

# **Threat Ownership Theory (TOT): Towards a greater understanding of the dynamic link between threat and political attitudes**

## **Pre-Analysis Plan<sup>\*</sup>**

Amélie Godefroidt,<sup>†</sup> Fade Eadeh,<sup>‡</sup> and Jais Adam-Trojan<sup>§</sup>

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### **Abstract**

How do threatening experiences shape our political beliefs? Previous research has demonstrated right- and left-wing shifts as well as increased polarization in times of threat. The proposed project aims to provide an overarching framework to account for these diverging results by introducing the Threat Ownership Theory (TOT). TOT argues that attitude-shifts after collective threat will be contingent on the political entity perceived as most able to fix the issue, i.e. the entity “owning the threat”. Secondly, the TOT hypothesizes that threats in which no party has a clear perceptual advantage will result in higher levels of political polarization. This pre-analysis plan outlines the research strategy (i.e., a between-subjects vignette experiment) used to test the key underlying assumptions of the threat ownership theory. This new theory holds both a theoretical and practical promise, as these findings can inform academics, policy-makers, and the general public in better understanding how threat might shape political beliefs.

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<sup>†</sup>Centre for Research on Peace and Development, KU Leuven – University of Leuven

<sup>‡</sup>Goizueta Business School, Emory University

<sup>§</sup>Laboratoire de Psychologie Sociale, Aix-Marseille Université

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# 1 Introduction

How do the threatening experiences shape our political beliefs? It depends on whom one asks. Some authors argue that threat increases support for conservatism (e.g., Jost et al., 2003; 2017), whereas others show that threat fortifies people's pre-existing beliefs (e.g., Castano et al., 2011). Yet, more recent research also demonstrate left-wing shifts after threat, an effect which holds for both self-claimed liberals and conservatives (Eadeh and Chang, 2019). As one can see, there is still much uncertainty as to how, when, and in which direction, people's ideological beliefs shift under threat. The current article aims to provide an overarching framework to account for these diverging results, called the **Threat Ownership Theory (TOT)**. TOT suggests that *perceived political ownership to fix a particular collective threat* might play a crucial but often-overlooked role in shifting political beliefs, especially *domain-specific attitudes*, by asking:

**RQ1** Is a conservative or liberal shift in political attitudes after threat contingent on the nature of that threat (relative to other threats) and the corresponding political ownership of the threat (relative to the political ownership of other threats)?

**RQ2** Is political polarization after threat contingent on the nature of that threat (relative to other threats) and the corresponding lack of clear political ownership of the threat (relative to the political ownership of other threats)?

These research questions aim to fill an academic void since previous research often failed to clearly distinguish between the types of threat under consideration or the specific political beliefs examined. Based on a set of interrelated hypotheses and the implementation of a randomized survey experiment (spring 2019), this project aims to test the core assumptions of this new theory pertaining to how, when, and in which direction threat-driven attitude changes occur. By doing so, the present research has clear theoretical, methodological, and practical implications for understanding specific types of threat may have specific ideological consequences. On a theoretical level, this project allows us to test and falsify a new theory that can unify the divergent findings in the threat-regulation literature. On a methodological level, this study replicates and extends previous research on threat by manipulating left-, right-, and un-owned threats both within and outside of the context of the United States. Finally, this research holds a practical promise, as these findings can inform practitioners, policy-makers, and the general public in better understanding how threat can shape political beliefs.

## 1.1 Theory and Hypotheses

### 1.1.1 Previous theories on threat and political attitudes

Threat is a ubiquitous feature of human life, and can affect our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Although threat may come in all shapes and sizes, one common element is that threat involves an experience of discrepancy and, consequently, motivates people to seek for solutions in their immediate environment in order to reduce this arousal. Although some threats are minor and can be handled by the individual (e.g., the threat of a light rain), other threats are more serious and may motivate people to look for groups or collectives to solve the issue (e.g., economic crises, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks). Shifts in political beliefs, for instance, is one well-known coping mechanism for dealing with such collective and existential threats (see Jonas et al., 2014 for a review).

There is some uncertainty in the literature as to in which direction people's ideological beliefs shifts in times of threat. To date, two dominant perspectives make predictions on these matters. Jost and colleagues (2003, 2017) posit that threat generally leads to a conservative shift, as conservative ideologies are seen as more effective in easing anxiety, elucidating ambiguities, and providing structure. More specifically, their motivated social cognition framework argues that a set of interrelated epistemic (e.g., dogmatism, uncertainty avoidance, and need for closure/structure/order), existential (e.g., self-esteem, loss prevention, and terror management), and ideological (e.g., self-interest, group-based dominance, and system justification) motives stimulates both liberals and conservatives to embrace more conservative political attitudes in times of threat. In their recent and large-scale meta-analysis (2017), they show how conservatism is indeed associated with subjective perceptions of threat [ $r = .12; .31$ ] as well as with exposure to objectively threatening situations, such as terrorist attacks or immigration threats [ $r = .07; .14$ ].

In contrast, other research argues that people cope with threat by clinging onto their pre-existing political beliefs, thereby leading to political polarization (Castano et al., 2011; Proulx, Heine, and Vohs, 2010; Pyszczynski, Solomon, and Greenberg, 2015). The meaning maintenance model (MMM; Proulx and Inzlicht, 2012), for instance, building on the cognitive dissonance theory, posits that people will defend their meaning framework whenever they experience threat (defined as experiences inconsistent with their meaning frameworks). Likewise, the more specific terror management theory (TMT; Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, and Lyon, 1989; Greenberg et al., 1990) proposes that people are highly motivated to maintain and intensify faith in the cultural worldviews to which they subscribe in order to buffer the awareness that death is inevitable. Hence, a cultural worldview is “more than merely an outlook on life, it is an immortality formula” (Becker, 1973, p. 255). The majority of empirical studies on TMT have tested variants of the mortality salience (MS) hypothesis, which states that if cultural worldviews buffer against death-related thoughts, then reminders of death will intensify

faith in these psychological notions. Across operationalizations, cultures, and time, mortality salience has shown to stimulate individuals to defend various aspects of their cultural worldview (for a review, see Burke, Martens, and Faucher, 2010). Importantly, many political issues are also directly or indirectly related to death (e.g., terrorist attacks, health care issues, environmental disasters, traffic accidents, infrastructure failures, etc.), and political ideologies are “some of humankind’s most accessible and reinforced systems of meaning” (Burke, Kosloff, and Landau, 2013, p. 184). Hence, based on TMT, it is expected and demonstrated that threats provoking the awareness of death will cause individuals to intensify efforts to adhere and defend their political attitudes and ideologies, be they liberal or conservative.

