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Remaking the World in America's Image: Surprise, Strategic Culture and the American Ways of Intervention

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Abstract

Why does the United States seek to export its own political and economic system as part of an intervention? We argue that the U.S. has an ideologically-inflected strategic culture which has yielded two 'ways' of intervention over time. The limited model is cost conscious and cedes control over the future of the state to local actors provided that they guarantee open markets and good government. The vindicationist model involves the U.S. paying costs to remake another society in its own image. We argue that the vindicationist way of intervention is activated by specific types of strategic surprises, which cause policymakers to react by gambling on interventions to remake another society. To empirically investigate this claim, we examine the record of America's major interventions from 1946-2005 and present two contrasting case studies of Cold War interventions in Lebanon and the Dominican Republic.

Introduction

Why does the United States seek to export its political and economic systems when it intervenes? Over the last two decades, the U.S. has intervened in over a dozen countries, but only in two cases – Iraq (2003-2011) and Afghanistan (2001-present) – has it sought to remake the country's social and political order in the image of the United States. These interventions have included efforts to rewrite constitutions and engage in social and economic engineering along American lines (Ginsberg et al, 2007; Chandrasekhan 2007, 2013). The Americanization of these societies has a dark side: those who did not conform to the imposed agendas suffered punitive responses. While a number of scholars attributed the errors of these interventions to the influence of neoconservative ideas and leaders, many of the same elements were present in U.S. interventions decades before (Bacevich 2005; Fukuyama, 2007).

The literature on interventions address a number of important questions, such as when and why states intervene (Peceny, 1995; Choi, 2013; Choi and James, 2016); how states normatively justify intervention (Wheeler, 2000; Finnemore, 2004; Peevers, 2013); how states sell interventions to their domestic public (Western 2005; Butler 2012); and the outcomes of interventions in target states (Peceny 1999; Pickering and Peceny, 2006, Pickering and Kisangani, 2006; Downes and Monten 2013). While this literature discusses reasons for intervention, it says relatively little about why and when states choose to export their domestic political and economic systems. Two explanations have been offered for why states sometimes gamble on multi-year interventions to remake other societies in their image. Focusing on forcible interventions from 1955-2000, Owen (2002) argues that states export their domestic political and economic arrangements to expand their power abroad and extend their links with transnational ideological partners. By contrast, Saunders (2009) finds that causal beliefs of individual leaders are crucial to explaining when states opt for

"transformative" intervention strategies designed to dramatically change the internal affairs of another state.

We offer a third explanation which uses strategic culture and prospect theory to explain whether a state is willing to export its political and economic system. Looking at the interplay between the liberal ideology and strategic culture of the United States, we argue that the instinct to remake societies in its own image is latent but inherent within American strategic culture and is activated by strategic surprises which present a new type of ideological threat. Since such moments are rare, the default American approach to intervention is a limited and cost-conscious one, but when challenged ideologically, the U.S. gives into the temptation to remake other societies in its image. Stated more formally, we argue that there are two distinct American "ways of intervention," both flowing from its strategic culture, that repeatedly surface throughout the country's history. The first, described here as *limited*, is drawn from America's anti-imperialist tradition and emphasizes the autonomy of local actors to determine their own political future. Far from leading the U.S. to embrace isolationism or eschew interventions entirely in favour of cultivating its own democracy at home, this position leads to small scale interventions for limited purposes, often to restore governments or open markets. Largely dominant in U.S. foreign relations throughout the eighteenth century, this approach has been described as "imperial anti-colonialism" (Williams 2009).

The second approach to intervention seeks to produce sweeping political change to remake a society in the image of the United States. This is done through legal-constitutional means – for example, crafting a new constitution based on the American model – and through sustained efforts to reengineer its social and economic structures to generate American-style prosperity. This second American "way" of intervention has a dark side, as policymakers often violently pursue and punish those who oppose their plans as malcontents opposed to the natural political order. This second American "way" of intervention is broadly *vindicationist*

in the sense that it seeks to validate American values and institutions, both seen as universal, and spread them by force if necessary (Brands 1998; Monten 2005).

We argue that both American approaches to major military interventions are inherent within American strategic culture. This position is against conventional wisdom that the U.S. decisively shifted from isolationism to-hyper interventionism in the 1890s and never looked back (Kagan 2007). While it is generally true that "vindicationism largely prevailed in the twentieth century," (Monten 2005: 114), we argue that the U.S. has vacillated between these two approaches to intervention across its history. While "imperial anti-colonialism" dominated American thinking about foreign affairs during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, glimpses of this vindicationist approach to interventions can be seen in the Mexican War (1846-1848) and in periodic calls to seize Canada, Mexico, Cuba and other islands in the Caribbean (Kagan 2007). In the twentieth and twenty-first century, vindicationist interventions were more common, as evidenced by the efforts to change other societies during multi-year occupations such as the Philippines (1898-1902), Germany (1945-1955), Japan (1945-1952) and Vietnam (1964-1975). Our central claim is that vindicationist interventions follow when the United States is confronted by strategic surprises that convey a novel ideological challenge and, as a result, threaten the assumption of universalism that underlies American liberalism. These types of ideological challenges act as a "selector of ideas" about the purpose and nature of American interventions (Miller 2010: 29) and lead U.S. policymakers to take the riskier, more transformative 'way of intervention.'

This article proceeds in six sections. The first section relates our argument to the debate on strategic culture, explaining how strategic culture can affect decision-making by shaping choices and providing scripts for explaining foreign policy decisions. The next section describes America's liberal tradition and both ways of intervention, with particular attention to the three measurable features of a vindicationist intervention: (1) the development of an American-style constitution; (2) the use of social engineering programs to remake the

economic and social structures; and (3) the deployment of punitive measures to punish opponents. Based on prospect theory, the third section discusses why certain types of ideological strategic surprises lead U.S. policymakers to become more risk-taking with interventions, while relying on culturally grounded "ways" when doing so. This section also examines new data which shows this pattern in action as vindicationist interventions followed new ideological strategic surprises between 1946 and 2005. The fourth section compares two paired cases of interventions which were alternatively limited and vindicationist: (1) Lebanon (1958) vs. Dominican Republic (1965-1966). The fifth section evaluates the alternative hypotheses to explain this variation between the American approaches to intervention. The conclusion addresses the risks and costs of the vindicationist way of intervention.

Intervention and Strategic Culture

Since the publication of Russell F. Weigley's *The American Way of War*, there have been numerous studies exploring the impact of strategic culture in generating a distinctly American approach to fighting wars (Weigley 1973). Expanded to other countries, each nation's historical style of warfighting was depicted as deriving from its strategic culture, which was itself composed of a diverse array of geopolitical, historical, cultural, and even sociological inputs (Sondaus 2006: 2-4). The recognition of distinct national strategic cultures and the ways of war that flowed from them amounted to a long overdue recognition of "cultural distinctiveness on strategic thought and practice" (Gray 1986: 34). But as Johnston noted, early literature on strategic culture was underspecified because it implied that strategic culture "led consistently to one type of behaviour" and did not explain why "particular modes of strategic behaviour are prominent at different times" (Johnston 1995: 37-38). The early work on strategic culture offered little more than general description and did not indicate when it came into play or how it would be empirically observed.

