies (ANES) began surveying Americans about trade policy. According to a Pew Research Center survey, the average American spends 70 minutes a day following the news, and despite increased media sources, almost half of that time is spent watching TV news.¹¹ Prior research finds that televised economic news is more accessible to the public (Arts, Takeshita, and Becker 2002) and increased coverage in the 1970s has been linked to increased subjective and objective knowledge of the economy (Adoni and Cohen 1978; Reese, Daly, and Hardy 1987).¹² Furthermore, national broadcasts—more than other national and local media including national newspapers—have been found to influence expectations for the US economy (Goidel et al. 2010). Additionally, in terms of political information, viewing television news has been found—across multiple elections—to be a predictor of knowledge of candidates' issue positions (Weaver and Drew 1995,

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Reuters, “U.S. Trade Deficit Narrows as Exports Climb Sharply,” *New York Times*, November 8, 2012.

¹¹ “Americans Spending More Time Following the News,” Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, September 12, 2010.

¹² Of course, simplicity does not necessarily ensure accurate incorporation of economic information by viewers as found by Pruitt, Reilly, and Hoffer (1988) in their comparison of CBS television's and the *Washington Post's* economic news on undergraduate students' economic perceptions.

2001; Chaffee and Frank 1996; Drew and Weaver 2006). To explore the frequency, content, and tone of trade-related televised news I use three collections of newscasts, each with their own distinctive benefits: The Vanderbilt Television News Archive¹³ (1968–2014), Lexis-Nexis’s collection of transcripts of ABC’s “World News” broadcast (1983–2014), and the Tyndall Report¹⁴ archive of video reports (2006–2014).

Tracking the Trade Balance

The Commerce Department provides each month a report on the US trade balance (total exports minus total imports), but these figures appear irregularly on the evening television news. To understand when the trade balance is covered I searched the Vanderbilt Television News Archive for all mentions of “trade deficit” or “trade surplus” in either the title or abstract for items in the major networks evening news (ABC, CBS, and NBC) since 1968, the start of the Vanderbilt collection. From this set I identified a total of 770 news items which explicitly referenced a recent US government report on the United States’ monthly or annual balance of trade. The most common item was simply a studio report on the trade deficit. For example, from the NBC Evening News for Wednesday, December 27, 1972, this item “(studio) Commerce Department reports November trade deficit of \$560 million.” Others were embedded in the economic news segments, such as ABC’s *On the Money*; others still as the opening to broader stories about the economy or trade specifically. I excluded items which did not explicitly reference recent Commerce Department or other similar government reports on the trade deficit.¹⁵

From 1969 to 2012, ABC, CBS, and NBC reported on average balance of trade figures six times a year (5.9 for ABC, 6.3 for CBS, and 4.9 for NBC). However, the average disguises the uneven distribution of balance of trade figures over the more than four decades analyzed. Figure 7.2 displays the total number of stories per year in contrast with data on the annual US Balance of Trade in Goods and Services (US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division) over this period. Economic news as a whole increased at the end of the Vietnam War (Rubin 1981); however, reporting of macroeconomic indicators other than unemployment diminished at the turn of the century as the news media consciously chose a new, more story-focused presentation of economic news.¹⁶

¹³ <http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu>.

¹⁴ Tyndall Report, <http://tyndallreport.com/>.

¹⁵ For example, I excluded an April 19, 1984, CBS news story on US–China trade but not the prior similar April 3, 1984, story on US–Japan trade because the latter opened with the Commerce Department figures. Similar for trade agreement stories, I retained those which referenced recent figures and excluded those simply referencing the concept of a trade balance but not trade balance statistics. Furthermore, I excluded items concerning the trade deficit of other countries (primarily Britain and Japan during this period). All total, I excluded 122 stories from the initial 882 items found.

¹⁶ Interview with Andrew Tyndall, July 16, 2014.

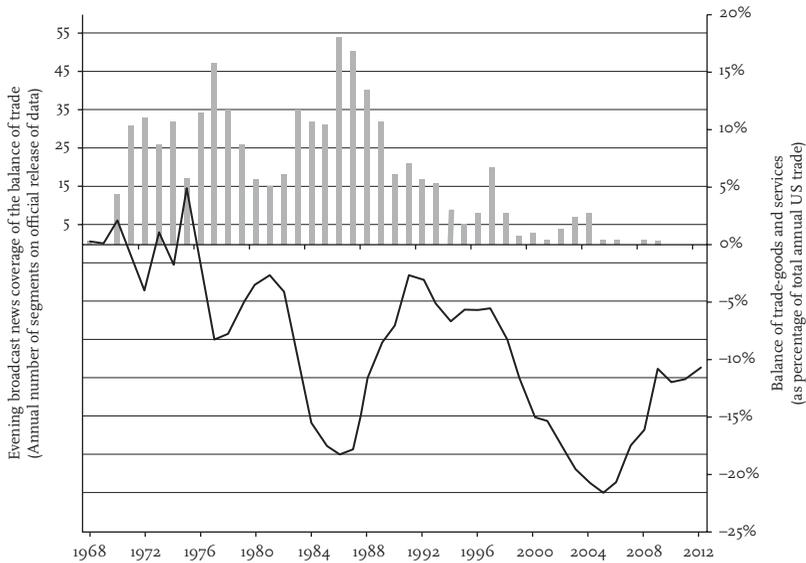


FIGURE 7.2 Reporting the US balance of trade on the evening news (1968–2012)
 SOURCES: US Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division (Various); the Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

The start of the transcript data (1969) also coincides with the start of the decline and then fall of the US trade surplus. For most of the period, coverage of the trade balance appears as a mirror image of movement in the balance of trade with large drops in the trade balance receiving more frequent coverage in the evening broadcast news. Even after the turn of the century, when the trade balance received far less coverage, the pattern continues, albeit at a smaller magnitude.

Not only did coverage spike during downturns, but coverage of declines and recoveries was unevenly distributed. A month-to-month comparison of balance of trade data to the following month's coverage on the evening news reveals a startling pattern. Since 1969, every time there has been a decline in the US balance of trade for three sequential months, the newly released balance of trade figures have received news coverage. In contrast, when the US balance of trade improved for three months in a row, the major networks covered the balance of trade only 44 percent of the time. Comparing the number of stories run, “bad” news generated 37 percent more stories (2.13 vs. 1.56 average stories) than “good.” Post-NAFTA, there has only been one run each of three sequential months of positive and three sequential months of negative changes. The negative run garnered two news stories and the positive run received no mention from the media. In other words, when the newscasts choose to cover the balance of trade, the storyline is predominantly negative rather than positive, even without considering the additional context surrounding the report on the figures.

Three Decades of ABC World News Tonight Coverage

For greater insight into the context in which balance of trade and other trade information was conveyed, I collected and analyzed trade-related news segments from Lexis-Nexis's holding of broadcast transcripts from ABC's *World News Tonight* from January 1, 1984 to January 1, 2014. I start the analysis in 1984, two years before ANES opinion data begins. I selected ABC because ABC has ranked either first or second in terms of highest evening news share since starting in 1985.¹⁷ During this period, I identified 703 trade-related transcripts by using together the Lexis-Nexis subject coding "International Trade" and country coding "United States." These transcripts included reports of the current balance of trade figures but also trade policy, trade agreements, and trade impact items. I had two independent coders classify the contents of each item in terms of subject, focus, concern, description of effect on the economy, and tone. First, coders identified whether the item was a balance of trade report and if there was a reason provided for the imbalance (which since 1984 has always been a trade deficit): "U.S. imports high," "U.S. exports low," "other country imports low," and "other country imports high." If the item was broader than the figures or did not include balance of trade figures, coders identified the primary focus of the story ("imports to the U.S.," "exports from the U.S.," or "general"); the primary concern ("safety, including food, health, and environmental issues," "jobs," "patents and piracy," or "prices"); the expressed link between trade and the effect of the economy ("bad," "mixed," or "good"); the tone concerning conditions ("improving," "neutral," or "worsening"); and which other countries were included in the item. The separation of trade's effect and the tone of the story allows for the possibility of more positively spun news even with the background depiction of the US trade deficit as bad for the US economy.

For instance, the coding of the data allows insight past just the occurrence of trade deficit stories but also the framing and tone of such stories. Of the 120 times the trade deficit was mentioned between 1984 and 2014, 78 percent of all reports framed the reason for the imbalance in terms of excessive US imports. For two short spans within the three decades, emphasis was placed on excessive exports by other countries: Japan in the early 1990s and China in the late 1990s. However, such frames on the trade deficit alone were less than 9 percent of all reports. The role of exports by American companies received little more airtime. Despite the balance of trade comprising both imports and exports, US exports were the main story line only fifteen times, just 13 percent of the total coverage. Furthermore, the bulk of the trade-related stories were coded as having a negative tone. When the trade deficit was mentioned, in

¹⁷ "Evening Network News Share over Time," Pew Research Journalism Project, <http://journalismandmedia.com/media-indicators/evening-network-news-share-over-time/>; Nielsen ratings published in the *Washington Post's* "The TV Column" by John Carmody, various weeks in 1984–1993.

particular, more than two-thirds of the time the news described worsening conditions and less than one-third of the stories described improving conditions. This finding fits the prior discerned pattern that trade deficit coverage increases during deficit increases but not during equivalent surplus increases.

The trade deficit is an important, but small component of overall coverage. Reporting of trade deficit figures comprise 16 percent of the sample (7 percent cite trade deficit figures alone and 9 percent ran a story segment on the deficit). An additional 582 segments covered trade more broadly. Analysis of these trade stories shows less singular focus on imports over exports: the percent of segments solely about imports (14 percent) only slightly exceeds those solely about exports (13 percent); the remaining stories offered a story line including both. However, a larger set of trade-related stories shared with balance of surplus stories a similar focus on negative outcomes rather than positive: more than half (52 percent) of stories depicted conditions as worsening and only in 30 percent of stories were conditions seen to be improving. Of the trade-related stories, 34 percent had a primary focus on employment issues with two-thirds of these stories focused on the negative ramification of trade on US employment. Safety concerns (health, security, and the environment) comprised the next largest grouping with 22 percent of all segments citing a safety concern linked to trade. Positive benefits to consumer prices—one of the primary theoretical benefits of trade liberalization—were mentioned less than 5 percent of the time.

If we compare all stories across time, it is clear that while positive stories do run, the backbone of the news segments are in fact stories about “the problem” created by trade. Each news segment was coded on the presentation of impact of trade on current US conditions using five categories—good, mixed to good, neutral, mixed to bad, and bad. Figure 7.3 displays the annual

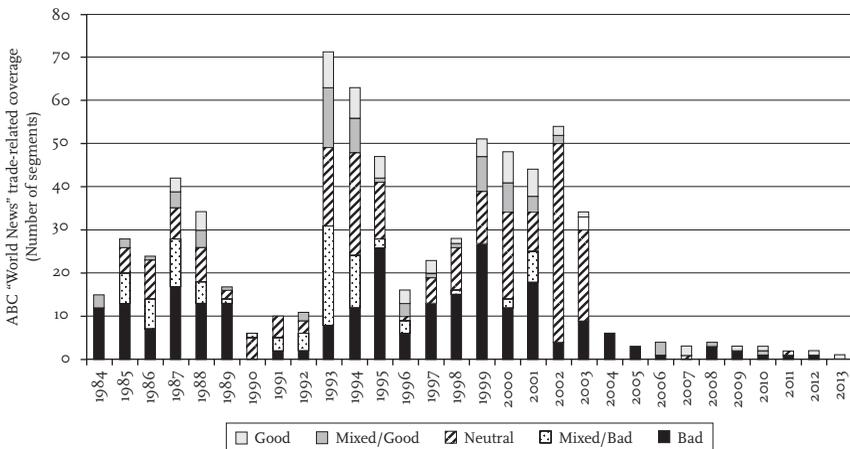


FIGURE 7.3 Framing of trade’s influence on economic outcomes in ABC “World News” segments (1984–2013)

SOURCE: Analysis of Lexis-Nexis Broadcast News Transcripts (LexisNexisAcademic 1984–2013).

frequency and distribution by “impact” framing of these news segments from 1984 to 2013. While coverage appears to wax and wane, particularly in the last decade, the negative framing is persistent. The black spine in the figure represents the negatively framed stories. More than one-third of the time, the relationship in the story segment was coded as “bad.” Combined with “mixed to bad” such stories accounted for more than half of all segments across time. Neutral segments comprised an additional third, with more positive stories accounting for less than 20 percent of all segments. Only in a few years did positive or at least neutral presentations outweigh negative messages.

Coverage across Networks

The ABC transcripts provide a broad span of time, but to compare across more recent network broadcasts and to benefit from a video archive, I also analyzed evening news segments identified by the Tyndall report. Since 2006, the Tyndall report has classified by subject, segments of the evening news programs of the three major American broadcast networks. Selecting the 197 trade-related articles (as identified by the Tyndall report subject classification system), I asked two independent coders to watch the identified trade-related segments and code whether they were export- or import-oriented and whether the news was presented as positive or negative for the United States or subgroups within the United States.

Since 2006, the most common framing of trade in national newscasts similarly links trade to safety concerns about food, health, the environment, and security. During this period, all three networks extensively reported on concerns over food and toy imports from China. Representative titles included “China–US Trade Relations: Import Safety Worries”; “Food Supply Safety, Poisoning Prevention Measures”; “Children’s Toy Imports from China Safety Worries” for reports detailing a House of Representatives’ hearing into FDA import inspections flaws, the monitoring of lead paint, the FDA’s ban of generic pharmaceuticals from a plant in India, and traces of Brazilian pesticides found in orange juice imports. During the period tracked by Tyndall, for each story about trade and US exports, these news outlets ran four stories on US imports, almost all of which were negative. In 2012, to give an example, the networks ran five stories discussing recent growth in US exports (particularly to Mexico and China), while they carried twenty-six stories about US imports—more than half of which were framed in terms of American job losses and a third in terms of food, health, and safety concerns. Even though reporting on the trade deficit has petered off, coverage of trade continues, and it emphasizes negative over positive benefits and trade with China over that with any other country.

In summary, reporting on trade-related issues diverges substantially from political, business, and academic elites’ general positive beliefs about trade’s positive national benefits, conveying a far more negative view. As such the

media provides a cue but one that differs from the “banker” model of the electorate in which the expectations of economic experts flow through the news media to the mass public (MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson 1992). Instead, the media plays a distinct role in interpreting trade-related information, providing a changed narrative as has been found true of other economic conditions (Nadeau, Miemi, Fan, and Amato 1999). Not only do the media fail to echo the elite free-trade consensus, but it actually conveys a protectionist message that is the exact opposite of the elite consensus. Thus, the lack of convergence with elite beliefs about national benefits need not be because voters fail to take the cues of the political, business, and academic elite, but simply that the primary cues they hear differ.

The Persistence of Negative Campaign Messages about Trade

Political campaigns serve as a second major source of information for Americans about the economy and economic policy. Like the media, campaigns can both raise the salience of particular issues and offer information which can influence individuals’ attitudes toward the issue. To be sure, politicians can attempt to inform and influence constituents’ perceptions at any time. Incumbent presidents, in particular, can set the agenda for press briefings, weekly addresses, reports, and the annual State of the Union address (Cohen 1995). Given the importance of perceptions of economic outcomes in the president’s overall job approval (Nickelsburg and Norpoth 2000; Wood 2004) and subsequent legislative success (Neustadt 1960; Ostrom and Simon 1985; Rivers and Rose 1985; Bond, Fleisher, and Wood 2003), the president has a constant incentive to frame economic events in order to shape public opinion via rhetorical leadership (Wood 2004). Without term limits in the Congress, incumbent senators and representatives also have incentives to strategically influence constituent opinions during non-campaign periods. Incumbents are well placed to increase constituents’ knowledge on economic and other issues with the advantages that come from holding office: access to staff, franking privileges, appearances, and press releases (see Mayhew 1974; Cover and Brumberg 1982). Incumbents can also speak authoritatively on government reports, special sessions, and other official sources of national economic information. Doing so can ease the upcoming campaign season. That said, campaign seasons heighten the potential for politicians to influence public opinion. Constituents are more attentive during the campaign season and the media are more likely to cover politics. The competition to win elections provides incentive for information provision not only to incumbents but also to their challengers. In this environment, political interest groups also reach out to voters to influence their opinions. Issue advocacy ads—ads which define a social problem without explicitly recommending a candidate—have become an influential staple of the campaign period, both those by congressional campaign committees and those by interest groups (Magleby 2004; Herrnson 2013).

As with scholarship on media influence, scholarship on campaigns divides into two broad camps, those who view campaigns as influencing *what* voters think about and those who view campaigns as influencing *how* voters think about topics. Campaigns can select the issues to make prominent, and incumbents, in particular, are thought to behave strategically when announcing or publicizing a position (Arnold 1990). If candidates feel that the media have not focused sufficiently on a subject or have framed it incorrectly, they can run ads to increase the salience of the subject for voters and put their opponents on the defensive. The need for strategic selection is particularly important if, as many have argued, advertisements (and the media as a whole) are best at focusing attention on what issues, values, and attributes the public should think about rather than what they should think about them (Cohen 1963; Sutherland and Galloway 1981; Weaver et al. 1981; Ghorpade 1986). Whether campaign ads can do more and influence attitudes is still debated. Early work by Patterson and McClure (1976), analyzing the 1972 presidential elections, found evidence that not only did political advertising contain meaningful issue content but also that it effectively informed viewers about issues, arguably more than did the television news. But, as Goldstein and Ridout (2004, 2005) point out, “informing and engaging the public outside of one’s supporters, when and if it occurs, is a by-product or secondary effort to win political battles.”

Issue ads—those identifying a problem to be solved and recommending a solution without advocating for a specific candidate—play a dual role. To remain unlimited by campaign finance laws, “pure” issue ads must avoid an explicit exhortation to vote for or against a candidate. Even though many ads still manage to clearly telegraph preferences via other calls to action (“ask Joe Donnelly,” “call the Government”), voters still perceive such ads as different from standard candidate-based advertisements. According to self-reports analyzed by Magleby (2004) more than two-thirds surveyed considered the primary objective of an issue ad to inform about the issue rather than tout a specific candidate. And these issue ads have been found to be persuasive, especially when the message provider is perceived as sincere, or at least not obviously driven by vote-seeking interests (An, Jin, and Pfau 2006). Notably, voters have also been found more likely to recall viewing advertisements than watching speeches delivered during the free airtime available on broadcast networks (Beck et al. 1996).

Tracking Trade in Twenty-First-Century Political Advertisements

To better understand what information about trade was conveyed to voters, I analyzed the composition of trade-related congressional, gubernatorial, and presidential television advertisements in the 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, and 2012 election cycles. For the 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2008 US presidential and mid-term elections, the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project has compiled, transcribed, storyboarded, and indexed campaign advertisements from the country’s largest media markets (Goldstein, Franz, and Ridout 1998, 2002;

Goldstein and Rivlin 2005, 2007; Goldstein et al. 2011). From their database, I selected the 385 ads the project characterized as having trade as its theme. For each advertisement, the Wisconsin Advertising project provides the length of the advertisement and the date, time, and media market in which it was run. Combining this information and comparing it against averages for other non-trade-related political advertisement provides a sense of trade-related political advertisement coverage during the 2000s, but with a caveat. Over the course of the 2000s, the Wisconsin Advertising Project increased the markets included in their coverage; the markets' geographic classifications themselves changed; and because of the distinct cycles of Senate and Presidential elections, the political geography of campaigns differed in each election period. However, comparisons across time allow for broad characterization of coverage, especially when comparing presidential campaign years.

To get a better sense of content and the tone of recent trade-related advertisements, I coded these from the Wisconsin Advertising Project as well as an additional set of congressional and presidential advertisements gathered by Public Citizen during the 2012 campaign. While Public Citizen's sampling method is opaque and limited to advertisements available online, their list covers 146 ads from 2 presidential, 58 House of Representatives, and 19 Senate candidates. Unfortunately, where and when the advertisements were run is unspecified. However, analysis of the content of the ads can still provide descriptive insight into the current state of trade-related political advertising. For both sets of advertisements (the Wisconsin Advertising Project and Public Citizen), I had two independent coders read the script or watch the video as applicable and then classify the ads as primarily supporting increased trade protection (pro-protection) or supporting continued or increased free trade (pro-trade).¹⁸ Additionally, coders identified commonly used themes such as export promotion, saving American jobs, and "fair" trade. In coding the Wisconsin data, when coders identified a particular trade stance, they rarely disagreed (5 times out of 200 jointly coded cases) and a third party arbitrated. However, much higher variation existed in coders' perception of a whether a particular stance on trade was clear. In these cases, if one coder deemed the ad neutral and the other with a stance, the joint code favored the identified stance. By selection, all the ads identified by Public Citizen had a clear trade stance and thus unclear classification was not an issue in coding these ads.

Although the election years are not perfectly comparable due to variations in both the collection of the political ads and the election cycle itself, broad characteristics in tone, content, and placement emerge from analysis of the data in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, and 2012. Most clearly, in the last dozen years, campaign-specific political ads concerning trade have been overwhelmingly

¹⁸ Coders also excluded ads which on closer inspection did not appear to actually discuss trade, although they were coded as such. For example, in 2000 "Chabot on Our Side" is about foreign debt relief, not foreign trade.

negative, focusing on trade as a source of employment losses rather than gains. This negative focus by candidates has been countered by more positive issue advocacy ads, but unevenly so across the election cycles.

In 2000, the Wisconsin Advertising Project identified 20 trade-related advertisements across the national's largest 100 media markets (DMAs), none at the presidential level. The 2000 campaign came six years after NAFTA entered force. Canada and Mexico were the United States' top two trading partners and combined, accounted for more than one-third of all US trade (20.5 percent and 12.4 percent, respectively). In both cases, the United States ran a trade deficit of around 10 percent of total trade. As vice president to President Bill Clinton, Al Gore had helped shepherd NAFTA through the final stages of ratification and was especially active in ensuring Democratic support of a treaty originally negotiated by Republican President George H. W. Bush. NAFTA could have emerged as a point of contention in the Democratic primary race for the presidency. Instead, in the 2000 election, neither presidential candidate (Democrat Al Gore nor Republican George Bush) ran a trade-related ad in the major markets.

In fact, only three candidates in major markets directly included trade policy in their campaigns. During the Republican New Hampshire primary season, candidate Gary Bauer accused his fellow Republicans, as well as President Clinton, of placing trade interests above security interests when dealing with China. But his campaign was brief, and the ad played no more than 15 times (less than 8 minutes) and only in the Boston market. Bill Frazier, an independent candidate for Indiana Congressional District 2, focused his campaign almost singularly on defeating NAFTA. He ran over 2 hours and 10 minutes of anti-NAFTA advertising in the Indianapolis market, but ultimately failed to break 10 percent of the vote on Election Day. Only Senator Ashcroft, an incumbent, ran a pro-export ad in his successful re-election campaign. Paid for by the Business Round Table, but specifically supporting Ashcroft, the ad "Ashcroft from the Start" featured a newborn baby and suggested that an America with open markets provided the best opportunities for future peace and prosperity.

In fact, the main trade-related debates in the 2000 elections were driven instead by special interest groups who provided almost three-quarters of all trade-related political ads. Although a few ads raised the potential safety concerns of imports having bypassed FDA safety standards or imports' potential to be counterfeit, the primary concern centered on trade with China. Two business groups (the Business Coalition and the Business Round Table) and the AFL-CIO ran competing, non-office-related ads concerning trade, American jobs, and conditions in China. The ads presented starkly opposing depictions of the impact of trade with China and opposing stances on whether Fast Track Authority should be granted to the president on the issue of China.

The Business Coalition and the Business Round Table ran eight different trade- and China-focused ads which promoted trade as improving political, religious, and environmental conditions in China and increasing employment in the United States. Combined, the ads aired for 32 hours in roughly one-third

of US media markets. The most common ad—the Business Round Table’s “America and China”—ran for 19 of those hours and focused primarily on American jobs. A series of men and women narrated the following:

I work in America making products the world wants. Expanding opportunities. Opening new markets, like China, the world’s largest market. Trade with China will open new frontiers. And build a better future for me and my family. China’s markets have unlimited potential. I work in America. Trade works for me. Let Congress know that trade with China works for us working Americans.

The AFL-CIO ran two different ads, both of which featured the “Made in China” label and linked poor labor conditions to unfair competition and job losses. Both combined the problem of Chinese human and labor rights abuse with the issue of domestic job losses. In one of them, “Made in China,” the screen flashed a “Made in China” label, a prisoner, and the text “800,000 American Jobs LOST,” while the narrator in the background announced “Behind this label is a shameful story of political prisoners and forced labor camps, of wages as low as 13 cents an hour, of a country that routinely violates trade rules—flooding our markets—draining American jobs.” The ads ran for just under 10 hours of total play time during the 2000 election cycle.

Special interests offered a message candidates could or would not. Importantly, both sets of ads focused on changing American opinion about future trade with China, rather than informing voters about politicians’ previous behavior. Unlike some issue ads whose intent is to provide political information on candidates’ positions, these ads focused on providing information to shift American attitudes toward trade by setting the attributes on which trade should be judged (employment, ethical concerns) as well as providing the necessary information to form a judgment on those attributes. The Business Coalition and the AFL-CIO, unlike politicians, need not personally care about potential electoral backlash from having their positions highlighted. Thus, it is interesting that it is in these cases of advocacy ads, the balance between negative and positive information is reversed. For the one positive pro-trade candidate campaign ad in 2000, there were nine negative ads. Here, positive trade messages far outweigh (four to one) negative messages. In terms of the combined 52.6 hours of trade-related advertising minutes, the positive messages about trade played about 1.7 times the minutes of negative trade messages.

Figure 7.4 shows the distribution of these issue ads by independent groups, pro-trade ads on the top and pro-protection ads on the bottom. The pro-protection ads ran extensively in more than half of the top 75 US media markets and were distributed relatively evenly across the country. Compared to the concentration of other political ads, however, the AFL-CIO’s ads were in the shadows: where the ads played, they on average constituted less than 0.5 percent of all political ads in the cycle. In comparison, the pro-China trade ads run by the business coalitions ran in fewer markets—just a third of the top 75 major markets—but more often. In total, their pro-China trade ads played for over 320 hours, well over half of the

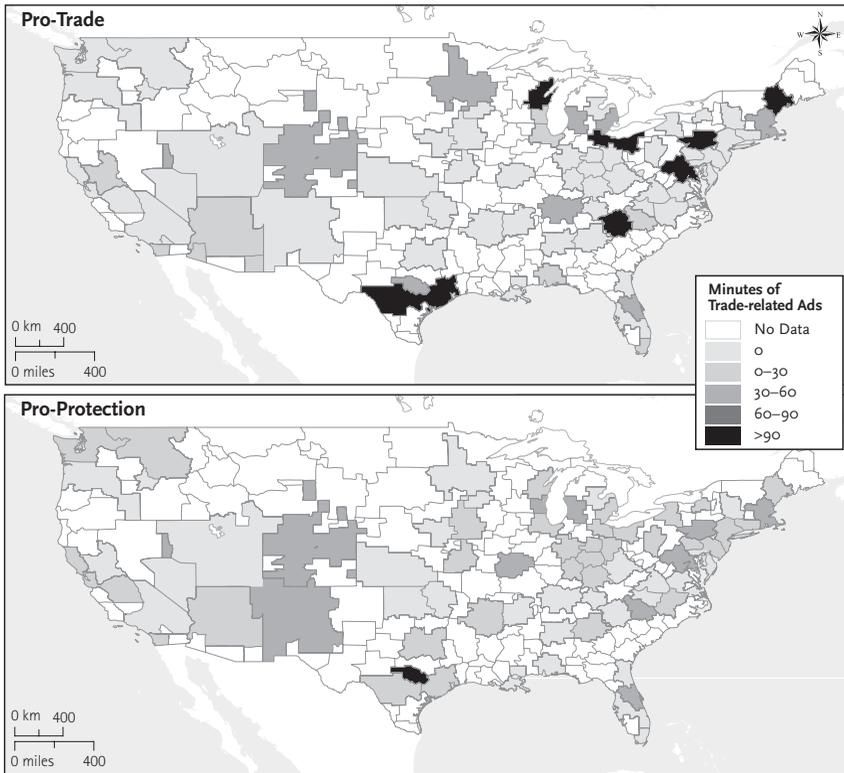


FIGURE 7.4 Concentration of non-campaign trade-related ads in the 2000 election (as percentage of total ads in each market)

SOURCE: Analysis of trade-related ads from the 2000 Wisconsin Advertising Project (Goldstein, Franz, and Ridout 2002).

total amount of trade-related advertising. Both pro-trade and pro-protection groups focused more heavily on the eastern part of the country, with some additional concentration around Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. Even so, on average, where trade ads were run, they still constituted less than 2 percent of all political ads played in those markets during the election cycle.¹⁹ In 2000, trade-related issue ads far outweighed trade-related political campaign ads, but the impact was still relatively small.

In the 2002 mid-term elections, all 65 trade-related ads were candidate-specific (although 5 were paid by independent interest groups) and again these candidate-specific messages were overwhelmingly pro-protection. Only 6 offered pro-trade sentiment; 4 mentioned trade but took no specific stance; and 55 espoused support for protection. Fifty of the ads (more than 75 percent) linked trade with the need to protect American jobs. The main trade message

¹⁹ An outlier is San Antonio in which the ad constituted 29 percent of all political ads in the cycle; however, this was due to that year's electoral races being relatively uncontested.

of the election cycle was one of concern over employment prospects, yet trade was still a minor issue. Trade-related ads comprised a relatively small percentage (< 2 percent) of all political advertising in the top 100 media markets.

During the 2004 presidential campaign, the relative frequency of trade-related political ads more than doubled to 4 percent. Of the 115 trade-related advertisements, 113 promoted the need to protect the American market from imports and increased outsourcing of jobs abroad. Of the two ads that were not pro-protection, only one was explicitly pro-imports. The majority of the trade-related ads occurred early in the campaign as Howard Dean, John Edwards, Dick Gephardt, and John Kerry jostled for the Democratic Party's nomination. In late 2003 and early 2004, potential nominees and their supporters raised the specter of job losses due to American companies moving production overseas, placing the blame on trade agreements in general and President Bush's tax policies specifically. A group called "Americans for Jobs, Healthcare, and Progressive Values" attempted to discredit early fundraising leader Howard Dean for his stated support of NAFTA,²⁰ even though as governor of Vermont, Dean had no voting history on trade policy.²¹ Similarly, Gephardt's campaign and supporters attempted to diminish the protectionist credentials of John Kerry and John Edwards. The United Steelworkers of America publicized its endorsement of Gephardt with an ad calling out the lack of opposition to free trade by other Democratic candidates: "These days, just about every Democrat says he's against trade deals that wipe out our jobs. Too bad they woke up after the horses left the barn. Only one leading Democrat has fought for our jobs since day one."²²

The campaign ads corresponded with only a slight uptick in media attention; during 2002 and early 2003 media references to offshore outsourcing in four major national newspapers (*The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*) averaged around 20 a month (Mankiw and Swagel 2006). In the early period of the campaign (end of 2003 to January 2004), references to outsourcing in the same four newspapers increased to an average of 50 a month (Mankiw and Swagel 2006). But in early February 2004, the release of the Economic Report of the President (ERP) ignited media interest and garnered criticism from both Republicans and Democrats for its straightforward promotion of free trade not just for manufactured goods but also services. Mirroring an economics textbook, the report argued that the economic principles of offshore outsourcing were the same for services as

²⁰ Americans for Jobs, Healthcare and Progressive Values, "PRES/AJHPV Dean with Bush," aired December 12, 2003 to December 19, 2003, Wisconsin Advertising Project (2003–2004).

²¹ Dean's campaign was more generally characterized by his support for universal healthcare and his opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The Achilles Heel to Dean's candidacy was not NAFTA, but instead what became known as the "Dean Scream," an onstage outburst after a surprising third-place finish at the Iowa Democratic Caucus.