Nevertheless, more recent work by Eadeh and Chang (2019) shows how threatening events related to healthcare access, pollution, and corporate malfeasance can equally induce support for political liberalism, including for participants who typically abhor such views (i.e., conservatives). Of importance, these findings are incompatible with the two dominant perspectives presented in the literature. Hence, the authors propose the “ideology-affordance framework” assuming that there is no “intrinsic” property of threat predisposing people to enhance political conservatism but that scholars need to start taking the *type* of threat under consideration (emphasis in original, p. 5).

In sum, people tend to rely on political ideologies when faced with existential threat. Yet, the processes underlying such threat-driven attitude change remain largely unclear. In their recent meta-analysis, Burke, Kosloff, and Landau (2013) test the effect of mortality salience on political attitudes and find that the effect sizes for the world-defense (or polarization) hypothesis ( $r = .35$ ) and the conservative-shift hypothesis ( $r = .22$ ) were both significant and statistically equivalent to one another [ $Q_b(1, 38) = .84, p = .36$ ]. Hence, they invited future research to “focus squarely on conditions that produce the different effects each position predicts” (p. 194). In order to address this gap, we propose and test the “**Threat Ownership Theory**” (TOT).

### 1.1.2 The Threat Ownership Theory (TOT) and its hypotheses

The Threat Ownership Theory (TOT) rests on the assumption that people, when faced with a serious collective threat (e.g., a terrorist attack, financial crisis, or natural disaster), will look for other people or collectives that are perceived as effective in dealing with that threat. Most previous research, however, has adopted a fairly narrow operationalization of threat while measuring fairly generic political beliefs. Yet, threat nor political attitudes are uni-dimensional concepts. Building on the “ideology-affordance framework” suggested by Eadeh and Chang (2019) and the “issue ownership” literature from political science (Petrocik, 1996; Egan, 2013; Seeberg, 2017), we therefore argue that *certain* politicians, political parties, and policy measures might offer powerful affordances in times of *certain* collective threats.

Petrocik (1996) introduced the concept of “issue ownership” as the “reputation for policy and program interest, produced by a history of attention, initiative and innovation toward problems, which leads voters to believe that one of the parties is more sincere and committed to do something” (p. 826). In other words, the “issue ownership” framework suggests that different political parties carry perceptual advantages in fixing certain political issues. The TOT builds upon this idea and posits firstly that any attitude change occurring after threat will be contingent on the political entity perceived as most able to fix the issue, i.e. the entity “owning the threat”. By extension, a particular threat will first and foremost influence those specific aspects of ideological beliefs that are perceived as most effective to deal with the problem at hand (e.g., hawkish policies in times of terrorism). Secondly, the TOT argues that threats for which no party has a clear perceptual advantage will result in higher levels of political polarization. In this scenario, we propose participants will rely on their own pre-existing beliefs. Hence, we extend the “ideology-affordance framework” by proposing that there is no “intrinsic” property of threat in general that predisposes people to enhance political conservatism or that stimulates them to cling onto their preexisting ideology. Rather, the presence or absence of a clear issue ownership over the policy area of the corresponding threat will determine how political attitudes might shift.

At this point, it is thus relevant to consider the *kinds* of threat researchers have typically studied in the past and their political ownership. As to the latter question, Seeberg (2017) offers an extensive overview of issue ownership for 12 policy issues across 17 countries over three decades concluding that right-wing parties are associated with issues related to law and order, asylum and migration, and the EU while left-wing parties are associated with health care, education, social security, and the environment. These patterns of issue-party connection are quite stable across time and similar across countries. And, let us now look at the particular threats social and political psychologists have studied in the past. The often-cited meta-analysis by Jost, Stern, Rule, and Sterling (2017) reviews 55 tests that have examined the impact of objectively threatening circumstances on political attitudes. Of these studies, a vast majority (n = 45; 76%) focuses on terrorist attacks. The remaining studies mostly focus on xenophobic threats or the threat of physical harm from muggings or burglary. Notably, these primes represent threats for which conservatives are perceived as more effective agents compared to liberals (Seeberg, 2017). In contrast, Eadeh and Chang (2019) show that threatening stimuli might equally contribute to liberal shifts by manipulating threats related to the environment and healthcare access or, in other words, threats for which liberals are perceived as more effective (Seeberg, 2017). Interestingly, the few studies on climate change, environmental threats, or healthcare included in the meta-analysis of Jost et al. (2017) show a significant and substantial left-wing shift; which is completely in line with the argument of the threat ownership theory<sup>1</sup>. Last, studies in the

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<sup>1</sup>Jost and colleagues (2017) do not take the kind of threat under consideration in their meta-analysis as a possible between-study moderator.

realm of the terror management theory typically look at a more general reminders of people's individual death or fear of dying which is not clearly owned by any political party (e.g., Burke et al., 2010; Burke et al., 2013).

To the best of our knowledge no study so far has simultaneously manipulated and compared the effects of threatening stimuli for which the liberal, conservative, and no party is perceived as most effective. Therefore, we first hypothesize (and test) in this paper that, regardless of prior beliefs, political attitudes will change after threat in the direction of the political entity with a clear perceptual advantage of fixing the issue. We expect that political threats in the domain of 'law and order' might increase the appeal of political conservatism (e.g., terrorism in Jost et al., 2003, 2017), whereas political threats related to the environment or social welfare may push people to be more supportive of aspects of political liberalism (e.g., pollution and healthcare access in Eadeh & Chang, 2019). Moreover, we expect that threat will push people first and foremost to be more supportive of those aspects of political conservatism or liberalism that clearly represent a solution to the threat. For instance, participants in the terrorist threat condition are expected to be more supportive of stronger national security policies that "get tough" on terrorists, whereas participants in the pollution conditions are expected to be more supportive of bold liberal environmental policies tackling climate change. The first hypotheses tested in the paper are thus as follows:

**H1** In general, exposure to political threats will change political attitudes in the direction of the political entity with the perceptual advantage of fixing the issue. More specifically:

H1A Exposure to a terrorism threat will lead to a *right-wing shift* in participants' political attitudes, especially in issue-specific political attitudes.

H2A Exposure to an environmental threat will lead to a *left-wing shift* in participants' political attitudes, especially in issue-specific political attitudes.