Subsequent waves of literature on strategic culture focused on how it manifested itself in discursive practices to explain choices (Klein 1988) and on how organizational culture

affected military action (Legro 1995, Keir 1997). While this literature made important contributions, it had three limitations. First, it was designed to yield a different set of predictions from realist theories of state behaviour, but in many cases the predictions overlapped and suggested the same behaviour in response to an external threat (Desch 1998). Second, it was sometimes imprecise about where strategic culture came from and the mechanisms through which it asserted itself. Third, it has erred on the side of too much continuity and failed to accommodate for competing cultural traditions within a single country. Despite many authors acknowledging the importance of identifying when strategic sub-cultures come to the fore, there have been only a few attempts to do so (Berger 1998). Strategic culture is hardly monolithic; rather, countries like the United States have competing strategic subcultures or "ways" of doing something in response to distinct triggers. The existing strategic culture debate has said little about these triggers. This leaves a gap, for as Bloomfield argues: "What we need, instead, is a model capable of accounting for the observed ebbs and flows in American strategic policy over time: it must explain the general absence of extra-continental adventurism before the 1980s; the spurt of overseas activity from then until around 1905; the isolationist period from then until 1941 (broken by five or six years of Wilsonian idealist engagement); the massive mobilization during the Second World War; the containment period, followed by détente, etc." (Bloomfield 2012: 440)

This literature has also been silent on the impact of strategic culture on the practice of interventions. We develop a model of strategic culture which responds to these challenges and applies it to interventions. Focusing exclusively on the United States, we draw a connection between an antecedent to the formation of a country's strategic culture – in this case, its ideology – and its reaction to strategic surprise, identifying how this interplay produces two distinct "ways of intervention." Empirically, we show how that strategic culture manifests itself both as lens which frames choices for policymakers and as an

embedded cultural script available to those on the ground. We also show that new ideological strategic surprises can activate the vindicationist 'way' of intervention.

America's Illiberal Liberalism

One of the central claims of this paper is that one input – political ideology – carries greater weight in shaping American strategic culture than others. Early work on America's strategic culture acknowledged that it was fundamentally derivative of its political culture, but scholars tended to leave the relationship between the two unexplored (Gray 1986; Farrell 2005: 11; Duffield 1998: 33-34). Carnes Lord asserted that American strategic culture was "rooted in liberal democracy" while Colin Gray argued that American foundational beliefs about its exceptional nature, coupled with confidence in its ability to win, dominated its strategic thinking until the early twentieth century (Lord 1985: 269; Gray 1981-26-28). Klein argues that American strategic culture is premised on the view that fighting would be "over there" and would be driven by the "moral and ideological propriety of its new-found responsibilities" more than balance of power politics (Klein 1988: 136-137).

To understand how American strategic culture yields two ways of intervention, it is important to understand the four distinctive elements of American liberalism (Hartz 1991). First, it is *universal* in assuming that all people will eventually embrace its benefits. American universalism arises from its dual heritage of the Enlightenment and Puritan Christianity (Gilbert 1970). Many of the American Founders believed that the "liberal norms that came to define U.S. national identity were framed in absolute and universal terms" (Monten 2005: 122). This universalism rejects cultural distinctiveness and instead highlights the commonality of human desires and the right of all people to exercise their fundamental liberties. Second, it is *progressive*. This commitment to progressivism manifests itself in the belief that all political orders will move toward a liberal political system and that America must, by example or direct action, demonstrate the benefits of liberal governance. Third, it is *pragmatic*. This means that ideological disagreements should be resolved through the

delivery of material or welfare benefits, and equally, that governments should be evaluated on their ability to deliver on those benefits. Finally, it is *constitutional*. While the rule of law is embraced by liberals everywhere, the American version of liberalism focuses on the need for a written constitution as a guide for managing political disagreement. The constitutionalism of American liberalism downplays underlying ethnic, sectarian and ideological differences and suggests that they can be managed with a constitution or legal and electoral reforms. These four distinctive elements have produced a national version of liberalism that assumes all persons will naturally come to accept the wisdom of a well-regulated constitutional order along American lines. This constitutional order is progressive (in that it gradually aims to improve over time) and pragmatic in that it yields material benefits in the here and now. Its value is assumed to be universally acknowledged and inherently superior to historic ethnic or sectarian grievances.

At home, this version of liberalism is relatively unproblematic, but when the U.S. confronts the outside world it produces a contrasting pattern of intervention and retreat. As Hartz noted, "Americans seem to oscillate between fleeing the rest of the world and embracing it with too ardent a passion. An absolute morality is inspired to either withdraw entirely from 'alien' things or to transform them: it cannot live in comfort constantly by their side" (Hartz 1991: 286). Confronted with a world that does not always share their presuppositions, U.S. policymakers prefer to withdraw or, at the most, engage in a highly limited, "hands-off" intervention designed to let the population find its own way to a constitutional order. However, when U.S. policymakers are shocked by an external surprise and confronted with societies and political systems that seemingly do not accept the value of these propositions, their response is often the opposite: to vindicate American values and punish those that break with this supposedly natural order. This response often amounts to an intervention to remake other societies in America's image, for as Walter Lippman noted, "no war can end rightly, therefore, except by the unconditional surrender of the aggressor nation

and by the overthrow and transformation of its political regime" (Lippman 1952: 25-26). These interventions represent a kind of harsh tutelage in which the U.S. tries to convince a foreign population of the merits of its political order, even if this means that the U.S. behaves in an illiberal fashion in pursuit of liberal goals (Desch 2007/2008).

The Janus-faced ideology of the United States – progressive and optimistic about human progress, but intolerant of difference and punitive if opposed – can explain some puzzling aspects of America's history of interventions. While some scholars have argued that Americans tend to conceive of war as a crusade on behalf of universal values which can only be fought to the finish, the historical record of American interventions – by one estimate, 280 uses of force between 1798 and 2009 – contains many more limited, short-duration cases that do not fit this description (Echevarria 2014: 40). The U.S. can be reluctant to intervene in many cases for cost reasons, but willing to intervene extensively when provoked to do so. We describe this pattern as reflecting two 'ways' of intervention. The first approach to intervention, described here as *limited*, involves interventions of short duration and circumscribed scope, such as efforts to rescue personnel, protect economic interests or secure bases. These interventions have involved the deployment of the military, but often under strict guidelines for the use of force. Limited interventions are not designed to remake the state or its underlying economic and social structures; rather, they aim to achieve very specific, measurable objectives and to allow U.S. troops to depart as soon as possible. In limited interventions, the U.S. aims to delegate as much authority and agency to the local population and eschew efforts to transform the political order of the state.

