

Strategic Mediation:
The Domestic Influences and
Constraints on Diplomacy

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DEDICATION

To my family, Mom, Dad, Lindsay and Eric, who have always encouraged me to be independent, to go my own way and have my own adventures, all the while providing me with love and support, often from afar. I would not be who I am or have accomplished what I have without everything you have done for me. I can never thank you enough for the life and opportunities that you have given me.

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Any errors, omissions, or oversights are mine alone.

ABSTRACT

Mediation theory has developed separately from mainstream theories explaining foreign policy. Specifically, mediator motivations and constraints have often been overlooked. I extend an argument explaining mediator motivations, and thus mediation occurrence and strategy, in terms of domestic political institutions and leader performance. The notion that leaders use foreign policy in order to help further their domestic fortunes and those of their party is widely accepted in the international relations literature, as is the notion that political survival is pre-eminent in any leader's decision-making calculus. Scholars have also shown that leaders shift their focus to foreign policy when institutional factors, such as an opposition controlled legislature, make addressing poor domestic performance through legislation especially difficult. Empirical tests of such arguments have been limited to the use of force and have not been extended to other aspects of foreign policy such as third party mediation. Given that a leader is focused on political survival, but is also constrained by domestic circumstances and evaluated by a domestic audience, the use of military force to engineer a policy success is to be a risky and potentially costly policy option, given the other policy options at his disposal.

Conflict mediation is a policy option that is both low-cost and low-risk, relative to the use of force, which also has the potential to be billed as a high-profile success for an administration. As such, leaders should be seen using mediation as a foreign policy option when domestic policy options are unavailable or are considered inefficient for demonstrating success. This project examines the incentives (or motivations), constraints, strategies, and benefits US Presidents confront when using mediation as a policy tool, given this goal of developing a record of success in the eyes of a domestic political audience. It tests whether engaging in mediation yields domestic political benefits. I find limited support for the argument that leaders engage in mediation in response to poor domestic conditions when domestic political configurations make the passage of legislation difficult. There is also support for the argument that partisan support in congress provides "cover" for the president to engage in mediation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“The act of mediation is not a neutral act: it is a... political act undertaken by the mediator to achieve desired ends.” (Webb 1988)

Liberal Political Thought and Conflict Mediation

The mediation research program has emerged primarily out of the real world need to understand the process by which conflicts can be resolved peacefully. There are clearly several tangible and important benefits to understanding the process by which political leaders can help to facilitate peace through negotiations and mediation. Additionally, the end of the Cold War and the proliferation of democracies worldwide have led scholars and policy makers to believe that the international community has the capability to create and ensure widespread peace.¹ Further, the advent of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has made the need for both peace and stability in the international system of paramount importance. At the beginning of the 1990s, while the fears of systemic conflict were lifting, numerous regional and intra-state conflicts previously obscured in an international system dominated by rival superpowers were being exposed.² Increased levels of economic interdependence worldwide mean that small conflicts in remote parts of the globe have the potential to impact world

¹ There was a drastic increase in the number of new mediation attempts worldwide beginning in 1991. According to Jacob Bercovitch's ICM dataset, there were 1,110 new mediation attempts worldwide during the Cold War years (1945-1995), averaging 24.67 per year, with the highest one-year totals being 70 attempts in 1990 and 62 in 1976. In the short time for which data was collected in the post-Cold War Era (1991-1995), a total of 1,005 new mediation attempts were made, with the lowest one-year total being 108 in 1991 and the highest 285 in 1994.

² In fact, Luttwak (1994) contends that during the Cold War and prior, great powers “often instigated or at least encouraged and materially supported” regional conflicts, ostensibly to keep both sides relatively weak and thus easier to manage, but that the opposite is the case in the post-Cold-War setting. The absence of great power interest has led to increased levels of violence in these conflicts.

politics in ways previously unseen. As a result, political leaders and international organizations have often sought to use the resources at their disposal to help bring about peaceful conflict resolution and scholars have established a substantial research program examining conflict management processes and the factors contributing to their successes. Despite the presence of such a research program and liberal theories suggesting that the proliferation of democracy should lead to a more peaceful world, conflict remains a major problem in international relations, and conflict management attempts often fail.³

Third-party mediation is seen by many scholars and policy makers as the conflict management strategy most likely to succeed in creating a peace settlement. Mediation differs from other conflict management strategies because it is non-binding, but utilizes a third party that can help to facilitate an agreement either because of its prestige, rapport with the belligerents, or its resources, which it uses to induce the parties to come to an agreement. It has several characteristics seen as favorable to bringing about conflict resolution in the anarchic international system, as well in intra-state conflicts, where the traditional security structures of the state have failed or the legitimacy of the government in power has been disputed. Mediation allows both disputing parties to “save face” and, in the case of international conflicts, maintain their sovereignty. Based on this notion, scholars have done a great deal of work to explain how mediation works and what factors are likely to yield a successful agreement (see Rubin, ed. 1981; Bercovitch, ed. 2002; Bercovitch and Gartner, eds. 2009; Grieg and Regan 2008, Touval and Zartmann 1987,

³ Interestingly, more than 50% of mediation attempts are unsuccessful for the data period, compared with only 4.26% of attempts yielding a full settlement of the dispute. There is no discernible change in success during the post-Cold War period, despite the marked increase in mediation volume over that time period.

etc.). However, the mediating party and its incentives and constraints are often assumed away in systematic and large-N studies of mediation, where mediators are categorized by unchanging system-level and state-level characteristics.

One needs only to look at the ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians to see how pro-peace leaders can be constrained by their political audiences, and research has begun to examine disputing parties from such a perspective (Melin and Svensson 2009). A similar analysis should be applied to mediators' entrance into conflict management; they should be seen pursuing policy outcomes in a way most likely to improve their political fortunes. Given that we see a great deal of variation in states' interest in and commitment to conflict resolution over time and space (despite the almost constant presence of conflict) these motivations and constraints should be important factors in explaining the likelihood that conflict management is successful.

In this dissertation, I build on findings and conclusions from the mediation research program that imply that mediator motivations are likely to play a significant role in the strategies, timings, and level of commitment that mediators display when attempting to end conflict. In doing so, I explain mediator motivations and commitment as functions of domestic politics, which brings theories of conflict management in line with more general, state-of-the-art theories of foreign policy decision making. Specifically, I examine domestic institutional configurations and leaders' political vulnerability and argue that leaders have incentives to focus on mediation when they are politically vulnerable and when domestic institutional configurations make passing domestic policy legislation an inefficient way to build a record of policy success.