Moreover, the threat ownership theory adds that threats with no clear ownership will stimulate people to hold on to their pre-existing beliefs leading to political polarization. Hence, the second main hypotheses of this study are thus as follows:

**H2** In general, political polarization will result after threat when no political entity has a clear perceptual advantage of fixing the issue. More specifically:

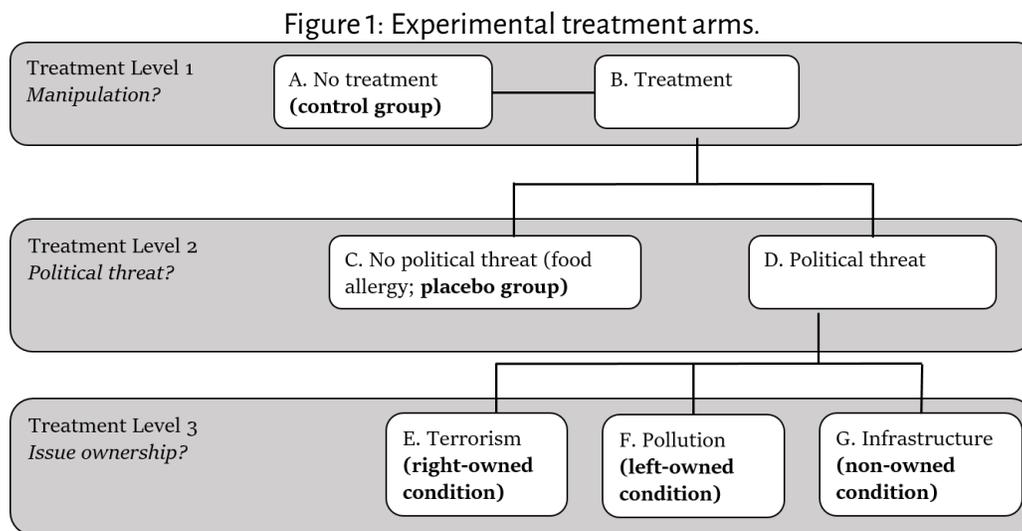
H2A Exposure to an infrastructure threat<sup>2</sup> will result in political *polarization* contingent on prior political beliefs.

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<sup>2</sup>Unlike for the two other types of threats, we did not select the un-owned threat based on Seeberg (2017) who identified education, elderly care, and unemployment as un-owned. This is because there were some specific cross-country variations that might bias our manipulation. Belgium, for instance, deviated from the pattern as elderly care is more left-owned in Belgium. Moreover, in order to keep our threat manipulations threatening and

## 2 Research Strategy

We established an experimental protocol (i.e., a between-subjects vignette manipulation) that allows us to robustly test our hypotheses across three countries (i.e., Belgium, France and the United States). More specifically, our study design consists of five between-subjects conditions in which participants read newspaper vignettes on a specific threatening situation. Participants will not know the treatment group to which they have been assigned. We included three experimental primes (i.e., left-, right, and un-owned political threat) as well as two control conditions<sup>3</sup> (i.e., a placebo group with a non-political threat and a control group that does not receive any treatment). The five conditions are visualized in Figure 1 below. For more information on the exact treatments, see Section 2.2.1. and Appendix.



constant, all political threats needed to result in several casualties and injured. But, this is quite unrealistic in certain policy domains. Hence, to test the polarization hypothesis, we decided to manipulate a more clearly non-owned political issue related to infrastructure (i.e., deadly bridge collapse, see Budge 2015).

<sup>3</sup>The Threat Ownership Theory rests on the assumption that particular policies and, to a lesser extent, particular ideologies offer solutions to collective threats depending on the political ownership of that particular threat. Hence, the political nature of the threat is manipulated and compared to a non-threatening as well as non-politically threatening condition to robustly test this assumption. We expect that non-political threats should not lead to attitudinal shifts because political measures and ideologies are expected to be irrelevant to resolve them.

## 2.1 Case Selection and Sampling

This project uses a three-case study design in order to “peer into the black box of causality” (Gerring, 2004, p. 348) between threat and political attitudes. We follow Gerring (2004, p. 341) in defining a case study as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units”, and the cases that are examined in this project constitute countries. The three countries of this study (i.e., the United States, France, and Belgium) are selected based on a *purposive* case selection while the respondents within each country are selected based on a *random* sample. Both selection procedures are outlined in the following sections.

### 2.1.1 Country Selection

Studies on threat and political attitudes are predominantly focused on the United States (US). For example, 116 out of the 134 (86.5%) samples in the meta-analysis of Jost et al. (2017) and 25 out of the 31 (80%) samples in the meta-analysis of Burke et al. (2013) are located in the US. Hence, we decided to test our theory in the US in the first place with intention of accommodating some of the previously contradictory results. Moreover, left-right or democrat-republican divisions are increasingly relevant, visible, and even divisive in American political and social life. Hence, it is of utmost importance to examine the foundations of political attitudes in the American context. However, in order to provide a strong basis for generalizing this new theory, we also selected two other countries to field our experiment. In other words, as Sartori (1970) would ask: does the threat ownership theory travel across the United States?

Within the pragmatic, linguistic, and logistic possibilities of this research team, we decided to field the study in France and Belgium (more specifically, Flanders<sup>4</sup>) in addition to the US. France and Belgium are both similar to and different from the US in some important aspects. On the one hand, all three countries are liberal democracies with a strong welfare state, a similar degree of economic development, and shared Western cultural norms and values. Hence, we consider these three countries ‘typical cases’ for Western democracies (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). By choosing three ‘typical cases’ we aim to provide evidence for the causal link between threat and political attitudes that also hold for other Western democracies. Importantly in the scope of this research, all three countries faced threatening challenges in the realm of our manipulated threats. First, the selected countries faced large-scale transnational terrorist attacks that have impacted its politics and citizens in various ways (i.e., 9/11, the 2015 Paris attacks, and the 2016 Brussels Bombings). Second, climate change is currently high on the agenda in all three countries and is simultaneously causing a lot of political and societal controversies (e.g.,

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<sup>4</sup>We only field this study in Flanders given crucial political differences between Flanders and Wallonia, including differences in issue ownership (see e.g., Walgrave and De Swert, 2007; Walgrave, Lefevere, and Tresch, 2012; Walgrave, Tresch, and Lefevere, 2015)

Donald Trump's denial of climate change or Belgium's vote against a EU proposal on renewable energy<sup>5</sup>). Last, recently, both Europe and the United States have encountered some serious infrastructural collapses, some of which caused a high death toll (e.g., a deadly bridge or building collapses in Genua<sup>6</sup>, Miami<sup>7</sup>, or Marseille<sup>8</sup>). Hence, this increases the external validity of the vignettes in all three countries.

On the other hand, the countries also differ in some important aspects –which is crucial from a theory-building perspective. More specifically, this set of countries allows us to test the generalizability of our hypotheses by comparing two Western-European countries and the United States as well as three linguistic areas (i.e., English, French, and Dutch). More importantly, these countries differ in the nature of their political structures (i.e., the US is a fully presidential republic, France a semi-presidential republic, and Belgium a parliamentary constitutional monarchy) and party systems (i.e., the US has a classic two-party system and Belgium a very fragmented multi-party system, while France's system is situated somewhere in-between). Finally and importantly, the US is currently a textbook example of a polarized electorate (Westfall, Van Boven, Chambers, and Judd, 2015) as well as of an individualistic country while the electorate in France and Belgium is more indifferent and uncertainty-avoidant<sup>9</sup>. These differences in political systems and polarization are, of course, of crucial importance to test the scope of our theory. To check this ‘travelling’ capacity of the TOT, all analyses will be conducted on both the aggregate dataset and the separate country data.