Limited interventions are consistent with parts of America's ideological tradition, particularly its progressive and pragmatist strain. This tradition holds that while American values are universal, prudence only requires the country to undertake only limited interventions, if at any all, which help others achieve pragmatic reforms and move closer to achieving the blessings of liberty.. These interventions to open markets or restore

governments may implicitly hope to encourage other societies to tilt towards the American model, but they are limited in duration and cost. This approach is consistent with America's ideological tradition because while American values are universal, its exceptional nature requires the country to undertake only limited actions abroad to achieve discrete objectives and to withdraw as quickly as possible. To do otherwise would be to have American risk its "democratic soul." (Brands 1998, viii). This approach is marked by cost sensitivity; while the U.S. wants to see other governments take pragmatic steps to achieve its standard of progress, it is reluctant to spend large amounts of blood and treasure, and risk public backlash, to achieve that.

The second way of intervention is described here as *vindicationist*. Like the limited approach, it has a long intellectual lineage from de Tocqueville to Wilson's promise to "make the world safe for democracy." As an ideology, it is premised on taking active measures to vindicate the right in other lands and to show the wisdom of American institutions and experience. This delivery of the universal values of democracy cannot be expected to happen on its own; if anything, a vindicationist perspective doubts that the march of progress will yield this result without an aggressive intervention by the United States. Accordingly, a vindicationist intervention is premised on moving the society towards freedom, by force if necessary, through changing institutions and underlying social and economic structures in favour of the American model. Vindicationist interventions are profoundly optimistic in their belief that other good things – economic development and respect for pluralism, for example -- will naturally accompany the change towards American-style institutions. It is this thinking which lay behind the Bush Doctrine and the American efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East after September 11th (Monten 2005).

Explaining the Variation

Both models of intervention –limited and vindicationist – are present within American strategic culture and shape the assumptions of those authorizing and conducting its

interventions. In practical terms, both "ways of intervention" operate like deeply embedded but readily available scripts which policymakers can turn to during interventions. They provide a series of norms which deliver "technical scripts and moral codes for military action," which can be observed in the doctrine and behaviour of American intervening forces (Farrell 2005: 10). But if both models are present in its strategic culture, why does one model of intervention prevail over another (Deuck 2006:24)?

To explain this variation, we point to a complex interaction between ideology, strategic culture and strategic surprise. Strategic surprises have been defined in different ways, from surprise military attacks to unexpected shocks that have a considerable impact on the distribution of power in the international system (Handel 1981: 10). Following this broad definition, examples of strategic surprise would include the Pearl Harbor attacks, but also the end of the Cold War and the September 11th attacks. The vast majority of literature on strategic surprises concerns why states often miss their warning signs (Betts 1982; Levite 1997; Bracken, et al 2008). There have been almost no studies that have looked at the response to strategic surprises (Helfstein 2012: 276) beyond the immediate shock.

We follow Helfstein in suggesting, based on prospect theory, that states will become more risk-taking in the aftermath of a strategic surprise because they have been placed in a "zone of loss" (Helfstein 2012: 281). The underlying logic behind prospect theory holds that actors who experience losses become more risk acceptant in response to finding themselves worse off than they were originally (Kahneman and Tversky 1979; McDermott 2001; McDermott 2004). This is based upon a pre-existing position, called a "reference point", and a "zone of loss" is generally measured in terms of a loss of utility from that point (Levy 1996: 189). According to prospect theory, actors who perceive that they are in a zone of loss not only become more willing to take on larger risks but they also can discount the risks of failure (Helfstein 2012: 282). This would suggest, as Helfstein shows, that states will engage in costly and unexpectedly long wars following strategic surprises. Following this logic, we

suggest that states will also contemplate vindicationist interventions designed to remake other societies when decision-makers perceive losses from prior reference points after a strategic surprise. In the language of prospect theory, the 'ways of intervention' operate like frames, providing goals, methods and rationales for organizing American interventions. At specific moments of surprise, the U.S. rejects the limited frame and embraces the vindicationist frame, leading to waves of interventions of this type.

What types of strategic surprises can push states into a "zone of loss"? It is obvious that military surprises, such as surprise attacks, could do so because the state incurs the material costs of the attack. Non-military strategic surprises, such as revolutions, economic catastrophes and natural disasters, could also leave a state in a "zone of loss" because of their material costs. But if strategic culture shapes how states see the outside world and act in response to threats, it follows that it should also condition policymakers to see some types of threats as especially grave and likely to put them in a "zone of loss." For the United States, which has a strong ideological foundation to its foreign policy, novel ideological strategic surprises – for example, those that suddenly but dramatically threaten a core assumption of its liberal ideology and its foreign policy worldview – are more likely to convince U.S. policymakers that the country has experienced a drastic deterioration of its position from a prior reference point. The salience of ideology in American liberalism and its strategic culture means that U.S. policymakers will over-estimate their losses and overreact to threats that present new ideological, rather than purely material, challenges.

Stated more formally, we argue that this perception of a "zone of loss" is particularly likely to be triggered when a surprise is both novel and ideological, as opposed to representing a further iteration of an existing material threat. Novel ideological surprises are defined by two criteria: (1) that they present an unanticipated threat or a dramatic change in an existing one; and (2) that they appear to challenge the core elements of ideology of the reacting state. For the United States, surprises that challenge the universality of the American

project, or its assumption of pragmatic, progressive improvement of the human condition, are more prone to convince U.S. policymakers that they are in a "zone of loss." These shocks are able to undermine a sense of safety, scramble definitions of friends and enemies, and bring about a painful revaluation of beliefs and ideological assumptions. As a result, these types of strategic surprises can induce policymakers to consider abandoning standard practices in favour of more radical or transformative policy options, including intervening in another state to "fix" its political system and render it closer to the American model.

It is important to note that while many material strategic surprises have an ideological hue or dimension, not all are perceived as novel. Consider as an example how the U.S. responded to the threat posed by Communism during the Cold War. The U.S. accepted the reality of the Communist threat from the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. For the next several decades, it experienced a number of strategic surprises, including governments that turned to Communism (e.g., the "loss of China") and unexpected invasions from Communist-backed forces (e.g., Korea in 1950, Afghanistan in 1979). While each of these events alarmed policymakers and in some cases imposed material costs to the United States, they were nevertheless considered iterations, albeit severe ones, of an existing Communist threat. These surprises did not upend core ideological assumptions or scramble existing definitions of friends and enemies. Accordingly, the U.S. did not engage in vindicationist interventions following each of these strategic surprises, even though they had an ideological dimension.