States and Mediation

Sovereign states are thought to be the most capable mediators because of their ability to credibly commit resources to a conflict management effort that manipulates the payoffs for both disputing parties in ways that induce a peaceful settlement (see Kleiboer 2002; Pruitt 1981). While international organizations (IOs) such as the United Nations and more regionally focused organizations such as the African Union and the Organization of American States have a great deal of legitimacy in the international system, they are faced with commitment problems when it comes to using resources to push disputants closer to an agreement. These commitment problems, which are essentially collective action problems, are well documented in the literature (see Krasner 1983, Baldwin, ed. 1993). Additionally, such organizations are often limited in their mandate to enforce peace agreements, as was seen with the UN in the 1994 Rwanda genocide (see Fortna 2003), and research suggests that short-term interventions focusing on the promotion of democracy are unlikely to be successful in the long term (Paris 1997).

Although the involvement of sovereign states often means a biased mediator in which the mediator maneuvers for a negotiated outcome that asymmetrically benefits one of the disputing parties, often the one with which the mediator has a relationship, such mediations have been shown to be most likely to yield an agreement (Kydd 2003; Crescezi, et al. 2012). Despite the presence of bias, powerful states such as the U.S.⁴

⁴ Bercovitch and Schneider (2000) find that the US, as world hegemon, occupies a special place in the pantheon of mediators. As a result of its vast resources, it is called on to mediate more often than any other country. They also argue that manipulative strategies can only be credibly employed by a select number of powerful states, which they characterize as either permanent members of the UN Security Council, or regional hegemons exerting their influence within their own region.

have the leverage to push disputants toward agreement by credibly introducing “carrots and sticks.” However, the question of what factors induce states to focus on mediation and use these manipulative strategies is an important piece of this conflict management puzzle that remains unaddressed.

Despite the fact that powerful states can often use their resources to induce peace agreements and subsequently enforce them, they vary in their willingness and commitment to doing so. The extant research on mediation treats states as unchanging actors, defining them in terms of their international power, regime type, or alliances, and does not account for the factors that cause these states to choose mediating conflict as a policy focus from the set of domestic and foreign policy options. In fact, much of the literature on third party mediation has emerged separately from the foreign policy decision making research program and attempts to reconcile the two have been few (see Touval 2003; Greig and Beardsley 2010).

Because of the concrete, real world need for peaceful conflict resolution, research on the subject often focuses on the factors leading to peace agreements, assuming away mediator motivations. Thus, research has often assumed, explicitly stated or not, that mediators’ primary goals are to peacefully resolve conflict. However, in his review essay, Saadia Touval (2003) takes stock of the conflict resolution program and argues that there has been a fundamental disconnect in its progression—it fails to recognize that mediation is in fact a type of foreign policy and is driven by factors similar to those driving other foreign policy decisions. Additionally, Touval correctly contends that mediation occurs within the existing political environment and thus is a political act, as

Webb (1988) describes, undertaken with political goals and the potential ramifications thereof in mind. While a moral motivation for conflict resolution almost certainly exists, in the case of mediators from sovereign states, such motivations are likely subordinate to those of political survival and success (see Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003). Therefore, as political motivations change, mediator availability, commitment, and strategy are likely to change as well. Such variation in mediator behavior should, in turn, affect the likelihood that mediation efforts will be successful.

Domestic Politics, Leaders, and Mediation

An increasingly strong consensus among scholars of foreign policy decision making holds that leaders make foreign policy decisions with their domestic consequences in mind (Ostrom and Job 1986; Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003). Because leaders are ultimately beholden to domestic political audiences, which determine whether or not they will continue in office, they are thought to make decisions that they believe will be seen favorably those audiences (Downs 1957; Neustadt 1960). However, such a rationale has not been applied to the choice to engage in diplomacy, especially when pertaining to conflicts where the leader is a third party. Here I argue that the decision to engage in mediation and the subsequent strategies employed stem from domestic political conditions.

Given a leader's need to build a record of policy successes to ensure re-election both for himself and for members of his party, he will likely choose policies and employ strategies that are likely to maximize the political benefits of success. A substantial body of research has emerged suggesting that leaders tend to use the foreign policy arena to

build such a record when poor domestic political conditions exist (see Levy 1989; Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992) and when domestic political configurations make the use domestic policy difficult (Brulé 2006; Marshall and Prins 2011; Russett 1990; Gelpi 1997). In contrast, strong evidence exists contending that democratically elected political leaders are ultimately punished by their domestic audiences for using military force (Gaubatz 1991; Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003; Chiozza and Goemans 2003). However, the primary dependent variable in all of this research has been the use of military force. I argue, however, that because rational political leaders seeking to improve their electoral fortunes and those of their party should be risk averse in their decision making, and because the use of military force is risky, non-violent foreign policy options such as third party mediation should be attractive policy options. Thus, in situations in which leaders need to demonstrate competence through policy success but legislative opposition makes the passage of domestic policy difficult, they will seek to engage in diplomacy to achieve such a success.

Dissertation Scope and Outline

In this dissertation, I argue that mediator motivations and constraints should be pivotal factors in determining policy choices and subsequently the success of conflict management efforts. By reviewing the relevant research from the conflict management, foreign policy decision making, and leader survival literatures, I argue specifically that given incentives to focus on foreign policy when domestic conditions require presidential action and the makeup of Congress is not conducive to passing legislation, third-party

mediation should be an appealing outlet for presidents to create the image of competence and success. Moreover, given the need for a policy victory, presidents should choose mediation strategies that are most likely to yield short-term resolution of conflict. This argument works to better our understanding of the dynamics of conflict resolution processes and brings the study of conflict resolution in line with prevailing theories of foreign policy decision making and leader behavior. I test my argument empirically using a time-series modified version of Jacob Bercovitch's International Conflict Management dataset (see Bercovitch and Fretter 2007) for United States mediation attempts from 1945-1995. The empirical results are generally supportive of the argument.

In the first empirical chapter, I focus specifically on how the interaction between domestic political conditions and the makeup of Congress influences foreign policy choices. I begin by analyzing models that suggest presidents are more likely to use mediation in response to deteriorating approval ratings and when congressional support is low. From there, I build on this argument by contending that the mediation strategy employed in these situations should seek to manipulate the payoffs for the disputing parties rather than simply facilitate negotiations, in order quickly to induce a peace settlement—and thus better the chances of a president's success in the upcoming election.