### 2.1.2 Sampling

All citizens from the United States, France, and Belgium (Flanders) above 18 years old are eligible to participate in this study. Moreover, participants must speak English, French, or Dutch as their first language in order to be eligible to decrease the chance that instructions are incorrectly interpreted. Minors, non-citizens, or non-native speakers will be excluded from the experiment a priori via a filter question in the questionnaire (See Appendix).

All eligible American, French, and Belgian subjects will be recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk, Foule Factory, and PanelClix, respectively. These are three online participant recruitment sites known for being low-costs, fast, and reliable (e.g., see Mullinix, Leeper, Druckman, and Freese, 2015). However, a common critique on these opt-in convenience samples is that

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<sup>5</sup>Just two days after more than 75,000 people marched through Brussels calling for more government action on tackling climate change, the federal minister voted against a European bill on more energy efficiency and renewable energy. As a result, about 70,000 Belgian citizens wrote a letter to their King Philippe in which they ask the King to urge the “incapable politicians” to take action on climate change.

<sup>6</sup><https://www.politico.eu/article/at-least-20-dead-in-italian-bridge-collapse/>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-03-16/the-latest-6-dead-in-pedestrian-bridge-collapse-in-florida>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/07/marseille-building-collapse-fifth-body-found-in-rubble>

<sup>9</sup><https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/belgium,france,the-usa/>

they might differ from representative population samples in myriad, possibly unmeasured, ways. Yet, recent studies show that these convenience samples generally provide estimates of average treatment effects comparable to those found in population-based samples (like, for instance, compared to TESS samples in Mullinix et al., 2015). Still, since one of the main goals of this project is to make general inferences, we will carefully check how our respondents might differ from the broader American, French, and Belgian population. Some important sample characteristics (i.e., the gender, age, and educational distribution) will be compared to known population parameters based on the census of the countries. If needed, we will use a weighting technique to approximate the broader population (i.e., up-weighting responses from individuals in demographic categories underrepresented in the sample via entropy balancing, see Hainmueller, 2012) and report both the weighted and unweighted average treatment effects<sup>10</sup>.

When successfully obtaining funds for this study, the study is suspected to be launched in the spring of 2019. Data collection should take about one or two weeks to complete. Participants will be paid \$2 or €2 for the 15 minute study<sup>11</sup>. Participants who drop-out of the experiment before completing the whole survey will not receive this payment, and their data will be excluded. The recruitment phase will terminate once 1,000 participants have been collected in all three countries (i.e., total of  $n = 3,000$ ).

### 2.1.3 Statistical Power

We aim for 200 respondents per experimental cell to achieve suitable levels of statistical power. We consider the three countries as replications from each other and, hence, calculated a power analysis based on one country. More specifically, we ran a bias and uncertainty corrected power analysis (see code below;  $\alpha = .05$ , 80% statistical power) based on the ANOVA-results of the pollution experiment in Eadeh and Chang (2019). The design of this experiment resembled most to our design and the results offered the most conservative prior for our power analysis.

```
ss.power.ba(F. observed = 10.72, N = 184,  
           levels.A = 2,  
           effect="factor.A",  
           alpha.prior=.05, alpha.planned=.05,  
           assurance=0.8, power=.80, step=.001)
```

[188]

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<sup>10</sup>In general, as Mutz (2011) explains, adding weights to survey experiments should not substantially change the results because weights only change the quantities of interest in survey experiments if the demographic characteristics used to generate the weights significantly interact with the study treatments.

<sup>11</sup>For now, we expect the study to take about 15 minutes to complete but pilot testing will be conducted in order to, among other things, assess the exact duration.

#### **2.1.4 Assignment to Treatment**

In order to address the “missing data” problem in experimental studies (here: respondents are only treated with one vignette), random assignment of respondents to the treatment conditions is crucial. In other words, all groups should be, in expectation, identical to each other prior to the application of the treatment (Gerber and Green, 2009). Therefore, we will use a complete random assignment in which each subject has the same probability of being treated and treatment assignment is completely independent of the subjects’ potential outcomes. The Qualtrics randomization tool will be used to assure randomization. Random assignment terminates once there are 200 subjects in the treatment arm. In addition, in the appendix, we will carefully report observable covariates across treatment arms (we expect them to be balanced) and in the populations of interest (i.e., American, French, and Belgian population data).

## **2.2 Measurements**

The full English questionnaire can be found in Appendix. The French and Dutch questionnaires are available upon request ([amelie.godefroidt@kuleuven.be](mailto:amelie.godefroidt@kuleuven.be)). The French and Dutch surveys are translated from the English survey and are (except for some country-specific political attitude variables) identical with the English survey.

### **2.2.1 Manipulated Variables**

In this between-subjects study, we manipulate the *type* of threat. The selected threats are drawn, in part, from the research by Seeberg (2017) who offers an extensive overview of issue ownership for 12 policy issues across 17 countries over three decades. Among the right-owned issues identified (i.e., immigration, law and order, taxation, and the economy), we decided to prime for a threat within the domain of law and order, that is a terrorist attack. Previous research, including the above-mentioned meta-analyses, repeatedly demonstrated right-wing shifts in times of terror across time and space. Among the left-owned issues identified (i.e., environment and social security), we decided to use a threat related to the environment, that is a toxic water pollution. Hence, in addition to Seeberg (2017), we also follow Eadeh and Chang’s (2019) manipulation since they demonstrated a stable and reliable left-wing shift in response to environmental treats. Last, as to the un-owned political threat, we decided to prime for an infrastructure failure (Budge, 2015). In sum, manipulated threats will be water pollution (left-owned), terrorism (right-owned), and infrastructure failure (un-owned). The two control groups consist of a group that gets no treatment at all (i.e., control group) and a group that gets to read an unpolitical threatening situation about food allergies (i.e., placebo group). This allows us to compare left-, right-, and un-owned political threats with unpolitical and non-threatening situations to strengthen the foundations of the threat ownership theory.

Importantly, in all three experimental conditions, we aim at utmost consistency in order to manipulate the type of threat as clean as possible. In this respect, it is important to note here that all vignettes (see Appendix as well):

- 1) follow the same grammatical structure starting with a “breaking news”-headline and the most important facts (i.e., human toll and culprit) followed by a discussion on political responsibilities (including a quote of a relative of one of the victims). In this way, we avoid length and order effects.
- 2) are located in the capital of the selected countries and led to 12 casualties and 34 injured people. In this way, the vignettes will be significantly threatening but also realistic.
- 3) include exactly same picture of a victim who is taken to the hospital by emergency services. In this way, we aim to increase attention to the newspaper vignettes.
- 4) stress that the culprit is a national citizen or company. In this way, we try to avoid group-based effects.
- 5) stress the lack of efficient policies to tackle this threat in order to stress the political and collective nature of the threat.