²² United Steelworkers of America, "Trd/USWA Gephardt Endorsement," aired November 19, 2003, to November 26, 2003, Wisconsin Advertising Project (2003–2004).

for goods, only the means of delivery might differ. During the report's public discussion, Bush's chief economic advisor, Gregory Mankiw, responded to criticism by citing not only most economists' agreement with the long-term efficiency benefits of trade but also the president's. In the subsequent political storm, both Republicans and Democrats criticized Mankiw. Republican Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert denounced the report, saying that it failed a basic test of "real" economics; Republican senators pushed through an amendment to deny certain federal contracts to companies practicing offshore outsourcing, and Kerry reasserted his intention to remove any tax advantages which facilitated "Benedict Arnold" CEOs or companies "shipping jobs overseas." President Bush sought to distance himself from Mankiw's report by noting his concerns for American jobs. In February, references to outsourcing in the four national newspapers jumped to more than 150 (Mankiw and Swagel 2006). Against this background, Kerry and Edwards continued to run ads denouncing outsourcing and questioning NAFTA through Super Tuesday (March 2, 2004), but once the nomination settled, candidate-supported trade ads quickly subsided. As the *New York Times* noted, both Kerry and Edwards were free traders at heart and needed to be careful not to make promises they couldn't keep.²³

In the three months from April to June 2004, only interest groups ran trade-related campaign advertisements. While interest-group advertisements have been on the rise, in 2004, the proportion of interest-group advertising on non-trade issues was less than 19 percent. For trade-related advertising, the proportion was over 29 percent. Furthermore, in 2004, these interest group ads in 2004 skewed protectionist. The AFL-CIO, the NEA fund for Children and Public Education, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the Alliance for Economic Justice, Bring Ohio Back, and similar groups ran similar ads blaming job losses on Bush's helping American counties to outsource jobs. The AFL-CIO ad entitled "Show Us the Jobs" ran more than 4,500 times from April to June across twenty-four media markets, including not only traditional manufacturing towns like Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Detroit, but West Palm Beach and Seattle.²⁴ The ad highlighted a worker who had been asked to train her overseas replacement, a story the Kerry campaign would return to in the month running up to the election. Efforts by the interest groups kept the issue simmering. Media attention had fallen rapidly since the February report (see again Mankiw and Swagel 2006). In June, the Bureau of Labor statistics released its first attempt to estimate the domestic employment effects of offshoring.²⁵ But its estimate that less than 2 percent of recent job losses were due to

²³ "Overpromising on Trade," *New York Times*, February 28, 2004.

²⁴ AFL-CIO, "Show Us the Jobs," aired April 13, 2004, Wisconsin Advertising Project (2003-2004).

²⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Extended Mass Layoffs Associated with Domestic and Overseas Relocations, First Quarter 2004," June 10, 2004, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/reloc.nro.htm>.

outsourcing was underwhelming and the debate surrounding the methodology used in the Bureau's mass layoff survey failed to spark a second upsurge in media attention. Both the Democratic and Republican campaigns turned to other issues, particularly security.

President Bush did little to counter the attacks via campaign ads. Despite, or arguably because of, his successful efforts to streamline trade negotiations via the renewal of Trade Promotion Authority Act in 2002 (colloquially known as "Fast Track" authority) and his initiation of negotiations for a Caribbean free trade zone (what would come to be called CAFTA), President Bush sponsored no trade-related campaign advertisements. His ads spoke generally of his stewardship of the American economy and of his leadership after the 9/11 attacks, but not about trade and especially not about the benefits of free trade. The only trade-related ad attached to President Bush touted his protectionist policies rather than his free-trade policies. In a likely attempt to keep pressure on the president, in the fall of 2003, the United Steelworkers ran a political advertisement thanking Bush for his protection of the steel industry from "unfair" foreign competition.

In fact, the only campaign ad in 2004 educating voters about the benefits of trade was that of Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry who ran an advertisement explaining his support for the liberalization of pharmaceutical imports in order to lower medical costs ("Kerry RX Drugs"). Republican Senator Jim DeMint offered a pro-liberalization ad which was couched in terms of the ability of Americans to fight and compete globally if left unfettered by the government. In total, 99 percent of the political advertisements—congressional and presidential—noted some concern with trade liberalization and its effect on the US economy. Yet, the next year, Congress passed CAFTA, at the time the biggest trade bill since NAFTA. The campaign ads of the 2004 election cycle had provided little to no indication of this policy direction which was so at odds with public sentiment.

By 2008, the United States had entered into the post-financial crisis recession and according to Pew Research Center polls, support for free-trade agreements was at a decade low. In April 2008, only 35 percent of individuals polled thought that free-trade agreements were a "good thing" for the country. Almost half (48 percent) thought that trade agreements were a "bad thing," and undecideds comprised only 17 percent of the sample (half as many compared to a poll five years prior). Perhaps, not surprisingly, then, the candidate-sponsored, pro-trade ads run during that election cycle could be counted on one hand.

In 2008, trade-related advertising remained relatively stable at just less than 5 percent (184 ads, for a combined 1,004 hours across 210 markets). Ninety-five percent of the airtime spent on trade offered a negative spin; 130 of the trade-related ads explicitly supported the need for protection, even though the majority of incumbents in that year had supported trade liberalization. However, despite (or perhaps because of) CAFTA's recent passage through Congress, only three campaigners actively touted their role in expanding trade in their ads. Two of the three candidates running pro-trade ads had no prior trade

policy voting record. In North Dakota, incumbent John Hoeven successfully ran to return to the office of Governor with a pro-trade—albeit not specifically pro-liberalization—ad called “Hoeven Making Real Progress.” He touted both the expansion of jobs in the high-tech and advanced manufacturing industries and the expansion of exports during his tenure in office without suggesting a need to diminish protection or in fact change trade policy. In New Hampshire, Democratic challenger and former Governor Jeanne Shaheen defeated incumbent Republican Senator John E. Sununu. During his single term as a senator, Sununu had voted for CAFTA as well as for trade agreements with Peru, Oman, Singapore, and Chile. As a representative, he had voted in support of Fast Track Authority and against withdrawing from the WTO. Shaheen also struck a pro-trade tone in her campaign, albeit a limited one: out of 32 Shaheen ads, one, “Shaheen First,” offered a pro-trade message. That ad ran 200 times (or approximately 3 hours 20 minutes), constituting approximately 2.5 percent of all pro-Shaheen ads.

In comparison, trade policy was a major issue in the campaign for Pennsylvania Congressional District 3. Roughly 20 percent of ads centered on trade issues, starting with incumbent Phil English’s own ad, “Disclosed Trip,” which touted his “publicly disclosed trips to promote Western Pennsylvania and create jobs. Like GE-built locomotives sold to Asia, and local small business exports to Europe and South America.” The Democratic challenger, Kathy Dahlkemper, and the Democratic Party, responded to the English ad by calling out English’s vote in support of CAFTA (described in their ads as “expanding NAFTA”), and specifically noting his “flip-flopping” on the issue. Dahlkemper won by a small margin, only to be ousted herself by a Republican challenger in 2010.

Across the rest of the country, where candidates ran trade-related ads, they kept to a cautious tone concerning the effect of trade, especially on employment. Figure 7.5 shows the nationwide distribution and concentration of pro-protection ads in the 2008 campaigns for the presidency, House, Senate, and governors’ offices. The heaviest concentration was in the old-industrial centers. Seven of the 196 media markets tracked by the Wisconsin Advertising Project in 2008 had trade-related ad concentrations exceeding 20 percent: Syracuse, NY (34 percent); Buffalo, NY (28 percent); Utica, NY (27 percent); Rochester, NY (26 percent); Gainesville, FL (23 percent); Binghamton, NY (22 percent); and Detroit, MI (21 percent). While the northern New York state congressional districts had highly contentious trade debates throughout the cycle, just south, in New York City, only a single trade-related ad ran—and it was for the New Jersey Senate race.

The largest contribution to the pro-protectionist tone of the 2008 election cycle came from the presidential campaign ads. Unlike in 2000, when neither candidate ran a trade-related ad in the major media market, in 2008 presidential campaign ads accounted for 62 percent of all trade-related ads, and these ads generally noted public concern about the relationship between trade and job losses. In ad after ad, Democratic candidates pounded home

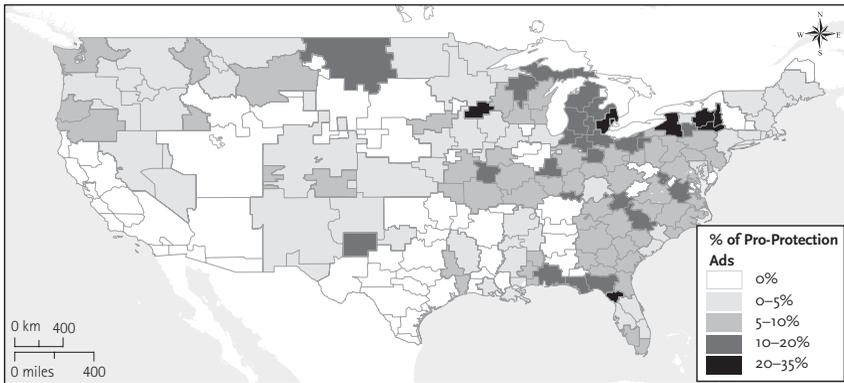


FIGURE 7.5 Concentration of pro-protection trade-related ads in the 2008 election (as percentage of total ads in each market)

SOURCE: Analysis of ads from the 2008 Wisconsin Advertising Project (Goldstein et al. 2011).

the message that jobs were being shipped overseas, that politicians had sold out the American people, and that unfair trade practices were at the heart of job losses. Yet while the Democrats and their presidential candidate, Barack Obama, pointed fingers at the prior administration and senators like McCain, Republicans also sounded the alarm in their own campaign ads. Ron Paul directly blamed NAFTA for American job losses, with an ad characterizing NAFTA as “900 pages of regulations” setting up “international tribunals” with power over Americans, and costing the nation 3 million jobs. Mitt Romney’s ads noted increased foreign competition from Asia.

Republican presidential candidate Senator John McCain had produced (in both English and Spanish) a strong, informative, pro-Colombian free-trade agreement advertisement, but it never made it off the Internet and onto the television. McCain boldly declared climate change “real” and immigration and financial reform urgent necessities but failed to promote his decidedly pro-liberalization trade views. Instead McCain ads attempted to place the problems created by trade at the feet of Democrats. In McCain’s ad, “Overseas,” over a background of manufacturing workers, a narrator declared, “Michigan manufacturing jobs are going overseas. Barack Obama and his liberal allies are to blame,” before linking the losses to energy costs, healthcare costs, and high taxes. Although tariff policy is not discussed, the picture—even from Republicans—is that trade not managed well mires the domestic economy in gloom, primarily through the loss of American jobs to overseas competition.

That said, pessimistic trade messages were not equally dispersed across the country. Within the national constituency, presidential campaigns can pick and choose their markets. Roughly one-quarter of covered media markets—56—saw less than 5 percent of trade-related ads. And an additional 56 saw no trade-related ads, including major markets in Texas and California, such as Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco. In short, even during a

period of economic downturn, when protectionist sentiment was high, while political ads for trade remained primarily negative, they also remained relatively scarce.

In 2012, of 143 trade-related ads, only three (less than 2 percent) were pro-trade. In that year, presidential candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney both ran multiple pro-protection advertisements (18 and 12, respectively) compared to one ad each which noted trade expansion. Only in Hawaii (by senatorial candidate Linda Lingle), Minnesota (by Senator Amy Klobuchar), and Utah (by Senator Orrin Hatch) did candidates link themselves to a pro-trade message, in all three cases focusing on the importance of exports for the health of the American economy. More commonly, trade-related scripts during the 2012 election sounded like this one from Josh Segall, a challenger for Alabama Congressional District 3: “Thousands of Alabama jobs—one after another—lost to bad free trade agreements. Trade deals Mike Rogers voted for—Mike Rogers cast the deciding vote for CAFTA, shipping our jobs to other countries, all while Rogers voted for a pay raise for himself. Josh Segall is different. Josh Segall will oppose every trade deal that costs us jobs. Segall’s top priority is creating jobs here in Alabama.”

Although anti-trade sentiment might not be surprising in import-competing areas with a high proportion of manufacturing jobs, it also extended to states and sectors typically viewed as export-oriented. For example, in California District 4, a Democratic challenger, Charlie Brown, came within 1,600 votes of ousting a two-decade Republican incumbent on the back of an ad campaign focused on the loss of skilled white-collar jobs. In his ad, “Table Talk,” Dian and Craig Raether, a middle-class white couple with two young daughters, talk about the changes in their life that started with Craig’s job loss: “I was laid off from my job. . . . I worked at Oracle for eight years; my job was cut in favor of moving it to India.” This reflects a common theme of the 2012 election cycle: the threat of jobs being shipped overseas. These negative messages were so pervasive that they drowned out messages about the positive gains of jobs in export industries, new technology, performance-improving competition, and cheaper consumer goods. Even other negative impacts of trade, such as transition costs and the loss of domestic skills capabilities, took a back seat to messaging about jobs moving overseas as a result of trade.

From 2000 to 2012, the expression of positive, pro-trade information appeared primarily in issue advocacy advertisements run during the campaign period. Only a handful of candidates directly expressed their support for open trading borders or greater trade liberalization. Instead, this ground was covered by special interest groups such as the Business Coalition and the Business Round Table. For commentators on both sides, the lack of campaigning on free-trade policies has been frustrating. In 2004, the *New York Times* called on President Bush (as well as Edwards and Kerry) to stop running away from his free-trade policies.²⁶ In 2012, Public Citizen called out half a dozen Republican

²⁶ Editorial Board, “Political Timing: Outsourced,” *New York Times*, February 17, 2004.

incumbents running ads against trade liberalization despite what Public Citizen characterized as a “100 percent track record of support for every single NAFTA-style trade deal arising under their tenure” as well as 18 Democrats and Republicans who supported the Korea FTA yet still ran ads against offshoring.²⁷ Even though Congress and the Executive office continue to push the liberalization of trade markets, and even through pro-trade ads could likely decrease Americans’ support for protection, in campaign ads the majority of politicians who support this liberalization either ignore or obscure their support. The next chapter seeks to answer why, for election-focused political actors, there is little incentive to espouse a pro-trade message, despite the potential malleability of the opinions of some voters. For that reason, it is not surprising that, despite the passage of major trade liberalization policies immediately before and between the election cycles we have examined here, politicians continued, overall, to resist attempting to engage voters on the issue of trade.

Conclusion

American public opinion scholars acknowledge two primary sources of voters’ knowledge about national issues: the national media and political campaigns. I have shown that in recent years, both sources of national economic information have focused primarily on the negative attributes of trade—job losses, factory closings, and safety and security risks—at the national level. It is perhaps unsurprising then that the majority of surveyed individuals hold a negative view of the impact of trade on the national economy, and employment in particular. Aggregate, national-level economic considerations lie outside most individuals’ daily lives. Thus, on these types of national beliefs, individuals are more likely to seek and accept informational cues from others, including the media and political actors. Paradoxically, these cues remain negative despite continued expansion of trade liberalization. While politicians have limited influence over media presentation of issues, they can exert a more direct influence over their own messages. Understanding how individuals would respond to a different type of trade-related message—particularly more positive messages—can provide insight into why politicians seem to avoid trade-related campaigning in general and pro-trade campaigning specifically.

²⁷ Public Citizen, “Obama, Romney and Congressional Candidates Nationwide Used Trade Themed Ads to Appeal to U.S. Majority Opposing Trade Status Quo, Reinforcing Public Anger and Building Expectations for Reform,” November 7, 2012.

Could Positive Information Shift National-Level Beliefs?

AMERICAN TRADE POLICY FOR the last quarter-century has largely supported increased liberalization across borders. Sometimes the changes are small and hidden in larger omnibus bills; sometimes the changes are large and passed via widely debated multilateral or bilateral trade agreements. Large or small, these policy achievements and their benefits are not touted by American politicians, especially in comparison to protectionist bills. Why do we observe this uncharacteristic lack of credit claiming? At the personal level, some voters may retain individual economic or other concerns about trade liberalization, but the majority of American voters appear relatively indifferent about trade effects for them personally. At the community level, more voters appear concerned about the local and regional economic effects of trade, but I have shown that these concerns vary greatly across districts and appear to be diminishing over time as higher levels of community turnover and economic diversification remove clarity on the benefits of trade protection. However, at the national level, the majority of Americans continue to have negative views about trade's effects. I have argued that these views are largely influenced by the primarily negative description of trade both in the media and by politicians themselves.

This chapter seeks to explore how malleable these national-level beliefs are in the face of more positive messages about the effects of trade, as well as whether attempts to shift these beliefs are subject to the same gender and racial barriers that limit changes to beliefs about the impacts of trade on individual employment. If national level beliefs are moveable, but in a manner which risks political security, politicians face a collective action problem: while moving American opinion to match American policy would ease the political risk of trade-liberalizing policies in the long run, in the short run few politician may wish to accept the risk alone.

To envision how the public would react to a new information environment, I ran a series of survey experiments to answer four questions about national beliefs. First, would Americans respond differently to positive campaign messages? If the "good news" about trade espoused by economics were more

broadly discussed, would this information influence Americans' perceptions of the benefits of trade for the country as a whole enough to move the majority to hold a positive perception of trade? Second, would positive information reinforce or create political divisions? Positive messages created cleavages in terms of beliefs about the individual benefits of trade, but at the aggregate level, shared information could perhaps bring Americans together. Third, could positive messages cross party lines? If individuals filter information to privilege that of trusted sources, then positive messages could generate greater partisan divides. However, if individuals can learn from a variety of sources, then messages could create greater cohesion of opinion. And fourth, could the public be moved by being asked to think about other countries' policies, not just the United States' own? Can simple reminders that trade requires two parties soften individuals' perception of the benefits of trade protection? Or are Americans' beliefs in the benefits of protection so strong as to influence how Americans perceive the cost of trade liberalization in other countries as well? The answers to these questions can explain the strategic choices politicians make when talking about trade.

Could Positive Campaign Ads Change Minds?

John McCain made but did not nationally broadcast a strikingly pro-trade ad which declared his support for the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Looking directly at the camera, McCain explained:

To fuel our economy, we must create more jobs for Americans and for our neighbors to the south. With better jobs, more of them will be able to stay in their country. We can't go back on our word on free trade promises with Mexico, Canada, Central America, or anyone else. We must encourage more trade agreements to create more jobs on both sides of the border. That's why I'm behind the Colombian Free Trade Agreement. I'm John McCain, and I approve this message.

Few candidates in the modern era have so directly linked a free trade agenda, and a specific free trade agreement, to their own candidacy. In 2004, Bush could have campaigned on his free trade endeavors. During his first term, he worked with Congress to revive so-called "Fast-Track Authority," legislation which permitted the president a temporary window to negotiate international trade agreements and limited Congress to an "up or down" vote on agreed terms. In use since early 1934, the most recent span of authority from 1974 to 1994 had facilitated the US Israel Free Trade Agreement, the US-Canada Free Trade Agreement, and NAFTA as well as US participation in the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations which initiated the World Trade Organization (WTO). The revival of "fast-track" authority was a boon to free traders and ultimately allowed for negotiation and ratification of CAFTA, yet Bush did not tout or seek to explain his decision. As discussed in chapter 7, Bush

ran no trade-related ads during the 2004 election campaign. Furthermore, in the spring of 2004, Bush actively backed away from free trading statements made by his top economic advisor Gregory Mankiw during the press release for the Economic Report of the President (ERP), ostensibly the annual mechanism for presenting the administration's domestic and international economic policies. This reticence to run on his pro-trade bona fides frustrated free-trade proponents who were seeking promotion rather than disavowal of the Mankiw report.

In 2012 trade-related campaign ads, incumbent President Barack Obama repeated this pattern by raising the specter of offshore outsourcing rather than touting his leadership role in the completion the US–Korea Free Trade Agreements. As noted at the time, the treaty's passage offered counter-evidence to criticisms that President Obama could not successfully cooperate with a Republican-led Congress, and yet the campaign chose to downplay the president's trade liberalization actions. Both presidents ignored the opportunity to explain their trade policy. McCain's 2008 campaign message not only offered a personal endorsement of free trade but also a rationale for why Americans should support free trade, yet it was buried on a John McCain YouTube page and never aired on TV. What would be the influence if more such ads ran?

We have already observed the effect of a more standard negative presentation of trade. "A Couple of Miles," the pro-trade protection campaign advertisement by Sal Pace first discussed in chapter 6, serves not only as an example of the racial composition of the typical trade-policy-related campaign advertisement but also the effect of the typical advertisement. In "A Couple of Miles," a steelworker narrates the need for protection while driving between the steel mill and a local bridge.

I worked 35 years in this steel mill. And our steel built Pueblo. But when the state built this bridge, they used Chinese steel. They couldn't go a couple miles down the road. Sal Pace was the only one who listened. Because of Sal, the law was changed so Colorado projects were built with American steel. Sal did something. He did everything.

"A Couple of Miles" encompasses almost all of the attributes typically found in a negative trade advertisement: pro-protection, focused on the threat to deserving, middle-class American workers which is created by imports from abroad (or in this case China). As the prior chapter detailed, hours of such ads are run during American campaign season. And analysis tells us that they are effective. In the survey experiment discussed in chapter 6, 500 adults from across the United States self-selected via Amazon Mechanical Turk to participate in a "three minute opinion survey."¹ The randomly selected half who watched the Sal Pace ad prior to responding to questions were 14.1 percentage points

¹ Amazon Mechanical Turk is an online forum for requesting participation in various forms of work, including survey responses. Individuals are paid by the "hit." In this case, individuals were

more likely to support limits on trade and 5.2 percentage points less likely to oppose new limits on trade protection than those who did not watch the advertisement—nearly a 20-point difference in favor of trade protection. This strongly suggests that the ad would have resonated with voters.

The effectiveness of this ad is not surprising. Following Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman (1991), behavioral psychology tells us it should be easier to activate concerns about potential losses—in this case American jobs—than potential gains, and more effective to note immediate costs than long-term gains, the type of gains that are expected from trade liberalization. Thus, the strong effect of the Sal Pace ad could be attributed to the combination of the negative and short-term characterization of trade policy within the ad. The McCain advertisement touts the creation of new jobs—not the potential loss of current jobs—and long-term benefits of free trade agreements, not short. Thus, the ad’s economic concerns are framed in ways which are theoretically less likely to engage voters’ attention. On the other hand, the McCain ad speaks to the broad economy, not just a specific region and industry, and thus provides the type of national, aggregate information which individuals could not accumulate through their day-to-day lives. New information—here delivered via a campaign message—should be particularly influential on such aggregate beliefs especially when transmitted with authority from a well-known source.

To measure the effect of such a positive, general narration on individuals’ beliefs about trade, I constructed an online survey experiment via Mechanical Turk.² Potential participants were offered \$0.50 to participate in a “three minute public opinion survey.” The 900 individuals who selected to participate were randomly sorted into three groups: those asked to watch the 30 second trade-focused McCain advertisement “Colombia Free Trade” (the positive treatment); those asked to watch a 30 second employment-focused McCain advertisement “Jobs for America” (the placebo treatment); and those provided no initial video (the control group receiving no treatment).

While the comparison of responses to those who watched the trade-related “Colombia Free Trade” McCain ad to the control group can estimate the effect of John McCain’s endorsement of pro-trade liberalization on a subject’s opinion,

offered \$0.50 to participate in a “three minute public opinion survey” and paid regardless of completion. The “A Couple of Miles” survey experiment was conducted in May 2014 with 500 voluntary participants via Mechanical Turk. The average effective hourly rate for participants was \$9.52. The Mechanical Turk pool of workers has been found to deviate from the general adult population with regards to age and education but to be comparable on other factors (Christensen and Glick 2013), although they have been much more representative of the general population than most in-person convenience samples (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2012).

² The McCain survey was conducted in June 2014 with 900 voluntary participants via Mechanical Turk. Participants were paid regardless of completion. The average effective hourly rate was \$12.86. See prior reference for description of the comparability of Mechanical Turk survey populations to other survey populations.

it cannot tell us what part of the ad is doing the work of moving opinion. It could be John McCain's presence on the screen, the discussion of economic policy, or the specific endorsement of trade liberalization. Since we are only interested in the last of these components, we need to make sure it is this final component which is the cause of the movement in opinion. The inclusion of a placebo treatment in the design of this experiment—an employment-focused McCain ad that does not mention trade—allows us to estimate the effect of the first two components combined (in other words the effect of watching McCain talk about the economy) without the trade component and thus verify that the influence of the “Colombia Free Trade” ad is indeed attributable to the discussion of trade rather than the other aspects of the advertisement.

For the placebo treatment, a randomly selected set of individuals were assigned to watch McCain's “Jobs for America” advertisement. In the advertisement, McCain promotes his plans to improve Americans' job prospects. To a backdrop of images from McCain's speeches and “meet and greets” on factory floors, McCain's voice is heard:

I intend to act quickly and decisively. The great goal is to get the American economy running at full strength again, creating the opportunities Americans expect and the jobs Americans need. I'm running to serve America and to champion the ideas I believe will help us do what every American generation has done. To make in our time and from our challenges, a safer, stronger, more prosperous country and a better world.

As McCain speaks, policy promises float across the screen: “millions of new jobs,” “cheap, clean, secure energy for America,” “immediate relief for American families,” “portable, affordable healthcare.” None of the phrases directly mention trade and as such the expectation is that watching the ad should not significantly move beliefs about the national effects of trade.³

Each group was asked a series of questions including a set on the employment benefits of trade at the national, regional, and individual level.

The U.S. government continues to expand opportunities to trade through bilateral and multi-lateral agreements with foreign countries. What do you believe has been the effect of trade on the following: your employment, employment in your region, and employment in the United States?

Respondents selected from five choices: “benefit greatly,” “benefit slightly,” “no difference,” “hurt slightly,” and “hurt greatly.” Additionally, respondents answered a series of questions about themselves including partisan

³ Other phrases included: “genuine relief to millions of families,” “a wide ranging plan to help the U.S. economy,” “nuclear energy will provide 700,000 new jobs,” “keep tax rates low,” and “balance the budget by year 2013.”

identification (Republican, Democratic, or Independent/Other), whether they voted for McCain in 2008 or Romney in 2012, their age, gender, race, and employment status. The sample skewed slightly more in favor of Democrats and Independents than Republicans (43 percent, 43 percent, 13 percent, respectively); male over female (64 percent to 36 percent); and younger (average age was 30). The racial composition (whites 82 percent, blacks 6 percent, Asians 11 percent, and other 5 percent with 10 percent additionally identifying as Hispanic) also represented more self-identified Asians than the general population. However, while the distribution of the survey sample population characteristics differ from that of the general adult population, random assignment of participants into the control, placebo, and treatment groups creates comparable subsample populations with similar characteristics on average which allows for comparison of effect across similar sets of individuals. A balance check found indeed that the subgroups were comparable in terms of partisanship, age, gender, employment, and racial composition.

To calculate the potential effect of the pro-free-trade McCain ad compared to the placebo jobs ad and no treatment, I recode responses into three groups (“benefits,” “no difference,” and “hurts”) and use multinomial logit to estimate the effect of each treatment as well as the individual characteristics. Since an individual’s gender has conditioned treatment responses in prior analyses, here too I incorporate the potential for different treatment effects for men and women by adding an interaction term of female and treatment (“Positive * Female” and “Placebo * Female”). Appendix table 8.A1 (left side) displays the full results.

As expected, those watching the pro-free-trade McCain ad were significantly more likely to respond that trade benefits national employment than those who watched no ad. The coefficient on “Positive Trade Treatment” is positive and significant (0.46, SE 0.23) and the coefficient on the interaction term “Positive * Female” is negative and significant (−0.64, SE 0.40) for the response “benefits” national employment. Thus, there is an effect, but it differs by gender: men who have watched the pro-free-trade advertisements are far more likely to believe that trade benefits the nation’s employment while women appear unaffected on average.

To ensure the effect is due to trade-related content, responses of the placebo group were also compared to responses of the control group. This comparison yields no statistically significant difference between the two groups. Thus, watching the placebo version of McCain’s economic proposal did not appear to influence beliefs about the national benefits of trade. Furthermore, unlike the effect on responses of the McCain Trade Ad, the response patterns of men and women in the placebo group did not differ from the response patterns of men and women in the control group; thus it is unlikely that the action itself of watching a Republican (McCain), economic-focused campaign ad resulted in the shift in stated beliefs about trade’s effect on the economy. Instead, it is much more likely that the trade-related content of the McCain Colombia Free Trade ad itself generated the change.

The size of the shift in opinion generated is difficult to interpret from the estimates of the multinomial analysis alone. Thus, using the statistical program Clarify (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003), I simulated predicted probabilities of responses for the average white, employed man and average white, employed woman. Figure 8.1 shows the change in the distribution of the predicted probabilities of responses between those with no treatment and those who watched the McCain ad, conditional on gender. The probability of a man saying that trade helps national employment is 10 percentage points less and the probability of a man saying that it hurts is 9 percentage points more for those who have watched the pro-free-trade campaign ad. In contrast, women who have watched the McCain ad are slightly less positive about the national benefits of trade, although the difference is not statistically significant.

From these individual response predictions, we can develop a sense of the aggregate influence of McCain’s ad. Imagine a hypothetical community of white, 30-year-old, employed individuals with an equal distribution of men and women. Based off the predicted probabilities, in such a community, only 31 percent would assess trade as benefiting national employment, 15 percent would think that trade made no difference, and fully 54 percent would state that trade hurts national employment. If such a community were to watch the McCain pro-free-trade advertisement, the change in public opinion would be incremental. The proportion of the population contending that trade helps employment would increase 3 percentage points to 34 percent but 50 percent would still aver that trade hurts national employment. Thinking of the experiment in terms of a campaign message for a candidate, such an ad would create a net aggregate gain in favor of trade, but not enough to push public opinion to where the majority have positive perceptions of trade at the national level.

Response to the question “What do you believe has been the effect of trade on employment in the United States?” conditional on survey treatment (Predicted proportions)

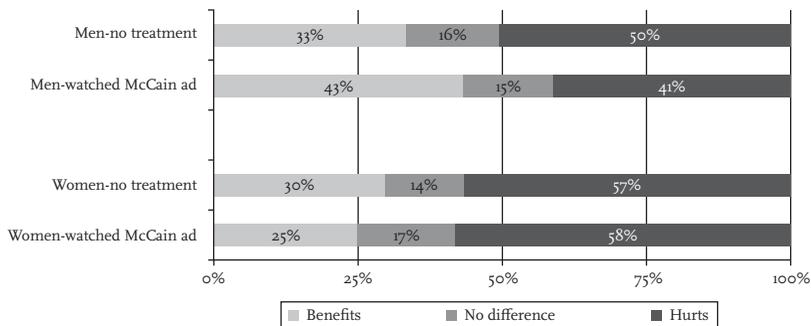


FIGURE 8.1 Effect of a pro-free-trade campaign message on beliefs about national benefits of trade

SOURCE: Campaign Ad Experiment, Amazon Mechanical Turk Survey, conducted June 2014.

The danger of incremental change in public opinion arises from the other potential influence of political advertisements: salience. As discussed in chapter 7, not only do political advertisements influence how people think about issues but also what issues they think about. If public opinion does not already closely resemble a political actor's stance, there is the risk that any benefit from shifting attitudes is outweighed by increased salience on an issue on which the majority still disagree with the view being promoted. As argued in chapter 3, since opinions about trade policy can incorporate beliefs at the individual, community, and national level, it is quite possible that even a positive change in national level beliefs is not large enough to push individuals over the threshold necessary to actively support trade-liberalizing policies.

As part of the McCain survey experiment, individuals were additionally asked about their support for trade policy, using the standard American National Election Studies (ANES) question as before: "Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. What do you think?" Participants could select among three responses: "oppose new limits," "support new limits," and "haven't thought much about this." Multinomial analysis of these responses supports the contention that a positive message may not only shift beliefs at the national level but activate other concerns effecting trade policy preferences: the coefficient for the positive treatment is both positive and significant for the protectionist "support new limits" response (for full results, see appendix table 8.A1, right side, second page). That is the positive, pro-trade McCain ad effectively increased support for greater protection from imports, even as it changed individuals' perceptions of the national benefits. Increasing attention on trade via a positive message about trade may have shifted beliefs at the national level but also offered a reminder of the perils at the individual and community level and thus increased expression of protectionist sentiment.

Considering again a hypothetical community of white, 30-year-old, employed individuals with an equal distribution of men and women and of partisanship, initial preferences for trade policy would be distributed as follows: 43 percent "haven't thought much about this," 25 percent "support new limits," and 32 percent "oppose new limits." After watching the McCain Ad, the new estimated distribution would be 38 percent "haven't thought much about it," 29 percent "support new limits," and 33 percent "oppose new limits." The ad may have caused some people to think trade is beneficial, but it also increased opposition to trade liberalization by 4 percentage points.