The second empirical chapter focuses on election cycles and the makeup of Congress, and their subsequent impact on the frequency and strategy of mediation. Similar to the way that deteriorating economic conditions and low approval ratings make a president vulnerable, democratic elections are a built in vulnerability that presidents

must face. As such, it can be argued that presidents should engage in policy making strategically to maximize their electoral prospects. Thus, I argue that as elections near, presidents should seek to build a record of success through policy initiatives. When confronted with nearing elections and a hostile Congress, presidents should be seen using foreign policy as an avenue to build this record of success, because of their greater autonomy in foreign policy making process. Coupled with the notion that leaders are thought to be punished electorally for engagement in military conflict, non-violent foreign policy endeavors, such as third party mediation, should be attractive to presidents. Additionally, I argue that given their need to generate a series of high-profile successes before campaigns get underway, manipulative strategies that are likely to induce agreement should be employed. The results of these analyses largely suggest support for the hypotheses, but also that more research should be done to explain all of the factors at work in the process.

Finally, in the third empirical chapter I examine the effects that mediation has on presidential approval. The dissertation to this point has focused on presidential behavior, arguing that a president's increasing vulnerability—due either to deteriorating approval, low levels of congressional support, or selection institutions, will give him incentives to focus resources on mediation. But does this focus on mediation have the desired effect? I test the public's response to mediation using the president's approval rating as a dependent variable. Empirical results largely support my argument.

The contributions of my findings are twofold. On the one hand, they contribute to a growing literature on the nature of foreign policy decision making that suggests that

leaders use foreign policy like any other policy, to help them build a record success that serves to improve their electoral fortunes. On the other hand, they inform the conflict management literature on the dynamics of mediation processes. Because state mediators are constrained and incentivized by domestic political considerations, such conditions need to be taken into account when attempting to explain the factors that lead to successful conflict resolution. It is not enough simply to consider state mediators as unchanging, unitary actors categorized by states' international characteristics. Rather, the mediator's domestic situation must be taken into account. Such an approach should help to explain why states pay varied levels of attention to mediation over time and why it is often unsuccessful, despite mediators' ability to commit many resources to the effort and induce the disputants to come to a peaceful agreement.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Mediation⁵ has traditionally been studied through the normative lens of conflict resolution, seeking to provide members of the international community with the tools to successfully resolve international and civil conflict peacefully. However, such a goal often led to the examination of conflict resolution processes from the perspective of the disputing parties, and with the tacit assumption that the mediators' primary goal in mediating a conflict was to engineer a successful and lasting resolution (Touval 2003). Additionally, mediation theory has emerged separately from theories of foreign policy decision making, which have developed with a focus on the political incentives and constraints that leaders confront both domestically and internationally. As such, mediators have been considered as unchanging, unitary actors when they are included in models of conflict resolution processes, and their strategic political motivations for engaging in mediation have not been taken into account. Even so, we see varying levels of interest and commitment from the same mediators across time and space, suggesting that this unitary state actor approach is insufficient to explain mediator behavior.⁶

Many case studies of mediation do mention that mediator motivations should be considered when analyzing mediation processes (see Rubin, ed. 1981; Jabri 1990; Touval

⁵ For the purposes of this work, I use Bercovitch's (1992) and Princen's (1995) definition of mediation. Mediation is defined as a form of triadic, non-binding conflict resolution that occurs when the two disputing parties agree that there is a peaceful, negotiated outcome that can be reached, but require some assistance in actually arriving at that outcome. While mediators may "sweeten or sour the deal" by adding guarantees, they do not use punishment as a tactic, but rather rely on persuasion and rewards. For a comprehensive discussion of the nature of mediation, see Bercovitch and Fretter 2007, 145-146.

⁶ For instance, the United States has been involved in several peacemaking attempts in the Middle East since 1948, but its level of interest and commitment to peace have varied over time as evidenced by different ranking mediators, and different mediator strategies, as well as the conspicuous absence thereof.

1992; 1982), but such considerations have not been taken into account in systematic studies of mediation across time and space.⁷ Despite the prevalence of the single case study in early analyses of the mediation process, and although mediation must be a flexible and adaptive enterprise, scholars have come to the consensus that it can be studied systematically in a statistical fashion (Bercovitch 1992, 127, Schrodtt and Gerner 2004, 325). Such a conclusion has led to numerous studies and a significant body of research surrounding mediation, primarily focusing on the factors leading to mediation success. Where mediator strategies and motivations have been taken into account, however, scholarship has focused overwhelmingly on describing mediator characteristics and how variation in these characteristics influences the conflict resolution process. It has not, though, focused on leaders' political motivations behind choosing such to engage in mediation, their tactics when doing so, or, especially in unsuccessful cases, the factors that constrain them from using more extreme measures to bring about peaceful conflict resolution. Such an analysis will better inform discussions of when, where, and how mediation is likely to be offered, which should in turn play a significant role in determining the potential for a peaceful settlement, as well as the characteristics of that settlement.

⁷ Grieg and Regan's (2008) primary focus is on the motivations for accepting an offer of mediation, rather than the motivations. They posit a liberal interdependence argument and find that mediation is most likely to be accepted when there are historical or economic ties between the mediator and a state involved in a civil war. From such a conclusion, it can be implied that states have economic and cultural motivations to offer conflict mediation to states with which they have strong economic and historical ties. Several studies address bias (see Kydd 2003; Crescenzi et. al), which I discuss later in this chapter. However, the presence of bias is addressed in the context of the willingness of disputants to accept mediation, and not regarding the motivation to offer it.

In this chapter, I outline mediation as a political process and take stock of the mediation research program, highlighting findings suggesting that applying a strategic decision making approach is both appropriate and necessary to explain the variation in occurrence and commitment to conflict resolution by state mediators. Then I review the foreign policy decision making literature focusing on two-level games, the strategic use of foreign policy and foreign policy substitutability, to synthesize an argument contending that this variation in focus on and commitment to mediation is driven by domestic politics, political vulnerability, and the availability of domestic policy outlets.

The Disputants' Perspective: Why Mediation?

Case studies of conflict mediation attempt to trace the mediation process and highlight the factors that contributed to or hindered peaceful resolution of the conflict. While theory generation has not always been the primary goal of these case studies, they have generated a number of conclusions that characterize the nature of mediation processes. From a rationalist, state-centered perspective, third-party mediation is appealing to states and factions engaged in military conflict because such conflict is thought to be ex-post inefficient; the agreement made at the end of the conflict is often one that could be made prior to violence. Disputes are not settled peacefully because of the lack of information about each side's capabilities and their resolve to get what they want, as well as issue indivisibilities where there is a constant sum payoff at stake (Fearon 1995). Thus, the extreme nature of conflict outcomes (clear winners and losers and the intervening human, political, and economic devastation) make a negotiated settlement appealing to leaders and publics alike, but difficult to realize because of the

high stakes involved and the difficulty of reaching a mutually agreeable compromise (Rubin 1981). Much of this difficulty stems from the fact that leaders of the disputing factions are politically vulnerable, although often to different extents, and thus cannot agree to a settlement that is unsatisfactory to their domestic political constituencies, which they have likely spent a great deal of political capital motivating to fight. However, as the costs of conflict compound, especially if hostilities near a stalemate, the marginal utility of continuing conflict decreases and the parties' resolve will begin to wane, meaning that their domestic constituencies are likely to begin to favor a settlement over continued hostilities.