Equally important to note is that we will carefully test in a pilot study whether or not the terrorist prime is still qualitatively different from the other primes. More specifically, we will examine the equivalence of the vignettes with respect to (a) perceived personal and collective threat and (b) emotional responses<sup>12</sup>. This pilot study should ensure that the key difference between our vignettes is the threat ownership (i.e., that our threats are related to a problem for which liberals or conservatives or no one is perceived to be more effective at solving).

### 2.2.2 Measured Variables

**(1) Outcome variable.** To recall, we hypothesize that threats will first and foremost influence domain-specific attitudes that offer a solution to the problem at hand, and, to a lesser extent, broader political ideologies that are perceived more effective to solve the problem. Hence, to carefully scrutinize the relationship between threat and ideology, we include issue-specific political attitudes (i.e., left- and right-wing solutions for each of the three policy domains in our threat conditions) in addition to the general Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS).

All outcome variables are measured via multi-item scale to reduce measurement error. The four blocks and all items per block will be fully randomized via Qualtrics to avoid order effects (see Appendix for the complete list of items). Some items are written in a pro-liberal direction

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<sup>12</sup>We expect them to be equivalent since Fade and Chang (2019) included a similar control in their study and concluded that the threats shown to elicit pro-liberal shifts were “just as threatening as terrorist threat” (p. 22). Still, they used different vignettes that are also less consistent across treatment arms. Hence, we will still assess that the key difference between our vignettes is threat ownership.

whereas others are written in a pro-conservative direction. Based on best practices in survey research (see e.g., Lundmark, Gilljam, and Dahlberg, 2016), all items will be completed on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). After reverse coding of the pro-liberal items, a multi-group confirmatory factor analysis will be used to assess the validity and cross-country equivalence<sup>13</sup> of the issue-specific as well as overarching political ideology scales. Factor scores will be used in the main analyses. A higher score will always indicate political conservatism.

**(2) Moderator variable.** To recall, we hypothesize a main effect in clearly owned political threats (i.e., terrorism and pollution) but an interaction effect for un-owned political threats (i.e., infrastructure). Hence, we will collect self-reported political orientation using a 7-point scale ranging from extremely liberal to extremely conservative (more adapt to the American context) as well as a 11-point scale ranging from left to right (more adapt to the European context).

**(3) Covariates.** Respondents age, gender, and educational level will be asked to check the representativity of the sample. We will adjust (i.e., weight) the sample where necessary.

**(4) Manipulation check.** To ensure that (a) our vignettes are indeed related to threats owned by conservatives, liberals, or no political entity across all three countries, we gauge participants associations between a wide range of issues (based on Seeberg, 2017) and political parties. (b) To ensure that our vignettes are indeed more threatening than to the control conditions, we also include a perceived threat index and a standard mood inventory. As explained above, a pilot study will be conducted first to check our manipulation and make adjustment were necessary (see also Section 4).

**(5) Exposure check.** In addition to setting (a) a timer on the vignette page, we will (b) ask subjects to recall the number of casualties and the cause of death. Last, we will (c) also ask participants to list whatever thoughts and feelings they have about the article they just read. Participants will be free to write anything; the only constraint will be that their answers need to be below 500 characters. This open-ended question provides an opportunity to screen participants who did not read the article or who display disinterest by submitting nonsense characters or unrelated answers (e.g. x#\*M@x), but also enables us to detect bots.

**(6) Attention check.** Lastly, a classic attention filter is used in which we ask the subject to "please select the category bad from the list below".

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<sup>13</sup>Measurement equivalence will firstly be assessed in our pilot study. Problematic items will be rephrased, re-tested, and possibly be removed. However, we will ensure that each scale has at least three manifest items.

### 3 Analysis Plan

#### 3.1 Statistical Models: Treatment Effects

To recapitulate, we will estimate the effect of a subject being assigned to one of five conditions: (1) No treatment (i.e., control group), (2) No political threat (i.e., food allergy), (3) Un-owned political threat (i.e., bridge collapse), (4) Left-owned political threat (i.e., toxic pollution), and (5) Right-owned political threat (i.e., terrorist attack) on policy-specific attitudes. More specifically, we predict (H1) threats will have a main effect on measures directly related to their issues and, to a lesser extent, on general political ideologies in the predicted direction for clearly owned threats. Next, we expect (H2) an interaction effect for un-owned political threat, such that liberals are will become more supportive of liberal policies and conservatives more supportive of conservative policies and beliefs in the realm of infrastructure failures. Before the analyses, participants' prior political ideology be standardized (Z-score) to provide reliable estimates (see Aiken & West, 1991) when integrated as a continuous moderator of threat's effects on political attitudes.

Given that our subjects are randomly assigned to our treatment arms, a simple comparison of average outcomes in treatment and control groups (i.e., *difference-in-means estimator*) is an unbiased estimate of the average treatment effect (Gerber & Green, 2009). Our main statistical model consists of a MANCOVA analysis because we have multiple treatment groups, a moderator, and four outcome variables. This omnibus test will be followed-up by tests of Between-Subjects Effects and post-hoc tests (including estimated marginal means plots) in order to see which groups vary in which way on which dependent variables. Table 1 outlines the comparisons used to test our hypotheses:

Table 1: Confirmatory comparisons.

Hypothesis	Treatment	Comparison
Hypothesis 1A.	Terrorist threat group (E)	Control group (A) and Placebo group (C)
Hypothesis 1B.	Pollution threat group (F)	Control group (A) and Placebo group (C)
Hypothesis 2A.	Infrastructure threat group (G)	Control group (A) and Placebo group (C)

*Note:* We always expect an effect on the domain-specific attitudes and a smaller effect on RWA.

Given that we have directional hypotheses, all tests conducted will be one-tailed tests at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . We will mainly estimate models with treatment assignment as the only independent variable as we expect the randomization to be successful. In a second set of models, we will run OLS regression models and add additional pre-treatment covariates (i.e., age, gender, religion, education, political interest) and entropy weights (if necessary) as a robustness check. These models will be reported in the appendix unless there are substantial discrepancies.

In addition, we will also compare the following groups but, since we did not formulate hypothesis here, these analysis are fully **exploratory**:

Table 2: Exploratory comparisons.