The potential to generate stronger cleavages could be attributed to the narrator—John McCain—rather than the content. Use of a McCain campaign ad offers benefits in terms of realism: an actual, professionally produced campaign ad with a real, not hypothetical, candidate provides a strong simulation of real world conditions. However, the particular characteristics of the ad raise concerns about the generalizability of the results. Individuals may be responding not simply to the content but to Senator McCain himself and in

ways that cannot be easily removed simply by controls for individuals' electoral support for Senator McCain or for his successor as the Republican presidential candidate, Mitt Romney. For example, the positive treatment had little to no effect on women. But McCain and later Romney polled relatively poorly among women. The Pew Research Center estimated a gender gap of 14 percentage points against McCain in 2008 and 20 percentage points against Romney in 2012.⁴ The potential influence of a pro-trade ad such as the "Colombia Free Trade Agreement" may be suppressed because women did not respond well to McCain or to Republicans generally.

Additionally, further analysis of the McCain experiment results shows that the ad created a greater divide among Republicans: although those watching the ad were significantly less likely to respond "no difference" to the question of trade's effect on the economy (19 percent in the McCain "Colombian Free Trade Agreement" ad treatment group compared to 34 percent in the no ad treatment group), both the proportion of those stating that trade hurt and the proportion of those stating that trade benefited national employment increased (9 percentage points and 6 percentage points, respectively). In the field, the ad would have thus been more likely to generate a divide rather than draw together potential McCain supporters making it harder to form a coalition among Republicans, even before considering the possible impact on attracting Independent and Democratic identified voters.

Thus, the first survey experiment raises two additional questions: Do such positive messages more generally generate wider cleavages among voters and can political actors influence voters across partisan lines?

Is Positive Information Divisive?

Mass opinion concerning trade's effect on the national economy is currently relatively cohesive. In the samples used in this book, the proportion of those who believe that trade hurts national employment ranges from 55 percent (2014 Amazon Mechanical Turk control group) to 62 percent (CCES 2006 and 2010 control group). Subpopulations fall close to this range. Women are slightly more pessimistic than men (63 percent to 60 percent), low-skilled workers more pessimistic than high-skilled workers (64 percent to 59 percent), and Democrats and Independents more so than Republicans (65 and 63 percent to 58 percent); but overall the majority of prominent subgroups believe that trade hurts. Thus, while groups' trade policy preferences differ from current trade policy, at least politicians and other political actors making strategic choices

⁴ Pew Research Center, "The Gender Gap: Three Decades Old, as Wide as ever," March 29, 2012, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/03/29/the-gender-gap-three-decades-old-as-wide-as-ever/>.

about which policy issues to promote and which policy issues to skirt face a similar set of incentives across the population.

The McCain “Colombia Free Trade” campaign ad served to generate divisions both between men and women and within subpopulations. Would similar information, provided more generically, create similar cleavages? The “good news” about trade—the benefits to national GDP growth, to consumer prices and choices, and to efficient use of national resources—typically languishes in economic textbooks and lecture halls. While 40 percent of Americans may have received some exposure to economic theory during their secondary school (Walstad and Rebeck 2000) or college years (Siegfried 2000; Siegfried and Walstad 2014), whether the positive role of trade was mentioned or retained is uncertain. As chapter 7 detailed, it is certainly not a position commonly broadcast on the evening news or in the current era’s political advertisements (with the few exceptions noted in chapter 7). The goal of this experiment, therefore, was to create a counterfactual world in which positive messages about trade are aired more frequently and heard by a larger percentage of citizens. The treatment consisted of a prompt focusing on the national level benefits of trade:

The U.S. continues to rank as the largest trading country in the world. In the service sector, the U.S. dominates the international market, exporting more than the next two countries combined. U.S. exports in services more than doubled between 1998 and 2008 and service exports are estimated to support at least 3.5 million U.S. jobs. Even in the manufacturing sector, where the U.S. faces stronger competition, more than 1 in 5 jobs are dependent on exports.

The content is purposely one-sided. Even the commonly considered negative aspect of trade creating increased competition in the manufacturing sector is reframed by reference to the job opportunities created by exports in that sector. The treatment is also factually true, albeit truncated in that it fails to mention the broader costs of increased trade or potential individual losses. At seventy-six words, the treatment is long but not overly complicated. The treatment prompt has an average US grade-level at just below the ninth grade (8.98) or the equivalent of nine years of education.⁵

This positive treatment was provided to a randomly selected half of the 1,500 participants in the Notre Dame component of the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study (CCES), before they answered questions about their beliefs about trade’s impact on individual, regional, and US employment. The control group received no such prompt. As before, possible responses to the employment questions were “benefit greatly,” “benefit slightly,” “no difference,” “hurt slightly,” and “hurt greatly.” All participants answered additional questions concerning personal characteristics such as education, income, gender, partisan identification, age, and employment circumstances.

⁵ Google Code Project: php-text-statistics.

Overall, as expected, the prompt had a widespread positive effect on perceptions about the benefits of trade. Aggregate information is most distant from individuals' everyday experience and thus beliefs about national-level outcomes should be most amenable to updating when individuals gain new information such as that in the positive prompt. As a quick measure of positive information's influence, consider the difference in the average response between the control and treatment groups, using a five-point (-2 to 2) scale to stand for the five responses from "hurts greatly" to "benefits greatly." In the control group, 46 percent and 16 percent of respondents, respectively, thought trade hurt greatly or slightly. The average response on the five-point scale was -0.88, the equivalent of hurts slightly. In the treatment group, far fewer thought trade hurt greatly (36 percent) or slightly (15 percent); and the average response on the five-point scale was -0.49. In other words, the average response moved on average +0.39 on a five-point scale—or roughly one-tenth of the full scale. In terms of the underlying distribution of public opinion, the positive information shifted at a minimum 10 percent of the sample population to a more positive perception.

What the overall figures obscure however is the division which opens among those reading the positive information. The schism appears not only by skill levels, as might be expected by Stolper-Samuelson-based assumptions of preferences, but also with gender, partisan, and racial grouping. This distinction matters because while the skill-level divide is already accommodated for in American political parties, division across other attributes would be disruptive to party coalition formation. Table 8.1 displays the comparison of this treatment effect both across skill set, gender, racial, and partisan classifications as well as between subgroups. The first two sets of columns provide the mean response and standard deviation for the control group and treatment group, respectively. The third (right-most) set of columns displays the calculated difference of the means and the standard deviation, or the estimated effect of the treatment on the distribution of public opinion for the subgroup. (For a pictorial depiction, see appendix figure 8.A1.) To compare across subgroups, differences in means and standard deviations are displayed below each set of groups (skill level, gender, race, and partisan identification).

Within all subgroups, positive movement of opinion came hand in hand with an increase in the dispersion of opinion. Looking at the difference in means, the positive treatment moved opinion as much as +0.67 (among Republicans) and as little as +0.18 (among nonwhites), but in all cases positively. However, this positive movement pushed the distribution from a concentration around "hurt" responses to a broader distribution. The standard deviations by subgroup of those in the treatment group are between 11 percent and 22 percent higher than those in the control groups. Thus, the treatment served to increase the dispersion of public opinion, making specific coalitions more difficult to organize.

While the positive prompt generated some convergence of opinion among subpopulations, it also created divergence between electorally important

TABLE 8.1 Comparison of a positive treatment on aggregate beliefs about national benefits of trade, by subgroup (−2 “greatly hurts” to 2 “greatly benefits”)

	CONTROL GROUP			TREATMENT GROUP			DIFFERENCE		
	OBS.	MEAN	S.D.	OBS.	MEAN	S.D.	Δ MEAN	Δ S.D.	S.D GROWTH (%)
All	793	−0.88	1.22	697	−0.49	1.39	+0.39 *	+0.17	+14
Low Skilled	178	−1.16	1.08	153	−0.65	1.32	+0.51 *	+0.24	+22
High Skilled	615	−0.80	1.24	544	−0.45	1.41	+0.35 *	+0.16	+13
<i>Low Skilled v. High Skilled</i>		−0.35	−0.17		−0.20	−0.09			
Men	371	−0.82	1.28	317	−0.36	1.42	+0.46 *	+0.13	+10
Women	422	−0.94	1.16	380	−0.60	1.36	+0.33 *	+0.21	+18
<i>Men v. Women</i>		0.11	0.13		0.24	0.05			
Whites	588	−0.96	1.21	522	−0.50	1.39	+0.46 *	+0.18	+15
Nonwhites	205	−0.66	1.21	175	−0.48	1.39	+0.18 *	+0.18	+15
<i>Whites v. Nonwhites</i>		−0.30	0.00		−0.02	0.00			
Republicans	208	−0.92	1.21	183	−0.26	1.38	+0.67 *	+0.18	+14
Independents	309	−1.01	1.19	270	−0.77	1.32	+0.24 *	+0.13	+11
Democrats	276	−0.71	1.24	244	−0.36	1.43	+0.35 *	+0.19	+15
<i>Republicans v. Democrats</i>		0.21	0.03		0.11	0.04			
<i>Republicans v. Independents</i>		0.08	0.02		0.51	0.07			
<i>Democrats v. Independents</i>		0.29	0.04		0.40	−0.11			

SOURCE: Positive Aggregate Frame Experiment, 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, University of Notre Dame Module.*Denotes significance at the $p < .10$ level using a two-tailed test and at the $p < .05$ level using a one-tailed test.

groups. Again, looking at the comparisons of subgroups displayed in table 8.1, we can see the impact of the positive message on the convergence of opinion among different skills groups and different racial identifications. In the control group, low-skilled workers expressed, on average, much more negative beliefs about the potential national employment benefits of trade (mean -1.16) than did high-skilled workers (mean -0.80). The difference of -0.35 is significant. The positive message improved both low-skilled and high-skilled workers' evaluations of the benefits, but the low-skilled more so, diminishing the divergence to -0.20 , a difference which is still significant but smaller by more than a third. Similarly, the positive message diminished the gap between white and nonwhite beliefs (from -0.30 to -0.02).

However, the convergence generated by the positive message came at the cost of divergence within subpopulations and also between men and women and between groups defined by political identification. Across all subgroups, divergence of opinion increased, as measured by the growth of the standard deviation of opinion from the control group to the treatment group in each subgroup (displayed in the right-most column of table 8.1). Furthermore, the treatment increased divergence in beliefs between men and women. The effect is similar (albeit smaller) than the effect of positive messages on individual employment beliefs, as discussed in chapter 4. In the control group, women are only slightly more negative in their beliefs than men (-0.94 compared to -0.82); however, the gap doubles within the treatment groups (-0.60 compared to -0.36). Since all parties need support from both men and women, the increase in the gender gap is particularly problematic.

Additionally, not only did the positive treatment increase the standard deviation of opinion within partisan groups, it also increased divergence between Independents and both Democrats and Republicans. The positive message strongly influenced the opinion of both self-identified Democrats and self-identified Republicans, albeit more so for the Republicans. In the control group, Democrats were slightly more positive in their belief about trade than Republicans (-0.71 to -0.92 , for a difference of -0.21); whereas in the treatment group, the positions reversed (-0.36 to -0.26 , for a difference of 0.11) with the Republicans more positive in their beliefs. Opinion among Independents was the least affected by the positive treatment. Thus, the gaps between Republicans and Independents and Democrats and Independents both grew and, in the case of the Republican and Independents, substantially from only -0.08 to -0.51 or six times. Given the importance for both parties of attracting Independent voters, the potential for a positively worded message to increase division could generate strategic concerns and raise the question of how well messages transfer across partisan affiliations, the subject of the next experiment.

Perhaps the most important takeaway from the experiments is that despite its strongly positive effect, the treatment still left the average individual with a negative belief about the benefits of trade for the country as a whole, and thus at odds with the average policy position of members of Congress.

Does the Message Provider Matter?

Political actors face a choice of whether to use their position of authority to move public opinion. While an average opinion situated closer to current policy might be preferable to incumbents and political parties alike, attaching one's own name to a policy idea can come at a cost when the majority currently opposes the idea. In the prior experiment, a positive (unattributed) frame shifted individuals' beliefs about the national employment benefits of trade liberalization, but not enough to ensure that the majority thought that liberalization provided positive national benefits. Yet, the information provided came unattributed, simply stated as a fact. In other words, the previous survey experiment expected respondents to accept the provided information at face value; in the real world, individuals filter a cacophony of messages, and one method of doing so is by prioritizing those that come from a trusted source. Thus, direct attribution may offer a stronger influence on opinion than non-attributed information.

As discussed in chapter 5, aggregating and selecting information can be costly (Downs 1957), and an elite message could serve as a shortcut to opinion formation—by offering certified information (see, e.g., Lupia and McCubbins 1998) or simply by signaling pre-formed partisan positions (Zaller 1992). Which effect dominates remains under debate (see for discussion, Guisinger and Saunders forthcoming), leaving open the question of how individuals integrate information presented in political advertisements into their existing beliefs, particularly when those messages cross partisan expectations. The bulk of the theoretical models assume partisan effects outweigh information effects (see, e.g., Cohen 2003), particularly when elites divide (Zaller 1992) or the mass opinion already manifests partisan divisions (Guisinger and Saunders forthcoming). Simultaneous empirical tests of both processes are relatively rare (Bullock 2011, 497), and results have been mixed. Both partisan cues and policy information appear to matter, but their relative weight depends on the circumstances (e.g., Bullock 2011; Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013). Trade policy offers an interesting test of the influence of partisan attribution because the primary divide lies not between partisans but between elites and the masses: for the last four decades, elites have consistently favored more liberal trade policies and masses more protectionist ones (Bauer, de Sola Pool, and Dexter 1972; Holsti and Rosenau 1993; Herrmann et al. 2001). Zaller (1992) argues that in the face of this type of elite consensus, public opinion should converge toward elite opinion—assuming, of course, that elites voice this consensus opinion.

The divide between elites and the mass public is prominent not only in preferences for liberalization broadly but also in the specific, often technical, mechanisms supporting liberalization. Just as with aggregate economic information, trade promotion policies such as the participation in trade agreements or the selection of exchange rates are not everyday economic events for individuals. Thus, on such specific trade policy choices, individuals might be uncertain

and more willing to take cues from elites. The question for this third survey experiment is how important attribution—particularly partisan attribution—is in determining the influence of such cues. For this experiment, I focus on two technical issues: use of the dispute mechanisms provided by US membership in the WTO and the more recent issue of punishment of China for perceived currency manipulation detrimental to US exporters and to domestic, import-competing firms.

Since World War II, US trade liberalization has been primarily implemented through a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements, including membership in the WTO. The United States' participation in these agreements not only tied US policy to multilateral trade agreements but also limited retaliation for currency manipulation. Support among the public for these instruments of trade liberalization has waxed and waned. Since 1997, the Pew Research Center and the Council on Foreign Relations have asked a nationwide sample of adults the following question: "In general, do you think that free trade agreements like NAFTA, and the policies of the WTO, have been a good thing or bad thing for the United States?" Positive responses reached a high in 2001, with 49 percent saying that the impact of free trade agreements on the country was positive, but numbers dipped to 35 percent in both 2003 and 2008. Entering into the US 2008 recession, the majority of individuals still either held that the agreements were negative for the country (48 percent in 2008) or that they didn't know (17 percent in 2008).⁶ More recently, the public has voiced support for retaliation against China. Two-thirds of those surveyed during the 2012 CCES survey supported imposing tariffs on Chinese goods to retaliate for perceived currency manipulation. Yet, congressional resolutions on this latter subject have been limited and so far failed to find final congressional approval—again suggesting a divide between elite consensus and the American public.

In a series of survey experiments about trade policy, Herrmann et al. (2001) found the elite to be 20 percentage points more likely to support trade than the mass public in ordinary times, and 32 percentage points more likely to support trade when relative gains were portrayed as benefiting countries other than the United States. On the specific issue of the WTO, between 65 percent and 66 percent of elites surveyed supported unrestricted trade via the instrument of the WTO. It is worth noting that Herrmann et al. explain that they chose not to survey the mass public on the WTO, on the grounds that when they had conducted the survey, the WTO "had not received much public attention, and we felt the general public would not be familiar with it." For the purposes of the partisan attribution experiment, this lack of attention is useful.

This third experiment concerning the influence of positive information on national-level beliefs about trade evaluates the potential impact of greater

⁶ The Pew Research Center, "Support for Free Trade Recovers Despite Recession," April 28, 2009, <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/511.pdf>.

discussion of elite consensus on these trade issues with in-depth consideration of attribution concerns raised in discussion of the McCain campaign ad experiment. In other words, if more elite messages not only carried the pro-trade logic typically followed by Congress, but attributed them to particular political parties, what would be the effect on individuals' attitudes? As before, the frame is generally pro-trade, mirroring the elite consensus. Since political messages—especially those around election cycles—tend to highlight partisan positions, the three treatments do so as well. The three possible treatments offer the same information but randomly attribute the position to either “generic” experts, “Democratic” experts, or “Republican” experts. Thus, the survey treatment offers the equivalent of hearing a nonpartisan, Democratic, or Republican pro-trade message during an election. If partisanship is a strong filter for information, then the treatment should influence opinion primarily for matched sets (i.e., when a respondent's self-identified partisanship matches the information's partisan attribution). If information flows freely, treatment effects should be strong regardless of partisan attribution. The difference is not only of theoretical interest but also pragmatic interest. The breadth and strength of a political actor's influence on public opinion can affect the utility of campaigning on that issue.

For the attribution experiment, 2,000 respondents were drawn from the 2012 CCEs, a 50,000-person national stratified sample survey administered by YouGov/Polimetrix (Ansolabehere and Schaffner 2012).⁷ This relatively large sample size allows for multiple treatments as well as comparison across party affiliation. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of four categories: the control group, the generically elite treatment group, the Democratic treatment group, and the Republican treatment group. Again, two technical trade policy questions were asked: one focused on the use of WTO dispute mechanisms and the other focused on potential tariff-based retaliations for perceived Chinese currency manipulation. Both questions are technical and not based on individuals' daily experiences. Additionally, the two policy issues differ in the type of gap between mass opinion and expert opinion. As will be seen, in the case of the WTO, divergence comes in the form of uncertainty and status quo bias. In the case of response to Chinese exchange rates, divergence is in a stronger form: in direct contrast to current congressional action and economic consensus, the mass public supports retaliations. Choice of these issues thus allow for comparison not only across different types of attribution but also different forms of diverging from expert opinion.

For the WTO component of the attribution experiment, all individuals received the following base information:

The U.S. has participated in the dispute settlement process of the World Trade Organization since its founding in 1995. The United States has filed 100 complaints against other member countries and has had 116 complaints filed against it.

⁷ The sample combined two subsamples: 1,000 individuals from the George Washington University and 1,000 from the University of Notre Dame. I thank GWU and Elizabeth Saunders for sharing the data.

Individuals in the control group then were immediately asked:

Should the U.S. increase or decrease its use of the WTO dispute mechanism?

Individuals in each of the three treatment groups received additional information about expert opinion on these policies before the final question. Those in the generic treatment group received information attributed to experts, but without reference to those experts' partisan affiliation. Those in the Democratic treatment group and Republican treatment group received information attributed to Democratic experts and Republican experts, respectively. The information content was identical; only the attribution varied as follows:

The U.S. wins more than 80% of disputes that it initiates at the WTO, opening markets to U.S. goods. However, the U.S. has primarily focused complaints against its main trading partners: Europe, Japan, Korea, Canada and Mexico. [Many | Democratic | Republican] trade representatives argue that the U.S. should systematically expand its use of the WTO and file complaints against a broad range of countries to address trade barriers and other violations including currency manipulation. Ensuring fair trade practices and transparent currency markets will help the U.S. economy stay competitive. Should the U.S. increase or decrease its use of the WTO dispute mechanism?

Available response options were “increase,” “decrease,” “stay about the same,” and “don't know.” Excluding Independents, only 16 percent (18 percent of Democrats and 14 percent of Republicans) in the control group believed that the United States should increase the use of the WTO dispute mechanism. Since policymakers and economic experts in general support continued use of mechanisms supporting trade liberalization (Caplan 2002; Coughlin 2002; Fuller and Geide-Stevenson 2003, 2007; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; IGM Economic Experts Panel 2012), the survey results highlight the divergence of the American populace from elite opinion on the WTO.

This divergence from the elite opinion manifests in both forms in the control group: specific counter opinion responses (“decrease”) and non-opinion responses (“don't know” or “stay the same”). Considered together, 84 percent of those surveyed diverged from elite opinion on the WTO, with non-opinion responses comprising 69 percent of responses. Almost three-quarters of self-identified Democrats answered “don't know” or “stay the same” and only 8 percent answered “decrease.” Slightly fewer (61 percent) of Republicans answered “don't know” or “stay the same,” and instead, more than a quarter (three times as many as Democrats) answered “decrease” (26 percent). Compared to other current issues such as Iranian security policy or environmental regulation, these partisan-based differences in the distribution of responses are relatively small (for more detailed issue comparisons, see

Guisinger and Saunders forthcoming). For the purposes of visual comparison, the control-group dispositions of self-identified Democrats and self-identified Republicans are mapped in figure 8.2: self-identified Democrats are represented by squares, and self-identified Republicans are represented by triangles. The control group responses represent a presumed “base” opinion for these self-identified groups (that is, for representative individuals who did not receive the treatment information), they are identified by the letter “B.” The other triangles and squares mark the disposition of respective group members who received the three treatments—generic attribution (G), Democratic attribution (D), and Republican attribution (R).

All three treatments—regardless of partisan attribution—resulted in large-scale changes in public opinion in the direction of elite opinion. The arrows on figure 8.2 show the direction of the treatment effects. Movements downward and to the left show convergence toward elite opinion; perfect convergence would be marked by 0 percent contrary responses and 0 percent non-opinion responses. For Democrats, all three treatments diminished the percent offering a non-opinion as well as the percent offering a response in opposition to the expert consensus, indicating that an elite message, regardless of party attribution, prompted overall increased support of the WTO and thus greater alignment with elite opinion. All treatment

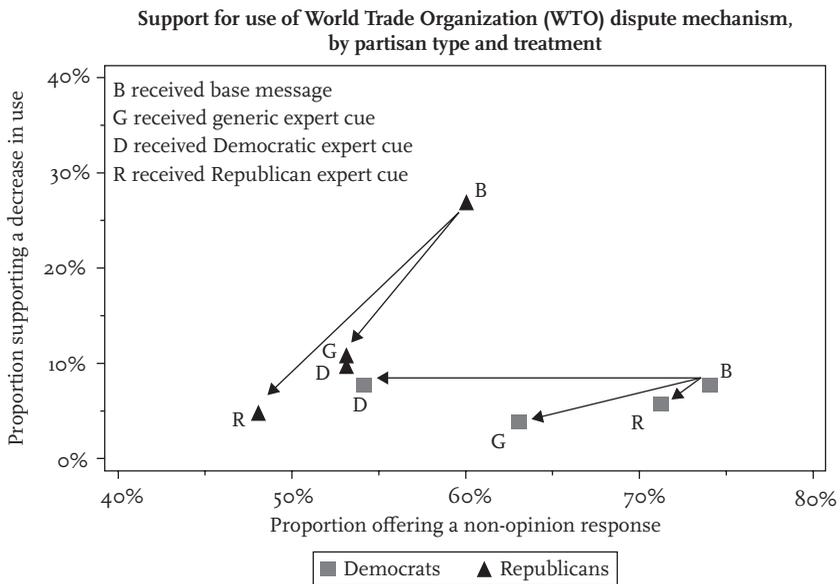


FIGURE 8.2 Effect of elite messaging on American opinions about the World Trade Organization

SOURCE: Attribution Experiment, 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010) and University of Notre Dame (self); and George Washington University Modules (Saunders and Guisinger 2010).

messages were effective, but increases in support did vary across the different attributions. The proportion of Democrats supporting the use of WTO dispute mechanisms increased 30 percent among those receiving the Republican-attributed message and 100 percent among those receiving the Democratic message.

Among Republicans, support was 170 percent higher among those receiving the Democratic message and 260 percent higher among those receiving the Republican message. Much like the Democrats, own-party attribution of the message produced the strongest effect among Republicans, but the generic and other-party messages also had positive (and at times almost equal) effects.

In particular, note that the Democratic-attributed message was able to bring both Democrats and Republicans into near-agreement on the issue of the WTO. However, in the case of mass opinion concerning the use of WTO dispute mechanisms, the underlying mass opinion—as measured by the responses of the control group—was not in direct opposition to the policy. As a result, it could be that the survey experiment results overstate the influence of expert attributed messages, generic or partisan.

In the case of mass opinion concerning the policy response to perceived Chinese currency manipulation, public opinion appears to support retaliation, a strategy directly in opposition to current policy and expert opinion that the policy of non-retaliation should remain unchanged (Howard 2013, IGM 2016). Thus, the second question of the attribution experiment provides a measure of the influence of message attribution when public opinion is largely in opposition to elite opinion. All individuals received the following base information:

The Chinese Government has been accused of manipulating exchange rates to keep the price of Chinese exports to the United States artificially low.

Individuals in the control group then were immediately asked:

What do you think should be the official response by the U.S. government?

Individuals in each of the three treatment groups received additional information about expert opinion on these policies before the final question. Again the treatments varied only in attribution of the information:

Since there is little head-to-head competition between Chinese manufactured goods and American manufactured goods, [many | Democratic | Republican] trade experts believe that unilaterally imposing tariffs on China would not stimulate U.S. employment but instead would endanger export trade to China. China is the third largest importer of U.S. goods and American exports to China are growing at a rate double that of exports to the rest of the world. What do you think should be the official response by the U.S. government?

In all cases responders were given the option to select “keep currency policies unchanged,” “impose tariffs on Chinese goods as punishment,” or “don’t know.” The current elite consensus is that tariff measures would be damaging, and yet fully 61 percent of the control group supported imposing tariffs and 29 percent answered “don’t know.” Thus, in a sample population that had not received an elite pro-trade cue, only 10 percent supported keeping the current policy of non-retaliation.

In contrast to the WTO question results, where the modal response in the control group was “don’t know,” for this currency question the modal response was directly in opposition to elite consensus. But in this test too, the effect of messages about elite consensus was to significantly transform opinions, regardless of partisan attribution. As shown in figure 8.3, the treatments decreased support for tariff-based retaliation by at least 20 percentage points. While the treatments did also increase the proportion of “don’t know” responses, that increase was relatively small. Agreement with the provided expert opinion of non-retaliation more than doubled among Democrats and quadrupled among Republicans despite the fact that the initial disposition of the public was largely in support of raising import tariffs in response to Chinese currency manipulation. The base support for retaining the current policy of non-retaliation was only 12 percent among Democrats in the control group but rose to 35 percent among those hearing the generic expert message,

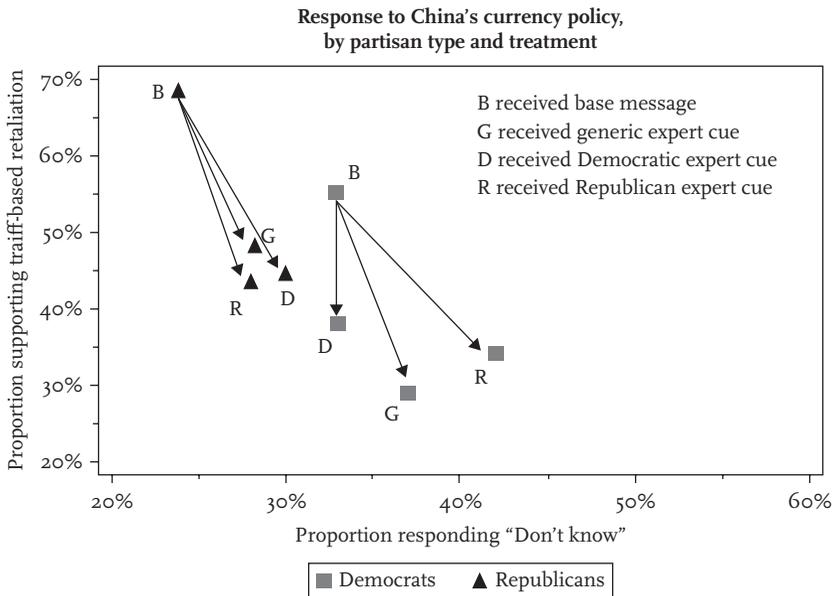


FIGURE 8.3 Effect of elite messaging on American opinions about US response to China’s currency policy

SOURCE: Attribution Experiment, 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010), George Washington University Modules (Saunders and Gusinger 2010), and University of Notre Dame (self).

29 percent among those hearing the Democratic expert message, and 24 percent among those hearing the Republican expert message. Among Republicans, base support for retaining the current policy of non-retaliation was only 8 percent in the control group, and rose to 24 percent among those hearing the generic message, 26 percent among those hearing the Democratic message, and 29 percent among those hearing the Republican message. Assuming an even distribution of partisans, direct attribution by either the Republicans or the Democrats could yield a 16 to 17 percentage point gain in support for current policy.

Yet, even with the large shifts in opinion yielded by pro-trade messaging, the percentage of individuals ultimately offering a pro-trade opinion remains in the minority. While positive messages increase the public's openness to trade liberalization mechanisms such as the WTO and decrease support for protectionist measures such as retaliation against China, individual politicians may gain little from those changes. In the short term, even the more-informed voter's median stance is in opposition to the median elite position.

Informational Reminders and Beliefs about Trade Policy

Not all information about the national costs and benefits of trade arrives pre-processed in the form of a policy stance. Broadcast news, in particular, seeks to stay impartial and to tell the story rather than to dictate a preferred policy. However, that story tends to be one sided—from the US perspective. Since the mid-1990s, the topics of China, Chinese products, and US policy toward China have dominated trade-related US newscasts and political advertisements.⁸ In the 2000 election, both pro-trade and pro-protection ads were framed in terms of trade with China. The pro-protection ads raised concerns about American job losses and Chinese human rights, environmental problems, and quality issues. The pro-trade ads noted the rapidly expanding Chinese market and the potential for US export-oriented employment growth. Neither exuded subtlety in the information provided. But are such heavy-handed framings necessary?

The fourth experiment in this chapter tests whether a simple reminder that trade is the result of two countries' policies, not just one, can soften Americans' habitual pro-protection stance. More specifically, it examines whether thinking about how other countries set trade policy might change Americans' thinking about domestic trade questions or alternatively, whether Americans' current distrust of the potential positive effects of trade is so strong as to color even "altruistic" opinion when applied to other nations. To focus on the reciprocal nature of a trade agreement, in this survey experiment, I alter the order in which individuals are asked questions about whether the United States and China should limit each other's imports.

⁸ The focus on China is more remarkable given that during this period Canada was and remained the United States' primary trading partner, and the primary export partner for thirty-five of the fifty US states.

At the dawn of the Cold War, Hyman and Sheatsley (1950) and the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) conducted what became a canonical survey experiment. Members of the American public were asked in 1948, “Do you think the United States should let Communist reporters from other countries come in here and send back to their papers the news as they see it?” A large plurality (63.5 percent) did not affirm freedom of the press for reporters from Communist countries. By itself, this finding would simply reveal an unsurprising but distressingly weak commitment on the part of the American public to one of our core founding principles. However, Hyman and Sheatsley also asked the identical question to an otherwise-identical sample of respondents who differed only in that they were first asked, “Do you think a Communist country like Russia should let American newspaper reporters come in and send back to America the news as they see it?” Naturally, nearly all respondents (89.8 percent) felt the Communist country should respect freedom of the press and not censor reporters. When these respondents were next asked about American censoring of Communist reporters, a large plurality (73.1 percent) voiced support for freedom of the press—even for foreign Communist reporters. The 36.6 percentage point swing in public opinion caused solely by a change in question order was a striking illustration of the power of cuing reciprocity and fairness norms.

Reciprocity is one of the universal “principal components” of moral codes (Gouldner 1960), but when do we expect respondents to exhibit this norm of reciprocity? Schuman and Ludwig (1983, 112) argue that a norm of reciprocity will be invoked by survey respondents and people more generally when a right is extended to one of two competing parties: “if an advantage (or disadvantage) is given to one party in the dispute, it should be given to the other as well.” Note that this norm of even-handedness is not simply a desire from survey respondents to maintain consistency in answers.⁹ Most people have an instinctive ethical preference for a level playing field when groups are competing for scarce resources.

International trade definitely fits the criteria for norms of reciprocity to be invoked. While textbooks present trade as mutually beneficial to both countries engaged in the transactions, specific policies and practices often benefit one partner at the expense of the other. For instance, raising tariffs on certain goods will hinder the ability of foreign firms to sell those goods, while privileging companies within the tariff-imposing country. Regulations, inspections, and other non-tariff barriers can perform similar roles. A norm of reciprocity would sanction either the removal of one-sided barriers to trade or the matched imposition of new tariffs intended to ensure that the ability of companies to compete in other markets is equalized. Reciprocity requires that the rules of the “game” be equal for both sides, but it is silent on whether the equality is

⁹ To empirically differentiate that simple response consistency was not driving the result, Schuman and Ludwig (1983) alternated the order of the professions when asking about whether doctors and lawyers are interested in serving the common good or just making money. Lawyers were viewed as considerably more mercenary regardless of which occupation was asked about first.

reached by stripped-away protections (i.e., free trade) or by engaging in a tit-for-tat policy of imposing trade restrictions (i.e., a trade war).