While it is common that strategies for conflict management are multi-faceted and tailored to the specific nature of the conflict, scholars have identified a typology of intervention or “conflict management” strategies that has made systematic inquiry possible. While the term “intervention,” when used referring to disputes, can have many meanings—ranging from military activity as a belligerent to an arbitrator with decision-making power—the conflict management literature uses the term to refer to the latter part of this spectrum, focusing specifically on peaceful attempts made by a third-party to be an intermediary and to peacefully end conflict (Frazier and Dixon 2009, 46).⁸ As mentioned above, multilateralism tends to be the norm in conflict management, at least initially (Frazier and Dixon 2009), while unilateral, manipulative strategies tend to induce outcomes (Kleiboer 2003, Touval 1992, Touval and Zartmann 1985). One of the major problems with multilateralism and international organizations, especially with regard to

⁸ In this work, “intervention” and “conflict management attempt” are used interchangeably.

the use of traditional peacekeeping missions and standing arbitrators is that such outlets were created to deal with conflicts in a state-centered environment. However, given that an increasing number of conflicts on the world stage involve non-state entities and deal with problems more complex than sovereignty and border disputes, more flexible and specifically-tailored strategies are necessary.

The variation in how parties in conflict attempt to come to a peaceful agreement is great, and despite numerous efforts, such agreements that substantively create peace are rare, despite the fact that attempts are numerous. However, three major types of conflict management have emerged: negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Each of these vehicles for conflict resolution is different with respect to the amount of sovereignty (control and decision-making power over their own obligations) that the parties retain and the proximity to the adversary with which discussions take place. Thus, with each of these conflict management types, leaders are faced with the question of which concessions to make, which concessions to ask for, and which means to use in getting them. A major component of their decision is whether leaders should give up their sovereignty in order to guarantee that a peace agreement will become a reality. On one hand, relying on a third party may give them the leverage they need to gain the necessary concessions from their adversaries, thus impressing key domestic constituencies by producing peace. On the other hand, the devolution of decision-making power to a third party may signal a leader's weakness and expose him to political criticism, and thus make him more vulnerable to removal. A third-party may also strengthen a leader's domestic standing, because the concessions that he made are not direct ones. Working through a

third party can even provide distance and cover for leaders who might otherwise be politically unable to make controversial concessions. Additionally, in the case of civil conflicts, where one of the disputants is a non-state actor, agreeing to negotiate through a third party adds to that actor's credibility and legitimacy as a political entity (Beardsley 2009).

Issue Indivisibilities and Commitment Problems– Problems with Peacekeeping, Arbitration, and Adjudication

The United Nations has, since its inception, held a special place among international institutions because of its mission to peacefully prevent and resolve conflict between states. However, the end of the Cold War has led to a greater focus on, and need for, resolution of conflicts within states or between non-state actors (Paris 1997, 54-55). Such a change has led to a need for new strategies and exposed the limits of traditional peacekeeping along with some of the deficiencies of international organizations in the conflict management arena.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping missions, as the name would suggest, have traditionally focused on preventing conflict as much as resolving it. The most common peacekeeping strategy in the postwar period has been to use UN troops and international observers to serve as a buffer between conflicting parties. Such a strategy has proven successful in numerous conflicts where there is a clear geographical separator of the belligerents such as a border.⁹ However, peacekeeping missions have had less success where the belligerents

⁹ Prime examples are the UN peacekeeping missions after the 1956 Suez Crisis, the UN presence in the Korean de-militarized zone from 1953-1967, and the ongoing UN presence in Cyprus to prevent conflict

are not easily separated geographically and where protracted conflicts between enduring rivals have flared into violence (Goertz and Diehl 1993). Moreover, most modern peacekeeping missions have occurred alongside attempts at wholesale liberalization of both politics and economics within the conflict region. Paris (1997, 85) aptly points out that such liberalization can hinder the prospects for peace due to the fact that liberal policies often create competition for power and political dissensus that hinder the overall prospects for peace, largely because there is no political culture reinforcing democratic values or historic precedent for upholding the rule of law.¹⁰

Instances such as the 1994 Rwandan genocide and UN failures in Bosnia Herzegovina further illustrate the limits of traditional peacekeeping missions and international institutions attempting to resolve intra-state conflicts (Fortna 2003, Paris 1997, Regan 2000). In conflicts such as these, underlying factors such as lack of development, ethnic tensions, and power struggles make physically separating the conflicting parties impossible. Moreover, the extent of the geographic integration of the conflicting parties and the scarcity of resources create issue indivisibilities, such as which side's leaders will hold the most political power after a settlement is forged or who will have access to scarce resources; consequently, the current range of potential payoffs may

between ethnic Turkish and ethnic Greek Cypriots. In each of these cases, the peacekeeping force's goal was to keep the belligerents on their side of a predetermined border (see Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000). In these cases, the role of the peacekeepers was to keep belligerents apart from one another once a cease-fire had been agreed upon.

¹⁰ Paris continues by arguing that the key to true and lasting resolution of conflict in troubled regions must occur through a long-term, multi-faceted approach that includes conciliation, investment, and political and military support, much like the US strategy in the Marshall Plan after World War II. His conclusions support those of Yuen and Werner (2005) that contend that manipulated peace agreements are most likely to see relapses in violence, due to the fragile nature of such agreements and the failure to address the underlying causes of conflict.

be unsatisfactory to those involved. Therefore, scholars have prescribed longer-term, active attempts to change and improve conditions on the ground, ones that are specifically-tailored to the situation. In particular, research has demonstrated that state actors who seek to manipulate the conflicting factions by providing incentives that increase the payoffs for both sides and provide some guarantee of peace are the most successful in ending or curtailing conflict (Svenson 2009, Bercovitch and Regan 2004, Zartmann and Touval 1985).

Negotiations

Bilateral negotiations involve only the conflicting parties engaging in peace talks (Merills 2005; Druckman 1997). There are several obstacles that make the mere occurrence of bilateral negotiations difficult. Due to the fact that the parties have recently been in conflict with one another, often with high and indivisible stakes, purely bilateral negotiations might appear unlikely to yield substantive results. Moreover, the conflicting factions often require a starting mechanism, some externality that makes the stakes of the conflict more transparent, thus inducing negotiations (Druckman 1997). Finally, there are strategic barriers to engaging in negotiations (Bercovitch and Jackson 2009). Conflicting factions, especially in civil wars, do not recognize their adversary as a politically legitimate entity, and often at least one of the factions lacks broad recognition from the international community. Therefore, they are often reluctant to engage in negotiation, as the very practice of doing so concedes at least some legitimacy to the other side, as well as precludes the prospect of total victory, thus potentially exposing political leaders to domestic criticism.