<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Comparison</b>
Control group (A)	All threatened groups (B)
Control group (A)	All politically threatened groups (D)
Control group (A)	Not politically threatened group (C)

## 3.2 Statistical Models: Follow-up Analyses

### 3.2.1 Robustness checks

As stated above, the main MANCOVA analysis will be followed-up by several robustness checks. All these models will be reported in the appendix but substantial discrepancies will be clearly reported in the main manuscript. The robustness checks are:

1. OLS regression including covariates
2. OLS regression including weights (i.e., entropy weighting based on age, gender, and educational distribution population reported in census)
3. A Structural Equation Model (SEM) which allows us to include a measurement model (i.e., a confirmatory factor analysis) in addition to the structural model (i.e., certain threats leads to certain attitudes changes). This model allows us to control for measurement error in our structural model.
4. A Multi-Group SEM which extends the model above by testing the equivalence of the model across all three countries.
5. MANOVA results using multiple imputation (following van Ginkel and Kroonenberg, 2014; Finch, 2016)

### 3.2.2 Mediation analyses

Although our experimental treatment operationalizes the kind of threat differently, we expect all participants to express negative emotions when assigned to any of the threatening primes (vs. control). Indeed, research has shown that the activation of threat evokes a diversity of negative emotions, including anger, fear, and anxiety (Lambert et al., 2010; Huddy, Stanley, and Erin, 2007). Hence, as we will measure these emotions as well, we might probe for mediation via emotion in follow-up analyses (and in a second manuscript). Specifically, we hypothesize

that threat effects on issue-specific political attitudes will mainly run via anger. This is because anger, unlike fear, is known to be an action-oriented approach emotion (Carver and Harmon-Jones, 2009; Mackie, Devos, and Smith, 2000) and, more importantly, a solution-based feeling state aimed at “fixing” obstacles in the environment (Cottrell and Neuberg, 2005; Litvak, Lerner, Tiedens, and Shonk, 2010). For example, Lambert and colleagues (2010) found that a terrorist threat activates many emotions (e.g., fear, sadness), but that only anger contributes to increased support for conservatism. These mediation analyses will be implemented in a Structural Equation Model (which also allows to take into account the measurement models included in this study as well as test the multi-group invariance of the full models; see Section 3.2.1 on Robustness checks as well).

### 3.3 Inference Criteria

All hypothesis tests are one-tailed given the specificity of our directional hypotheses. We will use p-values as a criterion for excluding sampling error as an explanation to the observed effects (interpreted in a continuous way, Cohen, 1994) and we will set the alpha at 0.05. In other words, we will conclude that the difference between experimental groups is statistically significant if the unrounded p-value resulting from the post-hoc tests is equal to or smaller than 0.05 (i.e., 1/20). We will interpret the degree of evidence for our hypotheses using models’ explained variance indices and standardized measures of effect size with 95% CI estimates<sup>14</sup>. Multiple comparisons are clearly planned a priori and therefore will not be subjected to statistical correction.

### 3.4 Data Exclusion

Data exclusion occurs both at the level of the participants as well as at the level of data within participants. As described above, participants will be excluded from participation when they are (a) minus 18 years-old, (b) non-citizens of the three sampled countries, or (c) non-native speakers. Data of subjects that do not fully complete the survey will also be excluded prior to analysis. In this paragraph, we further outline our strategy to handle (a) missing data, (b) subjects who failed our Screeners (i.e., 2 exposure tests and 1 attention check), and (c) outliers. In general, we do not exclude this data a priori from our analysis as this could introduce bias.

1. **Missing data:** First, as explained above, the main analyses will apply a listwise deletion technique to handle missing data. However, we will counter the concern that such technique might introduce bias in our estimates by using multiple imputation as well. We

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<sup>14</sup>Partial  $\eta^2$  will be used for the MANOVA analyses, while adjusted  $R^2$  and standardized  $\beta$  coefficients will be used for the regression models in our robustness checks.

will multiply impute missing values on any of the control variables, perform new estimations on a this larger set of observations, and scrutinize how the obtained estimates (including standard errors) deviate from the original estimates using listwise deletion. Again, these models will be reported in the Appendix of the paper, but substantial discrepancies will be addressed in the main article.

2. **Screeners:** Second, we will not exclude subjects who fail the exposure or attention filter a priori. This common tactic of simply dropping a potentially non-random portion of respondents who fail such Screeners is problematic because, as prior research suggests (Berinsky, Margolis, and Sances, 2014; Anduiza and Galais, 2017), this might lead to selection bias in our experiments which in turn might result in severely biased estimates. Therefore, based on best-practices (Berinsky, Margolis, & Sances, 2013), we will (a) present results stratified by levels of attentiveness and (b) carefully consider how a culled sample affects the findings in order to improve both data quality and transparency while avoiding the drawbacks.
3. **Outliers:** Last, we will identify multivariate outliers using Mahalanobis distance. Outliers will also not be removed a priori since they can still offer interesting insight. Again, we will run the all models with and without outliers (results will be reported in the Appendix) and substantial discrepancies will be addressed in the paper.

## 4 Pilot Study

Before fielding our cross-country large-scale experiment, we will conduct a thorough pilot study to check some core aspects of our manipulating. Due to budgetary constraints, this pilot study will be conducted using previously collected samples by all three authors (i.e., a nationally representative sample in the US and student samples in France and Belgium). The pilot study will mainly be used to assess the following issues:

1. First, it is crucial to determine whether all primes presented are equally threatening or whether adjustments are needed. Hence, we will test our vignettes included in Appendix using a standard mood inventory as well as a perceived threat questionnaire. For both dependent measures, we predict higher scores for participants in the experimental primes compared to control conditions (i.e., higher levels of negative affect and greater levels of perceived threat). Moreover, we predict no differences between the threat primes, neither in affective experience nor perceived threat. However, if we do find differences between the threat primes or no differences with the control conditions, adjustments will be made (and piloted again) in order to make all primes equally threatening before fielding the experiment.

2. A second core assumption is that we manipulate a left-, right-, and un-owned policy issue. Hence, we will also question the respondents about their associative and competence issue ownership perceptions. More specifically, they will be asked which party they associate with certain policy issues as well as which party they deem most competent for dealing with this issue.
3. Third, the pilot study will also test the measurement equivalence and quality of our outcome variables. When the items vary across countries, we will first modify the items and retest the measurement equivalence. If we still fail to obtain measurement equivalence, the problematic items will be dropped. However, we will assure that each latent construct will be measured by at least three manifest items.
4. Fourth, the pilot results might be used to obtain a more fine-grained power analysis using the same experimental set-up as the final study.
5. Last, a pilot study will also give detailed information on the exact time needed to complete this survey. This estimate will be reported in the informed consent form in the final survey experiment.

## 5 Research Team

**Amélie Godefroidt** is a Ph.D. Fellow of the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) at the Centre for Research on Peace and Development (CRPD), KU Leuven.

Postal address: Centre for Research on Peace and Development, KU Leuven, Parkstraat 45, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium.

E-mail: [amelie.godefroidt@kuleuven.be](mailto:amelie.godefroidt@kuleuven.be).

Twitter: [@AGodefroidt](https://twitter.com/AGodefroidt).