By contrast, when an ideologically-oriented surprise had a novel character and upended fundamental assumptions about U.S. foreign policy, the reaction was different. This could be particularly seen in the "loss of Cuba." While the U.S. could have interpreted this as yet another loss to the Communist side, no different than Korea or even China, it reacted very differently to the Communist takeover of Cuba. This was because it challenged longstanding presumptions about American safety and dominance in the Western Hemisphere and

suggested that waves of further losses Latin and South America to the Communist side were forthcoming. Since the Monroe Doctrine, the U.S. had assumed its superiority and the right to control and even depose governments in the Western Hemisphere. Now, it faced the prospect of losing control of its own neighbourhood to a Communist enemy, and accordingly U.S. policymakers from 1959 onwards reacted with alarm to Fidel Castro's regime and launched increasingly desperate measures to overthrow him. Notably, until the USSR placed missiles in Cuba, the "loss" of Cuba did not portend immediate material costs to the United States, but the novel ideological character of the specific threat – that it appeared to signal an end of the U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere – nevertheless convinced U.S. policymakers that they were in a "zone of loss" from a prior reference point. Consistent with our theory, the U.S. was more risk-taking with interventions after the "loss of Cuba" than it was after Communist takeovers of other countries, such as China.

Far from yielding to a rational calculation of the actual losses involved in a strategic surprise, ideology magnifies the risks that U.S. policymakers perceive themselves to face and encourages over-reaction to them. Given its conviction about that American liberalism is universal and will be progressively adopted elsewhere, ideological threats can cause U.S. policymakers to inflate the future material losses that they face, sometimes beyond the actual material costs involved. One consequence of finding themselves in a "zone of loss" following a novel ideological strategic surprise is that they will engage in more vindicationist interventions than they will with other, more ordinary surprises. Each of the three strategic surprises identified here – the loss of Cuba, the collapse of the USSR, and the September 11th attacks – were perceived as posing a novel ideological challenge, either by undoing a dominant historic assumption of safety in the Western Hemisphere (Cuba), by eliminating a long-standing ideological enemy (end of the Cold War) or by offering up a new one (September 11th). The immediate aftermath of each was a wave of vindicationist interventions. By contrast, purely material strategic surprises and ones that were iterations of

existing ideological threats were borne by the United States without producing a new wave of vindicationist interventions. Examples include the Communist revolution in China, the Korean War, the Iranian hostage crisis, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.[1] None of these produced a wave of vindicationist interventions in the way that the more overtly ideological surprises did.

Some new ideological strategic surprises that deliver some material gains can make policymakers perceive that they are in a zone of loss if the surprise is considered sufficiently novel and disorienting. This may lead them to discount material gains in the present while exaggerating the prospect of future losses. This unusual dynamic can be seen in the worried reactions of many U.S. policymakers to the end of the Cold War. The conventional wisdom today is that the U.S. emerged victorious at the end of the Cold War and embarked on a strategy of primacy for more than a decade afterwards. At the time, many policymakers were concerned about the emergence of a new world disorder and warned that the U.S. was entering a dangerous world of ethnic and sectarian conflict. This pre-occupation with the possibility of future losses motivated both Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton to support a wave of vindicationist interventions. In 1991, President Bush remarked that among the purposes of his new world order was to deal with new threats, as the U.S. faced "a challenge to keep the dangers of disorder at bay" (Oberdorfer 1991). Clinton also concluded that U.S. leadership was needed to tame ethnic and sectarian tensions around the world which might explode and drag the U.S. into more conflicts (Chollet and Goldgeier 2009). Clinton's Secretary of State Madeleine Albright put the issue succinctly: the end of the Cold War had "thawed the ground" but "all of the worms were crawling out…there were [ethnic conflicts] that has been frozen." (Chollet and Goldgeier 2009: 56). Seen from this light, it was not triumphalism which motivated the post-Cold War interventions as much as a fear of loss if the

[1] One might argue that the Iranian revolution was an ideological threat, as it launched the wider Islamic challenge to the established international order. At the time, however, the Carter administration focused more on the hostage crisis and the collapse of a valued ally in the region.

U.S. was unable to stem the tide of the ethnic and sectarian hatred following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The idea that the post-Cold War world was dangerous may explain why Nincic (1997:108) found that presidential justifications for interventions in the post-Cold War era were more designed to protect the status quo against a potential loss rather than secure a new foreign policy gain.

We identify three novel ideological strategic surprises from 1947-2005 that led to waves of vindicationist interventions. First, the "loss of Cuba" – beginning with the fall of the Batista regime to the Communist forces of Fidel Castro in 1959 and culminating in the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 - constituted a double threat: initially a novel ideological one (e.g., the first Communist foothold in the Western hemisphere) and eventually an actual military one (e.g., Soviet missiles in Cuba). As we show, this produced a wave of vindicationist U.S. interventions in the 1960s, as the U.S. sought to modernize other societies along American lines and to show the value of that approach compared to international communism. Second, the collapse of the Soviet Union may have been a net material gain for the U.S. in the long run, but the rise of ethnic and sectarian disorder was perceived as an offsetting loss which motivated U.S. decision-makers to support interventions to remake societies to foster harmony. The result was vindicationist U.S. interventions in Panama and Somalia and American-driven UN missions in Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo. The third event was novel and ideological, with clear material costs: the September 11th attacks, which led to the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

How does this pattern of interventionism relate to strategic culture? Lantis notes that external shocks may produce what he calls "strategic cultural dilemmas," where a reconsideration of the tenets and interpretation of strategic culture become possible. This process is not easy as it may involve extreme psychological distress for decision-makers and a gradual renegotiation of beliefs and cultural scripts (Lantis 2002: 110-111). Since this process is difficult and must contend with stubborn facts and long-standing cultural

presuppositions, any shift in policy will not be wholescale but rather will be bounded by cultural scripts already in place. We argue that the two "ways of intervention" operate like readily available cultural scripts which "acts as a lens that alters the appearance and efficacy of different choices" (Johnston 1995: 42) and bound the choices available to U.S. policymakers. The variation between them is determined by whether they fall during a period of risk-taking following ideological strategic shock.

The default choice for American interventions is the limited one, in which the United States engages in short-term operations for modest goals. In moments of strategic surprise, the limited model is cast aside in favour of a vindicationist model that aims to remake other societies in America's image. In other words, what changes is the external environment that makes one model preferable (Miller 2010). Like the limited model, the vindicationist model is embedded within America's ideological tradition and strategic culture and familiar by assumption and practice as a script for those authorizing and conducting the intervention. This explains the similarity in the language used to justify vindicationist interventions from Cuba and the Philippines to Afghanistan and Iraq today.