Within the scope of negotiations, there are two major perspectives from which negotiators are thought to work: problem solving and bargaining (Hoppman 2001). Where negotiators are political actors, either political leaders or their deputies who are beholden to some domestic political audience, bargaining often trumps problem solving. Because negotiating can make a leader appear weak to his domestic supporters and, in cases where conflict has reached a relative stalemate, the zero-sum nature of the payoffs often reduces the utility of concessions. Furthermore, leaders have incentives to err on the side of security, which often precludes the making of concessions necessary for substantive negotiation (Druckman 1997). Thus, the factions are often caught in a security dilemma, whereby making concessions (especially being the first to move) is politically, and perhaps militarily, risky. As such, these political actors are constrained from agreeing to terms that weaken their domestic political position, even if they might result in peace. As a result, negotiation cannot happen successfully while the belligerents view the conflict as zero-sum in nature (Starkey, Boyer, and Wilkenfeld 2009). However, negotiations are thought to have some utility after hostilities because the process of the conflict provides each side with previously unknown information about the other's resolve and capabilities—and this occurs at the point where the conflict itself is beginning to have negative effects on leaders, as the result of a stalemate.

Despite the obstacles, certain characteristics of negotiation make it an appealing policy strategy for leaders. Negotiations allow the parties to maintain full sovereignty in the bargaining process. Maintaining sovereignty is important for political leaders because the delegation or devolution thereof can expose them to criticism from domestic

political adversaries seeking to characterize them as weak or ineffective. Thus, in negotiating bilaterally after hostilities, political leaders address the decreasing utility of conflict with new information about their adversary. Negotiations are also likely to be the safest, or at least most conservative, political option leaders can select when choosing a conflict resolution strategy. However, likely because of the intractability of the disputing parties' positions (Merrills 2005), negotiations are unsuccessful more than half of the time, and are successful in bringing about a full settlement only slightly more than four percent of the time. (2.1)¹¹

Arbitration and Adjudication

Arbitration is a more binding form of conflict resolution that can occur when both parties agree to give up their own decision-making power and agree to the terms put forth by a court, tribunal, or other organization prior to knowing what those terms are (Merrills 2005). Such a remedy can have several appealing benefits to belligerents, but is also the least likely to occur (see Figure 2.2), most likely because there are several obstacles to getting both sides to agree to arbitration. Similar explanations can be given for the inability of freestanding arbitrators to successfully curtail many of these modern conflicts. Pre-existing tribunals such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) were created to adjudicate "legal" disputes between state actors. However, as Bilder (1997:

¹¹ "Success" in the ICM dataset is defined as the cessation of hostilities and/or the agreement of the belligerent parties on some or all the terms over which they were fighting. Success is further disaggregated into the following categories: cease-fire (temporary agreement to stop hostilities in search of a peaceful solution), partial settlement (peaceful agreement on some of the issues over which they had been fighting), full settlement (agreement on all issues over which they had been fighting). Success is not defined in terms of the longevity or durability of the agreement. In fact, even in cases where conflict management (all types) yields a full settlement, conflict re-emerges at some level roughly 77% of the time. Thus, the definition of success is a weak one, with a short-term focus.

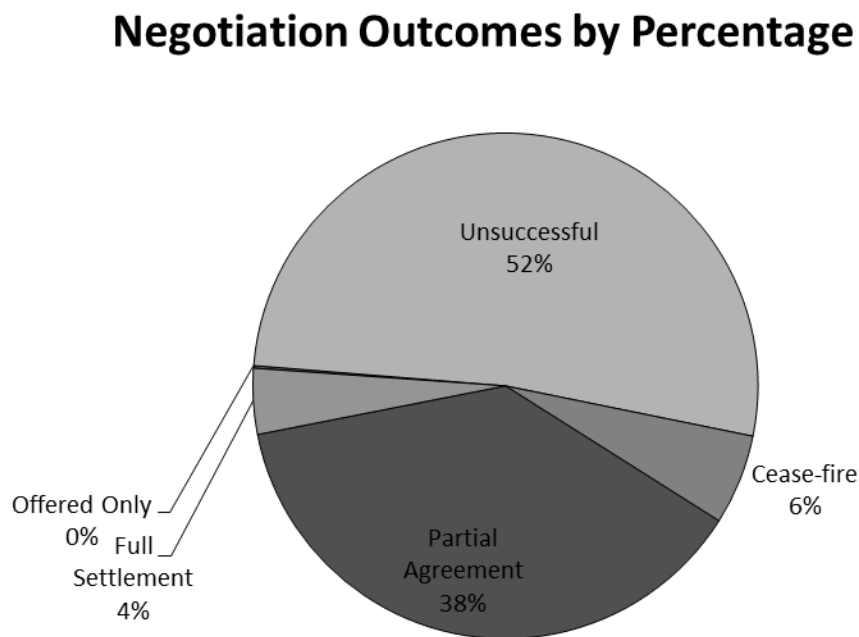
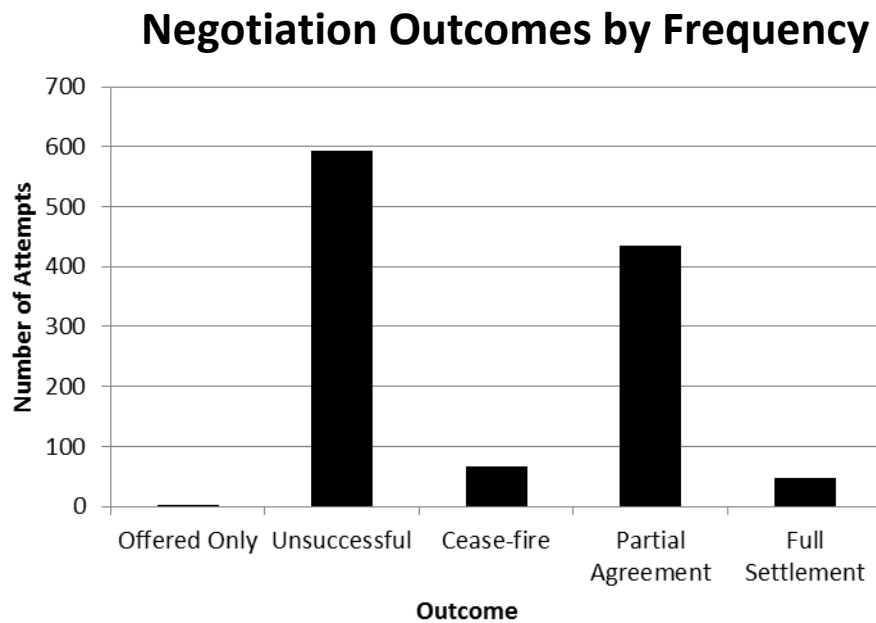
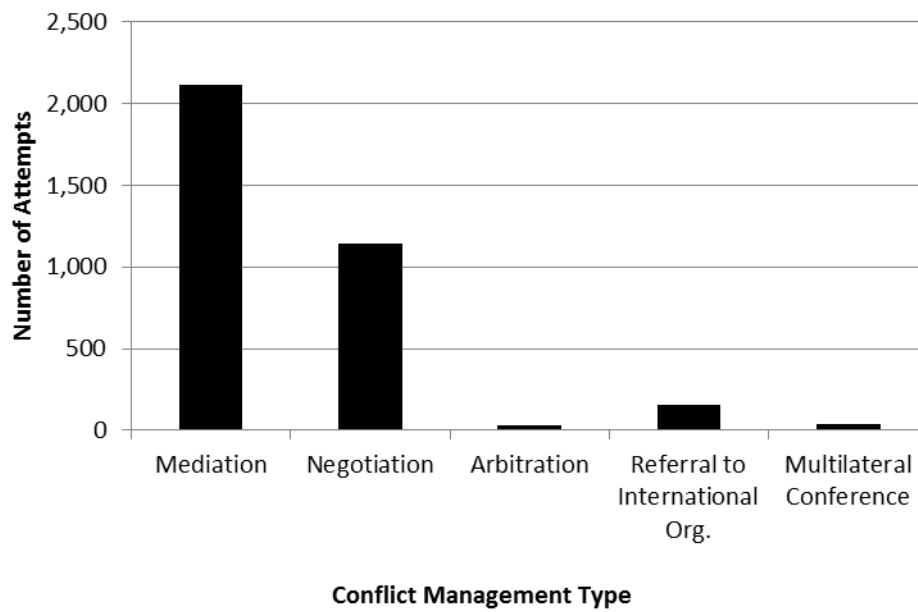