This potentially bidirectional role for reciprocity in reasoning about policy options is often ignored. Typically, the results of experiments on reciprocity are framed in the direction that the researcher finds normatively desirable. Hyman and Sheatsley's 37-point increase in support for freedom of the press is frequently cited in textbooks on public opinion and journalism and viewed as the headline takeaway from the landmark study. Far less frequently cited is the parallel 17-point drop in opposition to Communist censorship of US reporters in the opposite condition; that is, US respondents in 1948 became more tolerant of censorship (moving from 90 percent opposition to 73 percent) when they were first asked about US censorship that they approved of. This move away from the principle of freedom of the press is significantly smaller than the move toward domestic freedom of the press in the reverse condition, indicating that freedom of the press is a compelling norm when cued in the right way but also demonstrating that predispositions influence the effectiveness of norms of reciprocity.

Cuing the norm of reciprocity will therefore push people in different directions depending on the strength of their preferences for free trade or protectionism. Among people who value free trade more highly, we would expect to see those people expressing even greater opposition to US trade restrictions when norms of reciprocity are invoked. Conversely, people who prefer protectionist policies will, in the face of reciprocity norms, express no higher enthusiasm for free trade from the United States but will be more tolerant of protectionist policies from other countries. Given overall support for protectionism—particularly among women—the latter tendency to accept protectionism abroad would be expected to outweigh a reciprocity-based impetus to diminish protectionism at home.

To test whether this was the case, I conducted a simple question-order experiment on the 2008 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project (Jackman and Vavreck 2009), a nationally representative on-line survey.¹⁰ Approximately 1,200 respondents were asked a pair of questions: "Should the United States limit imports from China?" and "Should China limit imports from the United States?"¹¹ The order in which these two questions were asked was randomly varied so that respondents were either asked about US restrictions on China first or Chinese restrictions on US exports first. The two groups of respondents were otherwise identical. Thus, respondents who were asked about US trade restrictions first serve as a control group for the people who were asked about US trade restrictions second.

¹⁰ Question order experiments to detect reciprocity have been conducted on a range of topics such as allowing US citizens to join a foreign army (Rugg and Cantril 1944), the balance of power between striking workers and management in a labor dispute (Link 1946), and whether labor unions and corporations should be able to use funds to support particular political candidates (Gallop 1947).

¹¹ The answer possible answer categories were "Yes, definitely" (1); "Yes, probably" (2); "Maybe" (3); "No, probably not" (4); and "No, definitely not" (5).

As with the Communist reporter question, asking about Chinese behavior first should prompt respondents to express increased opposition to US trade restrictions in their answers to the second question. Similarly, it is also possible that asking about US trade restrictions first will cause respondents to be more tolerant of Chinese trade restrictions in their second answer. The relative magnitude of these two treatment effects can provide some insight into whether reciprocity is causing people to create a level playing field based on existing values that favor either free trade or protectionism. Figure 8.4 shows the distribution of responses for the question on US policy and table 8.2 reports the full results of this question-order survey experiment.

By any standard, it is apparent that question order matters a great deal in predicting respondents' preferences for US trade protection ($X^2 = 18.5$; p value $< .001$) and tolerance for Chinese limits on trade ($X^2 = 74.8$; p value $< .0001$). Looking at the question on whether or not the United States should limit imports from China, when this question was asked first, 64 percent of the people answered favorably and 15 percent answered negatively (with the remaining 21 percent answering "maybe"). Support for limiting imports from China falls to 58 percent when respondents are first asked about Chinese limitations on imports. This difference of 6 percentage points is substantively and statistically significant ($SE = 2.9$; p value $< .03$). A very similar 5-point change is found among respondents answering "no" ($SE = 2.2$; p value $< .02$), indicating that the norm of reciprocity made the public less convinced of the wisdom of imposing limits on Chinese imports.

Shifting to focus on whether China should limit imports from the United States, the effect of cuing reciprocity is nearly as large. When respondents are asked about Chinese behavior first, only 14 percent feel that China should limit imports. However, when US limits on imports are asked about first, this percentage increases to 19 percent. This increase of 5.6 percentage points is statistically significant ($SE = 2.2$; p value $< .01$) and nearly identical to the reciprocity-fueled 6-point decrease in support for US limits on Chinese imports. The real movement in opinion is to be found among respondents

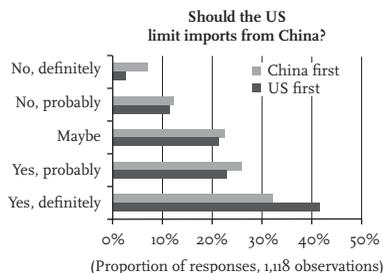


FIGURE 8.4 Responses from survey experiment switching question order about the desirability of a protectionist policy for China and for the United States

SOURCE: Altruism Experiment, 2008 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project. Common Content (Ansolabehere 2008) and University of Notre Dame Module (self).

TABLE 8.2 Does consideration of another country's choice sway opinion on protection?

RESPONSE BY TREATMENT TYPE	SHOULD THE UNITED STATES LIMIT IMPORTS FROM CHINA?			SHOULD CHINA LIMIT IMPORTS FROM THE UNITED STATES?		
	US FIRST (%)	CHINA FIRST (%)	DIFFERENCE	US FIRST (%)	CHINA FIRST (%)	DIFFERENCE
Yes, definitely	42	32	+ 0.09	6	8	- 0.02
Yes, probably	23	26	- 0.03	13	6	+ 0.07
Maybe	21	23	- 0.01	37	24	+ 0.14
No, probably	12	12	- 0.01	27	27	+ 0.00
No, definitely	3	7	- 0.04	17	37	- 0.20
Total observations	554	564		549	561	
<i>Pearson's chi-squared</i>			8.47			74.77
<i>Pearson's chi-squared probability</i>			0.001			0.000

SOURCE: Reciprocity experiment, 2008 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project.

who feel that China should not limit imports from the United States. When asked about Chinese behavior first, 64 percent of respondents thought China should not limit US imports. When respondents were first asked about US trade policy, this number fell to 44 percent—a decrease of 19 percentage points ($SE = 2.9$; p value $< .0001$). This increased support for Chinese limits on US imports is an order of magnitude larger than what was found among those answering negatively about US trade limits. Thus, it initially appears that the effect of reciprocity norms on public opinion is to create more tolerance for trade protection by other countries, rather than foster support for decreasing the United States' own barriers to trade.

In keeping with expectations that the influence of the reciprocity cue depends on the strength of initial preferences, the group with the greatest pre-existing support of protectionism—women—is also the group in which the reciprocity effect on acceptance of protectionism is greatest. The percentage of women recommending Chinese protectionism increased 9 percentage points when US policy was ordered first. In contrast, men—more generally supportive of free trade to begin with—saw little increase in the percentage recommending Chinese protectionism, with the reciprocity norm effect instead visible in their diminished support for American protectionism. The percentage of men supporting US protectionism fell by 10 percentage points when China's policy was considered first. These gendered effects tie closely back to the initial survey experiments in chapter 4 and earlier in this chapter. In this test, we observe that while men and women are both easily manipulated in terms of beliefs, the effects of that manipulation are differentiated by gender—in this case, with subjects' initial perceptions about trade strongly determining the direction of the reciprocity effect observed.

Despite the continued presence of these gender-differentiated effects, the primary takeaway from these tests is that national-level beliefs about trade are capable of being markedly influenced by pro-trade messaging. In this final experiment, the treatment was particularly light-handed in that the questions asked made no explicit mention of “reciprocity” or even about the size of shared trade. Instead, the two questions provided in sequence offered an implicit reminder that trade is a two-way transaction between countries. Gender-related differences notwithstanding, this alone served to temper US protectionism. While political messaging and news analysis are not often viewed as outlets for sophisticated technical analysis, this reciprocity experiment suggests that simply reminding voters that trade protection is a two-way street can shift opinions.

Conclusion

While Americans do indeed have negative perceptions about trade's effect on the national economy, the results of the four experiments suggest that these nationally based opinions would be malleable in the face of more positive

information about trade. The McCain Ad, the positive information survey prompts (attributed or not), and the reciprocity reminder improved individuals' evaluation of trade, increased acceptance of mechanisms supporting liberalized trade, and influenced stated preferences over levels of protection. In light of this malleability, the apparent reluctance of trade-favoring politicians to attempt to influence public opinion on trade is puzzling. Politicians regularly eschew the opportunity to attempt to move public opinion toward their own opinions or toward greater support for the trade policies implemented by Congress. Despite these indications that the public is receptive to elite positive messages about trade, such positive messages are rarely heard—and are especially limited during election cycles.

The characteristics of the influence of the positive treatments help to explain why not. Positive messages work, yet the populace is so negative that a single message is not enough to pull the majority, or even the majority of a major group, to sharing the position promoted. Since campaign messages increase the salience of highlighted issues, politicians including trade-related messages are placing themselves at higher risk of being observed in discordance with their constituencies. Additionally, all of the positive messages discussed in this chapter generated dispersion of beliefs and preferences, creating cracks within, not only between existing coalitions. If messages are broadcast widely, the process of shifting opinion on trade can generate rifts within the party structure and necessitate new strategies for creating cohesion. Finally, the broad influence of messages can be viewed as generating a negative incentive for politicians. If the public could be easily moved by any number of information providers, why should the individual campaigner take on the additional risk?

The disconnect between US policy and public opinion has become a classic collective action problem. Over the long term, concerted efforts by many members of one or both party would likely shift opinion. But politicians deal with the short term and face their constituency alone. Parties could serve as a mechanism to solve the collective action problem. Most races are lopsided in favor of incumbents so senators and representatives in safe seats could provide pro-trade messaging while more vulnerable members could stay quiet. However, if senior incumbents push a trade policy narrative and raise the salience of the issue, vulnerable candidates may be asked to provide an opinion as well. While a party could delegate the test of changing mass opinion on trade, both Democrats and Republicans seem to have instead chosen to keep it off the national agenda. In the face of the significant divergence between mass opinion and policy, the more politically advantageous form of trade messaging is the use of anti-trade messages or simply silence which tends to perpetuate the general populace's negative beliefs and associated pro-protection positions. Without a broad effort, the individual stakes are too high for pro-trade messaging; and the parties in recent decades have avoided such a strategy.

Examined in this context, we see that for politicians who support free trade, the problem with positive trade policy political ads is that while they can move opinion, they cannot do so enough. Instead, such ads run the risk of increasing

the salience of trade policy by supporting individual opinion formation and by providing information about the candidate's position. Perhaps for good reason: at the polls, the stakes appear to fluctuate between negligible and high. Of the three pro-trade campaigns in 2008 (New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania's 3rd Congressional District) only one candidate, incumbent Representative Phil English from Pennsylvania, had an actual voting record on CAFTA.¹² And he lost the election.

Recall that the analysis in chapter 4 suggests that, for candidates, the net outcome of fostering opinions about trade and knowledge of candidates' positions on trade is actually a small loss: the gain from opinion and knowledge about CAFTA (chapter 4, table 4.3) was a net loss of 1 percent of the predicted vote for the incumbent. Given these risks, pro-trade candidates—of whom there are many—therefore tend to be silent on trade issues, leaving the airways to be filled with a stream of negative descriptions of trade and employment, which in turn reinforce Americans' negative beliefs about trade. These experiments demonstrate that single pro-trade messages can move public opinion but not enough to compensate for the baseline negative opinion of trade liberalization. Until a political party or industry decides to aggressively change the trade narrative, this dynamic is unlikely to change.

¹² In North Dakota, incumbent John Hoeven ran for the office of governor with a pro-trade (albeit not pro-trade policy) ad called "Hoeven Making Real Progress" which touted the expansion of jobs in the high tech and advanced manufacturing industries and noted a link with the expansion of exports. In New Hampshire, Democrat challenger, former Governor Jeanne Shaheen defeated incumbent Republican John Sununu. Out of thirty-two Shaheen ads, one "Shaheen First" offered a pro-trade message. The ad ran 200 times (or approximately 3 hours 20 minutes) and constituted approximately 2.5 percent of all pro-Shaheen ads. Phil English, running as an incumbent for Pennsylvania Congressional District 3 was successfully attacked for having expanded NAFTA.

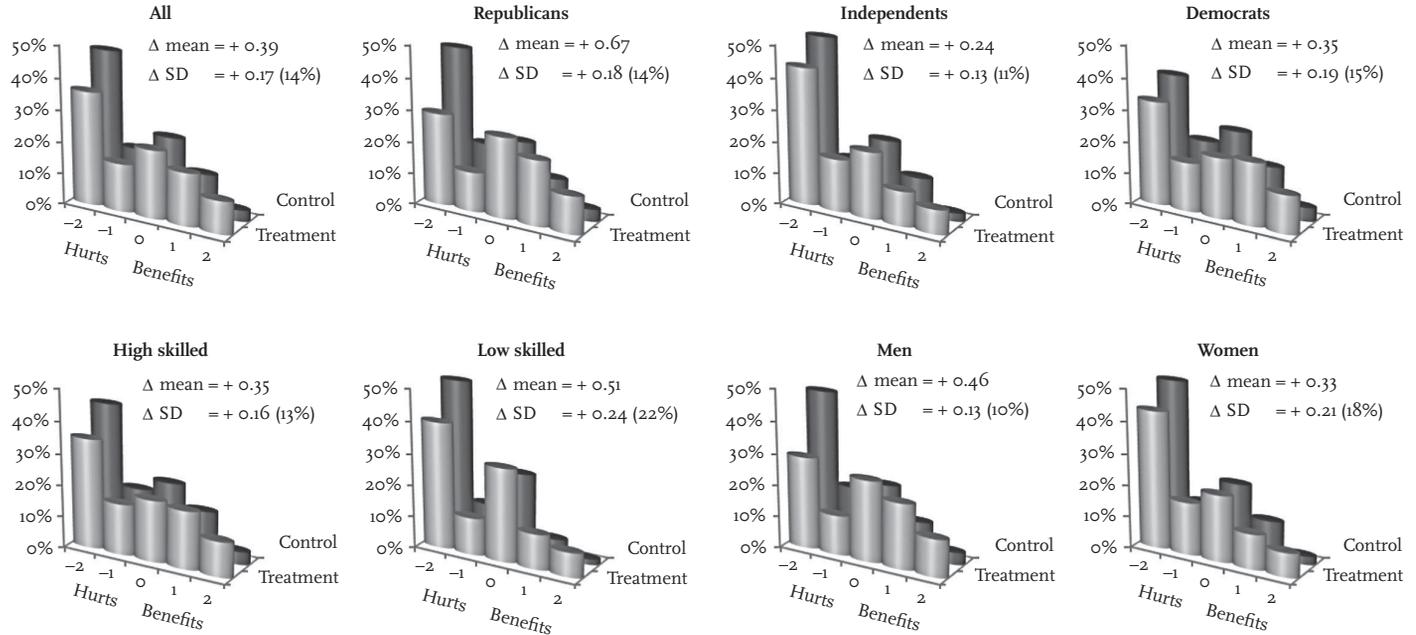


FIGURE 8.A1 Effect of positive treatment on the distribution of perceptions of trade's effect on national employment, by subgroups
 SOURCE: Positive Aggregate Frame Experiment, 2010 Cooperative Congressional Elections Study, Common Content (Ansolabehere 2010), and University of Notre Dame Module (self).

TABLE 8.A1 Influence of a positive trade message on beliefs and preferences for trade

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF					
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON:		BENEFITS OF TRADE		LIMITS ON TRADE	
Benefits national employment	Coefficient	SE	Oppose new limits (pro-trade)	Coefficient	SE
Positive trade treatment	0.46	(0.23) **	Positive trade treatment	0.15	(0.24)
Interaction: Positive * Female	-0.64	(0.40) *	Interaction: Positive * Female	0.00	(0.45)
Placebo treatment	-0.19	(0.23)	Placebo treatment	0.16	(0.25)
Interaction: Placebo * Female	0.13	(0.41)	Interaction: Placebo * Female	-0.17	(0.43)
Republican	-0.20	(0.30)	Republican	0.07	(0.33)
Democrat	0.18	(0.17)	Democrat	0.47	(0.18) ***
Voted McCain 2008	0.74	(0.32) **	Voted McCain 2008	0.86	(0.36) **
Voted Romney 2012	-0.11	(0.33)	Voted Romney 2012	0.15	(0.36)
Age	-0.03	(0.01) ***	Age	0.01	(0.01)
Female	-0.25	(0.29)	Female	-0.87	(0.32) ***
Employed	0.20	(0.16)	Employed	-0.19	(0.17)
White	-0.33	(0.20) *	White	0.08	(0.21)
Constant	0.53	(0.35)	Constant	-0.57	(0.37)

(Continued)

TABLE 8.A1 (Continued)

MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ANALYSIS OF					
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON:		BENEFITS OF TRADE		LIMITS ON TRADE	
Makes no difference	Coefficient	SE	Support new limits (pro-protection)	Coefficient	SE
Positive trade treatment	0.15	(0.31)	Positive trade treatment	0.55	(0.27) **
Interaction: Positive * Female	0.03	(0.52)	Interaction: Positive * Female	-0.30	(0.44)
Placebo treatment	-0.22	(0.30)	Placebo treatment	0.63	(0.28) **
Interaction: Placebo * Female	0.44	(0.53)	Interaction: Placebo * Female	-0.80	(0.43) *
Republican	0.34	(0.38)	Republican	0.52	(0.33)
Democrat	0.06	(0.22)	Democrat	0.52	(0.19) ***
Voted McCain 2008	0.24	(0.44)	Voted McCain 2008	0.51	(0.37)
Voted Romney 2012	-0.49	(0.45)	Voted Romney 2012	0.25	(0.36)
Age	-0.01	(0.01)	Age	0.04	(0.01) ***
Female	-0.30	(0.38)	Female	0.12	(0.31)
Employed	0.16	(0.21)	Employed	-0.16	(0.18)
White	0.04	(0.27)	White	0.53	(0.24) **
Constant	-1.10	(0.45) ***	Constant	-2.54	(0.41) ***
Number of Observations	886		Number of Observations	886	
Base Response "Hurts"			Base Response "No Difference"		

SOURCE: Amazon Mechanical Turk Survey, conducted June 2014.

* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

CHAPTER 9 | Conclusions

JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT ON July 28, 2005, the US House of Representatives passed the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) by two votes (217–215). An hour before, passage had seemed improbable. Breaking from the president and the Republican Party, a number of representatives from affected textile, sugar, and manufacturing states planned to directly oppose CAFTA, or, in less overt defiance, simply miss the vote. As it was, at the end of the standard 15-minute voting window, the vote was 175 in favor, 180 against. But the House Speaker, Republican Dennis Hastert, kept the vote open for an additional 45 minutes, enough time for the Republican leadership (including Hastert himself) to wrangle those sitting out and to induce one member from North Carolina—Robin Hayes—to switch his vote by offering up a combination of promises of future textile protection and earmarks in an upcoming highway spending bill. As a result, the long-running pattern of incremental US trade liberalization continued.

The final tally that night did not include the vote of Representative Charles H. Taylor, a Republican and also from North Carolina. Taylor had earlier publicly stated his intent to vote against CAFTA because of the potential threat to textile workers in his state. For a recorded vote, such as was held for the CAFTA bill, each individual's vote is officially recorded by either calling the roll, holding a teller vote, or accessing an electronic voting device. On the night in question, Taylor's vote should have been recorded by an electronic card-swipe system, which immediately displays a candidate's vote on a panel behind the Speaker's chair. Yet despite his presence in the chamber, Representative Taylor was not on the record as having cast a vote. The following day, Representative Taylor and his office offered a varied and growing list of explanations for his missing vote: that his electronic card was not working (despite his successfully using it eleven times during the day's session); that he had voted at the end of the extended session and so had not had time to notice the error (despite his having made an ostensible show of voting within the original 15-minute period); that he had, in fact, voted early but so as to not be pressured by Republican leaders had left to watch (without sound) the results

with Howard Coble, another representative who had voted “no”; that his staff and that of Representative Coble had not been able to locate him (in the Appropriations Committee office in the US Capitol, while wearing his pager); and finally, that he had not known until watching C-SPAN at the gym the following day that his vote was not recorded.

Taylor was unfortunate.¹ On a different day, his nonvote would likely have gone unnoticed or at least unremarked upon. When the night had started, he had been just one among ten to twenty other nonvoters, a strategy that had been tacitly approved by Republican leaders as preferable to recorded “nay” votes and by fellow anti-CAFTA representatives as preferable to a recorded “yay” vote. But the initial failure to ensure passage of CAFTA sparked a full court press by the Republican leadership. Other Republicans who had previously framed CAFTA as potentially devastating to jobs in their states, such as North Carolina’s Robin Hayes and Representative Mark Foley of Florida, abruptly voted in support of the trade agreement. Taylor’s nonvote, originally intended to be inconspicuous, became the opposite—and instead shone a light on what had become a successful trade policy strategy for many Republican and Democratic politicians: tacit acceptance of trade liberalization on the congressional floor, combined with light protectionist sentiment in addresses to the public.

In recent decades, this strategy has protected both incumbent politicians and the continued liberalization of US trade. The majority of Americans remain unconvinced of the benefits of trade liberalization at the national level; and in specific regions—such as Taylor’s—many also voice concerns about the local and regional costs of liberalization. In Taylor’s own home state of North Carolina, the 2006 CCES survey found 59 percent of respondents expressed opposition to CAFTA and only 21 percent supported the trade agreement, a proportion similar to that found in his home district, NC-11, and slightly more strongly in opposition to CAFTA than the national sample.² In national surveys of the CAFTA ratification, opposition to CAFTA outweighed support by a 5 to 3 ratio,³ and even sometimes a 5 to 2 ratio.⁴ Yet CAFTA passed by a 55 to

¹ Taylor would lose his bid for re-election in 2006 to Heath Shuler, the former University of Tennessee quarterback who repeatedly used Taylor’s failure to cast a “no” vote as an indictment of Taylor’s ability to represent the district’s interests.

² In the full sample of 36,234 responses, 51 percent opposed CAFTA, 27 percent supported CAFTA, and 22 percent answered “Don’t Know.” The responses from North Carolina (N = 939) were significantly more opposed to CAFTA than the sample from the general population according to a chi-squared test (p value = $< .001$). Responses from Taylor’s district (the 11th) conformed to those of North Carolina as a whole: 57 percent stated opposition to CAFTA, only 22 percent proffered support, and 21 percent answered “Don’t know.” However, with only 82 observations from the district, the sample was too small to offer a meaningful test of the differences between the district and state or district and nation.

³ In a survey of registered voters conducted in February 2005 by Americans for Fair Trade and Ipsos-Public Affairs and Ayres, McHenry & Associates in anticipation of the United States’ congressional vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), opponents outweighed supporters by 51 percent to 32 percent (<http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/ipoll.html>).

⁴ CCES 2006, Common Content.

45 margin on the Senate floor and by a 217 to 215 margin on the House floor.⁵ Members of Congress who vote against the wishes of their constituents (or fail to turn up for the vote) are generally assumed to face electoral punishment yet such punishment is rarely observed when the issue at hand is trade policy. American preferences for trade policy had become disconnected from American politics on trade policy.

I have argued that the shift to a service economy in the latter half of the twentieth century extinguished the direct link between individual employment and trade policy for many Americans, weakening both industry- and class-based political activism on trade. Instead, in recent years, American preferences for trade have depended on a combination of factors ranging from individual circumstances, to community characteristics, to beliefs about trade and the strength of the nation. These determinants are scattered, poorly aligned with current political interests groups, and of mixed strength and malleability, diluting their relevance in national politics. In chapter 4, I exposed the deep divide between white men and others on the perception of their own individual benefits from trade. This gap between white men and others' beliefs about their own benefits from trade are exacerbated rather than diminished by positive messages about trade. White men respond positively to a free trade message that matches current US policy, but minorities and women do not. Thus, generalized attempts to shift individual beliefs about the benefits of trade can result in greater cleavages. While these newly identified trade-related preferences of women and minorities benefit from existing, gender- and identity-based interest groups, these pre-existing interest groups do not prioritize trade policy and thus weaken the potential political impact of the protectionist tendencies of women and many nonwhites. Notably in the 2016 Democratic primary cycle, Bernie Sanders failed to mobilize women and minorities to his side in meaningful numbers, despite a pro-protection policy message.

Furthermore, traditional sources of protectionism have declined as many import-competing industries have declined, factories have closed, and workers have moved on to other jobs. Individuals in communities with low concentrations of manufacturing and high residential turnover express higher levels of uncertainty about the benefits (or costs) of trade and thus are less likely to incorporate sociotropic protectionism when forming opinions and when holding politicians accountable on policy votes. Pockets of strong sentiment remain, but they are increasingly in the minority. Instead, I have identified a different source of community-based trade policy preferences: community racial diversity. Increased racial diversity has highlighted differences between

⁵ Since the addition of the Dominican Republic to the agreement in 2004, the formal name is the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA), but the agreement is still generally referred to as CAFTA. For both descriptive and analytic purposes, the analysis in this book uses the second Senate CAFTA vote, taken on July 28, 2005, for procedural reasons, which includes the supporting vote of the previously absent Senator Joe Lieberman.

redistributional policies that appear to privilege the majority group and those that privilege the minority groups. This race-driven divide generates continued support for protection among certain populations. Yet again, this source of sentiment is not well organized for mobilization. In the case of trade, the race-cueing messages are implicit rather than explicit, with many likely not realizing the influence. Rallying these race-based preferences requires more direct identification of in-group benefits, but such explicit in-group cues would likely have negative ramifications for both main parties. Trump's 2016 campaign, more than others described in this book, made explicit the potential of trade policy to protect the employment prospects of the white working class. During the summer and fall of 2016, in numerous cover stories, the media highlighted this demographic's fear of losing out economically in the new globalized market, and in doing so brought to the front pages the racial dimensions of redistribution. Where many politicians have chosen to downplay the racial divide—at least in public, Trump instead chose to benefit from racial divisions at home while also framing trade policy in terms of competition from abroad.

The high levels of negative sentiment concerning the national effect of trade appear to offer the greatest potential for political mobilization, but it also suffers from a pragmatic roadblock for free trade oriented politicians: that public opinion differs so greatly from current policy. Most individuals are relatively unconcerned about the potential for trade to affect their own employment concerns but hold negative views about the effect on national employment. Yet as these beliefs are not from an individual's own experience, they are easily influenced by economic messages from political elites, but not enough to overcome a political catch-22. Modern trade policy diverges so greatly from current sentiment that political actors attempting to influence public opinion run the risk of raising the salience of a topic in which their own actions differ from the majority opinion of voters. The result is that in all but a few districts, trade policy currently stays quietly in the background of political discourse, or shrouded by policy free platitudes such as “strong against China,” despite its importance for Americans' economic prosperity and the great divide between opinion and policy. Up to the 2016 election, the absence of salient and mobilized mass opinion on trade left Congress free to continue to form trade policy with little reference to constituents.

This analysis raises two outstanding questions. First, is this story rooted in American exceptionalism, or do conditions in other developed industrial countries similarly predict the political impotence (or political relevance) of trade policy? And second, could conditions in the United States change to revive the salience of trade policy? We have ample cross-national evidence to address the former question; answers to the second questions must be more speculative, but the political upheavals of 2016, both in the United States and in Britain, provide some important hints. I take these questions in turn.

A Case of American Exceptionalism?

Ross Perot's presidential campaigns, the wider debate surrounding NAFTA, and prior periods of partisan disagreement offer US-based evidence that even if the hurdles are higher today than in the past, trade need not always be on the political sidelines in the United States. To this point, the experience of other countries offers a broader context for the current state of trade's salience in the United States. In countries similar to the United States, trade salience not only varies today across countries but also has varied across time within these countries. Over the border in Canada, trade policy defined the 1988 election, only to disappear as a prominent issue the following year. In France, trade policy continues to play a prominent role in elections, despite French trade policy—like the policy of other European Union member countries—being determined by the office of the European Trade Minister, an institutional system limiting national political accountability on trade issues. Such points of reference can help highlight both what is unique and what is common to the American experience and in particular sources of changing salience.

Comparing Trade's Salience in the United States and Other Advanced Industrial Countries

To capture both economic and political similarities to the United States, I focus on a comparison with eight other advanced industrial countries (AICs): Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Table 9.1 offers a summary of general economic and specific trade characteristics of these countries and the United States, a group that I call the AIC 9. All are high-income members of the OECD, thus ensuring similarities in political regime. All are members of the World Trade Organization. Five of the countries—France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom—participate in a shared trade policy through the European Union; and the first four of these participate in a shared currency and monetary union. All are wealthy, with GDP per capita from \$26,000 in South Korea to \$53,000 in the United States. All are characterized by having a strong domestic service economy, yet manufacturing-oriented export trade. A handful—Canada, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States—also have strong export markets related to fuels (although South Korea differs from the other three due to its refineries' reliance on imports of natural gas and crude oil). Over the last few decades, all have seen increased trade both in absolute terms but also relative to the size of their domestic economies (see figure 9.1). Thus, even while the United States swamps these other AICs in economic size and importance in international markets, in many other characteristics, the countries are comparable.

TABLE 9.1 Economic and trade characteristics of nine similar, advanced industrial countries (AIC 9) in 2013

	GENERAL ECONOMIC OUTCOMES							TRADE OUTCOMES					
	GDP PER CAPITA	GDP (US\$B)	AVERAGE ANNUAL GDP GROWTH (2004–2013) (%)	SERVICE (% GDP)*	MANUFACTU- RING (% GDP)*	CONCENTRA- TION (HH INDEX)*	TOTAL TRADE (US\$B)	TRADE AS % GDP	AVERAGE ANNUAL IMPORT GROWTH (2004–2013) (%)	AVERAGE ANNUAL EXPORT GROWTH (2004–2013) (%)	SERVICE TO MERCH. TRADE	PRIMARY EXPORT (%)	SECONDARY EXPORT (%)
Canada	\$51,964	\$1,827	1.9	71	11	0.54	\$1,130	62	4	1	1:5	Mfg. (47)	Fuel (27)
France	\$42,560	\$2,806	1.1	79	11	0.64	\$1,629	58	3	3	1:3	Mfg. (77)	Food (13)
Germany	\$46,251	\$3,730	1.2	69	22	0.53	\$3,183	85	5	5	1:5	Mfg. (83)	Food (6)
Italy	\$35,686	\$2,149	-0.2	74	16	0.58	\$1,179	55	1	2	1:4	Mfg. (83)	Food (8)
Japan	\$38,634	\$4,920	0.9	71	20	0.55	\$1,729	35	3	4	1:5	Mfg. (88)	Ores and Metals (< 3)
Korea, Rep.	\$25,977	\$1,305	3.8	59	31	0.45	\$1,341	103	8	10	1:5	Mfg. (86)	Fuel (10)
Spain	\$29,882	\$1,393	0.8	71	26**	0.58**	\$ 832	60	1	3	1:3	Mfg. (69)	Food (15)
United Kingdom	\$41,781	\$2,678	1.2	79	10	0.64	\$1,649	62	2	3	1:2	Mfg. (63)	Fuel (19)
United States	\$53,042	\$16,768	1.7	78	13	0.64	\$5,033	30	3	6	1:3	Mfg. (62)	Fuel (11)
Median AIC 9	\$41,781	\$2,678	1.2	71	14	0.56	\$1,629	59	3	3	1:4	Mfg. (77)	

SOURCE: World Bank Development Indicators (World Bank 2015).

NOTE: GDP and trade values in current 2013 US dollars.

*Year 2010 due to data constraints.

**Spain does not distinguish between manufacturing and other industrial activities; calculation based on "Industry (value added) as % of GDP, rather than subcategories of manufacturing and non-manufacturing.

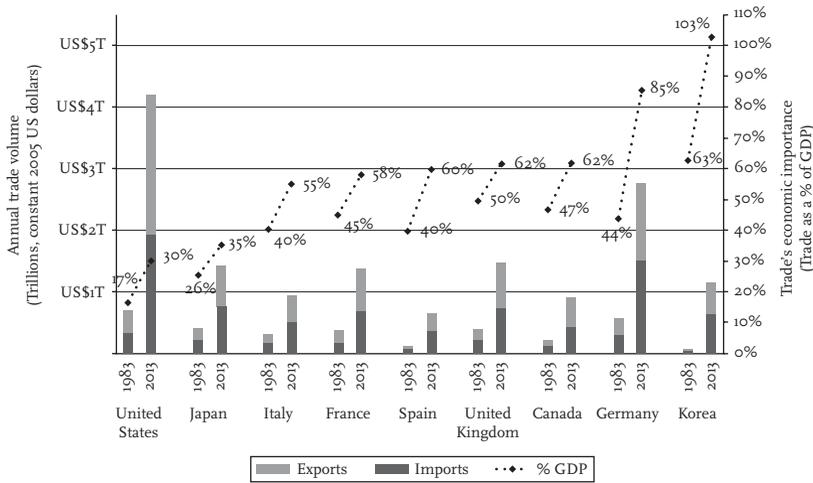


FIGURE 9.1 AIC 9 trade volumes and economic importance (1983 to 2013)

NOTE: Annual trade values in constant 2005 US dollars.