**Fade Eadeh** is a post-doctoral fellow in Organization & Management at Emory University's Goizueta Business School.

Postal address: Emory University's Goizueta Business School, 1300 Clifton Boulevard, Atlanta, Georgia 30322

Twitter: [@feadeh](https://twitter.com/feadeh).

**Jais Troïan** is a Ph.D candidate (French Minister for Higher Education & Research Grant) at the Laboratory of Social Psychology (EA849), AMU, Aix-en-Provence.

Postal address: Laboratoire de Psychologie Sociale, Maison de la Recherche, 29 avenue Robert-Schuman, 13621 Aix-en-Provence, France.

E-mail: [jais.ADAM@univ-amu.fr](mailto:jais.ADAM@univ-amu.fr).

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## 6 Appendix: Questionnaire

Please find the full questionnaire below. The questionnaire consists out of the following sections:

- 0 Informed Consent Form
- 1 Demographics and Filters
- 2 Experimental Manipulation
- 3 Threat Check
- 4 Political Attitudes
- 5 Manipulation Check
- 6 Moderator and Controls
- 7 Debriefing

***Block 0: Informed Consent Form***

Informedconsent [to be made]

***Block 0: Demographics and Filters***

Let us first start with a few questions about yourself!

filter\_age What is your age?

---

gender What is your gender?

Male (1)

Female (2)

Other (3) \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer not to answer (4)

education What is your highest level of education you finished?

Some high school (1)

High school (2)

Some college/Associates degree (3)

Bachelors degree (4)

Some postgraduate study (5)

Masters degree (7)

Doctorate/Medical degree (8)

other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

filter\_citizen Are you a United States [Belgian/French] Citizen? If you are not, please type in your nationality in the space below.

Yes (1)

No (2) \_\_\_\_\_

filter\_language What language or languages do you speak most often at home?

\_\_\_\_\_

***Note: Minors, non-citizens, and non-native speakers are ineligible to continue with the survey.***

filter\_attention In order to verify that the browser works properly and that we are collecting all your answers, could you please select the category bad from the list below?

Very bad (1)

Bad(2)

Fair(3)

Good(4)

Very good (5)

*Block 1: Experimental Manipulation*

left\_threat Please read the following news article **carefully**. You will be asked some questions about it afterwards.

## **BREAKING NEWS: 12 killed, 34 contaminated in water pollution incident in New York City**



Local metal company dumps toxic sewage spills and industrial waste into nearby river leading to several casualties and many more seriously contaminated people.

[NEW YORK] – A few hours ago, 12 people died and at least 34 others were severely intoxicated after drinking polluted water. According to the authorities, locals drank water polluted by toxic sewage spills and industrial waste into the town’s nearby river. The contamination was caused by a nearby American metal processing company. The police evacuated the neighborhood after the deadly incident. It is still unclear when the citizens can return to their homes.

Water poisoning constitute an ever-increasing public health threat in the United States, but the regulation of toxic pollution is still in its infancy. According to a recent report of the Environmental Protection Agency, 41 American states have reported higher than acceptable levels of lead in drinking water in the last three fiscal years. Adam Reed, a family member of one of the victims, expressed his frustrations towards government: “I think the American government has been failing all of us on tackling environmental issues and strictly regulating industrial pollution.”

*more about the poisoning follows...*

right\_threat Please read the following news article **carefully**. You will be asked some questions about it afterwards.

## **BREAKING NEWS: 12 killed, 34 injured in terrorist attack in New York City**



American extremist drives van into shopping crowd, leading to several casualties and many more seriously injured people.

**[NEW YORK]** – A few hours ago, 12 people died and at least 34 others were severely injured in a terrorist attack. According to the authorities, a van was driven at speed into pedestrians in a shopping street in the city center. The attack was carried out by Thomas E., an American individual with no criminal record. The police evacuated the shopping area after the deadly incident.

Domestic terrorism constitutes an ever-increasing security threat in the United States, but counterterrorism policy is still in its infancy. According to a recent study of the Global Terrorism Database by the State Department, terrorism has been rising exponentially in the last ten years. Adam Reed, a family member of one of the victims, expressed his frustrations towards government: “I think the American government has been failing all of us on countering violent extremism”.

*more about the attack follows...*

unowned\_threat Please read the following news article **carefully**. You will be asked some questions about it afterwards.

## **BREAKING NEWS: 12 killed, 34 injured in bridge collapse in New York City**



Recently built footbridge collapses due to technical error leading to several casualty and many more seriously injured people.

**[NEW YORK]** – A few hours ago, 12 people died and at least 34 others were severely injured after a pedestrian bridge collapsed. According to the authorities, the bridge collapsed because of a design flaw that was exacerbated as construction workers added more weight to the structure. The negligence is blamed on a nearby American infrastructure company. The police evacuated the area after the deadly incident.

Infrastructure collapses – including bridges, buildings and dams – constitute an ever-increasing security threat in the United States, but the regulation of infrastructure is still in its infancy. According to a recent report of the Department of Transportation, half of the bridges in some American areas could collapse under heavy lorries or bad weather conditions. Adam Reed, a family member of one of the victims, expressed his frustrations towards government: “I think the American government has been failing all of us on monitoring infrastructure and strictly regulating weight restrictions on bridges.”

*more about the bridge collapse follows...*

unpol\_threat Please read the following news article **carefully**. You will be asked some questions about it afterwards.

## Unravelling the myth: Food allergy or food intolerance?

Every week, this newspaper unravels another myth. This week: Are we all allergic to some food?



Last night, a 65-year old man ended up in the hospital with an allergic reaction after eating (...). And hence the question rose once again: Are we all allergic to some food?

[NEW YORK] – Food intolerances affect nearly everyone at some point. People often have an unpleasant reaction to something they ate and wonder if they have a food allergy. One out of three people either say that they have a food allergy or that they modify the family diet because a family member is suspected of having a food allergy. But only about 5% of children have clinically proven allergic reactions to foods. In teens and adults, food allergies occur in about 4% of the total population. This difference between the clinically proven prevalence of food allergy and the public perception of the problem is in part due to reactions called “food intolerances” rather than “food allergies”. So, yes, we all suffer from intolerances every now and then. But no, we are not all allergic.

exposure\_1 How many people got injured in the article you just read?

exposure\_2 What was the cause of their injuries?

exposure\_3 What are your thoughts and feelings after reading this article? Three or four sentences are sufficient.