Figure 2.1: Summary of Bilateral Negotiation Outcomes (from ICM Dataset 1945-1995, N=1144)

Conflict Management Types by Frequency



Conflict Management Attempts by Percentage

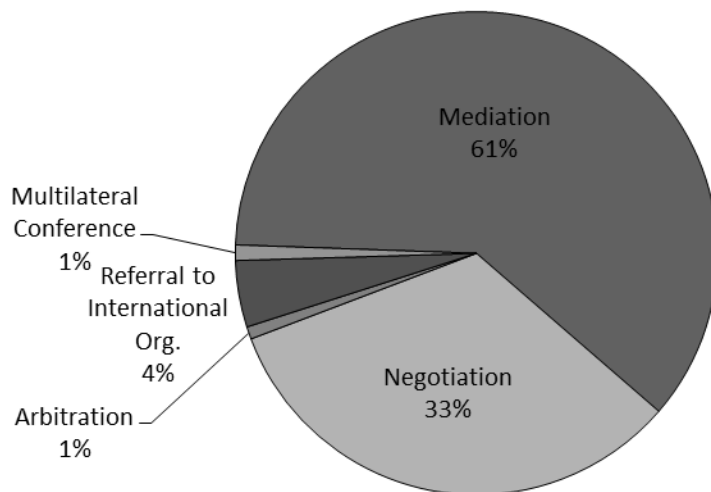


Figure 2.2: Conflict Management types by frequency (from ICM Dataset 1945-1995, N=3479)

166) points out, many of the disputes needing resolution today are “political” conflicts and therefore actors involved consider them inappropriate for adjudication. Arbitration is a political solution in that leaders must weigh the costs and benefits of agreeing to arbitration given the potential for all possible outcomes. For both sides to agree to arbitration, they must both consider the arbitrator to be sufficiently neutral, which is likely difficult to achieve given the depth of many conflict issues and the incentives for third parties seeking to serve as an arbitrator.¹² This is especially the case in issue areas involving a party’s honor or interests considered to be vital to its existence or purpose. Given that arbitration and adjudication are measures that generally involve a clear winner and loser, the expected utility for one of the parties to continue the conflict should usually outweigh the expected utility of losing an arbitrated settlement. However, given the fact that the win set of possible outcomes is likely to include indivisible issues, such as who holds power after the conflict, agreement to abide by such a decision is unlikely¹³ (Bilder 1997, Maoz and Terris 2009). Finally, adjudicating bodies such as the ICJ are designed to work in a state-centered system. However, given the prominence of conflict with non-state actors, such institutions are unable to provide a functional solution.

In the case of international conflict, pre-existing tribunals such as the ICJ may be employed to settle disputes, although jurisdiction is often limited and vague. However, in the case of civil wars or other intra-state conflicts, arbitration is less likely to be agreed

¹² Bias on the part of an arbitrator is likely to hinder conflict resolution attempts since arbitration more clearly yields a winner and loser. However, with mediation, which is discussed later in the chapter, several scholars (see Kydd 2003; Crescenzi, et al. 2012) argue that bias on the part of a mediator is desirable, because it is more likely to induce concessions,

¹³ For parties to agree to any form of conflict management, the expected utility of the outcome must outweigh that of continuing conflict (see Maoz and Terris 2009, Grieg 2005 for examples).

to.¹⁴ Because in order for arbitration/adjudication to occur in a civil war, the status quo power, who was recognized internationally as the sovereign before the start of hostilities, must acknowledge that their adversary is a legitimate political entity whose plight deserves some consideration from external arbitrator—which is unlikely to happen because it significantly diminishes the differential in legitimate power between the two.¹⁵ While an arbitrator or tribunal will give a definitive decision on how conflict is to be settled, the disputing parties must agree *ex ante* to abide by the terms and conditions that an arbitrator decides (Merrills 2005). Thus, except in the case of pre-existing arbitrators or tribunals, agreeing on an *ad hoc* arbitrator is difficult and unlikely.

Despite the fact that it sees the highest full settlement rate and lowest unsuccessful rate of the conflict management types, arbitration occurs the fewest times over the observation period. (2.3) As such, arbitration is likely to be limited in its relevance to certain types of conflicts. Moreover, guarantees or enforcement mechanisms for the terms the arbitrator lays out are likely to be limited, depending on who the arbitrator is or represents. Thus, the ability of the arbitrator to lay down a “full settlement” as defined by Becovitch and Fretter (2007) is undermined by the fact that in

¹⁴ Arbitration and referral to/adjudication by an international organization are similar in that both conflict management types involve an adjudicating third party, whose ruling is theoretically binding. The primary difference is the consent of the belligerents. Arbitration must be agreed to by both parties, whereas a pre-existing body with some level of monitoring or enforcement power, such as the UN Security Council, can refer states or conflicts to tribunals whose jurisdiction and mandate pre-exists that conflict, and, in other cases, one of the parties can bring the issue to before the tribunal without prior consent of the other.