SOURCE: *World Bank Development Indicators* (World Bank 2015).

Measuring Salience Cross-Nationally

Comparing salience across such a politically and regionally diverse set of countries is challenging. In earlier chapters, I measured salience via the role an issue played in a voter’s support for incumbent politicians. This type of fine-grained data is not available cross-nationally; but even if it were, cross-national institutional differences in politicians’ participation in policymaking, and particularly trade policymaking, would create problems for direct comparison. In EU member countries, domestic political representatives do not directly vote on tariff policy. However, domestic parties still have and still state preferences in platforms. Thus for cross-country comparisons, I turn again to the salience measure provided by the Manifesto Project Database (Volgens et al. 2014), a compilation of content analyses of parties’ electoral programs since 1920 in the United States and since 1945 in fifty other democratic countries. As discussed in chapter 2, the database decomposes party platforms into single-issue sentences or quasi-sentences, codes them into one of fifty-six policy categories, and then standardizes the total count for each category by the number of total sentences or quasi-sentences, in order to control for variation in length of party platforms across parties and across countries. Trade (and a handful of other policies with both negative and positive dimensions⁶) is further coded for position on trade: “protectionism: positive” (per406) and “protectionism: negative”

⁶ Dolezal et al. (2014, 61) note that trade was one of a handful of issues coded for both negative and positive positional categories; for most categories, the issue alone indicates a party’s position. Budge (2001) has shown that for most issues such dual-position categories are unnecessary, but that protectionism (406, 407) and military (104, 105) are the two exceptions in which real-world party manifestos mention both with near equal emphasis.

(per407). As a general measure of issue salience, scholars use this calculation of the percentage of the platform devoted to a specific issue or issues. For trade's salience, I use the sum of the number of positive and negative mentions of trade protection.

Figure 9.2 displays for each of the AIC 9, the average platform salience of trade in each national-level election. For this average, I use the unweighted mean across parties; in other words, I incorporate each party's platform data equally regardless of vote share on Election Day. While this measure may unduly emphasize non-mainstream parties, it has the benefit of not assuming that a platform was not influential simply because the vote share was not high. Minor party platforms may generate publicity and receive coverage even if few of their representatives are elected. In fact, even this unweighted average underrepresents some parties' influence due to the Manifesto Project Database's coding rules that exclude parties not garnering at least one seat in the national election, a bar more easily surpassed in countries with proportional representation systems rather than majoritarian systems. In the United States, third parties have struggled to pass this bar. In 1992, running as an independent presidential candidate, Ross Perot received an abundance of pre-election press. Additionally, unrestrained by federal campaign limits, the self-funded campaigner spent millions on an information campaign, spreading his opinions via half-hour blocks of advertising on major networks. His part-lecture, part-infomercial ads attracted millions of viewers, with a few blocks outdrawing regular programming.⁷ During the presidential debates, Perot delivered some of the election's most memorable lines including ones focused on trade. On Election Day in 1992, Perot received almost 19 percent of the popular vote; yet, since neither he nor the single congressional candidate affiliated with him won, the Manifesto Project Database's US data does not include his platform in the 1992 data. Similarly in 1996 and later elections, a lack of victories by Perot-affiliated candidates (after 1995 under the auspices of the Reform Party) prevents the inclusion of the Reform Party manifesto which has sought to use its support of trade protection to distinguish itself from the two main parties.⁸ As a result, the data for the United States understates the salience of trade in 1992 and to a lesser extent later elections. That said, despite this specific concern, the data from the Manifesto Project Database displayed in figure 9.2 allows for comparisons both across countries and across time which would be otherwise difficult to observe. The bottom right panel of figure 9.2 shows the salience of trade policy in the United States since 1920. The others show the measure of campaign salience since 1945 or, in the case of Spain and South Korea, upon initiation of democracy.

⁷ Elizabeth Kolbert, "The 1992 Campaign: The Media; Perot's 30-Minute TV Ads Defy the Experts, Again," *New York Times*, October 27, 1992, <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/10/27/nyregion/the-1992-campaign-the-media-perot-s-30-minute-tv-ads-defy-the-experts-again.html>.

⁸ Stephanie Simon, "Fractured Reform Party Sees Trade Issue as Its Salvation," *Los Angeles Times*, February 19, 2000, <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/feb/19/news/mn-535>.

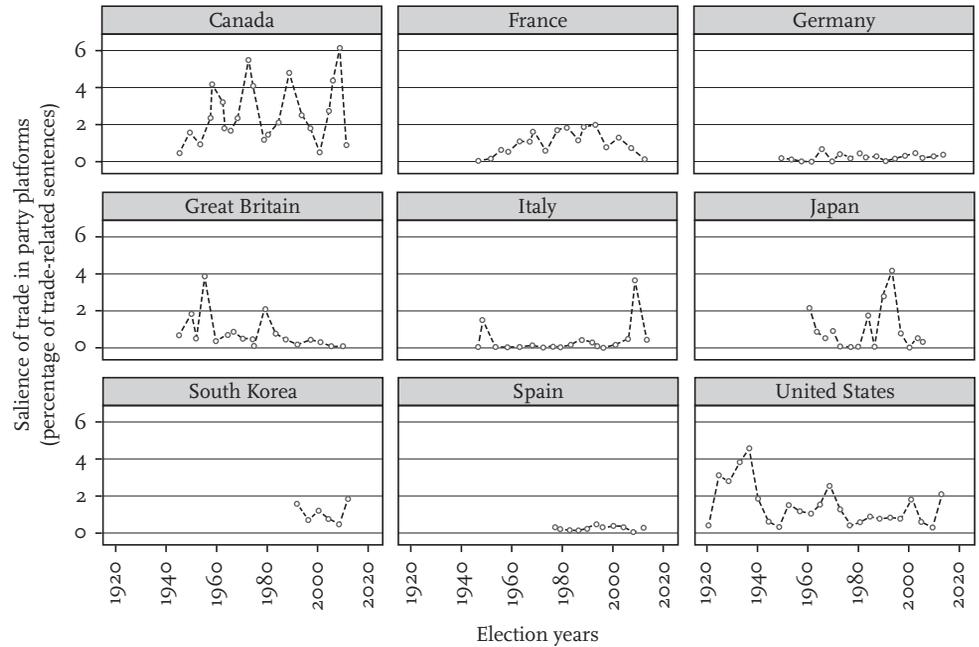


FIGURE 9.2 Salience of trade in election year party platforms of the AIC 9 (1920 to 2014)

SOURCE: The Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2014).

Cross-nationally and across time, the United States offers a distinctly middle case—having neither consistently high nor consistently low salience. Trade’s salience in campaigns was high during the 1930s and 1940s but fell out of prominence until the 1970s, when after a brief spike, trade’s campaign salience diminished again until the turn of the century. Remember though that inclusion of Perot’s anti-NAFTA rhetoric would generate an additional spike in 1992. In comparison, trade’s campaign salience in Germany and Spain has been relatively low and stable, even throughout the late 1990s and during the financial crisis. In Italy, after many years of little political attention, trade briefly re-emerged as an important issue in the 2008 election solely because of the highly protectionist stance of the Northern League—the most electorally significant of Italy’s minor parties. (It received 8 percent of the vote in the 2008 election.) In France, trade policy has been of consistently middling salience, but primarily due to position-taking by minor political parties. Since its emergence in the mid-1970s as the dominant center-left party, the Socialist Party has seldom included a trade-related policy statement in its platform.⁹ However, other parties—particularly the Union for French Democracy and the National Front—have kept the issue alive in their platforms, even as the European Union has increased its role on trade policy formation. In Canada, Japan, and South Korea as in the United States, trade’s salience in parties’ campaign literature has waxed and waned.

Trade’s Salience and Exposure to Trade

These observed variations across time and across countries do not neatly square with conventional expectations that trade’s salience be related to a country’s exposure to trade. Trade serves as a conduit to international markets and as such transmits trends and shocks in international markets to domestic markets (Eichengreen et al. 1996; Rodrik 1998). A common measure of this exposure to global volatility is a country’s trade as a percentage of its GDP. For countries with lower trade to GDP values, changes in external markets will have relatively smaller impact than if trade volumes relative to the domestic market values were larger. Among OECD countries, the United States is an outlier. By volume, American trade swamps other developed countries, but due to the size of domestic production, the United States counter-intuitively has the smallest exposure to trade: less than 30 percent of GDP. During and after the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, many countries with high levels of trade to GDP felt the immediate effects of the worldwide slowdown in trade.¹⁰ For

⁹ In 1978, the Socialist platform weakly promoted protection, but less than 0.5 percent of the platform discussed trade issues. In 1993, the platform weakly promoted free trade, but less than 1 percent of the platform discussed trade issues. In comparison, in 2002 over 7 percent of the National Front’s platform promoted a pro-protection stance toward trade.

¹⁰ Analysis by economist Richard Baldwin (2009) has shown that the 2008 financial crisis catalyzed a very specific demand shock, one focused on a range of domestic value-added activities

the United States, a smaller relative size of trade to GDP resulted in muted impact of these global trends. On these grounds alone, some might say that low salience in the United States is to be expected. However, a comparison across countries and across time helps to illustrate that exposure alone cannot explain the current state of trade salience in the United States.

For a cross-country comparison, figure 9.3 displays OECD countries according to these two trade metrics: the average volume of trade between 2004 and 2013 (x-axis) and this volume of trade as a percentage of each country's GDP (y-axis). Luxembourg (at the top left) sits at one extreme; Luxembourg's average annual imports and exports total 300 percent of Luxembourg's GDP. The United States (low right corner) sits at the other. For most OECD countries, the range of trade to GDP is 50 percent to 200 percent. In other words, most OECD countries have higher exposure to international markets, despite the fact that the United States has by far the greatest volume of trade. The inset graphic in figure 9.3 shows the AIC 9. All of the AIC 9 have annual trade volumes in excess of \$0.5 trillion but trade to GDP levels below 100 percent. Even among the AIC 9, the United States appears as an outlier. Japan appears the closest to the United States in terms of exposure and trade volumes. Germany, Korea, and Canada have more than double the exposure to international market volatility as the United States has. Yet salience in these countries varies greatly. Trade exposure is similar for both the United States and Japan but discussion of trade issues is more consistently observed in Japanese party platforms. In contrast, in Germany, where trade exposure is high, trade has politically been a nonissue, meriting less than one-third of a percent of party manifestos from 1949 to 2013. For context, in 2013, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) devoted 27 sentences of its party manifesto to outlining its support of free trade. Within the 93-page document, these trade-related sentences accounted for just over 1 percent of the platform. Yet in terms of trade's campaign salience, the 2013 FDP platform ranked second highest across all parties' platforms since 1949 and the highest since 1972. In comparison, despite US trade exposure measuring less than half the size of German trade exposure (30 percent vs. 85 percent), in the 2012 US election, trade comprised an average of 2 percent of the party platforms (2.0 for the Republican Party and 2.1 for the Democratic Party). Furthermore, while US trade exposure has been on the rise—today's 30 percent of GDP is almost double the levels in 1983—salience during this period of expansion has remained historically low, offering within-country evidence that trade exposure is not well correlated to trade's salience. Other countries too have experienced a rise in trade exposure without a commensurate rise in trade's salience. See figure 9.1 for a comparison of exposure levels in 1983 and 2013. During this period, Germany (like the United States) experienced a rapid rise in trade exposure (44 percent to 85 percent)

and most notably the production of "postponeable" goods. As Baldwin notes, such goods and their inputs make up only a small proportion of world GDP, but a large portion of world trade; this compositional difference turned the global financial crisis into a global trade crisis.

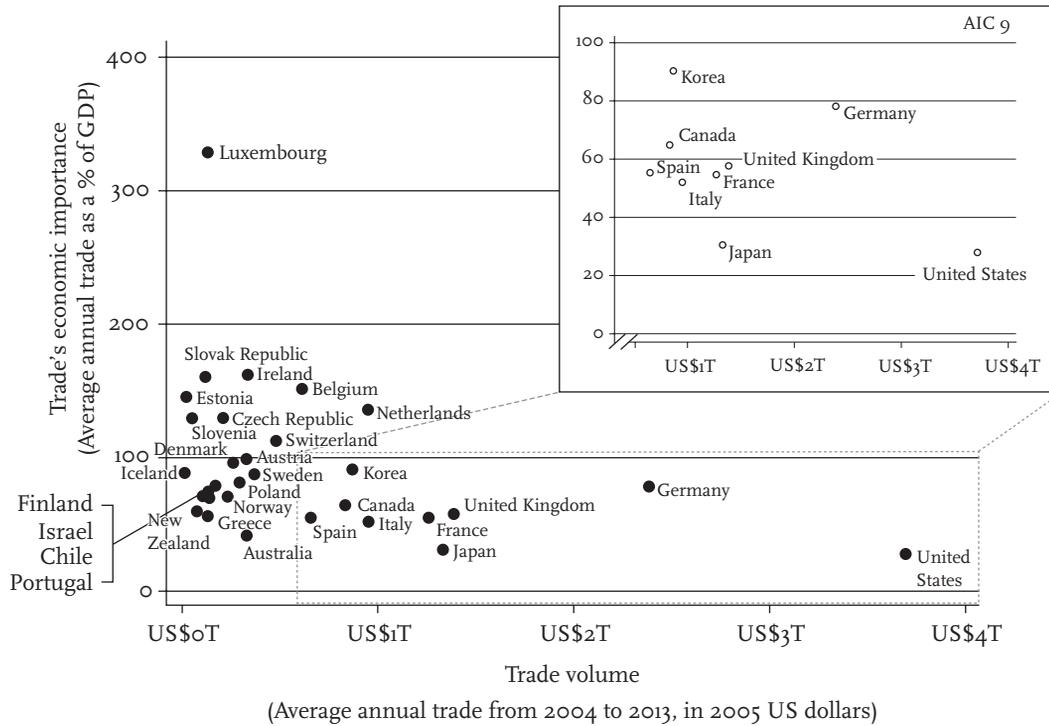


FIGURE 9.3 OECD countries' trade volumes and economic importance (2004 to 2013)

NOTE: Annual trade values in constant 2005 US dollars.

SOURCE: World Bank Development Indicators (World Bank 2015).

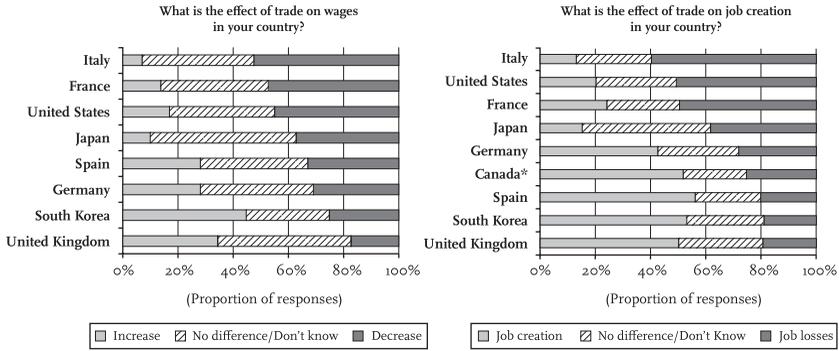


FIGURE 9.4 Comparative beliefs about the benefits of trade across AIC 9 countries in 2013

*Responses from similar but different survey questions.

SOURCE: Pew Research Center (2014); Canadian Election Study (Fournier et al. 2011).

with little increase in salience. Thus, despite an intuitive link between trade exposure and trade salience, the data does not support a clear correlation.

Trade's Salience and Societal Beliefs about Trade's Benefits

Differences in societal preferences could be a complicating factor in considering the effect of growing trade exposure on the salience of trade issues. Salience might be expected to be highest where the disagreement is highest over the benefits of trade, especially on employment and wages. Again, however, societal beliefs about the benefits of trade do not neatly link to salience levels. As one point of comparison, take current views on the employment and wage benefits of trade. Figure 9.4 displays results of a Pew Research Council survey of opinion in the AIC 9. The right panel shows the distribution of beliefs about trade's effect on employment,¹¹ and the left panel shows the distribution of beliefs about wages.¹² Unfortunately, Pew did not include Canada in their sample of countries; however, the Canadian Election Study (CES) routinely asks a similar question about net employment effects of trade with a comparable spectrum of five response categories.¹³ To expand the range of the comparison, I have included

¹¹ The Pew Research Center (2014) survey asked nationally representative samples, "Does trade with other countries lead to job creation in (survey country), job losses, or does it not make a difference?"

¹² The Pew Research Center (2014) survey asked national representative samples, "Does trade with other countries lead to an increase in the wages of (survey nationality) workers, a decrease in wages, or does it not make a difference?"

¹³ "For each statement below, please indicate if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Please write the number that best reflects your opinion in the space at the right of each statement: International trade creates more jobs in Canada than it destroys" (Canadian Election Study 2011).

results from the 2011 CES survey. The populations in Italy, France, the United States, and Japan appear the most divided on the issue of whether trade helps or hurts employment condition. Furthermore, in all four cases, negative views outweigh positive views. In contrast, respondents in the United Kingdom, South Korea, Spain, Canada, and Germany hold far more positive beliefs, particular on the issue of job creation. However, trade has been extremely salient in Canada and much less salient in Germany. In Italy, trade's high salience is recent, and specific to single recent election, at least to date. Preferences are helpful, but do not offer a clear-cut distinction between countries in which trade is politically salient and those in which it remains largely excluded from political discussion.

Trade's Salience and Political Divisions

Instead, trade's salience across time and across countries appears politically driven. Trade's campaign salience is highest when parties stake out divergent positions on trade. In other words, trade matters when parties make it matter. This is not a tautological statement. The perceived ability to capture vote share can serve to increase the amount of focus parties place on any particular political issue. When parties do not stake distinct positions, salience tends to drop. Figure 2.8 in chapter 2 displayed the relationship between US parties' position taking and the salience of trade as measured by coverage in party platforms. In the 1920s and 1930s, the policy gulf between free-trading Democrats and protectionist Republicans was high, and trade policy comprised historically high levels of both parties' platforms. With the convergence of party positions in the 1940s, salience fell. The same pattern repeated two decades later. Growing party differentiation throughout the 1960s matches trade's rising prominence in party platforms; and the subsequent party convergence matches its drop. This positive relationship between position-taking and salience appears across time in the other AIC 9 countries. For each national election, figure 9.5 displays each seat-winning party's position on trade (measured by the net percentage of the platform which is pro-protection) alongside the average salience (measured by the average percentage of trade-policy-related statements in each party platform), calculated as before from the standardized platform data provided by the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2014). In cases where seat-winning party platforms measure similarly (for example Italy in the '60s and '70s), the chart shows one marker for this position, highlighting overall party position convergence or divergence. As in the US case, where parties have more divergent positions, on average, more space is spent on defining those distinct positions. In Germany, since 1949, party positions—as stated in their party platforms—have minimally diverged, and many platforms say little or nothing about trade policy. Take, for example, the German election of 2002. All five parties offered on balance free trade statements, and all five devoted less than 1 percent of their platforms to trade issues.

During the same time period, the United Kingdom saw spikes in salience, particularly as third parties struggled for greater recognition

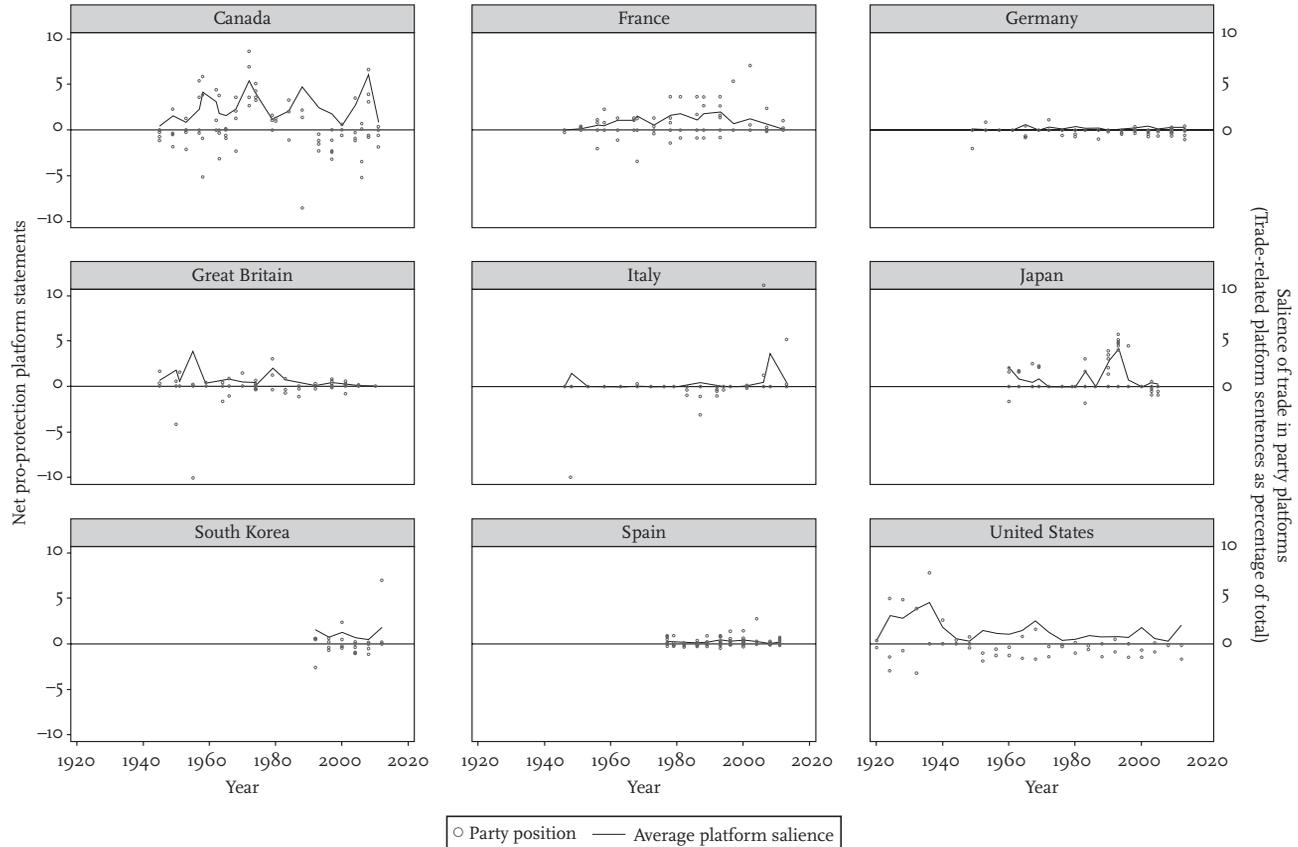


FIGURE 9.5 Party position and trade's salience in AIC 9 elections (1920 to 2012)

NOTE: A single platform position marker may include multiple seat-winning parties with identically measured platform positions. In 2008, the Northern League's platform measured 18, well off the scale for other seat-winning parties in Italy and the other AIC 9 countries.

SOURCE: The Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2014).

at the polls. In the 1950s, the waning Liberal Party—long defined by its free-market-oriented economic policies—continued to differentiate itself from the more electorally strong Conservative Party and Labour Party on the basis of its support for free trade and thus increased trade’s campaign salience. Trade issues arose again in the 1970s as politicians debated the merits of the European Economic Community (EEC), aka the Common Market. The Liberal Party was the first to embrace the EEC and could and did signal its support for freer trade in its platforms. In contrast, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party experienced within-party divisions, especially in the run-up to the 1975 national referendum on British membership in the EEC (Butler and Kitzinger 1976; Usherwood 2002). Although the Conservative Party, under the leadership of Prime Minister Edward Heath, had originally led Britain into membership in 1973, some Conservative members, notably prominent Member of Parliament Enoch Powell, vocally dissented. A schism within the Labour Party prevented a coherent response from the shadow government; while the Deputy Leader, Roy Jenkins, supported the terms of the agreement “as is,” some powerful Labour groups disapproved (Usherwood 2002). The lack of party cohesion corresponds with watered-down policy statements in the Party Manifestos of 1974; a year in which two national elections (first in February and then again in October) were necessary to achieve a majority government. Despite having just shepherded through the ground-breaking cooperative trade agreement, the first Conservative Party manifesto (“Firm Action for a Fair Britain”) mentioned the EEC almost in passing, noting that it would work within its framework to ensure the flow of oil and for the betterment of farmers (Conservative Party 1974a). Nothing was said of the effect of the new treaty on other industries. The second Conservative Party manifesto (“Putting Britain First: A National Policy”) offered a wordier defense, but one explicitly focused on security and autonomy issues rather than the economic benefits it deemed a mere “matter of accountancy” (Conservative Party 1974b). That year’s Labour Party manifestos more directly addressed “The Common Market” but did so with an emphasis on the procedural issue; in its February manifesto (“Let Us Work Together—Labour’s Way Out of the Crisis”), the Labour Party (1974) promised “to restore to the British people the right to decide the final issue of British membership of the Common Market.” The Labour Party manifestos were vague not only because policy outcomes were incumbent on proposed renegotiations but also because the Labour Party itself was split: the referendum proposal, now incorporated in their Manifesto, originated from an amendment to the European Communities bill first proposed by an anti-EC Conservative member. The shadow cabinet’s support of the proposal led to the resignation of the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Roy Jenkins. In the following year, the newly elected Labor-led government kept to its promise of a national referendum on Britain’s continued membership in the EEC, but now in power, the Labor leadership advocated a “yes” vote and, via the postal

service, distributed to all households a pamphlet detailing why remaining within the EEC was recommended by “Her Majesty’s Government.”¹⁴ Yet, the party allowed its members to speak on either side. Although the government officially recommended a “yes” vote, seven of its twenty-three cabinet members argued for a withdrawal from the agreement¹⁵ and the specially convened Labour Party Conference had voted by almost 2 to 1 to leave the EEC.¹⁶ Such within-party cleavages prevented either party from offering a coherent free trade message; as Usherwood (2002) describes it, rather than “whipping around” party support both parties “fudged” it. Commentators at the time complained that political parties had left an informational void that was only partially filled by the media; but more generally scholars note that lack of party management leaves public opinion more vulnerable to external political entrepreneurs, which in the case of Europe have tended to position themselves against integration (Usherwood 2002, 65). For example, two decades later, a lack of strong messaging by the mainstream parties opened the door for anti-integration activist, billionaire Sir James Goldsmith who during the 1997 election spent over £20 million on a campaign to exit the European Union. While Goldsmith’s Referendum Party failed to win a single seat, the party message corresponded with both an increase in interest in integration policy and increased “Euro scepticism” in the population. MORI polls of important issues facing Britain found the rank of importance of the European Community (EC, formerly the EEC) higher in 1997 than any point since polling started in 1974.¹⁷ Data from the 1992–1997 British Election Panel Study (BEPS) found a dramatic increase in Euro scepticism among the electorate (Heath et al. 1998). Results from the first two waves in 1992 and 1994 showed a populace balanced in terms of its support for the European Community: the proportion of the survey respondents wanting to leave or reduce the power of the EC was 44 percent in 1992 and 49 percent in 1994. In the third wave in 1997, during the height of the Referendum Party’s messaging, two-thirds (66 percent) wished to leave or reduce the power of the EC, with only 30 percent supporting increased integration or retention of the status quo. While the final vote tally of the Referendum Party was small (less than 3 percent in districts in which it competed) its message captured the public attention and supported a surge of negative opinion at odds with the mainstream parties’

¹⁴ Harold Wilson, Prime Minister, “Britain’s New Deal in Europe,” <http://www.harvard-digital.co.uk/euro/pamphlet.htm#front>.

¹⁵ “On This Day: June 6, 1975: UK Embraces Europe in Referendum,” BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/june/6/newsid_2499000/2499297.stm.

¹⁶ “On This Day: April 26, 1975: Labour Votes to Leave the EEC,” BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/26/newsid_2503000/2503155.stm.

¹⁷ “Europe: The State of Public Opinion,” Ipsos MORI, February 26, 1999, <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/newsevents/ca/263/Europe-The-State-of-Public-Opinion.aspx>.

policy goals. In this way, the influence of the Referendum Party in 1997 is similar to Ross Perot's Reform Party during the 1992 US election. The failure of the mainstream parties to offer a strong, coherent support of their policies created an opening for other political entrepreneurs to control the message on trade and sway public opinion.

Two decades later, the rise of a third party voicing discontent with integration would have a much stronger impact. In the spring and summer of 2016, faced with a government promised referendum on Britain's relationship with the European Union (more commonly called "Brexit"), the two primary political parties in the United Kingdom—the Labour Party and the Conservative Party—repeated the mistakes of the past. Despite the ruling Conservative cabinet and the shadow Labour cabinet members overwhelmingly siding with the "Remain" campaign, commentators noted a failure of both parties to positively explain their pro-integration stance. Again, outside groups and in particular the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) led by Nigel Farage largely controlled political discourse and rallied voters' discontent with the status quo, albeit in this case the focus was primarily on immigration rather than on trade. In fact, the trade aspects of Brexit were tertiary to budget and immigration concerns, in part because of ungrounded expectations that trading relations would be unaffected by withdrawal from the EU but also because as in the United States, British politicians speak less about the benefits of trade integration than potential concerns. As discussed in chapter 8, when provided more information about parties' positions, individuals are more likely to express their opinions on trade, and those opinions tend to move toward the position provided. British commentators chastised both the Conservatives and Labour Party for losing the narrative and failing to provide a strong pro-integration position until the eve of the referendum. This failure of both parties is notable since the United Kingdom had in the prior year held a general election in which trade as a policy could have been, but was not, prominent as an issue due to relative agreement of the two major parties on the importance of Britain's integration in the European and world economy. The primary political party supporting the exit—UKIP—gained only a single parliamentary seat in the 2015 general election. The division between the referendum vote and share of parliamentary seats of UKIP members offers insight into the distinct processes of preferences and political coalition; and also why the referendum results—48 percent "to stay" and 52 percent "to leave"—were so surprising. The referendum pared off the multiple other issues that clutter coalitions and in doing so exposed underlying preferences about economic integration. But it similarly exposes the power of the main parties to in most elections suppress the salience of trade when the main political parties have converged on trade liberalization. It also exposes the ability for third party voices to be similarly vague on trade issues. The official "Leave" campaign website promises in a single bullet point both to regain control of Britain's trade deals and to negotiate a replacement UK-EU treaty

based on free trade.¹⁸ In other words, even the “Leave” campaign chose to be strategically ambiguous on trade.

I have argued that, barring mistakes such as the Brexit referendum, the major political parties and their choice to converge or diverge on trade liberalization influences the degree of political salience of trade. Of course, the reverse could be true: parties could be picking up on underlying interest and preferences. In unravelling the causal direction, the 1988 elections in the United States and Canada offer a helpful comparative illustration of the effect of party position-taking. In Canada, as in the United States, the salience of trade policy had been on the wane since the early 1970s. However, negotiations on a new Canada–US Free Trade Agreement provided a potential catalyst for the re-emergence of trade policy as an electoral issue. After two years of negotiations, the FTA was signed in January 1988, just months ahead of the national elections in the United States and Canada. Support for free trade in general was mixed in both countries. The American National Election Survey in 1986 found that among a nationally representative sample of Americans, the majority (52 percent) supported increasing protection while only 19 percent stated that they would oppose such policies. A similar nationally representative poll of 1,000 Canadians, conducted by Canadian Facts in 1985, found that 55 percent expressed a preference for import restrictions while 33 expressed opposition.¹⁹ While the questions slightly differed (the American questions focused on change and the Canadian questions focused on the general concept); the topline results indicate a similarly divided, veering to protectionist, populace.

In Canada, the debate over the proposed Canada–US Free Trade Agreement dominated the federal election, so much so that the 1988 election has become known by many Canadians as the “Free Trade Election.” The three major parties staked out distinct positions on the issue, positions at odds with prior platforms. In 1983, successfully fighting for Progressive Conservative Party leadership, Brian Mulroney declared that “This country could not survive with a policy of unfettered free trade . . . we’d be swamped” (Argyle 2011). While corruption, not trade, defined the 1984 election, a Progressive Conservative Party victory brought Mulroney and his opposition to free trade into government. The catalyst for negotiations with the United States emerged not from the new governing party but instead from a report by former Liberal finance minister, Donald Macdonald, chair of the Royal Commission on Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada. In 1985, the final report by the Macdonald Commission called for a “leap of faith” into the global market and recommended that Canada pursue a free trade agreement with the United States,

¹⁸ “What Happens When We Vote Leave?,” Vote Leave, http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/briefing_newdeal.