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## ***Block 2: Threat Check***

### **Perceived Threat Scale [randomized]**

threat For the following set of items, please recall the newspaper article you just read. Please rate these items on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

1. I feel threatened after reading this article.
2. I am alarmed by the information I read in the previous article.
3. I feel unsafe after reading the assigned article.
4. I believe the article I read described a threat to society at-large.
5. I did **not** feel threatened by the article I read.\*
6. I am **not** alarmed by the assigned article.\*
7. I believe the information I read is **not** threatening to society.\*
8. I believe Americans are concerned about the information described in the article.
9. I feel personally alarmed after reading the assigned article.
10. This article made me feel a great deal of concern for fellow Americans.
11. I think what happened in the article could happen to me.
12. This article discusses a threat that is potentially relevant to my own life.
13. This article discusses a threat that is potentially relevant to my friends and/or people I know.
14. This kind of threat could never be relevant to me.\*

## ***Block 3: Mood Scale***

mood In this task, we would like you to consider what you might be feeling right now, after having read the news article in the previous task. For each of the items that appear on the screen, simply select the response that best captures how YOU are currently feeling.

Responses available:

1 = Very slightly or not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = Very much so

Adjectives [randomized order]:

1. Afraid<sup>fear</sup>
2. Scared<sup>fear</sup>
3. Frightened<sup>fear</sup>
4. Terrified<sup>fear</sup>
5. Angry<sup>anger</sup>
6. Mad<sup>anger</sup>

7. Outraged<sup>anger</sup>
8. Furious<sup>anger</sup>
9. Depressed<sup>sadness</sup>
10. Sad<sup>sadness</sup>
11. Hopeless<sup>sadness</sup>
12. Downhearted<sup>sadness</sup>

***Block 4: Political Attitudes* [blocks and items randomized]**

secs Please indicate the extent to which you feel positive or negative towards each issue. Scores of 0 indicate greater negativity, and scores of 100 indicate greater positivity. Scores of 50 indicate that you feel neutral about the issue.

1. Abortion (reverse scored). (S)
2. Limited government. (E)
3. Military and national security. (S)
4. Religion. (S)
5. Welfare benefits (reverse scored). (E)
6. Gun ownership. (E)
7. Traditional marriage. (S)
8. Traditional values. (S)
9. Fiscal responsibility. (E)
10. Business. (E)
11. The family unit. (S)
12. Patriotism. (S)

In what follows, you will see several statements on certain policies. To what extent do you agree with the following policy statements? Please read the items carefully and rate them on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). [randomized]

**Environmental Attitudes**

1. The federal government should aggressively carry out environmental protection regulations.
2. Private companies should be required, by federal law, to use cleaner energy solutions.
3. No additional tax dollars should go to the Environmental Protection Agency.
4. Private companies should not be aggressively regulated for the sake of preventing water pollution if it means a reduction in funding for other areas.

5. Federal funding of the Environmental Protection Agency should be our top priority, even Private companies should be given more control to set and legally abide by their own environmental.

### **Counterterrorism Attitudes**

1. Law enforcement should be free to search a property without a warrant on the suspicion that a terrorist act is being planned here. <sup>a</sup>
2. Law enforcement should be allowed to record telephone calls and monitor emails in order to prevent people from planning terrorist acts. <sup>a</sup>
3. Law enforcement should be able to stop or detain people of certain racial, ethnic or religious backgrounds if these groups are thought to be more likely to commit terrorist acts. <sup>a</sup>
4. Law enforcement should place greater restrictions on the public's access to online information in the fight against terrorism. <sup>a</sup>
5. Nobody should be detained for a long period of time without being formally charged with a crime. <sup>a</sup>
6. Diplomatic solutions to terrorism are almost always preferable to the use of military force. <sup>b</sup>
7. Military force is not an effective way to combat terrorism. <sup>b</sup>
8. Military force is the best way to defeat terrorism around the world. <sup>b</sup>
9. It is in our best interest that we improve our military power. <sup>b</sup>
10. Military spending is far too high in our country. <sup>b</sup>

*Note: These items are thought to cluster in two latent constructs (i.e., domestic policies and hawkishness). Given that our threat is related to domestic terrorism, scale a will be used in our analyses.*

### **Infrastructure Regulatory Attitudes**

1. The government has not gone far enough in regulating infrastructure companies.
2. There are too many regulations on infrastructure companies in the United States.
3. I believe we needed higher levels of regulations of the infrastructure industry.
4. Strict regulations of the infrastructure sector have gone far enough; there is no need for further regulation.
5. I support a massive overhaul of the infrastructure industry, to protect citizens from failures like building and bridge collapses.
6. Contrary to what some might say, a powerful infrastructural regulation is needed to protect the interests of the average man or woman.

**Block 5: Manipulation Checks**

issue\_importance Which of the following do you see as the most important issues facing the country right now? For this brief task, place the 10 issues you see being the most important facing the country in the box to the right. More specifically, we would like you to put the issue you see as most important at the top, and the issue you see as 10th most important at the bottom. (Note: To answer this question, "slide" your choices under the caption of the box.)

Note: please "drag" **all** ten items from this list on the left into the box to the right, in the order that is most important to you. Before moving on to the next question, you can adjust your rank orderings as needed by sliding items up or down within the box. We realize this task may be difficult, so just do the best you can.

Most Important Issues Facing United States
_____ Unemployment and Jobs (1)
_____ Health care (2)
_____ Terrorism (3)
_____ The federal deficit (4)
_____ Immigration (5)
_____ Taxes (6)
_____ Trade (7)
_____ Infrastructure (10)
_____ Environment (11)
_____ Education (9)

issue\_associative We will now list a few of these policy issues. Can you indicate for the following issues which party you **spontaneously think** about when you think about the issue? This does **not** have to be the party whose position on that issue you find most compelling. Please rate these issues on a scale from

0 to 10. Scores of 0 indicate you do not associate this party with this issue, while scores of 10 indicate that you strongly associate this party with this issue..

issue\_competence How suitable do you think each of the following parties are to deal with the following issues? Please rate these issues on a scale from 0 to 10. Scores of 0 indicate this party is completely unsuited to deal with this issue, while scores of 10 indicate that this party is completely suited to deal with this issue.

[issues asked are the manipulated issues; all parties in that country will be listed.]

***Block 6: Moderator and Controls***

ideology1 Where would you place yourself politically?

- Strongly Liberal (1)
- Moderately Liberal (2)
- Slightly Liberal (3)
- Moderate (4)
- Slightly Conservative (5)
- Moderately Conservative (6)
- Strongly Conservative (7)

ideology2 In politics, people sometimes talk of “left” and “right”. Where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means entirely left and 10 means entirely right?

pol\_party Which political party do you support? [Country-specific]

- Democratic Party (1)
- Republican Party (2)
- Libertarian Party (3)
- Green Party (4)
- None (6)
- Other (5) \_\_\_\_\_

party\_imp To what extent is your political party relatively important or unimportant to you?

- Extremely Unimportant (1)
- Very Unimportant (2)
- Somewhat Unimportant (3)
- Neither Important nor Unimportant (4)
- Somewhat Important (5)
- Very Important (6)
- Extremely Important (7)

pol\_interest [to add]

***Block 7: Debriefing***