Empirically, the presence of a vindicationist intervention can be measured in three ways. First, the U.S. seeks to change the country's institutions by enshrining universal values in a constitution and legal order. This process can be imposed – for example, in the Cuban intervention of 1906 where an American civilian administrator played a key role in drafting a new legal code. These constitutions and legal codes are often, but not always, based on the U.S. model, as recently occurred in Iraq and Afghanistan. Second, vindicationist models involve an effort to reshape a society along pragmatic and progressive lines. Such efforts, often included within a "hearts and minds" approach to counterinsurgency, include improving sanitation, public road building, providing start-up financing of local firms, and anti-corruption practices. Social engineering has been part of U.S. interventions in Cuba (1906) and Mexico (1914) to Somalia (1992) and Afghanistan (2001).

Finally, vindicationist interventions often involve punitive action against insurgents, guerrillas or other outlaws who were seen as thwarting the efforts of the United States to reform the state. Punitive actions are those designed to inflict harm on one or more agents that perceived as responsible for violating rules or norms (Lang 2008: 61). Punitive actions are designed to punish in an extraordinary way – for example, by punishing civilians for siding with insurgent leaders, or even killing them in a way similar to the My Lai massacre – and are distinct from ordinary warfighting or counterinsurgency. The use of violence for strategic reasons is not by definition punitive, but when violence exceeds any strategic rationale, as it often does with war crimes, it becomes punitive. Vindicationist interventions are not wholly punitive, as they also involve the use of violence for strategic reasons, but they tend to have a punitive element directed against leading opponents of the U.S. intervention. This can be seen by the degree to which the U.S. dismisses enemies as politically irrelevant (e.g., "the dead enders" in Iraq, according to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld) or criminalizes them ("bringing them to justice.") (Lang 2008: 58-77). Punitive actions are designed to send an example to that society and force them to accept the benefits of the American-dictated order, while reinforcing the image of the United States as the sheriff who will enforce the rules. Examples include the U.S. pursuit and killing of Pancho Villa, Che Guevara and Osama bin Laden or the effort to arrest Manuel Noriega in the Panama intervention. Punitive actions can extend beyond leaders if the U.S. encounters resistance. For example, the U.S.-led intervention in Somalia began as humanitarian operation but became more punitive over time, as U.S. efforts to find and punish Mohammad Farrah Aidid and other Somali warlords led to escalating punitive actions against the civilian population that was seen as sympathetic to them.

To test our hypothesis, we examined 47 interventions conducted by the United States

between 1947 and 2005 recorded in the International Military Intervention (IMI) dataset.[2] To ensure comparability between types of interventions, we excluded any intervention with fewer than 1,000 troops. We also excluded UN-run interventions such as Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor and instead focused on interventions exclusively commanded by U.S. forces, on the assumption that the effects of strategic culture would be most clearly visible in American-only cases. The full list of interventions is available in Appendix A. We collected data for three variables indicating a vindicationist intervention: (1) the development of a new constitution; (2) the use of social engineering, such as efforts to improve sanitation, public road building, educational policies, and other social projects; and (3) the use of punitive raids against those who resist the order.

We stipulate that the presence of at least two of the three variables indicates that the intervention was vindicationist. This analysis revealed that that 38 of the 47 interventions were limited, while 8 interventions (17%) were vindicationist. This is likely to be an underestimate for the post-Cold War wave since we exclude UN-led interventions such as Haiti (1994), Bosnia (1995) and Kosovo (1998). If they were included in the post-Cold War period, the clustering of vindicationist interventions would be even more pronounced. While there are limitations to such a small sample, it is notable that the eight U.S.-only vindicationist interventions were concentrated in one of three time clusters, each following a major moment of strategic surprise for the United States: the loss of Cuba (1959) and subsequent Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), the end of the Cold War (1989), and the September 11th attacks (2001).

Table 1-1: Vindicationist Interventions

Intervention	***Years***	***Development of Constitution***	***Social Engineering***	***Punitive Raids***

[2] Data from Pearson, Frederic S. and Robert A. Baumann, "International Military Intervention, 1946-1988" Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, Data Collection 6035, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; and Kisgani, Emizet F. and Jeffrey Pickering. 2008. "International Military Intervention, 1989-2005" Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, Data Collection 21282, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, online at: https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/21282

Crisis over Cuba (1959-1962)				
Vietnam	1961-1965	No	Yes	Yes
Laos	1964-1973	No	Yes	Yes
Vietnam	1965-1973	No	Yes	Yes
Dominican Republic	1965-1966	Yes	Yes	No
End of Cold War (1989-1991)				
Panama	1989-1990	No	Yes	Yes
Somalia	1992-1994	Yes	Yes	Yes
September 11th				
Afghanistan	2001-present	Yes	Yes	Yes
Iraq	2003-present	Yes	Yes	Yes

The clustering of these interventions alone is not sufficient to prove our argument. While the pattern broadly holds, there are also some exceptional cases of limited interventions during these windows of risk-taking, notably the Persian Gulf War in 1991.[3] At the same time, the concurrence of this broad pattern and the conduct and norms of the interventions – in other words, how and why they were done – is more suggestive. Each of these moments ushered in a series of vindicationist interventions in which U.S. policymakers sought to remake other societies in their own image in order to protect the U.S from further attack. As we show in the case studies, the language also changed: when the President and Congressional elites aimed to persuade the public to go along with the interventions, they were able to draw upon pre-existing cultural scripts for vindicationist interventions, often echoing Wilsonian language about making the world safe for democracy, to make their case.

[3] Most of the exceptions to the pattern are interventions involving more than 1,000 troops but which lasted only a few days or weeks, generally to rescue hostages, evacuate personnel or provide disaster relief, such as the multiple interventions in Zaire in the 1960s.

In most cases, the vindicationist intervention followed directly after moments of strategic surprise, but in two cases – Vietnam (1961) and Panama (1989) – the vindicationist character of the intervention became more apparent as the impact of the strategic surprise became clear. The intervention in Vietnam (1961) began alongside the loss of Cuba and the Missile Crisis, but the war in Vietnam became more vindicationist as the fears of the domino theory in Asia grew. Similarly, the invasion of Panama was conducted at the end of the Cold War, before the collapse of the USSR but one month after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Its scope changed from President Bush's very limited objectives to remove Manuel Noriega to a more decisive attempt to vindicate the "new world order" and reinforce America's position in the hemisphere. In its final stages, Operation Just Cause involved efforts to remake Panama by rebuilding bridges, removing ordinances and conducting punitive raids and detention of Noriega's allies.