¹⁹ “USIA Poll # 1985-185014: Economic Summit,” Canadian Facts, sponsored by the United States Information Agency, distributed by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, fielded February 4–March 20, 1985.

a recommendation picked up by the new government and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Thus in 1988, it was the governing Progressive Conservative Party who strongly backed the agreement. Both opposition parties—The Liberal Party and the New Democrats—opposed the free trade agreement as written. Despite the agreement’s liberal roots and his predisposition for free trade (Argyle 2011), Liberal Party leader John Turner led the Liberals into opposition to the bill. During initial debates in October 1987, Turner vowed to “tear up” the agreement if his party regained power: “We did not negotiate the deal, we are not bound by the deal, we will not live with this deal, and if the deal and the final contract reflects the principles and the general terms of the agreement we have seen, we are going to tear the deal up” (Argyle 2011). After the United States and Canada formally signed the agreement in January 1988, Turner used the power of a Liberal controlled Senate to block ratification and to force Prime Minister Mulroney to call an autumn election.²⁰ On October 1, 1988, Brian Mulroney announced that he was calling for an election to be held on November 21, setting off seven weeks of national debate over the agreement.

Turner’s first public appearance as the Liberal Party’s candidate reaffirmed trade as the issue of the election: “For two months I have been asking the prime minister to let the people decide, today he finally agreed. . . . This election is primarily about two things: an independent and sovereign Canada, which has never been so threatened as it is by the Mulroney trade deal, and fairness particularly for low- and middle-income Canadians who have been hit by Tory tax increases over the last four years” (Jeffrey 2010, 139–140). Unsurprisingly, a priority of the Liberal Party’s 40-point platform was to say “‘No’ to the Mulroney Trade Deal” (Liberal Party of Canada 1988). The New Democrats, a rising third party led by Ed Broadbent, also promised to “Stop the Mulroney–Reagan Trade Deal,” a deal the New Democrats characterized as threatening “Canadian jobs, Canadian farmers, Canadian small businesses and the future of our children” (The New Democrat Party 1988). Yet until the night of the English language debate on October 25, neither the Liberals nor the New Democrats had gained much traction from their positions; an Angus Reid poll taken in September predicted another Conservative majority (Argyle 2011). During the debate, Turner first called Mulroney out for refusing a debate exclusively on free trade and then noting the disparity between the expected terms and the actual terms of the free trade agreement, Turner asserted that with one stroke of a pen Mulroney would reverse 120 years of Canadian independence and “reduce us, I am sure, to a colony of the United States.”

Polls published the next morning and following week signaled a strong debate victory for Turner and the Liberal Party. Buoyed by the surge in polls, the Liberal Party pared down its 40-point platform to focus primarily on trade and

²⁰ Howard Witt, “Canada Liberals Stall Trade Pact: Maneuver Could Force Mulroney to Call Fall Election,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 21, 1988, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1988-07-21/news/8801160609_1_free-trade-liberal-party-canadian-senate.

taxes (Jeffrey 2010). The party scored a second campaign victory with a new ad “The Border,” in which two negotiators discuss removing from the free trade agreement “just one line” getting in the way. As the camera zeros in, the viewer sees that the line being erased is the border between Canada and the United States. The Progressive Conservatives and FTA supporters responded aggressively; and the “Trade Election” is now notable for being the first Canadian election with substantial third-party advertising, as well as the first Canadian election with widespread negative advertising. While the Elections Act limited spending by political parties, third-party expenditures had no such regulations at the time. The 1988 election changed the assumption that interest group participation was of little influence in Canadian elections (Hiebert 1991). Minimum estimates of interest group advertising costs totaled C\$4.7 million, roughly 30 percent of all election advertising (Hiebert 1991). Expenditures supporting the free trade agreements were four times greater than those opposing the agreement. The business community, primarily via a newly formed business group (the Canadian Alliance for Trade and Job Opportunities), pooled resources and organized a concerted “Yes” campaign (Jeffrey 2010). The Alliance (and other pro-trade business interests) spent millions on a public outreach campaign that included televised ads, full-page advertisements in the Sunday papers, and the printing of over 800,000 brochures. Employees of many Alliance member firms received targeted pro-FTA messages via internal communications and forums. While the persuasiveness of the outreach efforts remains unclear, the effect on salience is not: for the election of 1988, 60 percent of Canadians polled by the CES, selected “free trade” as the most important issue of the campaign (Johnston et al. 1988).

In contrast, in the US election in the same year, trade policy never rose to be a primary campaign issue, despite (and arguably because) Americans’ preference for increased, rather than decreased, protection. In their party platform, “An American Vision: For Our Children and Our Future” (Republican Party 1988), Republicans did promote their free trade position in a section entitled “Opening Markets Abroad.” As suggested by its title, this trade-related section primarily focused on prior and current efforts to lower protection in other countries, a position with few domestic naysayers. However, three paragraphs specifically laid out the Republican position on US government provided protection for domestic industries: that protection hurt US producers, US consumers, and the nation itself for the self-interested benefit of politicians and special interests; that the General Accounting Office should issue statistics enumerating these costs; and that “the bosses of the Democrat Party” had “thrown in the towel” and were retreating into protectionism, a strategy that would sap economic activity at home and endanger market access abroad.²¹

²¹ “Unfortunately, international markets are still restricted by antiquated policies: protective tariffs, quotas, and subsidies. These hinder world trade and hurt everyone, producers and consumers alike. It is the politicians and special interests who use protectionism to cover up their failures and enrich themselves at the expense of the country as a whole.

This anti-domestic protection section was brief. Its 167 words constituted less than 25 percent of the trade-related section of the platform and less than 0.5 percent of the platform as a whole. But it offered a detailed and forceful condemnation of protectionism that could have developed into a Canada-sized campaign issue. Instead, the trade issue fizzled out. In the two scheduled presidential debates—each watched by over 65 million viewers—disagreements about the government response to domestic drug usage, the AIDS epidemic, and the Iran/Contra scandal framed the divide between the Democratic and Republican parties. Neither trade in general nor the Canada–US Free Trade Agreement emerged as a topic during either the first debate on foreign and domestic policy or the second debate on defense and foreign policy issues.

One explanation is that the Democratic platform, and Democratic policy to date, offered little contrast to the Republican position. During the 100th Congress, the Democratic Party held a majority in both the Senate and the House and thus had the power to stall legislation, particularly legislation promoted by President Ronald Reagan, a Republican. Instead, the United States–Canada Free-Trade Agreement Implementation Act of 1988 (S. 2651 and H.R. 5090) had passed both chambers easily: 366–40 in the House and 83–9 in the Senate. The Democratic Party platform of 1988 also offered little room for debate. The platform put forth abstract support for trade married with technical concerns about transparency and enforcement of existing trade laws: “WE BELIEVE that America needs more trade, fair trade, an Administration willing to use all the tools available to better manage our trade in order to export more American goods and fewer American jobs, an Administration willing to recognize in the formulation and enforcement of our trade laws that workers’ rights are important human rights abroad as well as at home, and that advance notice of plant closings and major layoffs is not only fundamentally right but also economically sound. We believe that we can and must improve our competitiveness in the world economy, using our best minds” (Democratic Party 1988). Despite the claims published in the Republican platform, the Democratic platform was far from promoting a return for protection either generally or in the service of trade-affected industries. The lack of meaningful, public debate over trade and the Canada–US FTA functioned to minimize American voters’ interest and knowledge. In stark contrast to Canadian voters’ priorities, just 2 percent of the approximately 1,600 respondents to the American National Election Survey cited trade-related concerns as “the single most important problem the nation faces”; an additional 4 percent mentioned trade as one of the top

We propose that the General Accounting Office be required to issue regular statistics on the costs of U.S. trade restrictions to American workers, consumers, and businesses.

The bosses of the Democrat Party have thrown in the towel and abandoned the American worker and producer. They have begun a full-scale retreat into protectionism, an economic narcotic that saps the life out of commerce, closes foreign markets to U.S. producers and growers, and costs American consumers billions of dollars. The Democrats’ plans would endanger 200,000 jobs and \$8 billion in economic activity in agriculture alone! Over the past year, U.S. exports have expanded by 30 percent. The Democrats would reverse that growth by cowering behind trade barriers.” (The Republican Party 1988)

three problems.²² (Excessive government spending topped the list of priorities, selected by 26 percent of respondents.) In fact, US campaign discussion of the FTA was so muted, that the following year, a national survey of 1,000 American adults found that 43 percent of respondents were not even aware that Canada and the United States had recently signed a free trade agreement between the two countries. The same survey on the Canadian side of the border found only 3 percent of respondents who were similarly unaware of the trade agreement.

I have argued that party position-taking led to an increase in trade's salience in Canada, but one might think that Canadians simply care more about trade. Fortunately, the 1988 election offers insight into the decline in salience as well as the rise. In the months following the Mulroney and the Progressive Conservatives victory, trade was rarely mentioned. The Conservatives had squeaked through a victory, not because of voter support of its trade policy, but because the Liberal Party and the New Democrats split the anti-FTA voters. Most Canadian voters supported parties opposed to free trade, but the Conservatives returned with a new majority government and were this time able to successfully push through implementation without a hold up in the Senate. A year later, the issue had fallen from the public agenda. In an update entitled "Report on Canada—U.S. Trade: FTA Vanished from Nation's Political Agenda," *The Globe and Mail*, Canada's national "newspaper of record," noted that despite plant closings, lowered export values, and increased merger and acquisition activity, the free trade issue no longer garnered public attention, in part because no party was paying attention.²³ While Liberal critics accused the government of "a cocoon of silence," opposition parties also were guilty of sidelining while they were internally mired by leadership selection. The result was illustrated by results from the newspaper's poll asking 1,500 respondents what they considered to be the most important problem facing Canada. In 1988, when asked this question by the CES, 65 percent answered free trade; in 1989, the *Globe and Mail* found only 3.5 percent did. Thus, while Canada's experience with the politics of free trade may look superficially different from what the United States experienced, the broad dynamics are very similar. When parties make an issue of trade, the protectionist sentiments of the populace can be activated. Yet it is also true that in the 1988 Canadian election, the 1992 US election, the 1997 British election, and even the 2015 British election preceding the "Brexit" referendum, the protectionist parties struggled to win the day.

Difficulties of Protectionist Coalitions since NAFTA

For strong protectionist coalitions to have emerged from either the Republican or Democratic camps, candidates would have needed to successfully navigate

²² In 1988, code numbers 493, 494, and 497 were assigned to the trade-related issues of the US trade balance, restriction of imports, and increased competitive and job losses, respectively.

²³ Hugh Winsor, "Report on Canada—U.S. Trade FTA Vanished from Nation's Political Agenda," *Globe and Mail* (Canada), November 21, 1989.

a complex set of constituents while limiting the general costs to the party of turning away from policies tacitly supported for decades.

Entrepreneurial Democrats had an opportunity to pull together labor, women, and minorities to forge a protectionist coalition. Democrats are already more likely to receive support from women and minority voters, and these groups are more likely to support trade protection and question the benefits of liberalization. The Democrats also have existing labor union support and labor unions have in the past supported the protectionist agenda. However, as former pro-protection presidential candidate Richard Gephardt and other Democratic candidates have discovered, trade policy does not forge a strong coalition. Women and minorities (and the groups that promote their interests) have other stated priorities which suppress the role of trade protection in attracting their support for a particular candidate. As discussed extensively in chapter 2, labor unions themselves are no longer unified in their support for trade protection. A schism has arisen between industry sectors concerning the benefits of imports for advancing US manufacturing; the mixed message is manifest in analysis of public opinion surveys by the lack of a clear relationship between union membership and position on trade policy. Furthermore, Democratic support is strongest in urban, more economically diverse areas—the same areas which I have shown to be overall less concerned with trade policy and less likely to select politicians on the basis of trade policy stance. Thus, to date, national (i.e., presidential candidates) within the Democratic Party hoping to capitalize on the issue of trade protection have been unsuccessful.

In contrast, Republican strength was and remains in the rural areas with low residential turnover districts, districts shown to be more likely to hold a strong pro-protection stance. Yet, Republicans—as currently organized—lack support from the majority of women, minorities, and labor, who are the strongest supporters of trade protection. Since trade policy remains in the political background, much of the Republican disadvantage in these groups can be ascribed to positions in other policy areas. If they could not expect to easily capture voters from these groups without a significant upheaval of other policies, then Republican protectionist coalitions needed to be based on pulling together the scattered congressional districts supporting protection.

In 2008, Mike Huckabee, a former governor of Arkansas, won the Iowa Republican caucus, on a populist, religious, conservative platform which raised concerns about the employment effects of free trade: “If somebody in the presidency doesn’t begin to understand that we can’t have free trade if it’s not fair trade, we’re going to continually see people who have worked for 20 and 30 years for companies one day walk in and get the pink slip and told ‘I’m sorry but everything you spent your life working for is no longer here.’”²⁴ He raised

²⁴ Andy Karr, “Huckabee Touts Self as Family Values Candidate at Newton Stop,” *Newton Daily News*, April 30, 2007, <http://www.newtondailynews.com/2007/04/30/huckabee-touts-self-as-family-values-candidate-at-newton-stop/aqriqs2/local2.txt>.

concerns that Americans were suffering from “unfair” trade. Yet Huckabee, like other Republicans at times, also expressed support for free trade, particularly with Mexico. His trade message was mixed during the 2008 presidential campaign. It was also not long-lived. While Huckabee did well in more rural southern states such as West Virginia, Kansas, Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, and Tennessee, he failed to make inroads elsewhere and withdrew before facing the primary in Texas. So it appears that a single Republican candidate can gain support with pro-Christian values and pro-protection as major agenda planks, but the electoral calculus of primaries makes it an uphill climb. Huckabee’s inability to translate trade policy into convention delegates might also explain why his campaign announcement in 2016 ignored his prior stance on trade. In 2016, Donald Trump, the Republican outsider, was the only one of the seventeen Republican presidential candidates to include a position on tariffs in the campaign announcement speech.

Recent political history in the United States shows that protectionist sentiment has generally been rallied by those outside or on the edge of the mainstream parties rather than within the mainstream parties. As shown, trade policy cuts across party lines and so could potentially serve as an effective issue area from which to draw new supporters, assuming that the problems of coalition building, messaging, and funding could be overcome. Here, Perot’s candidacy offers a good, earlier model for both the potential gains and costs of mobilizing on the basis of trade policy.

Just over twenty years ago, Ross Perot organized a successful third-party campaign around trade issues. Raising concerns about the employment effects of the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (or in his terms “the giant sucking sound going south” of jobs moving across the border), Perot not only built himself a coalition of supporters but also put both Republicans and Democrats on the defensive about trade policy. How he did so is instructive for current and future challenges to the status quo and for considering the repercussions of the 2016 election on trade’s salience.

First, Perot and allies in what would become the Reform Party were—like Donald Trump—outsiders with neither their own individual voting record on trade policy nor a party voting record on trade issues. Both the Republican and Democratic Party’s support of trade liberalization over the last fifty years has made increasing trade policy salience a dangerous proposition for mainstream party candidates. To diverge too far from the party line could result in a backlash from party leadership and thus risk selection onto more prestigious committees, access to party funds, and general support from the party for other specific legislative goals, particularly those important to re-election. Yet, to promote the party line and support liberalization could result in a backlash from the electorate who in most locations express greater protectionism sentiment than is matched by policy. Perot (and later the Reform Party) could embrace protectionist sentiment without concern that their record would not match their policy pronouncements.

Second, Perot's platform was not only free to embrace American protectionist sentiment but the sentiment was indeed a primary means of attracting his supporters. Unlike the Democratic and Republican parties for which trade policy threatens to create cleavages in current coalitions, for Perot the cleavage surrounding trade was the entire point. To build a successful party, Perot needed an issue that would persuade voters to cross party lines and trade policy is such an issue. Using trade protection as a central platform point, Perot was indeed successful, pulling substantial support from both the Republicans and Democrats. In 1996, Perot's running mate Pat Choate was a political economist whose academic record hewed closely to his support for trade protection as the means to rebuilding the American economy.

Furthermore, unlike both the Democrats and Republicans, Perot entered on a single issue. While his platform was frequently criticized as unformed and lacking both breadth and depth, in terms of attracting new voters, he was relatively unencumbered by positions on other policies. In terms of persuading voters, Perot also initially had an advantage in the information game. His graphs and presentations changed standard campaigning strategies and offered him a short gain in controlling the nature of the trade message—one that the GOP and Democrats had to move quickly to negate. Finally, Perot was initially self-funded, allowing him to focus on gaining votes, not contributions. In short, Perot was a nearly perfect third party candidate to push a protectionist message.

Although initially persuasive, trade and government reform failed to sustain Perot's campaign, especially in the face of other issues with Perot's campaign—including a mid-campaign withdrawal for stated family reasons. Yet, they were strong enough to keep Perot politically important even subsequent to the campaign and through the ratification of NAFTA. It is possible that slight changes to Perot's candidacy would have resulted in a different outcome. Perhaps a more naturally charismatic candidate would have pulled in more votes. Or, emphasizing a second issue where both parties stake out unpopular positions might have broadened Perot's base of support enough to win a few states. It is even possible that slight changes in external factors such as earlier revelations about rumored Clinton sex scandals might have tipped the balance in favor of Perot. Unfortunately, it is not possible to rewind history and test these alternatives.

After Perot had faded from notice, the subsequent response by major parties was to court Perot voters but ignore the issue of trade. Rapport and Stone (2008) note that while the Republican *Contract for America* of 1994 was drafted in part to attract the Perot constituency, it made no mention of either the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the GATT) or NAFTA, primary concerns of Perot supporters. Furthermore, "this strategy was also reflected in a 'growing number of Republicans . . . running for Congress with campaign platforms that avoid[ed] any mention of free trade'" (Rapport and Stone, 153, quoting Bradsher 1994). This strategy of avoidance punctuated by strategic misdirection continues. In 2008, three years after the

passage of CAFTA, less than 5 percent of ads incorporated a message about trade policy and only three campaigners actively touted their role in expanding trade in their ads. The majority of those who supported CAFTA simply kept quiet.

Outsider status can free protectionist-minded political entrepreneurs from entanglements with their own or their party's own voting history but the difficulties in forging a coalition on pro-protection sentiment remain, as illustrated by in fighting within the Tea Party. In 2010, a joint NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll found that 61 percent of self-identified Tea Party sympathizers thought that free trade had hurt the United States, only a slightly smaller proportion than the 65 percent of union members who expressed the same sentiment.²⁵ More recently, some constituencies within the Tea Party have been vocal in their disapproval of trade agreements, particularly the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership. For example, Judson Phillips, president of the "Tea Party Nation," penned an op-ed suggesting that free and fair trade could only be guaranteed within the borders of the United States and condemning the Trade Promotion Authority Act, which expedites trade negotiations.²⁶ Yet others claim that these protectionist sentiments run against "unconditional support of free trade" and free market populism that supposedly characterizes Tea Party supporters and pushes the GOP to more trade liberalization.²⁷ Both could be correct. The grassroots-based, decentralization of the Tea Party alliance allows for the full variability of trade sentiment to be clearly observed even within a single faction of a single party. At its height, Skocpol and Williamson (2012) counted 1,000 local Tea Party groups, more than enough to capture the geographic variety of trade preferences. Today, Tea Partiers are working on both sides of the issue: seeking to dismantle the export-facilitating Export-Import Bank, working to prevent future trade agreements, and promoting free trade. To bind these disparate preferences requires the promotion of other—non-trade-related—shared policy goals such as checking the constitutionality of congressional actions and limiting government spending. Also, GOP stalwarts from the Cato, the Heritage Foundation, and the American Enterprises Institute have increased not only their explanation of the benefits of free trade but also why Tea Party sympathizers should support it. It is notable that trade issues did not make the Tea Party affiliated "Contract from America," a list of ten agenda items that congressional candidates are encouraged to follow. Thus, the Tea Party's (if we can even discuss it as a unified wing of the Republican Party) opposition to trade liberalization has not been consistent and the push by Republican

²⁵ John Harwood, "53% in U.S. Say Free Trade Hurts Nation: NBC/WSJ Poll," CNBC, September 28, 2010, <http://www.cnbc.com/id/39407846>.

²⁶ Judson Phillips, "Trade and the Tea Party: Washington Insiders Remain Clueless," *The Hill*, February 24, 2014, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/198942-trade-and-the-tea-party-washington-insiders-remain>.

²⁷ Bill Watson, "GOP Should Support Free Trade," *The Hill*, February 20, 2014, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/economy-budget/198759-gop-should-support-free-trade>.

establishment groups to extol the virtues of free trade may (as predicted by chapter 8) begin to weaken further the Tea Party push for protectionism.

Donald Trump's candidacy parallels much, but not all of Ross Perot's candidacy. As a political outsider, Trump ran unconstrained by a prior voting history on trade. Although Trump ran within a traditional party framework rather than as an independent, he ran against the Republican Party during the primary as much as he ran for it. Largely self-funded, Trump did little to aid the party as a brand and developed his own political brand distinct from the party. Even after his nomination, Trump's relationship with the party was distant. Trump spurned traditional party fundraising activities while the party in turn expended few resources advertising on his behalf.

This independence allowed Trump to eschew previous party principles with fewer political costs himself and less consideration of the potential cost to Republicans running in other races. Furthermore, untethered to past votes or party platforms, Trump's platform was free not only to propose protectionist policies but to actively campaign on the issue. Unlike past Republican and Democratic candidates for whom trade policy threatened to create a cleavage within their coalition, the cleavage surrounding trade was advantageous for Trump—like Perot before him. It provided him a rallying point to persuade voters, especially white Rust Belt voters, to cross party lines. While Trump's platform was more multifaceted than Perot's, its theme of isolationism, immigration limits, and placing "America First" resonated with rather than contrasted with protectionism.

But most importantly, where Perot's campaign faded away, Trump emerged victorious. In the aftermath of the 1992 election, both Republican and Democratic parties could return to their prior lower salience strategy. With Trump in power and making trade policy, the context for American trade policy opinion making is already shifting.

The Rise of Donald Trump and The Future of American Opinion

One of the hazards of academic publishing is the long delay between a manuscript being finished and appearing in print. Even the best political scientists can find their work has been superseded or even flatly contradicted by contemporary events. In his seminal book concerning trade politics, *Politics, Pressures, and the Tariff* (1935), E. E. Schattschneider assumed that the private interests of industrial interest groups would continue to overpower the population's preference for free trade. But even before the book left the press, the Democratic President Franklin and the newly Democratic-led Congress passed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act of 1934 and initiated what would become decades of trade liberalization. Although Schattschneider's own prediction concerning the inviolability of industry-specific trade protection was overturned by events even before publication of his manuscript, the spirit of his argument continued in decades of trade policy research which pitted free-trading consumers

against protectionist producers. Now the story is flipped. The population is in fact divided and could be mobilized for political purposes, as happened briefly in 1992. When first submitting the manuscript in spring of 2014, long before either Donald Trump or Bernie Sanders had thrown his hat into the presidential race, the question at hand was what would need to change for US parties to seek again to make trade salient? Where would the leadership for a trade protection coalition come from? What would the coalition look like? Where would it receive funding? What sort of messages would be appealing to the necessary voters? In other words, what would change the status quo?

The start of a new Trump Administration, given how much conventional wisdom Trump and to a lesser extent unsuccessful Democratic presidential candidate Sanders have overturned about the nomination process, forces me to revisit my theory, results, and previous predictions to see what *American Opinion on Trade: Preferences Without Politics* got correct (and perhaps what it missed) before even appearing in print. I will review the logic and key predictions from the empirical chapters and then assess how well they help predict and interpret the events of the 2016 election.

A hypothetical umbrella protectionist political coalition would need to weave together the disparate sources of preferences: not only those directly threatened by specific trade agreements; but potentially women and nonwhites concerned about their own economic vulnerability; individuals concerned about the effect on their communities; and individuals influenced by the current frames of trade protection, frames which are not only overwhelmingly negative but focused on white, generally male, workers. Less abstractly, creating such a coalition would potentially put together the Farm Bureau and the NAACP; blue-collar union steelworkers and white-collar computer programmers; and congressional representatives from West Texas and those of upstate New York. Historically, political parties have made such ramshackle coalitions work. For example, the Democrats in the mid-twentieth century relied on such an uneasy combination of southern farmers and industrial workers, but the infighting at Democratic Conventions was bitter, and the party soon divided.

Furthermore, attempts to gather together such a diverse collection of individuals could itself change preferences. Would the white men subconsciously attracted to trade protection because of the implicit privileging of white workers still express the same sentiment if the source of the preferences were made more explicit through political messaging directed at them? What would be the effect on their support if instead, in order to persuade women and nonwhites, a protectionist campaign changed the presentation of trade protection beneficiaries to represent the concerns of this group? The results of the survey experiment would suggest that outreach to women and minorities would result in the loss of support among the white majority and among men, thus making the creation of a meaningful coalition more difficult. Rather than broad, national outreach, a hypothetical mobilization could occur through specific interest groups—the National Organization for Women (NOW), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), labor unions, etc.—but such individualized efforts would be organizationally more difficult and would also rely on groups with other more primary concerns to heavily promote the protectionist agenda.

I also identified a longer-term threat to the protectionist coalition: the malleability of opinion for such a large segment of those with protectionist leanings. Recall that a large majority of individuals believe that trade affects others' employment more negatively than their own. However, since these beliefs are not based on personal experience but instead the result of the information environment, the beliefs, and thus opinions based on them are amenable to being updated, especially by more positive messages concerning trade's benefits. Such positive messages are not generally conveyed in political advertising not because they are not effective—they are, particularly for men—but instead because they are not effective enough for any one politician to take on alone the risk of shifting the negative public opinion on trade. The short-term concern of raising trade's salience before public opinion has been brought in line with current policy makes trade liberalization promotion an unattractive proposition for most politicians. Safe incumbents and the parties themselves could do so, but incentives to do so are not strong. Just as with specific individuals, there is a broad risk that the short-term messages about trade—even positive messages—would likely increase the salience of trade and simply highlight the divergence of public opinion from the policy that both the Democrats and Republicans have participated in creating. Remarks by leading politicians would be influential and likely not endanger their own election outcomes; but if the remarks successfully reignite discussion about the issue, highlighting this divergence could cause difficulty for the party as a whole as well as for vulnerable candidates affiliated with the party. Thus, even safe candidates have little incentive to stir up the waters during normal campaign periods. In other words, I successfully predicted that any protectionist stance more strident than the standard call to strengthen America, bring home jobs, and stand strong against China and other competitors would come from the outside and that incumbent politicians would be initially reluctant to engage in the discussion and to overtly promote trade liberalization.

I also predicted that the emergence of a pro-protection coalition capable of stealing voters from both parties would change these incentives by providing a reason for the mainstream parties to promote the benefits of free trade more strongly. Given the pro-liberalization position of the majority of Democrats and Republicans in Congress, such an exogenous increase in salience could threaten a large number of affiliated politicians rather than just a few. Once trade policy was again made salient, parties would likely gain more from a strong promotion of trade than they would by the continuation of silence on the issue. A strong push, particularly if that push were to be joint by both Republicans and Democrats, could turn the tide of public opinion and serve to erode support for a coalition promoting trade protection. Thus, simply because of the provision of information that the mobilization itself would set in motion,

the potential coalition before a move to mobilization could look very different than the *ex post* coalition of supporters of trade protection. Mainstream economists, politicians from both sides, even business leaders from pro-trade sectors would likely speak out more forcibly.

Additionally, if the issue became more politicized, media coverage itself would likely change. As discussed in chapter 7, with the trade issue politically moribund, media coverage has focused primarily on the problems of trade and negative events related to trade. However, debate would by definition politicize the issue of trade protection. For such politically salient issues, the current norm in the media is to cover both sides of an issue, which in the case of trade would of necessity lead to more pro-trade frames appearing on the televised news. Since individual beliefs of aggregate economic outcomes are strongly influenced by national media, such a switch could function to erode some of the pessimism of the national benefit of trade policy, pessimism which is particularly influential for the majority of Americans who think that trade policy does not affect them personally.

The potential power of a hypothetical protectionist coalition would be determined not only by the number of persuadable voters but also by the funding available to the coalition. Here too the coalition might suffer from increased salience of trade policy issues. As noted by Wolfgang Mayer and Raymond Riezman (1989), a characteristic of trade protection that aids mass appeal is the relative obscurity about who benefits and how much. Unlike redistribution that occurs through direct payments, redistribution via trade protection (with the exception of subsidies) obfuscates the beneficiaries. Attempting to mobilize on the basis of trade protection would likely result in greater information availability about who benefits and how. Highlighting such beneficiaries could potentially diminish the willingness of the general public to pay for what are at a minimum specific benefits and sometimes private benefits. For those who know that they benefit from trade protection, the problem is reversed. Supporting more general protection is unnecessary for them to achieve their own direct benefit and potentially counterproductive. Domestic producers of import-competing goods will economically be best off when they are protected, but other industries are not since imports can lower the price of inputs into production (making companies more profitable) and can also lower the price of consumer goods (making wages offered appear more generous). Furthermore, expanding protection to multiple industries generates broad economic costs that could slow national economic growth. Those in import-competing industries may not wish to direct funds to a broad coalition for protection when they could instead direct funds more specifically to protecting their own interests alone. Thus, while funding is always a problem for campaigns, wringing dollars from a trade protection coalition might be particularly difficult.

How have these predictions fared so far? The presidential election of 2016 provides an excellent test case because it is “out of sample” from my initial analysis; there were protectionist candidates in both primaries allowing for insight into coalition formation both among Republicans and Democrats, and

trade was actively discussed well past the primary season in both campaigns and the news media.

In the Democratic primary, trade policy was central in the divide between the two primary contenders—Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders. In her role as Secretary of State to President Obama, Clinton had negotiated and defended the Trans Pacific Partnership. In contrast, Senator Sanders was a staunch opponent of trade agreements and the TPP in particular. As predicted, this opposition was made possible by his outsider status. Even on announcing his candidacy, Sanders identified himself as an “Independent” and not a Democrat. Furthermore, Sanders is one of the few Senators unencumbered with a major pro-trade agreement vote. Clinton—like most other Democratic Senators—had a mixed voting record on trade having voted against CAFTA but in favor of other smaller bi-lateral agreements and having spoken in favor of NAFTA. As predicted, the divide in the candidates’ positions raised the salience of trade, allowing it to linger as a major campaign issue even into the July Democratic National Convention where on opening night Sanders’ supporters protested by waving “No TPP” signs on the floor.

Also in line with predictions, trade preferences did not neatly divide the Democratic coalition. I predicted that women and minorities—while leaning toward protectionism—had other issues of greater concern and that labor would remain split, and indeed Sanders was largely unsuccessful in integrating these Democratic voters into his coalition. When Sanders, against expectations, won the Michigan primary, media and political observers immediately tied his victory to his pro-protection stance and disavowal of the Trans Pacific Partnership.²⁸ But Sanders’ trade position did not garner him victories in the similarly trade-affected states of Ohio and Pennsylvania. In both Ohio and Pennsylvania, Clinton won the majority of voters who thought that trade “creates more [US] jobs” but also the majority of voters who thought that trade “takes away jobs” despite Sanders’ more vocal support for protectionism.²⁹ Clinton fared better than Sanders with women, nonwhites, and older voters—all good predictors of protectionist sentiment. Furthermore, labor unions split across the two candidates with the majority of national and regional unions supporting Clinton and relatively few supporting Sanders.³⁰ While Sanders had the more protectionist platform,

²⁸ Yamiche Alcindor and Patrick Healy, “Trade and Jobs Key to Victory for Bernie Sander,” *New York Times*, March 9, 2016; Philip Bump, “The Two Big Warning Signs in Hillary Clinton’s Shocking Michigan Loss,” *Washington Post*, March 8, 2016; Pat Garofalo, “The Trade Winds Blow for Bernie: Sanders Pulled Off a Huge Upset in Michigan on the Back of a Strong Message on Trade,” *U.S. News and World Report*, March 8, 2016; Sam Frizell, “Why Bernie Sanders’ Upset in Michigan Matters,” *Time*, March 9, 2016; John Nichols, “Bernie Sanders Wins in Michigan Thanks to Trade Policy,” *The Nation*, March 9, 2016.