¹⁵ While arbitration is the rarest of conflict management types, due to the difficulty of agreeing to arbitration, it is even rarer in civil/intra-state conflicts. It occurs roughly three times more often in interstate conflicts than in civil conflicts. Similarly, interstate conflicts are referred to international or regional organizations at a rate approximately three times greater than that of intrastate/civil wars.

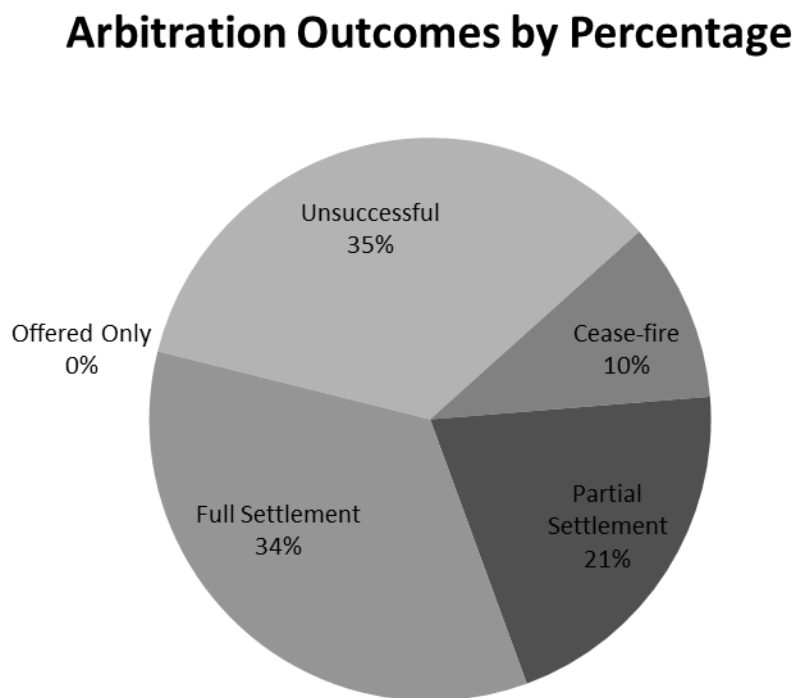
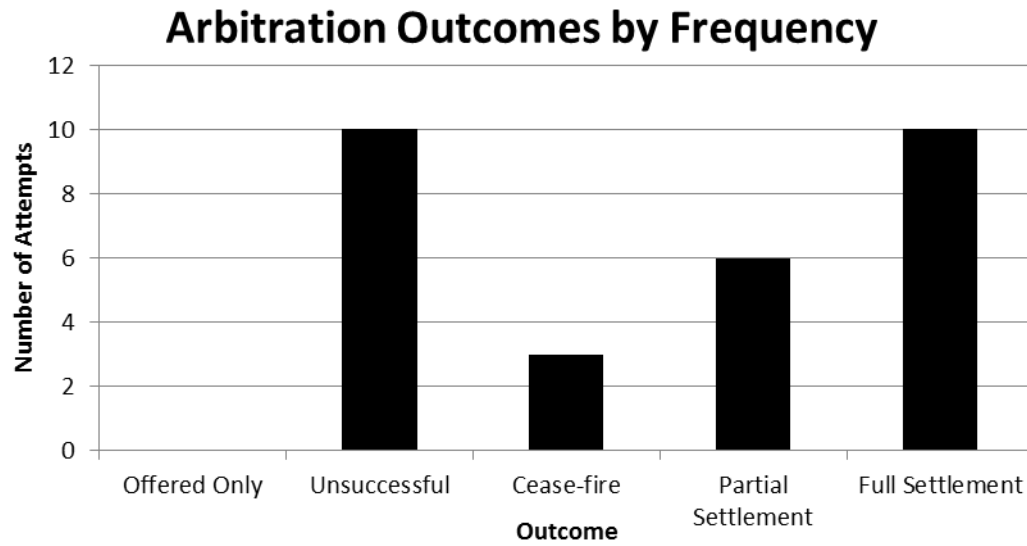


Figure 2.3: Summary of Arbitration Outcomes (from ICM Dataset 1945-1995, N=29)

an anarchical international system, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms are necessary to guarantee that both sides abide by such a settlement.

Additionally, the adjudication of military conflict by international or regional organizations is rare and, for the data observation period, never yields a full settlement (2.4). Because international organizations and their associated tribunals are limited in their jurisdiction and mandate, it is difficult for them to effectively address all aspects of grievances between two belligerent parties, be they states or other entities. Moreover, while prominent international organizations, such as the UN or World Trade Organization (WTO), may have stronger enforcement mechanisms at their disposal, many international and regional organizations are less able to enforce their tribunal's decisions.¹⁶ While many international organizations exist to prevent conflict, they are less adept at stopping it once it has begun, especially through peaceful means.¹⁷

Mediation

Mediation can be seen as a middle ground strategy between negotiation and arbitration that, on its face, overcomes many of the obstacles to negotiation and arbitration/adjudication. As such, it is the most common type of conflict management strategy employed (see Figure 2.2). It is a more flexible form of conflict resolution that can allow both sides to save face, while coming to a peace agreement (Rubin 1981;

¹⁶ For example, the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Tribunal ruled against the Mugabe Regime's eviction of white farmers in 2008. However, during the court's proceedings, Mugabe's representatives left in protest. Once the court had ruled in favor of the white farmers, Mugabe simply withdrew Zimbabwe from the international agreement empowering the SADC Tribunal. The SADC Tribunal lacked enforcement mechanisms and has, as result, of Zimbabwe's action been examined the SADC members for decommissioning.

¹⁷ The ICM Dataset does not contain information on military interventions used in conjunction with peaceful conflict management efforts, although such information is likely relevant to this discussion since peacekeeping, and increasingly peacemaking, is a regular component to conflict management.