While the periods of risk-taking follow ideological strategic surprises, they do not last indefinitely. The literature on prospect theory indicates that risk-taking begins on once the actor enters the zone of loss, but it generally does not specify how long risk-taking will prevail. Levy (2003) cites examples in which governments continue to take risks over a number of years, either by continuing to fight costly wars or by risking new wars well after the original provocation. Drawing from the literature on cost sensitivity and war (Mueller 1973; Gelpi, Feaver, Riefler 2009), we suggest that this window closes when the cumulative domestic costs of vindicationist interventions become too high and U.S. leaders begin to call for retrenchment. At these points, the U.S. abandons efforts to remake other societies in its image and reverts back to the model of limited interventions. This could be seen in President Obama's calls for "nation-building at home" and preference for a limited model in Libya following the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The underlying reason for the closing of the window for vindicationist interventions is that the U.S. public is reluctant to assume too many costs for interventions and applies a cost-benefit framework to accepting further

casualties (Gelpi, Feaver, Riefler 2009: 15) during them. This cost sensitivity is suspended in moments of shock to allow for vindicationist interventions, but as costs pile up public opinion tends to sour on ambitious interventions and leads to political pressure to return to limited interventions. As expected from a cost-benefit approach, the window of time for vindicationist interventions varies depending on how quickly those costs accrue; in this sense, it is measured more by accumulating costs than by years. This means that it is not possible to specify *ex ante* how long a window of vindicationist interventions will last, but each will vary and close when its tipping point emerges.

Case Studies

To test these claims, we have adopted a pre-and post-crisis case study design, focusing on two similar Cold War interventions: Lebanon (1958) and Dominican Republic (1965-1966). Both were interventions which were designed to restore a government and involved a sizeable deployment of troops; both interventions involved Cold War presidents worried about Communist infiltration. Both were largely non-violent, with U.S. troops enduring sniper attacks rather than responding with punitive action. Yet the limited intervention in Lebanon turned out to be different in character from the vindicationist intervention designed to restore democracy in the Dominican Republic. Consistent with our theoretical explanation, there were differences between the cases in the practice of the intervention (specifically the development of a constitution and the use of social engineering) and the language used to describe the interventions. Despite the fact the growing threat of international communism in the 1950s, the Lebanon case shows no evidence of being framed as a response to loss. The terms of the intervention were carefully modulated to minimize costs and cede agency to those on the ground. In contrast, the intervention in the Dominican Republic was directly tied to U.S. policymaker's reaction to the loss of Cuba. An important difference between the two can be seen in the way US policy makers understood the underlying threat. In Lebanon, the political crisis was linked to the rising Arab nationalism of Gamal Abdul Nasser, but it was

not cast in ideological terms. By contrast, Castro's challenge, and the risks it posed of spreading Communism in the Dominican Republic, was explicitly an ideological challenge. Accordingly, the latter resembles a vindicationist intervention, in which the U.S. made efforts to remake the society in way that it never contemplated before, while the Lebanese intervention was limited in character.

Lebanon (1958)

In July 1958, the United States sent over 14,000 troops to Lebanon to quell growing unrest against the pro-Western government of Camille Chamoun (Spiller 1981). This intervention lasted 102 days, until October 1958, and cost only one American casualty from sniper fire. For this reason, it is considered an "enormous military and political success" and an example of how the U.S. can use military deployments as a political tool to shore up unstable regimes without actually fighting (Western 2005: 62). Yet it is also an example of a limited intervention in which the U.S. carefully modulated its goals and strategic approach in ways consciously designed to avoid remaking Lebanese society in its image.

The crisis which prompted President Dwight Eisenhower to authorize an intervention in Lebanon was long in the making. For years, Lebanon's political stability hinged on the success of the National Pact, a power-sharing agreement which allocated political offices to Maronite Christians, Sunni and Shi'a Muslims and others to keep a delicate balance of power. This balance began to go astray during the rule of President Chamoun, who favoured his own community, Maronite Christians, and offered them both economic benefits and offices to consolidate their power (Western 2006: 66-67). Although Chamoun faced growing Muslim discontent with his rule, he received enthusiastic support from Washington because he was seen as a stalwart pro-Western force in a region increasingly susceptible to Soviet and Arab Nationalist influence (Little 1996: 31).

In January 1957, President Eisenhower promised to spend up to $200 million in economic aid across the Middle East and promised that the U.S. would send troops to respond

to any country threatened by aggression by a state "controlled by international communism" (Little 1996: 34). Lebanon was the only state in the region to support this doctrine, which in turn solidified U.S. support. But in the parliamentary elections in June 1958, Chamoun faced opposition from Muslim and Druze political leaders. He cast his critics as Nasserites and suggested that the elections would be a tipping point for Communist infiltration. This was enough to convince the Eisenhower administration to authorize a $12.7 million military and financial aid package, as well as to authorize the CIA to provide pay-offs to Lebanese politicians to defeat Nasser-backed candidates (Little 1996: 35). The effort was successful, but Chamoun soon began to covet another term as president and threatened to make an amendment to the Constitution. With the election results, Chamoun had more than the two-thirds majority of the parliament needed to amend the Constitution and allow him to hold power for a second term. As the opposition contested the election results, Chamoun resorted to increasingly autocratic crackdowns (Western 2006: 68).

Despite evidence that the region was in turmoil with the merger of Egypt and Syria into the United Arab Republic (UAR) and a coup in Iraq in 1958, U.S. officials did not frame their challenges in ideological terms and did not contemplate an extensive intervention in Lebanon. President Eisenhower remained sceptical of intervention and asked, "How can you save a country from its own leaders?...We would be intervening to save a nation; and yet the nation is the people, and the people don't want our intervention." As the crisis mounted, Eisenhower hoped that the UN would be able to broker a peace settlement which would keep U.S. forces out of Lebanon and avoid the anti-American backlash that their presence would produce (Little 1996: 41-43). Although he was convinced that American credibility was at stake and that an intervention might be necessary, he was determined to keep its scale limited. On the eve of the intervention on July 15, Eisenhower stated plainly that "we cannot give them a blank check…To intervene militarily [in Iraq] would introduce problems we have not even considered" (Gendzier 2006:300) Eisenhower was careful to downplay the extent of the

mission, avoiding even the word "intervention" in his address to Congress and emphasizing that U.S. forces were coming into Lebanon at the request of its government (Gendzier 2006: 300, 303).

Although there was a clear threat to American strategic interests, Eisenhower was careful not to let the crisis overcome his strategic planning process and push the U.S. to a larger intervention than it wanted. Under British pressure to engage in a joint operation to protect Jordan and plan for an operation "which could run all the way through Syria and Iraq," Eisenhower demurred and insisted that the U.S. was in no position to contemplate such a gamble (Gendzier 2006: 299). He was clear that such decisions "are far, far beyond anything I have the power to do constitutionally" (Little 1996: 46). Rather, the U.S. would treat Lebanon as a separate issue and contemplate a limited intervention in that country alone (Gendzier 2006: 298-299). When the final request for an armed intervention from U.S. troops emerged in July 1958, Eisenhower did not rush to respond, but instead had an orderly set of staff meetings and notified Congress before proceeding to authorize the intervention. Ultimately, he concluded that this call for intervention in Lebanon was a crucial test of the Eisenhower doctrine and of American credibility. The limited nature of the intervention comes out clearly in discussions among the principals during June 1958. In one conversation, Eisenhower criticized the effort by the British, French and Israelis to topple Nasser in the 1956 Suez intervention.[4] Secretary of State John Foster Dulles also argued against creating a US style political system in Lebanon[5]

Although they faced real risks, U.S. troops were reluctant to engage in military or policing action. The U.S. Marines were "under strict orders to maintain fire discipline, and to

[4] Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, June 15, 1958*Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958–1960, Lebanon and Jordan, Volume XI* available online at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v11/d84.