²⁹ “Ohio Exit Polls,” *New York Times*, March 15, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/03/15/us/elections/ohio-democrat-poll.html>; “Pennsylvania Exist Polls,” CNN, April 26, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/election/primaries/polls/pa/dem>.

³⁰ Andrew McGill, “Bernie Sanders, Union-Buster: More than a Dozen Local Labor Organizations Have Endorsed the Vermont Senator, Even Though Their National Leaders Have Picked Hillary Clinton,” *The Atlantic*, April 17, 2016.

his campaign—skewing young, white, and male—was not able to capture much of the latent Democratic protectionist base. Sanders’ campaign—and its anti-TPP rhetoric—also failed to resonate with many in Congress, many of whom had voted for trade agreements or trade promotion bills criticized by Sanders. Even at the height of his campaign, only 1 of 44 incumbent Democratic senators and 9 of 193 incumbent Democratic representatives had endorsed Sanders’ platform.

In the Republican primaries, as predicted, the challenge to current trade policy similarly came from an outsider—Donald Trump. In the last decade, Donald Trump has registered as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, and a Republican yet again.³¹ Furthermore, having never served in the Congress, Trump was freed from a voting record on trade. Trump’s protectionist rhetoric immediately distinguished him from other Republican candidates. Comparing across candidate announcement speeches, while a handful of candidates mentioned China and its economic impact on the economy, and two (Trump and former Texas Governor Rick Perry) explicitly criticized trade agreements, only Trump offered a clear protectionist trade policy in terms of increased tariff rates (while still declaring himself a “Free Trader”). In his announcement, Trump described at length the behavior of Ford Motor Company if Trump, as President, imposed a 35 percent tax on American firms manufacturing goods in Mexico. In contrast, Trump’s main challengers throughout the primary—Senator Ted Cruz, Senator Marco Rubio, and Governor John Kasich—were all on record supporting various tools of trade liberalization. As in the Democratic primary, the gulf between platforms raised the political salience of trade, especially as Trump himself promoted the issue to highlight his uniqueness from the other Republican candidates on offer.

Those Republican challengers walked a fine line between countering the idea that protectionism would be good for American jobs and angering a segment of their constituency who approved of Trump’s statements. Ted Cruz’s attempts to condemn Trump’s policies while retaining his core constituency during the Miami Republican debate (March 10, 2015) left viewers scrambling to google “Smoot-Hawley” tariffs. However, Cruz did more successfully draw the connection between Trump’s proposed tariffs on China and higher consumer costs and also noted the simplified pandering: “We’ve got to get beyond rhetoric of China bad, and actually get to how you solve the problem.” While chapter 8 showed the ability of such positive trade statements to move opinion, it also predicted the political difficulty individual pro-trade candidates face during campaign season. Any individual statement may move opinion but not enough to move the majority opinion to support free trade. Cruz, Rubio, and Kasich all ultimately lost the

³¹ Timothy Noah, “Will the Real Donald Trump Please Stand Up?” Politico, July 26, 2015, <http://www.politico.com/story/2015/07/will-the-real-donald-trump-please-stand-up-120607#ixzz4D7KQNY22>.

primary leaving it to other Republican Party members to explain their stances relative to Trump's.

Republicans faced an even greater challenge in Donald Trump as their nominee. As the *New York Times* noted, Trump is the first Republican presidential nominee since the Depression to openly oppose free trade and favor high tariffs on imports during the campaign. Many Republican candidates, Mitt Romney most recently, have nodded toward protectionist demands to "stay tough with China," and others, such as President George Bush, have used executive orders to impose tariffs, but protectionism as a platform plank is unique for the modern Republican Party and left Republicans scrambling for response. Downballot, in the states most drawn to Trump's fears for manufacturing jobs, Trump's vocalization of protectionist sentiment revealed disjunctures between Republican candidates' votes and their constituents' preferences. In both Pennsylvania and Ohio, increased scrutiny on trade policy combined with tight electoral races culminated in longterm advocates for free trade, Senators Pat Toomey and Rob Portman, walking back if not completely reversing, their positions.³² The broader fallout for the Republican Party was clear in the lack of endorsements for Trump and also the lack of fund raising. While the "#NeverTrump" movement was never solely about trade policy, Trump's candidacy called into stark relief the disjuncture between Trump's proposed foreign economic policies and decades long Republican support for trade liberalization. Traditional corporate sponsors as well as wealthy investors such as the Koch brothers eschewed support for Trump's campaign. Between 2013 and 2016, Koch Industries spent over \$58 million lobbying the US Senate on the Trans-Pacific Partnership.³³ During the primary, the Koch brothers supported Marco Rubio and during the general election refused to support Trump. In conjunction with other issues, Trump's protectionism alienated standard corporate sources who minimized their presence at the Republican convention (although, many returned to fund the inauguration).³⁴

As predicted, protectionism created divisions within Republicans and, despite the oversized emphasis on trade, Trump did not unite those holding protectionist sentiments. Trump's rhetoric has fared less well among women

³² Seth McLaughlin, "Pro-free trade GOP senators facing tough re-election bids Portman, Toomey sit opposite from Trump," *The Washington Times*, June 28, 2016. Marc Levy, "Toomey, in fight for political life, abandons TPP trade deal," Associated Press, August 17, 2016. William Mauldin, "Pat Toomey Opposes Pacific Pact as Trade Politics Sour: Pennsylvania senator faces reelection battle against Democrat who opposes the sweeping trade deal," *Wall Street Journal*, August 17, 2016. K. William Watson, "Former USTR Rob Portman Opposes TPP for the Worst Reasons," *Cato at Liberty*, February 5, 2016.

³³ US Senate Lobbying Disclosure Database, Client: "Koch," Issue: "Trans-Pacific Partnership" 2013–2016. <https://soprweb.senate.gov/index.cfm?event=selectFields&reset=1>.

³⁴ Ben Geier and Tory Newmyer, "CEO Daily: Corporate sponsors flee the RNC," *Fortune*, July 16, 2016. Nicholas Fandosjan, "Corporations Open the Cash Spigot for Trump's Inauguration," *New York Times*, January 15, 2017.

and minorities, traditional sources of protectionist sentiments. Instead Trump attracted the type of protectionists predicted in chapter 6—white males influenced by racial consideration of redistribution. That said, I underestimated the openness of discussion in this realm of identity politics and its link to policy. In this, Donald Trump far exceeded my imagination. Former Republican National Congress chair Michael Steele stated Trump’s willingness to profit from racial divides more bluntly, noting that Trump’s debate performance “captured that racist underbelly, that frustration, that angry underbelly of American life and gave voice to that.”³⁵

The general election similarly followed many of the predictions, especially in terms of the salience of trade. As previously discussed, trade seldom remains a salient issue into the general election campaign. But Trump carried his protectionist platform into the general and staked out a divide in trade policy that Clinton only partially closed. While arguing in favor of trade agreements in general, Clinton continued to distance herself from a treaty that as President Barack Obama’s Secretary of State, she negotiated, praised, and supported. Yet, many observers believed that if she had been elected, her post-election stance would have been more favorable toward the treaty and that even her campaign stance would have been warmer if not for Donald Trump’s attacks.³⁶ The 2016 general election offers a fascinating counterfactual proposition for trade policy. If any of the other final four Republican candidates had succeeded—all stalwart free traders—would trade have been more than a passing reference in the debates? Instead, the two candidates’ divide on trade served as a crutch for Trump in an otherwise rocky outing during the first Presidential debate. Trump repeatedly attacked Clinton on her earlier support of the TPP and of NAFTA, while Clinton offered at best a weak support of trade agreements “We are 5 percent of the world’s population; we have to trade with the other 95 percent. And we need to have smart, fair trade deals.”³⁷

Highlighting trade policy weakened Clinton in vulnerable states—particularly Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin and increased the difficulty of her stumping for votes in those areas. But notably, Clinton did well in many manufacturing cities, particularly those with export concerns. For example, in Ohio, Clinton won Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) by 66 percent and Lucas County (Toledo and Maumee) by 56 percent.³⁸ Manufacturing counties did not overwhelmingly support Trump. This electoral disconnect matches the belief disconnect of most Americans. Most Americans think trade hurts others if not

³⁵ “Kurtis Lee, “Another prominent Republican, Michael Steele, will not back Donald Trump,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 21, 2016.

³⁶ David Nakamura, “Clinton Does Not Back Obama Trade Vote in Post-Election Congressional Session,” *Washington Post*, May 5, 2016.

³⁷ Federal News Service, “Transcript of the First Debate”, *New York Times*, September 27, 2016.

³⁸ Rich Exner, “Trump had at least 70 percent of the vote in 30 Ohio counties; 6 takeaways from Ohio’s 2016 presidential vote,” *Cleveland.com*. http://www.cleveland.com/election-results/index.ssf/2016/11/trump_had_at_least_70_percent.html.

themselves. And in particular, the media focused on manufacturing jobs. Yet, many of these manufacturing jobs rely on exports, making trade policy a more nuanced issue for those directly affected. That is not to say that Trump's protectionist policies didn't resonate. Trump's call to "Make America Great Again" through protecting manufacturing jobs struck a chord with white males in the South and Industrial North, especially with what the *New York Times* called a "Certain Kind of Democrat" who while registered as a Democrat votes Republican and is often located in areas with high racial animosity.³⁹ Trump supporters embraced the presentation of trade protection benefitting people like themselves, highlighting the racial divide in preferences for some but not other forms of redistribution.

Finally, I predicted that individual political actors would face difficulties stemming the tide of protectionist rhetoric in the short term, but that in the longer term increased expression of protectionist sentiment might force greater explication of the benefits of trade. During the election, primary candidates, current senators and representatives, and the parties themselves have faced the difficulty of responding to more strident protectionist discourse and the potential for increased salience of trade policy. Furthermore, both Republican and Democrat shifts towards protectionism have served to consolidate the negative presentation of trade in political campaigns, feeding into the negative information environment discussed in chapter 7. In Pennsylvania, Toomey's Democratic challenger attempted to take advantage of his prior free trade stance. As both campaigns sought to distinguish and defend their individual platforms on trade, debates and campaign advertisements filled the airways with dire accounting of the costs of trade.

At the same time, the rise of protectionism has created a new foil for media, creating a counterbalance to the political rhetoric and revived coverage on trade policy. In 2012, the LexisNexis identified only two ABC newscast reports as having the primary topic of international trade; in 2016 the number more than tripled to eight. The task of fact-checking the protectionist claims made by the Sanders and Trump campaigns has resulted in more coverage of the positive economic benefits of trade and trade agreements in comparison to periods when journalists were responding to a primarily trade-liberalizing framework.

Trump's trade policy—particularly his withdrawal of the United States from the TPP and his threat to impose tariffs on Mexican goods to pay for a border wall—has additionally received extensive coverage as part of the focus on his first 100 days in office. This increased visibility parallels changes in the presentation of trade in the media. As detailed in chapter 7, in the context of decades of trade liberalization, the media primarily focuses on the negative consequences of policies. During the campaign, media focused on jobs lost from trade—particularly among white working class jobs in the Rust Belt—and

³⁹ Nate Cohn, "Donald Trump's Strongest Supporters: A Certain Kind of Democrat," *New York Times*, December 31, 2015.

this coverage may have amplified the Trump campaign's message. With trade liberalization now under attack, the media has begun to delve into the consequences of protectionism, potentially changing the information context and bringing to the real world the pro-trade messages only hypothesized in chapter 8. For instance, attention is being turned to those who will potentially lose out from a reversion to more protectionist policies from rice farmers in Louisiana who expected to profit from easing Cuban sanctions⁴⁰ to autoworkers and those in other manufacturing industries dependent on imported components from Mexico⁴¹ to consumers across the nation.⁴²

The terms used to describe trade have also shifted. Trump's own campaign statements stripped bare the euphemistic terminology of trade protectionism such as ambiguous claims to "be strong" against other countries. Trump first revived the use of the term "tariffs" which had largely fallen out of favor in political speech. More lately, Trump has utilized the more basic term, one universally avoided by politicians: a tax. In a widely publicized meeting with business leaders about outsourcing, Trump framed tariffs in blunt terms, saying "[any company that] thinks that that product is gonna just flow across the border into the United States, that's not gonna happen. They're gonna have a tax to pay, a border tax, substantial border tax." Americans may be unfamiliar with the details of trade agreements and tariff schedules, but few would claim not to understand a tax. The clarity of Trump's terminology may serve to decrease the high proportion of Americans who would answer "don't know" to the ANES question on imports.

Yet to be seen is how strongly trade-related discourse will carry through into the next months of policy making. In the past, trade debates dissipate well before the party conventions, but Trump carried the issue of trade into the presidential debates and now into policy. At the same time, the Administration has moved to change not only trade agreements but also security agreements, immigration policy, a border wall, healthcare provision, and financial regulations. It is possible that the salience of trade will diminish for Administration priorities, media focus, and public opinion. Already, the Administration has made trade policy subservient to its preference for a border wall by proposing a tariff on Mexican imports to pay for the wall. While such a policy may be thought to kill two birds with one stone, that taxes on trade are a policy tool rather than a policy in itself suggests a continued second tier role for trade policy. Whether in the new environment Americans continue to subordinate trade policy preference to other policies or whether instead trade rises to compete with other salient issues is still to be seen. If it does not, the Trump

⁴⁰ Tim Marcin, "US Trade Policy: In Trump's America, Louisiana Rice Farmers Hope For New Market," *International Business Times*, January 17, 2017.

⁴¹ Brad Tuttle, "Auto Group Says Trump Trade Policies Will Kill 31,000 Car Jobs," *Money*, January 23, 2017.

⁴² Dwyer Gunn, "Will the U.S. Economy Pay the Price for Pulling Out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership?" *Newsweek*, January 23, 2017.

administration may have as much leeway in imposing protectionism as prior administrations had in imposing free trade.

Conclusion

If Trump had failed to win the day, conditions appeared ripe for protectionist sentiment to fade once again and continue to lack a politically empowered voice at the national level. While globalization and other economic changes have increased the susceptibility of voters to elite messages, the same forces have also changed the environment for politicians. Rapid industrial turnover within their own districts and increased volatility due to exposure to international markets require politicians to be more flexible than ever. So-called “flip-flopping” by candidates is both a political necessity and a political liability. Removing a potential source of political vulnerability at election periods allowed politicians more leeway to meet the demands of their party, funders, and other interests groups, be those demands protectionist or free-trading. For this reason, until the current era, strategic ambiguity on a legislator’s trade position was preferable to seizing the protectionist mantle and championing a populist position.

In the face of actual dissolution of trade agreements, political ambiguity may be more costly both for free traders and protectionists alike. In the past, politicians could sound protectionist but vote for free trade. Proposed agreements such as Trans-Pacific Partnership (the TPP) or the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (the TTIP) offered momentary opportunities for political grandstanding or short-term political maneuvers, particularly on procedural issues such as Fast Track Authority or additional clauses such as those on currency manipulation. Now for those in Congress and especially for potential presidential candidates, a series of direct trade policy choices stand on the horizon. Despite the fanfare of Trump’s rejection of the TPP, the decision did not require the approval of other political actors nor did it change the status quo. But renegotiation of signed treaties—such as NAFTA—would require Senate input and by overturning the status quo would highlight the cost to both consumers, exporters, and even domestic import-competing industries who have benefitted from greater economic integration. Thus, the dissolution of trade agreements threatens to draw attention across partisan lines, seemingly reigniting trade’s salience.

Trump’s electoral success masked barely concealed tensions in his coalition and does not make navigating the politics of trade much easier for other politicians. Recent history has shown that a single-issue coalition based on trade is difficult to maintain. The same cross-partisan attraction which speaks across multiple groups creates its own political difficulties. While protectionism resonates with many individuals, trade is a central concern for few people or the interests groups that inform them; even Trump’s campaign married together several other isolationist policies for their support. With the sources

of protectionist sentiment so varied (gender, race, community characteristics, and beliefs about American economic and security interests) a political message that seeks to coalesce support can easily disperse support. For instance, the actual implementation of protectionist policies may backfire if at election time the public links higher consumer prices to these new taxes. Similarly, few politicians can afford to run a campaign counter to the historical policy pattern of their own party. Trump's self-funded primary campaign ran with limited party or corporate support, which is a difficult game plan for most politicians. Will protectionist candidates be able to attract the financial support from business people who support trade liberalization? There is a reason that third parties (or factions of parties) are generally the ones who raise trade's salience in the short term. The electoral obstacles are still steep for most current mainstream party candidates without their own trust fund.

The path for free trade voices is no less difficult and will likely have less short-term impact but could have a longer lived impact on Americans knowledge, interests, and preferences on trade policy. On the free trade side, few candidates—either Democratic or Republican—had an incentive to invest in changing public opinion on the national benefits of trade liberalization given that doing so could highlight the disparity between their constituents preferences and their and their party's record on trade policy. During previous campaign cycles, many media markets saw few to no trade-related campaign advertisements during previous election cycles; and those that did appear were negative about trade's impact on the economy. Now, with trade agreements under threat the calculations have changed. Across the country, many districts, especially agricultural, financial, and high-tech districts, face real negative consequences of diminished international trade and consumers face higher prices. But a "trade benefits" story is not a narrative that fits Americans' current beliefs about free trade; nor is it a narrative that will uniformly turn mass opinion to the benefit of free trade promoting politicians. A concerted information campaign would be required to move the needle on public opinion towards trade liberalization.

For now protectionism holds the upper hand. For those supporting free trade, their best hope may lie in a return to when most voters were relatively uninformed; fudging on trade policy was the best strategy for both mainstream parties, and trade policy could blend into the background to join exchange rates regimes, monetary policy, and capital control regulations in the pantheon of economic policies little understood, seldom discussed, and of limited interest to the voter on Election Day.

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INDEX

Note: Page references followed by a “*t*” indicate table; “*f*” indicate figure.

- ABC World News, 184, 185*f*, 266
- accountability
of politicians, 12, 35, 65, 71, 97, 137
of trade policy, 99
- advanced industrial countries (AICs),
235, 244
characteristics of, 236*t*
political parties position on
trade, 245*f*
trade opinion in, 243*f*
trade policy salience in, 235–53,
241*f*, 245*f*
trade volumes of, 240, 242*f*
- AFL-CIO. *See* American Federation of
Labor and Congress of Industrial
Organization
- African Americans
as interest groups, 103
as welfare beneficiaries, 146
- agricultural industry, 14, 125, 128, 129,
144, 252
- Ahlquist, John, 43–44
- AICs. *See* advanced industrial countries
- Amazon Mechanical Turk, 202,
202n1, 203n2
- ambiguity, 268
as meaningful, 67
non-responses as result of, 70
of preferences for trade protection,
57*f*–58*f*
- American Federation of Labor
and Congress of Industrial
Organization (AFL-CIO), 4,
31–33, 48, 103, 190–94
- American Life surveys, 49
- American National Election Studies
(ANES), 19, 59, 68, 72–73, 80–
82, 91, 122, 155*f*, 157, 207
analysis of data from (for social
security), 69
analysis of data from (for state-level
politics knowledge), 135–37, 139*t*
analysis of data from (for trade
opinion), 69*f*
by gender, 79–82, 80*f*, 81*t*, 106*t*,
127–28*t*, 133*f*, 134*f*, 158*t*
by geography, 81*t*, 106*t*, 122–35,
127–28*t*, 133*f*, 134*f*
by race, 79–82, 80*f*, 81*t*, 106*t*,
127–28*t*, 133*f*, 134*f*, 154–60, 155*f*,
158*t*, 160*f*, 168*t*
by year, 68–69, 69*f*, 81*t*, 106*t*, 133*f*,
134*f*, 168*t*
analysis of data from (for welfare
opinion), 154–60, 155*f*, 158*t*,
160*f*, 168*t*
data collection modes of, 68n17, 80n1,
82n2, 123
trade policy question format, 70–71,
76–80, 91, 122, 143

- ANES. *See* American National Election Studies
- Apple, 21
- Austen-Smith, David, 42
- Balance of Trade in Goods and Services (US), 182
- Beaulieu, Eugene, 79
- behavior. *See also* voting behavior
of Chinese, 223, 225
as idiosyncratic, 61
of incumbents, 97
as legislative, 99
literature on, 177
as political, 50, 71, 103, 179
of politicians, 35, 73, 135
of trade partners, 9
- beliefs. *See also* sociotropic beliefs
as balancing, 55
certainty (*see* uncertainty)
by community characteristics, 40,
110–14, 135–37, 139^t
about trade benefits, 39–41,
175–78, 233
beneficiaries, 145–51, 151–54
by community characteristics, 116,
119^t, 120^t
correlated with trade policy
preference, 53, 57^f, 60, 60^f,
62^f, 65–67
by country, 243^f
by gender, 92^f, 93^f, 95–96
impact of negative messages,
142–144, 143^t, 178–181, 182–186,
188–199
impact of positive messages, 92–95,
93^f, 200, 211^t, 212
for nation, 38^f, 177^f, 200–201
pre and post financial crisis, 39^f
by race, 92^f, 93^f, 95–96
for self, 38^f, 40, 95–96
by skill-type, 92^f
sources of beliefs, 41–50, 175–78
for others, 38^f
about trade influence on
employment, 38^f, 92^f
about trade partners, 87–90^f
of trade on preferences for trade
protection, 63^f, 64^f
about trade policy, 208, 220
trade protection impact of, 53
uncertainty surrounding, 5, 9, 11,
18–24, 25–35, 46, 53, 123
updating of, 52
- benefits
community characteristics and beliefs
on trade, 110–12
of free trade, 46, 111
for individuals compared to
others, 56–59
as national and for community, 66
preferences formed by costs and, 55
of trade liberalization, 52, 109
uncertainty and weight of perceived,
65–67, 233
of welfare, 152
- Bennett, Linda, 51
- Bennett, Stephen, 51
- Bhagwati, Jagdish, 42
- Bhagwati-Dehejia hypothesis, 84, 104
- Blinder, Alan, 3
- Blonigen, Bruce A., 79
- Brexit, 248–49
- Bring Jobs Home Act, 31
- Burgoon, Brian, 83
- Bush, George H. W. (President), 2,
28, 190
- Bush, George W. (President), 4, 30, 33,
141, 195, 201
- Business Coalition, 190, 191, 198
- Business Round Table, 190–91, 198
- CAFTA. *See* Central American Free Trade Agreement
- CAFTA-DR. *See* Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement
- campaign ads
analysis of, 145–48, 188–98,
192^f, 197^f
as anti-poverty, 146
employment referenced in, 145, 198
gender representation of, 104, 145
individuals location in, 145n3

- influence of, on trade preferences, 141–44, 143*t*, 150*t*, 188, 206*f*
- by McCain, 201, 203–4, 206, 206*f*, 207
- opinions swayed by, 141–44, 143*t*, 188, 191, 206*f*
- by political interest groups, 189–92, 192*f*, 194–93, 198
- of political parties, 30
- positive messages in, 191, 200–202
- for presidents, 188–90, 192–95, 196–99, 201, 256
- race in, 145–48
- survey experiments utilizing, 201–8, 206*f*, 142–44, 143*f*
- trade as negative in, 187, 192*f*, 197*f*
- against trade liberalization, 192*f*, 197*f*, 199
- Canada
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*
 - economic characteristics, 236*t*, 237*f*, 242*f*
 - economic independence for, 250
 - election of 1988, 249–53
 - free trade agreement pursued by, 249–50, 253
 - political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 245*f*
 - salience of trade policy, 239*f*, 245*f*, 249–53
 - as US top trade partner, 18, 19, 19*f*, 87–90*f*
- Canadian Election Study (CES), 243
- CBP. *See* County Business Patterns
- CCES. *See* Cooperative Congressional Election Study
- Ceccoli, Stephen J., 124
- Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), 72, 98*t*, 160, 262
- Congress passing of, 25, 195, 231–32, 257
- gender differences on, 102–3
- implementation of, 136
- opinion on, 99, 103, 232
 - conditional on racial diversity, 162*t*–64*t*
 - by gender, 102–4
 - by race, 102–4
- opportunities from, 96
- salience of, 33–35, 34*f*, 96–102, 98*t*, 101*t*
- voter knowledge about, 25–26, 101*t*, 227
- certainty. *See also* uncertainty
 - of beliefs, 137
 - concentration influencing, 113
 - uncertainty shift to, 114
- CES. *See* Canadian Election Study
- Change to Win, 33
- chauvinism, 7
- China
 - behavior of, 223, 225
 - imports limited from, 220, 222, 223*f*
 - as referenced in media, 16, 19, 42–43, 179–82, 186
 - as referenced in political campaigns, 30–33, 142, 190–91, 202–3, 260–64
 - support for retaliation against, 214–20, 219*f*, 220–25, 223*f*, 224*t*
 - tariffs imposed on, 218
 - as US trading partner, 18–20, 19*f*, 87–90*f*, 190–91, 241
- CITAC. *See* Consuming Industries Trade Coalition
- civic engagement, 49
- Clarify, 206
- Clinton, Bill (President), 2, 28, 190
- Clinton, Hilary, 262, 265
- collective memory, 115
- Colombia Free Trade Agreement, 201
- Common Core Standards, 1
- community. *See also* virtual communities
 - beliefs varied in, 40, 114
 - benefits as national and for, 66
 - change in, 116
 - characteristics and trade benefit beliefs, 110–12
 - characteristics importance in, 132
 - composition of, 115, 125
 - concern for, 109
 - Congress importance of, 110
 - diversity in, 11

community (Cont.)
economy, trade policy and, 44–45
as flexible term, 116n3
import-competing industries role
in, 123
individuals influenced by, 109, 233
industries influencing, 45
information sources in, 111
opinions influenced by characteristics
in, 130
preferences based on, 135–37
racial diversity of, 156, 159, 166, 233–34
residential turnover influencing, 117f
sociotropic preferences role of, 140
trade impact on, 10
trade preferences, information
sources and, 126t, 127t
trade protection hurting, 21
uncertainty, trade preferences
and, 121–32
uncertainty increase on level of,
118–20, 122
voting behavior influenced by, 136

concentration
certainty influenced by, 113
of import-competing employment,
112–15, 118, 135
of import-competing industries, 123
of manufacturing, 22f
of pro-protection ads, 197f

Congress, 195
CAFTA passed by, 25, 195, 231–32, 257
community important for, 110
as elites, 175
lobbying of, 6
trade policy formed by, 234

congressional districts, 131n12, 136n13,
136n14, 157

Conservative Party (U.K.), 246–48

consumer price indexes (CPIs), 24

Consuming Industries Trade Coalition
(CITAC), 33

consumption, 3, 16, 23, 42, 54

control groups, 205, 212
differences in, 94
information for, 218
treatment groups compared to, 93f

COOL. *See* country of origin label

Cooperative Campaign Analysis
Project, 222

Cooperative Congressional Election
Study (CCES), 18, 37–38, 40,
59, 209
analysis of data from (for candidate
choice), 34f–35, 72, 98t,
107–108t, 137f
analysis of data from (for trade
opinion), 59
by employment beliefs, 59–60, 60f,
62f, 64t
by community characteristics,
110–14f, 115, 160–65, 164f
by race, 160–65, 164f
by trade partner beliefs, 18
analysis of data from (for trade and
consumer prices), 23
analysis of data from (for trade’s
employment benefits),
37–38f, 39f–40
by community characteristics,
110–4f, 115–7f, 119–20t
by gender, 64t, 92f–93f, 211t, 228f
by partisan identification, 211t, 228f
by race, 92f–93f, 211t, 228f
by skill, 92f–93f, 211t, 228f
analysis of data from (for trade
salience), 101t
analysis of data from (for voter
knowledge), 25–26t
data collection modes of, 18, 37,
69n18, 72
survey experiments of, 84–85, 87, 91,
97, 209–11t, 212, 215–20, 217f,
219f, 222–25, 223f, 224t

Council on Foreign Relations, 176, 214

country of origin label (COOL), 129

County Business Patterns (CBP), 21,
21n5, 113, 113n1, 165

“A Couple of Miles,” 141–44, 142f, 145,
148, 202

CPIs. *See* consumer price indexes

Cronbach’s alpha, 88

- Dean, Howard, 193, 193n20
- Democratic Party, 27, 252
- candidates, 193–96, 198, 232, 255–58, 266, 269
 - platform position on trade, 27–31, 29f, 34f, 48, 48n13, 239, 244–5f, 252–53, 258
 - presidential primaries' trade
 - discussion, 193–95, 233, 254, 259, 262–63
 - Republican opposition to position on trade, 251n21
 - support for, 254
- dispute mechanisms
- support for, 218
 - use of, 214, 216
 - of WTO, 215
- diversity, 152. *See also* racial diversity
- in community, 11
 - of counties, 135
 - importance of, 154–60
 - increase in, 153
 - in individuals, 259
 - in information sources, 44
 - as residential turnover, 135–36
- dockworkers, 44
- dollar stabilization, 87, 88
- Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), 14, 175, 233n5. *See also* Central American Free Trade Agreement
- Dracula effect, 42
- Economic Report of the President (ERP), 193, 202
- economic vulnerability, 259
- heterogeneity in, 84
 - protectionist sentiment and, 85
 - support for, 87
 - survey responses influenced by, 95
 - trade preferences and, 78
 - trade protection, trade preferences and, 80f
 - trade relationship with, 88
- The Economist*, 16
- economy. *See also* economic vulnerability
- community, trade policy and, 44–45
 - concern for, 137, 178–79
 - education on, 42, 51
 - gender differences in concerns of, 78
 - imports influencing, 4
 - media coverage on, 47
 - media selection of issues on, 178–79
 - news increase on, 182
 - OECD countries trade volumes and, 241f
 - opinion correlation with
 - ignorance of, 24
 - studies in schools, 46
 - theory of, 8, 209
 - trade impact on US, 11, 16, 35, 37, 85
 - trade influence on, by ABC World News, 185f
 - trade reshaping, 13–17
 - transformation of, 3
 - uncertainty sources of, 18
- education
- on economy, 42, 51
 - on trade policy, 47, 83
 - for voters, 99, 195
- Edwards, John, 193
- EEC. *See* European Economic Community
- egocentrism, 152
- elections, 1, 73, 105, 190, 238, 269
- gender influence in, 90
 - US presidential (2000), 190–92
 - US presidential (2004), 193–95
 - US presidential (2008), 196–98
 - US presidential (2012), 198
 - US presidential (2016), 261–62, 266
- residential turnover influencing, 118
- trade debates in, 190
- trade policy importance in, 251
- voting behavior and, 4
- electoral programs, 28, 28n13
- elite messages
- influence of, 213–19, 268
 - on opinions about Chinese currency manipulation, 219f
 - on opinions about WTO, 217f

- elite opinion, 174
 - legislative action, voter's preferences and, 7
 - opposition to, 177
 - public opinion convergence with, 213, 217
 - voter's preferences, legislative action and, 7
- employment, 3, 243. *See also* import-competing employment
 - availability of, 44
 - beliefs on trade's influence on, 38*f*, 60*f*, 62*f*, 92*f*
 - campaign ads referencing, 145, 198
 - CBP reporting on, 211*5*
 - competition challenges in, 96
 - distribution of, 16
 - free trade influenced by, 254
 - gender influence on, 84, 84*n*7
 - in manufacturing, 17*f*, 266
 - non-agricultural, 17
 - opportunities for, 112
 - of others compared to individuals, 39, 39*n*2, 92
 - perception of positive messages influencing, 228*f*
 - populations shift due to, 17
 - positive messages influencing, 228*f*
 - of region, influenced by trade, 114*f*
 - sociotropic concerns for, 65
 - stability of, 84
 - trade influencing, 37–39, 52, 60, 91, 95, 135, 148, 152, 176, 244
 - trade policy linked to, 233
 - trade protection and, 20–23
- Entrepreneurial Democrats, 254
- ERP. *See* Economic Report of the President
- European Economic Community (EEC), 246, 247
- European Union, 1, 14
 - opposition to, 247–49
 - as trading partner, 18, 87
 - trade policy making, 235, 237
- export-oriented manufacturing, 22*f*, 165
- exports, 14, 15*f*, 184
- Farage, Nigel, 248
- fast-track authority, 201
- FDP. *See* Free Democratic Party
- financial crisis, 240*n*10
 - aftermath of, 61–62
 - beliefs on, 39*f*
 - concerns prior to, 65
 - outsourcing blamed for, 40
 - in US, 30, 38
- France
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*–4
 - economic characteristics, 235–6*t*, 237*f*, 240, 242*f*
 - political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 245*f*
 - salience of trade policy, 235, 237–245, 239*f*, 245*f*
 - trade policy making, 235, 237
- Frazier, Bill, 190
- Free Democratic Party (FDP), 241
- free trade, 187, 198
 - benefits of, 46, 111
 - as efficient, 76
 - employment influencing, 254
 - enthusiasm for, 222
 - path to, 269
 - Trump opposition of, 264
- free trade agreements. *See also* CAFTA; Colombia Free Trade Agreement; GATT; NAFTA; United States-Canada Free-Trade Agreement
 - for Canada, 249–50, 253
 - collaboration on, 28
 - facilitation of, 201
 - as fair, 30
 - politicians promoting, 52, 226
 - in US, 14, 175
- GATT. *See* General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
- GDP. *See* gross domestic product
- Gelleny, Ronald D., 124
- gender, 5, 131
 - CAFTA opinion differences by, 103
 - campaign ads directed toward, 104
 - divergence increase in, 212

- economic concerns according to, 78
 - elections influenced by, 90
 - employment influenced by, 84, 84n7
 - identification of, 10
 - NAFTA knowledge influenced by, 83
 - opinion differences of, 96
 - protectionism differences in, 89
 - race and knowledge in survey
 - experiments, 105
 - redistribution influenced by, 159
 - social preferences of, 94
 - survey experiments responses of, 88–89, 93
 - trade preferences determined by, 74, 82, 105
 - trade protection influenced by, 78–87, 91
 - voting behavior, race and, 102
 - General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 27, 256
 - genetic modification, 129
 - Gephardt, Richard, 31, 193, 254
 - Germany
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243f–4
 - economic characteristics, 235–36t, 237f, 241, 242f
 - political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 244–5f
 - salience of trade policy, 237–245, 239f, 245f
 - trade policy making, 235, 237
 - as US trading partner, 19
 - Gibson, Rhonda, 48
 - Gilens, Martin, 146
 - Goidel, Kirby, 45
 - Goldsmith's Referendum Party, 247–48
 - Goldstein, Judith, 128
 - goods
 - as final, 18
 - as intermediate, 18
 - manufacturing of, 21
 - national origin of, 43
 - quality of, 23
 - Gore, Al, 2, 190
 - gross domestic product (GDP), 14, 15f, 240
 - Heath, Edward (Prime Minister), 246
 - Heckscher-Ohlin (H-O) model, 54
 - Herrmann, Richard K., 175, 214
 - Hester, Joe, 48
 - heterogeneity, 84, 132, 153, 156
 - Hiscox, Michael, 83
 - H-O. *See* Heckscher-Ohlin model
 - Hoeven, John, 196, 227n12
 - Huckabee, Mike, 254–55
 - Hyman, Herbert H., 221
 - IAM. *See* International Association of Machinists
 - Ideas, Interests, and America Trade Policy* (Goldstein), 128
 - import-competing employment, 109–10
 - concentration of, 112–15, 118, 135
 - increase in, 114
 - residential turnover, beliefs and, 119t, 120t
 - import-competing industries
 - community role of, 123
 - concentrations of, 123
 - protection for, 110
 - import-competing manufacturing, 22f, 165
 - imports, 184. *See also* import-competing employment; import-competing industries
 - ANES question concerning limits
 - on, 122
 - China limiting, 220, 222, 223f
 - economy influenced by, 4
 - limits on, 59, 68, 72, 85, 87, 88, 132, 144, 180
 - probability of opposing limits
 - on, 133f
 - tariffs on, 2
 - unions influenced by, 31
 - US exports and, 14, 15f
- incentives
 - for candidates, 199
 - change in, 260
 - as political, 137
 - of president, 187
 - variation in, 51

- income, 131
 - as determinant, 132
 - redistribution of, 4, 140, 146, 154
- incumbents
 - advantages for, 100
 - behavior of, 97
 - conditional support for, 100
 - opinion, knowledge and support for, 101*t*
 - preferences, roll-call votes and support for, 107*t*, 108*t*
 - strategy for, 102
 - support for, 97
 - on television newscasts, 187
 - vote probability for, 100–102
 - voter support for, 137*f*
 - voting probability for, 137
- individuals
 - ambivalence in, 59, 100
 - benefits for, compared to others, 56–59
 - campaign ad location of, 145*n*3
 - characteristics of, 131, 135, 209
 - community influencing, 109, 233
 - diversity in, 259
 - employment of, compared to others, 39, 39*n*2, 92
 - information integration of, 213
 - localized knowledge of, 42
 - media influencing, 178
 - new information for, 210
 - political scoring of, 124
 - positive and negative utility of, 58
 - residential turnover related to information of, 131
 - risks for, 43
 - rural areas influencing trade preferences of, 125
 - sociotropic model of trade opinions of, 55–65
 - trade benefits of, 40, 65
 - trade influencing employment of, 152
 - trade policy influence on, 54
 - trade preferences of, 53, 54, 79, 106*t*, 135
 - trade protection support by, 141, 146
 - uncertainty in, 66
- information sources
 - access to, 50, 75, 137, 178
 - acquisition and influence of, 50–53
 - acquisition threats for, 50
 - as attributed, 213
 - beliefs changed by, 36
 - cognitive processing of, 66
 - in communities, 111
 - community, trade preferences and, 126*t*, 127*t*
 - diversity in, 44
 - exposure to, 42
 - as impartial, 220
 - influence of, 71, 76, 201
 - opinions needing strong, 35
 - politicians and political parties
 - role as, 48
 - as positive, 201
 - preferences influencing
 - acquisition of, 51
 - trade, beliefs and, 37
 - trade agreements timing with, 49
 - as trusted, 52
 - voters trusting, 52
- International Association of Machinists (IAM), 33
- International Monetary Fund, 47
- international political economy (IPE), 7
- Internet, 49
- IPE. *See* international political economy
- Iraq, 34
- Italy
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*–4
 - economic characteristics, 235–36*t*, 237*f*, 240, 242*f*
 - political parties' trade platforms, 240, 244–5*f*
 - salience of trade policy, 237–245, 239*f*, 245*f*
 - trade policy making, 235, 237
- Iyengar, Shanto, 147
- Jacobson, Louis, 83–84
- Japan
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*–4
 - economic characteristics, 235–36*t*, 237*f*, 240–2*f*

- political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 245f
 - salience of trade policy, 237–245, 239f, 245f
 - as US trading partner, 18–9f, 184

 - Kahneman, Daniel, 203
 - Kaltenthaler, Karl C., 124
 - Kellstedt, Paul M., 146
 - Kerry, John, 30, 193
 - Kiewiet, Roderick, 55, 111
 - Kinder, Donald, 55, 111, 148
 - knowledge, of senator votes on issues, 26t
 - knowledge gap hypothesis, 87–90, 95
 - Korea, Rep.
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243f–4
 - economic characteristics, 235–36t, 237f, 240–2f
 - political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 245f
 - salience of trade policy, 237–245, 239f, 245f
 - as US trading partner, 20, 31, 199, 202
 - Krosnic, Jon, 67

 - labor, 54, 79
 - Labour Party (U.K.), 246–47, 248
 - LaLonde, Robert J., 83–84
 - League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), 103, 260
 - legislative action, voter's preferences, elite opinion and, 7
 - Liberal Party (Canada), 250
 - Liberal Party (U.K.), 246
 - lobbying
 - of Congress, 6
 - dynamics of, 27
 - natural interest in, 78
 - for trade protection, 20
 - of Trans-Pacific Partnership, 264
 - LULAC. *See* League of United Latin American Citizens

 - Made in America*, 180
 - Manifesto Project Database, 28, 29, 237–38

 - Mankiw, Gregory, 30n14, 194, 202
 - Mansfield, Edward, 55, 56, 111
 - Manufacturers for Fair Trade, 33
 - manufacturing, 165, 209. *See also*
 - export-oriented manufacturing;
 - import-competing manufacturing
 - advances in, 3
 - concentration of, 22f
 - employment in, 17f, 266
 - of goods, 21
 - as struggle, 149f
 - of televisions, 16
 - in US, 17, 112
- Mayda, Anna Maria, 79
 - Mayer, Wolfgang, 41, 261
 - McCain, John, 29, 197
 - campaign ads by, 201, 203–4, 206, 207
 - Republican Party influenced by, 208
 - McClure, Robert D., 188
 - media, 45
 - change in, 261
 - coverage on economy, 47
 - data patterns of, 183
 - economic issues selected by, 178–79
 - individuals influenced by, 178
 - negative nature of, 179, 181, 184
 - network coverage and, 186–87
 - politicians, trade perception and, 174
 - politicians influence on, 199
 - race influence of, 140
 - trade, public opinion and, 178
 - trade balance coverage of, 183
 - trade deficit as component of, 185
 - trade in, 181–82, 183
 - trade-related information interpreted by, 187
 - transcript analysis of, 184
 - Mexican border wall, 267
 - Mexico as US trade partner, 2, 18–20, 87, 186, 190, 255, 283
 - Mulroney, Brian (Prime Minister), 249–50, 253
 - Mutz, Diana, 55, 56, 111

- NAACP. *See* National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- NAFTA. *See* North American Free Trade Agreement
- NAM. *See* National Association of Manufacturers
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 103, 259
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), 33
- National Conference of State Legislatures, 129
- National Opinion Research Center (NORC), 221
- National Organization for Women (NOW), 103, 259
- New York Times*, 20, 48, 179, 194
- non-responses
- acknowledgment for, 70
 - as ambiguity result, 70
 - lack of option for, 71
 - as majority, 69
 - as manifestation of conflicting concerns, 65
 - as potential bias, 70
 - in sociotropic model, 67
 - in survey data, 58–59
 - variable influence on probability of, 134*f*
- NORC. *See* National Opinion Research Center
- North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), 1, 256, 262
- advertising against, 190
 - concerns about, 255
 - gender influence on
 - knowledge of, 83
 - lack of knowledge on, 41
 - negotiations on, 28, 68
 - passing of, 154, 159
 - Perot suggestion for, 2
 - signing of, 14
- NOW. *See* National Organization for Women
- Obama, Barack (President), 29–30, 35, 141, 197–99, 202, 262
- occupational segregation, 82
- OECD countries
- members of, 235, 237, 240–2*f*
 - trade volumes and economic importance, 242*f*
- opinion. *See also* public opinion
- on CAFTA, 99
 - community characteristics
 - influencing, 130
 - divergence of, 212
 - economic ignorance correlating with, 24
 - elite messages helping formation of, 213
 - elite messages influence on WTO, 217*f*
 - empirical analysis of, 68–72
 - exposure as critical for, 74
 - forming of, 67, 104
 - future of American, 258–69
 - gender differences in, 96
 - information sources necessary for, 35
 - knowledge and support for incumbents, 101*t*
 - as malleable, 10
 - measuring of, 72–76
 - as non-opinion, 67
 - positive shift in, 210
 - reason for, 73
 - of redistribution policies, 155*f*
 - shift in, 206
 - sociotropic model of trade, 55–56
 - on trade, 5–9, 13, 65, 118
 - on trade agreements, 69*n*18
 - on trade policy, 69*f*, 72
 - trade protection swaying of, 224*f*
 - value needed for expression of, 56–57
- outsourcing, 20, 193
- as benefit, 30*n*14
 - financial crisis blaming, 40
 - public opinion on, 40
- Pace, Sal, 141, 142*f*, 202
- partisan attributions, 75

- importance of, 214
- influence of, 213
- survey data of experiment on, 215–17
- in survey experiments, 214
- party identification
 - as predictor, 137
 - salience increased by, 253
- Patterson, Thomas E., 188
- Perot, Ross, 9, 154, 238
 - campaign of, 48, 68, 255
 - NAFTA suggestion of, 2
 - platform of, 256
 - Trump candidacy similar to, 258
- Pew Research Center, 176, 195, 214, 243n11, 243n12
- political advertisements
 - examination of, 141
 - salience as danger of, 207
- political interest groups, 5, 187
 - awareness raised by, 102
 - campaign ads by, 194
 - information disseminated by, 125
 - sentiments mobilized by, 105
- political parties
 - campaign ads of, 30
 - divergence between, 212
 - as information source, 48
 - trade, salience and, 245f
 - trade importance defined by, 244
 - trade positions of, 29f
 - trade votes by, 32f, 33f
 - treatment groups utilizing, 215–17
 - Trump affiliation of, 263
- politicians
 - accountability of, 12, 35, 65, 71, 97, 137
 - behavior of, 35, 73, 135
 - catch-22 for, 67
 - free trade agreements promoted by, 52, 226
 - as information source, 48
 - media, trade perception and, 174
 - media influence of, 199
 - as resource, 46
 - risk for, 200
 - strategies of, 201
 - trade stance of, 11
- Politics, Pressures, and the Tariff* (Schattschneider), 6, 258
- population, 17
- positive messages
 - in campaign ads, 191, 200–202
 - employment beliefs influenced by, 228f
 - influence of, 93, 131, 208, 212
 - negative belief regardless of, 212
 - provider importance of, 213–20
 - public openness increased by, 220
 - about trade, 74–75, 199–201, 209, 226
 - trade beliefs impacted by, 93f
 - trade preferences influenced by, 229t–30t
 - as treatment, 94–95
 - presidential candidates, 1, 11–12, 190, 193–95, 197, 233, 254, 258–59, 262–65
 - shifting positions of, 31
 - voting for, 205
- prices, 23–25, 24f
- privatization, 28
- Progressive Conservative Party, 249, 250
- pro-protection ads, 191, 192f, 197f, 202, 220
- protectionism, 22, 28, 141, 251
 - acceptance of, 104, 225
 - condemnation of, 252
 - divisions created from, 264–65
 - economic vulnerability and sentiment of, 85
 - gender differences in, 89
 - sentiment of, 68, 129, 174, 255–56, 268–69
 - sources of, 233
 - stance of, 125
 - threat to, 60
 - trade preferences for, 35
 - Trump imposing, 268
 - of women, 79, 104
- protectionist coalitions, 253–58, 260, 261
- pro-trade ads, 191, 192f, 198
 - influence of, 206f, 208
 - public opinion moved by, 227
 - trade beliefs influenced by, 225

- Public Citizen, 35, 145, 189, 198–99
- public opinion, 125
 - dispersion increase of, 210
 - of economic issues, 179
 - elite opinion convergence with, 213, 217
 - on outsourcing, 40
 - positivity shift in, 206
 - pro-trade ads moving, 227
 - retaliation supported by, 218
 - shift in, 130, 207
 - trade, media and, 178
 - towards trade liberalization, 269
 - trade policy disconnect with, 226
- Quadagno, Jill, 146
- race, 5, 131
 - of beneficiaries of trade protection, 148
 - in campaign ads, 145–48
 - gender, voting behavior and, 102
 - gender and knowledge in survey experiments, 105
 - identification of, 10
 - influence of, 140
 - media influenced by, 140
 - perception of, 145, 146–47
 - prejudice in US, 151
 - presentation of, 148–51
 - survey experiments influenced by, 94
 - trade preferences determined by, 74, 82, 166, 167*f*
 - trade protection linked to, 73
- Racha, Roger, 103
- racial diversity, 8
 - beliefs interacting with, 151
 - CAFTA support conditional on, 162*t*–64*t*
 - of community, 156, 159, 166, 233–34
 - as difficult determinant, 166
 - redistribution related to, 144–45, 152, 157, 165
 - trade protection related to, 140, 153, 160–65
- Reagan, Ronald (President), 252
- Rebeck, Ken, 46
- Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act (RTAA), 26, 258
- reciprocity, 221, 222, 225
- redistribution
 - concerns for, 48
 - forms of, 146
 - gender influencing, 159
 - mechanism for, 11
 - opinion on policies of, 155*f*
 - policies of, 152, 233–34
 - preferences for, 157
 - racial diversity related to, 144–45, 152, 157, 165
 - support for policies of, 140, 151, 153, 158*t*, 160*f*, 168*t*–73*t*
 - of trade benefits, 41
 - trade protection as form of, 55, 151, 154
 - via welfare, 154, 157
- Republican Party, 27, 252
 - candidates, 1–2, 30–31, 136, 141, 195–98, 208, 227*n*12, 232, 254–55, 265–66
 - challenges of, 264
 - McCain influencing, 208
 - platform position on trade, 27–31, 29*f*, 48, 48*n*13, 239*f*, 241, 244–5*f*, 251–52, 256–58
 - presidential primaries' trade discussion, 1, 11–12, 190, 254, 259, 263–65
 - support for, 254–55
 - rump relationship with, 258, 264–65
- residential turnover
 - beliefs, import-competing employment and, 119*t*, 120*t*
 - beliefs influenced by, 116
 - calculation of, 123
 - cause of, 115
 - community influence of, 117*f*
 - as determinant, 132
 - elections influenced by, 118
 - individual information relationship with, 131
 - presidential campaign results and, 139*t*

- trade protection correlated with, 130
- uncertainty correlated with, 131
- Riezman, Raymond, 261
- Rodrik, Dani, 79
- roll-call votes, 25, 34, 99
 - proposals receiving, 97, 136
 - series of, 72
 - trade preferences, incumbent support
 - and, 107*t*, 108*t*
 - voter knowledge of, 26*t*, 100–1*t*
- Romney, Mitt, 30, 35, 198, 199, 208, 264
- Roosevelt, Theodore (President), 2
- Roper Poll, 7
- Royal Commission on Economic Union
 - and Development Prospects for Canada, 249
- RTAA. *See* Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act
- Rusciano, Frank Louis, 102–3
- Rust Belt, 17
- salience
 - as danger, 207
 - exposure to trade and, 240–44
 - as low, 240
 - measuring of, 28–29, 237–238
 - party identification increasing, 253
 - trade, political parties and, 245*f*
 - of trade, 35, 51, 235, 237–45*f*
 - of trade and political
 - divisions, 244–53
 - of trade in election year, 239*f*, 245*f*
 - of trade policy, 34*f*, 99, 154
 - variations of, 239*f*, 245*f*
- Samuelson, Paul, 54
- Sanders, Bernie, 233, 259, 262
- Schattschneider, E. E., 6, 258
- Scheve, Kenneth, 55, 79
- Schott, Peter K., 165
- Senators, knowledge of issue votes
 - by, 26*t*
- Shaheen, Jeanne, 196, 227*n*12
- Sheatsley, Paul B., 221
- Slaughter, Matthew, 55, 79
- Smoot-Hawley bill, 2, 263
- Socialist Party (France), 240
- social networking, 49, 50
- Social Security, 69, 144, 152
- sociotropic beliefs
 - control for, 61
 - darker influence of, 11
 - in trade preference models, 111
 - understanding source of, 65
- sociotropic concerns, 61, 102*n*14
 - as conditional, 122
 - as diminished, 121
 - for employment, 65
 - importance of, 5, 11, 156
 - incorporation of, 10, 50, 111, 120
 - measuring of, 65
 - uncertainty role on, 66
 - of voters, 8
- sociotropic models
 - non-opinion holders
 - significance in, 67
 - of trade opinion, 55–65
- sociotropic preferences, 8, 140, 141
- Spain
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*–4
 - economic characteristics, 235–36*t*, 237*f*, 240, 242*f*
 - political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 245*f*
 - salience of trade policy, 237–245, 239*f*, 245*f*
 - trade policy making, 235, 237
- steel industry, 4, 33, 141–44, 195
- steel tariffs, 4, 33, 19*n*3, 154, 159, 180, 195
- Stolper, Wolfgang, 54
- Stolper-Samuelson model, 124, 128
- subsidies, 87
- Sullivan, Daniel G., 83–84
- Sununu, John E., 196, 227*n*12
- survey data, 9–10, 210
 - analyzing of, 212
 - cognitive demands of, 67
 - limits of, 73
 - non-response in, 58–59
 - of partisan attribution
 - experiment, 215–17
 - in US, 7

- survey experiments, 11, 142
 - average pay for, 202n1, 203
 - campaign ads utilized in, 203
 - of CCEs, 84–85, 87, 91, 97, 209–11t, 212, 215–20, 217f, 219f, 222–25, 223f, 224t
 - on communist reporters, 221
 - economic vulnerability
 - influencing, 95
 - gender, race and knowledge in, 105
 - gender separation in responses of, 88–89, 93
 - goals of, 209
 - increased information needed for, 102
 - lack of control in, 74
 - limits to, 75
 - participant selection in, 97n11
 - partisan attributions in, 214
 - proposal questions in, 97
 - on provision of positive information, 90–96
 - question order importance in, 223f
 - race influencing, 94
 - robustness check in, 131
 - suggestions from, 259
 - trade preferences for protection
 - from, 90f
 - trade-related ads in, 205
 - utility of, 73–76
- Sweeney, John, 31
- tariff policies, 129, 219
- tariffs, 221. *See also* steel tariffs; Trade Promotion Authority; trade tariffs
 - for China, 218
 - debates on, 4
 - on imports, 2
 - as inefficient, 41
 - as protective, 251n21
 - trade protection via, 151
 - Trumps position on, 255, 266
- tautology, 130
- Taylor, Charles H., 231
- Tea Party, 257
- television ads, 141–42, 251
- television newscasts, 181–82
 - incumbents on, 187
 - trade as negative on, 178–86, 183f, 185f
- televisions, manufacturing of, 16
- Third Industrial Revolution, 3
- TPP. *See* Trans-Pacific Partnership
- trade
 - barriers of, lowered, 83
 - beliefs, information sources and, 37
 - beliefs about, 175–78, 233
 - beliefs of, on preferences for trade protection, 63f, 64f
 - campaign ads negative portrayal of, 187
 - as central concern, 268
 - changing landscape of, 13
 - characterization of, 79
 - with China, 18–21, 19f, 85–90f, 190–91, 241
 - community impact of, 10
 - economic influence of, 11, 16, 35, 37, 85
 - economic influence of, by ABC World News, 185f
 - economic vulnerability relationship with, 88
 - economy reshaped by, 13–17
 - election debates on, 190
 - employment beliefs for increased limits on, 60f, 62f
 - employment beliefs influenced by, 38f, 92f
 - employment influenced by, 37–39, 52, 60, 91, 95, 135, 148, 152, 176, 244
 - as GDP percentage, 15f
 - with Japan, 18–9f, 184
 - knowledge lacking on, 13
 - with Korea, Rep., 20, 31, 199, 202
 - legislation related to, 26
 - mechanics of, 53, 82
 - media, public opinion and, 178
 - in media, 181–82, 183, 185
 - national differences in, 87
 - negative views on, 38, 112, 176, 200, 225, 234, 261
 - opinion on, 5–9, 13, 65, 118

- perception of, 174–76, 177*f*
- political parties, salience and, 245*f*
- political parties defining importance of, 244
- political parties positions on, 29*f*
- political party votes on, 32*f*, 33*f*
- politicians, media and perception of, 174
- politicians stance on, 11
- positive aggregate treatment on
 - beliefs about, 211*t*
- positive messages about, 74–75, 93*f*, 199–201, 207, 209, 226
- preferences for limits on, 81*t*
- prices and, 23–25, 24*f*
- redistribution of benefits of, 41
- regional employment influenced by, 114*f*
- salience of, 29*f*, 34*f*, 35, 51, 235, 237–45
- salience of, in election year, 239*f*, 245*f*
- sentiments of, 105
- television newscasts negative portrayal of, 186
- with United Kingdom of Great Britain, 19
- trade agreements
 - basic principles of, 27
 - information sources timed with, 49
 - opinion on, 1, 69*n*18
 - prices influenced by, 23
 - reciprocal nature of, 220
 - resources for current, 47
 - support for, 176
- trade balance, 15*f*
 - decline of, 16
 - in evening news, 183*f*
 - media coverage on, 183
 - tracking of, 182–83
- trade benefits
 - beliefs as comparative about, 243*f*
 - of individuals, 40, 65
 - redistribution of, 41
- trade deficit, 182, 185
- trade liberalization, 185, 260
 - arguments for, 73
 - attack on, 267
 - benefits of, 52, 109
 - campaign ads against, 199
 - consumption improved by, 23
 - costs of, 232
 - as damaging, 55–56
 - era of, 14
 - expansion of, 5
 - implementation of, 214
 - influence of, 249
 - mechanisms supporting, 216
 - opposition to, 257
 - policies resulting in, 83
 - public opinion towards, 269
 - support for, 13, 175, 207, 255
 - transition costs of, 76
 - unions opposing, 124
 - as volatile, 84
 - voters informed on, 41
- trade partners
 - behavior of, 9
 - Canada as top US, 18, 19, 19*f*
 - China, 18–20, 19*f*, 85–90, 190–91, 241
 - knowledge impact of, 90*f*
 - trade preferences influenced by, 87
 - of US, 87–89
 - Japan, 18–9*f*, 184
 - Korea, Rep., 20, 31, 199, 202
 - Mexico, 2, 18–20, 87, 186, 190, 255, 283
 - United Kingdom of Great Britain, 19
- trade policy
 - accountability of, 99
 - actions of, 87
 - ambivalence on, 37
 - American opinion on, 69*f*, 72
 - ANES question on, 143
 - aspects of, 65
 - beliefs about, 208, 220
 - as campaign issue, 196
 - changes in, 4
 - characterization of, 203
 - Congress forming, 234
 - counterfactual proposition for, 265
 - diminishing concern for, 149
 - distributional consequences of, 46

- trade policy (Cont.)
 - economy, community and, 44–45
 - education on, 47, 83
 - election importance of, 251
 - employment linked to, 233
 - as foreign policies extension, 8
 - future of, 11
 - influence of, at individual level, 54
 - manipulation of, 5
 - measure of, 97
 - misperceptions of, 75
 - nature of, 4, 11
 - in postwar US, 3
 - preferences for, 207
 - public opinion disconnect with, 226
 - as redistributive, 8
 - reminders about, 220–25
 - salience of, 34*f*, 99, 154
 - simplified expected utility of, 56
 - standardized statements on, 29
 - support for, 207
 - of Trump, 2, 5
 - uncertainties about, 25–26
 - voters ignorance of, 41, 53, 252
 - voting behavior concerning, 96
- trade preferences
 - ambiguity for trade protection and, 57*f*–58*f*
 - analysis of, 55, 135
 - campaign ad influence on, 143*t*, 150*t*
 - community, information and, 126*t*, 127*t*
 - community, uncertainty and, 121–32
 - costs and benefits forming, 55
 - distribution of, 59
 - economic vulnerability, trade protection and, 80*f*
 - economic vulnerability and, 78
 - forcing of, 71
 - formation of, 151
 - gender determining, 74, 82, 105
 - income influencing, 124
 - of individuals, 53, 54, 79, 106*t*, 135
 - information sources important for, 51, 71, 76
 - knowledge influence on, 88–89
 - for limits on trade, 81*t*
 - of minorities, 233
 - without politics, 5–9
 - positive messages influencing, 229*t*–30*t*
 - potential sources for, 73
 - predictions on, 262
 - for protection from survey experiment, 90*f*
 - for protectionism, 35
 - provocation of, 44
 - race determining, 74, 82, 166, 167*f*
 - roll-call votes, incumbent support and, 107*t*, 108*t*
 - rural areas influencing, 125
 - shift in, 122
 - sociotropic beliefs in models of, 109, 111
 - trade beliefs on, for trade protection, 63*f*, 64*f*
 - trade partners influencing, 87
 - for trade protection, 19, 72
 - virtual communities shifting, 50
 - of voters, 3, 98*t*
 - as weak, 72
- Trade Promotion Authority Act, 195, 257
- trade protection, 4–5, 200, 251
 - ambiguity, trade preferences and, 57*f*–58*f*
 - ANES answers to questions on, 80
 - belief impact on, 53
 - beneficiaries of, 11, 141–42
 - community hurt by, 21
 - as composite measure, 88
 - economic vulnerability, trade preferences and, 80*f*
 - effectiveness of, 10
 - employment and, 20–23
 - gender influencing, 78–87, 91
 - individuals support for, 141, 146
 - lobbying for, 20
 - opinion swayed regarding, 224*f*
 - portrayal of, 147
 - race linked to, 73, 88*t*
 - racial diversity related to, 140, 153, 160–65

- redistribution as form of, 55, 151, 154
- residential turnover correlated
 - with, 130
- support for, 55, 68, 89, 132, 143, 148–51, 159
- support for increase in, 59
- trade beliefs on preferences for, 63*f*, 64*f*
- trade preferences for, 19, 72
 - as unclear, 22
 - value of, 140
 - via tariffs, 151
- trade-related ads
 - as candidate specific, 192
 - frequency of, 193
 - as stable, 195
 - in survey experiments, 141–44, 142*f*, 143*t*, 201–5
- trade tariffs, 1, 26–28, 44–45, 151
- trade volumes, 240, 241*f*, 242*f*
- Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), 1, 268
- Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), 3, 262, 264, 268
- treatment groups, 210, 212
 - control groups compared to, 93*f*
 - influence of, 94
 - information for, 218
 - political parties utilized for, 215–17
- Truman, Harry (President), 26, 27, 28
- Trumka, Richard, 31–32
- Trump, Donald (President), 1
 - campaign of, 234
 - free trade opposed by, 264
 - Perot candidacy similar to, 258
 - political party affiliation of, 263
 - protectionism imposed by, 268
 - as protection politician, 9
 - Republican Party relationship of, 258
 - rise of, 258–69
 - success of, 11–12, 268
 - supporters of, 265
 - tariff position of, 255, 266
 - trade policies of, 2, 5
- TTIP. *See* Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
- Turner, John, 250
- Tversky, Amos, 203
- Tyndall, Andrew, 180, 186
- UKIP. *See* United Kingdom Independence Party
- uncertainty
 - certainty shift to, 114
 - community, trade preferences
 - and, 121–32
 - decreasing of, 122
 - economic sources of, 18–24
 - increase in, at community level, 118–20, 122
 - in individuals, 66
 - political sources of, 25–35
 - residential turnover correlated
 - with, 131
 - role of sociotropic concerns on, 66
 - surrounding beliefs, 53
 - among voters, 9
 - weight of perceived benefits and, 65–67, 233
- unions, 2, 260
 - imports influencing, 31
 - membership of, 44
 - position promotion of, 48
 - trade liberalization opposed by, 124
 - United Kingdom of Great Britain
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*–4
 - Brexit, 248
 - economic characteristics, 235–36*t*, 237*f*, 240, 242*f*
 - as part of the European Union, 244–49
 - political parties' trade platforms, 249–50, 245*f*
 - salience of trade policy, 237–245, 239*f*, 245*f*
 - as US trading partner, 19
 - United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), 248
 - United Nations, 47
 - United States (US)
 - beliefs about trade benefits, 243*f*–4
 - Canada as top trade partner with, 18, 19, 19*f*

- United States (US) (Cont.)
 - as disadvantaged, 124
 - economic characteristics, 235–36*t*, 239*f*, 240, 242*f*
 - exceptionalism in, 234–35
 - financial crisis in, 30, 38
 - free trade agreements in, 14, 175
 - imports and exports in, 14, 15*f*
 - industrial power of, 28
 - as largest trading country, 92
 - manufacturing in, 17, 112
 - political parties' trade platforms, 245*f*, 249–50
 - population distribution in, 146
 - price lowering in, 23
 - race prejudice in, 151
 - salience of trade policy, 29*f*, 34*f*, 237–245, 239*f*, 245*f*
 - security role of, 5
 - survey data in, 7
 - third party struggle in, 29, 237–238, 255–256
 - trade partners of, 87–89
- United States-Canada Free-Trade Agreement, 201, 252
- United Steelworkers (USW), 33, 195
- unobserved trade, 18–20
- US. *See* United States
- USW. *See* United Steelworkers

- virtual communities, 49
 - preferences shifted by, 50
- voters
 - aid for, 70
 - concerns of, 200
 - consumption characterizing, 54
 - education for, 99, 195
 - engagement of, 199
 - as fully informed, 68
 - implication of trade knowledge promotion for, 96–104
 - incumbent support of, 137*f*
 - information sources trusted by, 52
 - knowledge sources of, 199
 - policy influence on, 34
 - sociotropic concerns of, 8
 - specter of, 5
 - stability of, 6
 - thinking of, 188
 - trade liberalization informing, 41
 - trade policy ignorance of, 41, 53, 252
 - trade preferences of, 3, 98*t*
 - uncertainty among, 9
- voting behavior, 34
 - community influencing, 136
 - concerning trade policies, 96
 - elections and, 4
 - gender, race and, 102
 - information impact and, 72–76
 - shaping of, 53
 - as sociotropic, 152
- wages, 10, 52, 243
- Walstad, William, 46
- Weizmann, Raymond, 41
- welfare, 11, 28
 - benefits of, 152
 - portrayal of beneficiaries, 146, 151
 - redistribution via, 154, 157
- Williams, Linda Faye, 146
- Wisconsin Advertising Project, 189, 190, 196
- World Bank, 47
- World Trade Organization (WTO), 14, 47, 175, 196, 215, 217*f*
- World War II, 14, 26, 214
- WTO. *See* World Trade Organization
- A Year Without "Made in China": One Family's True Life Adventure in the Global Economy*, 43