[5] Memorandum of a Conversation, Washington, June 22, 1958, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958–1960, Lebanon and Jordan, Volume XI* available online at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v11/d102,

shoot only in self-defense" (Historical Branch 1966: 22) and did not engage in punitive raids. Rather, they ceded policing authority to Lebanese army and police forces and hunkered down amidst sandbags to endure the attacks. The "passivity of the American troops" came under criticism from British officials in Beirut, and even some Lebanese officials thought that the U.S. did not go far enough (Gendzier 2006: 317). This posture reflected a limited intervention where the crisis would be resolved by local actors rather the U.S.

Far from attempting to rewrite the Lebanese constitution, U.S. forces attempted to have as little direct political impact as possible. Prior to the intervention, Eisenhower had specified three conditions for the U.S. intervention: (1) that Chamoun accept UN help in resolving the crisis; (2) that he obtain support from another Arab state; and (3) that he renounce his own candidacy for a second term (Little 1996: 40). In his official statement, Eisenhower insisted that U.S. forces "do not go as combat forces and not in any act of war" (Gendzier 2006: 324). Eisenhower was clear that beyond restoring stability and assuring the independent existence of Lebanon, he would countenance no other political purpose to the intervention. Chamoun complained that the U.S. was simply handing off responsibility for Lebanon to the "dubiously inadequate" staff of the UN and even bitterly said "it would be better of the U.S. forces had not come in the first place" (Ibid: 318). Dulles responded that the U.S. never committed itself to rooting out Nasserism and that he would resist attempts to "drag us into this thing in a bigger way" (Gendzier 2006: 318). Vice President Richard Nixon insisted that this intervention was ultimately about the "self-determination" of the Lebanese people, and that no outside power should interfere in this (Gendzier 2006: 326).

The U.S. also did not attempt to remake the economic and social structures of Lebanon during this intervention. The U.S. hardly patrolled outside Beirut and did not engage in any projects that would constitute social engineering. Economic aid for Lebanon was also limited in purpose. Once the new President Fu'ad Shibab was in place, the U.S. offered $1 million in aid for the Lebanese government to buy arms and, by October 1958, another $20 million in

general economic aid for the government (Ibid: 350). Eventually, the U.S. provided another $3.6 million in military supplies and another $17.1 million for development (Ibid 362-363). But none of the development aid insisted that economic and social structures of Lebanon be altered in ways similar to the American model.

Dominican Republic (1965-1966)

Less than ten years later, the U.S. engaged in another intervention to quell Communist-backed unrest but did so in way which showed its vindicationist side. After the fall of Juan Bosch in September 1963, Donald Reid Cabral became president of the Dominican Republic. From Puerto Rico, the exiled Bosch began agitating for a return to power and sought allies in the military, while his allies inside the country, known as the "constitutionalists", sought to reinstate him. After more than a year of agitation, on April 25, 1965, Dominican forces arrested Reid Cabral, intending to return Bosch to power (Lowenthal 1972: 74).

Almost immediately, President Lyndon Johnson saw the need for a wide-ranging intervention, saying that "we are going to have to really set up that government down there, run it and stabilize it some way or another."[6] Among policy makers, the coup was clearly a surprise, with the principals all expressing alarm at the deterioration of the situation. Within days, the intervention was underway. On April 30, 1965, approximately 400 U.S. troops landed in the Dominican Republic in response to calls to protect American civilians caught in the middle of the *coup d'état*. The initial landing of paratroopers was soon followed by over 22,000 U.S. troops. Unlike Lebanon, which was conducted with an air of deliberate caution, the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic began in an atmosphere of crisis. The ideological challenge posed by the "loss" of Cuba was clear. Johnson saw the hidden hand of Castro behind the uprising and remarked that "I sure don't want to wake up ... and find out

[6] Telephone Conversation between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson, April 26, 1965*, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXXII, Dominican Republic; Cuba; Haiti; Guyan*a, available online at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v32/d22.

Castro's in charge."[7] The Cuban Missile Crisis, in which President Kennedy barely averted nuclear war with the Soviets, shook many in the foreign policy establishment and gave a new urgency to America's policies in Latin America. The fear of Castro's influence was pervasive, and some in the administration even suspected that he was secretly behind the crisis in the Dominican Republic. In the eyes of the Johnson administration, the overriding goal of the intervention was to prevent another Cuba. The commanding officer of the intervention noted that, "my stated mission was to protect American lives and property; my unstated mission was to prevent another Cuba and, at the same time, to avoid another situation like that in Vietnam" (Palmer 1989: 5). The military junta recognized this fear and exploited it by pressing for direct military support from the U.S. in order to prevent "another Cuba" (Lowenthal 1972: 102).

While American military forces avoided much of the fighting due to their strict rules of engagement, they still went much further than they did in Lebanon. U.S. forces worked to ensure stability in the capitol by setting up checkpoints and barricades while establishing working relationships with the disaffected local police (Palmer 1989: 52-54; Lowenthal 1971: 120-131). They also cleared out snipers from the capital, managed traffic, created checkpoints to allow Dominicans to travel in the city, funded some Dominican military raids against Communist strongholds, and pressured the government to deport or intern Communists in their midst (Gleijesus 1978: 36).

The intervention, which rapidly grew in numbers, was soon recast as one to create "stability," along the lines of what the U.S. was beginning to do in Vietnam (Sorley 1998, Yates 1988: 73). The Johnson administration was determined "to make it clear that our soldiers do other things besides fire weapons at Dominicans."[8] U.S. forces began a civic action program designed to rebuild parts of Santo Domingo and to provide food there and in

[7] [7] David Coleman, National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 513, 28 April 2015, available at: https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB513/.

[8] Memorandum for the Record, May 2, 1965, FRUS. Vol. 31, available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v32/d51.

the countryside. U.S. efforts resulted in 15,000 pounds of food and 15,000 pounds of clothing being delivered by U.S. troops to the poor and hungry (Yates 1988: 133). American military officials also opened medical clinics and orphanages. The goal was to improve the quality of life of Dominicans through welfare projects which, American officials reasoned, would keep the island free of communist influence. The U.S. set up a Public Facilities Team which was responsible for restoring garbage collection, electricity, and water to the city (Ibid: 135). The U.S. also engaged in engineering projects, such as restoring power plants and incinerators, and opened schools, if only on a temporary basis. The goal was not just to fix, but to subtly re-engineer the society and economic of the Dominican Republic to keep it firmly in the capitalist camp (Ibid: 136-138).

U.S. officials engaged in legal and constitutional reform to create generate legitimacy and national unity. American diplomats regularly emphasized that a constitution was a precondition for order and provided the necessary guardrails for economic and social development. In June 1965, American officials proposed drafting a new constitution in light of the difficulties around the 1963 constitution.[9] In a call with U.S. officials, President Johnson emphasized that restoring democracy and producing socio-economic reform was key: "it looks like to me that we're being about as democratic as you can be and we're giving them protection and we're giving them food and feeding them and giving them supervised elections, while whatever elements of democracy they have in the country are permitted to function. I don't know what else we could do if we stayed there a million years."[10] American officials advocated for a constitutional convention and even used airdrops of draft constitutional reforms from U.S. military helicopters to population centers throughout the country (Palmer 1989: 90). The result was a constitution, produced in 1966 that worked

[9] Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic June 11, 1965, FRUS Vol. 321, available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v32/d105.
[10] Telephone Conversation Among the President's Advisers on the Dominican Republic and President Johnson, May 18, 1965. FRUS Vol. 31, available online at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v32/d77.

along American lines: it provided a long list of basic rights and civil liberties for all citizens, strengthened the legislature and executive branches, separated powers among them and created a complex set of checks and balances.

Alternative Hypotheses

The interventions in Lebanon and the Dominican Republic showcase two very different models of intervention: (1) a limited one, in which American officials cede as much authority and control as possible to locals and spend relatively little in blood and treasure; and (2) a vindicationist one, in which the U.S. seeks to remake another society in its image and engages in activities designed to reward and punish local actors based on their willingness to go along with this agenda. Both approaches are latent in American strategic culture and the scripts and norms employed by diplomats and military officials. As the Dominican Republic case shows, it is at moments of ideological strategic surprise where the U.S. perceives an opportunity to 'fix' another society before it was too late that the vindicationist model prevails.

Our explanation suggests that an understanding of how ideology inflects strategic culture in the United States can explain how both models of intervention recur in the country's history over time and why, under some circumstances, the U.S. tries to remake other societies in its image. Yet there are two alternative explanations which could be applied. Owen argues that great powers are likely to insist on undertaking interventions which export their regime types when they need to expand their power and keep their ideological partners in power. In the Dominican Republic case, this explanation is partially plausible: Johnson's actions to restore Cabral to power could be seen as keeping an ideological ally in power. But this does not explain why Eisenhower did not do the same to keep Chamoun in power as the president of Lebanon. While Johnson was concerned that the Dominican Republic would be yet another domino to fall to Communism, Eisenhower avoided such hyperbole in Lebanon despite clear evidence that Soviet-backed Nasserists were

arrayed against Chamoun and, by extension, U.S. forces in the country. Only after the loss of Cuba surprised policymakers and made them re-evaluate their safety in the Western Hemisphere did the U.S. show a willingness to engage in a vindicationist intervention.

Saunders also offers an alternative explanation which could explain the variation between our cases. Saunders draws a contrast between "internally-focused" leaders who are willing to undertake transformative interventions because they believe that threats emanate from the domestic politics of other states, and "externally-focused" focused more directly on explicit threats and inclined to engage in limited interventions only (Saunders 2009: 121). It is plausible to explain President Eisenhower's decision on the basis that he was "externally-focused" and unconvinced that the domestic politics of Lebanon could amount to a real threat to the United States. Similarly, one could characterize Johnson as "internally focused" in his approach to fixing the Dominican Republic and other countries through broad, vindicationist interventions. But Saunders also argues that Johnson should also be understood as "externally-focused" and consequentially unwilling to engage in transformative interventions. She classifies his approach to the Dominican Republic as "non-transformative" (Ibid: 122). Yet our coding suggests that Johnson's efforts in Vietnam, with its social engineering projects and the frequent use of punitive raids, should be considered a vindicationist intervention. Saunders' coding does not explain why a supposedly "externally-focused" leader like Johnson would gamble on an extensive intervention in the Dominican Republic, especially as the costs of the war in Vietnam became more apparent. More generally, our case studies suggest that the ways of thinking about an intervention go far beyond the top political leadership but rather permeate the views of military, intelligence and diplomatic officials at all levels, as strategic culture explanations would suggest.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated a link between the distinct strategic culture of the United States and its tendency to try to remake another society in its image. Although not all

interventions conform to this standard, we highlight the recurrence of distinct vindicationist interventions across American history, with common elements such as constitutional reform, social engineering and punitive action. As neither ideological nor leader-based explanations can fully explain this pattern, we believe that it is important to also consider the "ways of intervention" employed by different states, which are themselves derived from the country's strategic culture. This paper suggests that the impact of strategic culture can be ascertained on specific practices of intervention. To do this, it foregrounds the most important input into American strategic culture – its liberal ideology – and traces how that factor influences strategic culture and manifests itself in a diversified practice of American intervention. Just as Weigley (1973) identified two ways of war, this paper identifies two 'ways' of intervention – limited and vindicationist – deriving from American strategic culture. By demonstrating that there are two "ways of intervention" derivable American strategic culture, this accounts for the diversity of practice in U.S. interventions over time. Further, we offer a model drawing from strategic surprise and prospect theory which explains why vindicationist models sometimes prevail over limited approaches. We also identify a series of vindicationist interventions that have taken place in the last 50 years, and provide more detailed descriptions of two interventions, one limited (Lebanon) and one vindicationist (Dominican Republic) as evidence for our argument.

We do not argue that the United States is unique in allowing its strategic culture shapes its practice of intervention. On the contrary, it is likely that other states have their own distinct "ways of intervention." The two case studies, alike in many ways, show that strategic culture permeates much of the decision-making around interventions but is rarely observable on its own terms. It manifests itself in the ranked preferences for certain outcomes, the discursive practices used by elites to justify their decisions, and the policies of those on the ground. The differences between Eisenhower and Johnson is not due solely to ideological preferences or the personalities of leaders, but rather the reaction to the surprise of the "loss of

Cuba" activated a latent, but instinctual, vindicationist practice of intervention. If we are correct that there are "ways of intervention" just as there are ways of war, it is worth considering whether the American vindicationist approach, with its desire for sweeping reform, is prone to failure. Recent studies that have examined the record of America's attempts at intervention for regime change and democratization have concluded that the chances of success are low (Downes and Monten 2013). Given that fact, we suggest that U.S. policymakers may be better off acknowledging that the seeds of violent and illiberal interventions may lay within American strategic culture and to guard against them following strategic surprises, particularly new ideological ones. Containing that instinct after those moments, and carefully measuring the costs and rates of success of these interventions, may help the U.S. to avoid paying such high costs in the future.

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