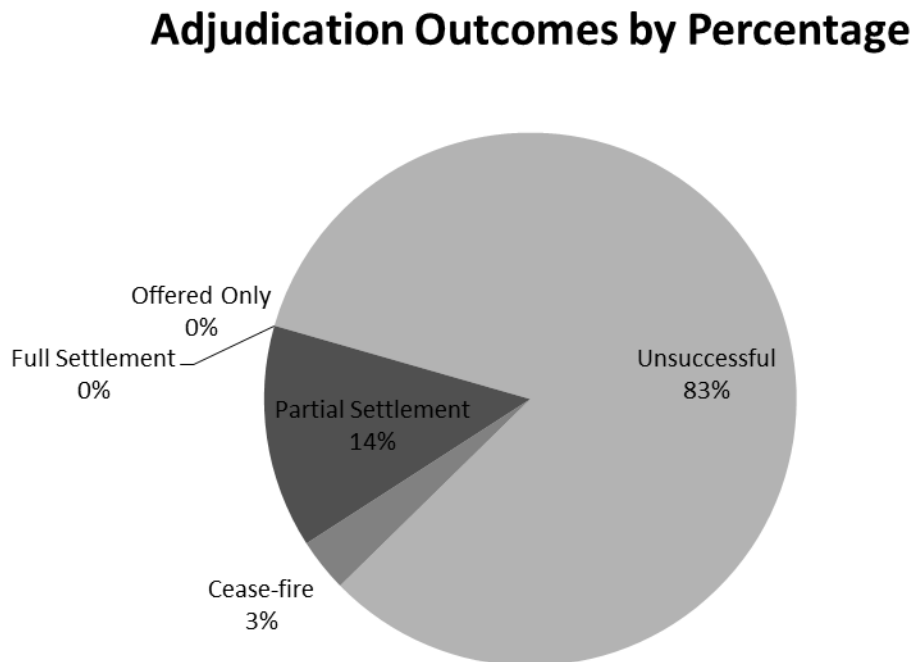
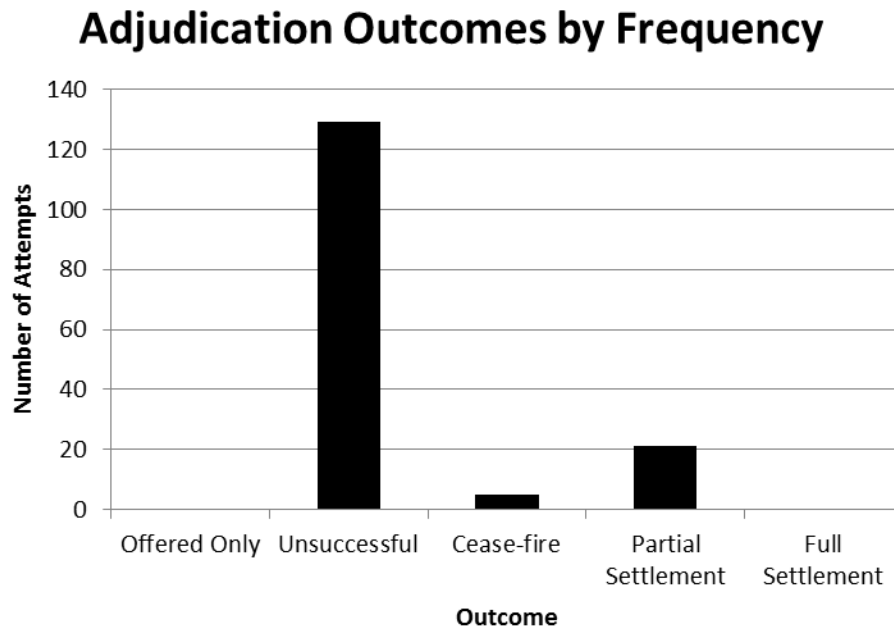
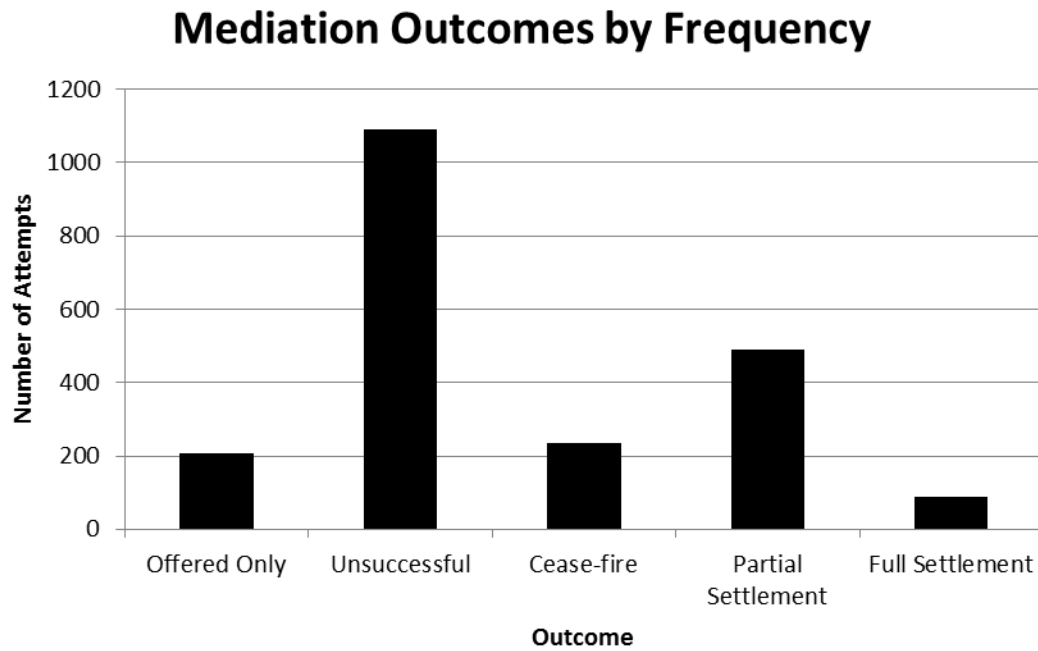


Figure 2.4: Summary of Adjudication by International/Regional Organizations (ICM Dataset 1945-1995, N=155)

Merrills 2005), as well as one that can overcome commitment problems and problems with the lack of credible information between the two parties (Bercovitch 2002; Touval and Zartman 1985). Leaders can save face by coming to an agreement in a way that does not admit or concede defeat, but effectively ends hostilities. In addition, they are not bound to terms *ex ante*, meaning that leaders are more likely to agree to mediation, probing the range of possible peaceful outcomes, rather than being forced to accept one that is decided by external actors.

Because of its flexible nature, mediation has become seen by scholars and politicians as the optimal way for conflicting parties to come to a peaceful agreement. However, despite its appeal and prevalence as a conflict management strategy, empirically, mediation is no more successful than other types of conflict management in bringing about successful conflict resolution, even by the weak definition of success being employed here. (2.5). Thus, the question must be asked as to why it is no more successful than other strategies, especially given the extent of the resources some mediators are willing to put toward the effort. The answer, I argue, is not just in the capabilities of the mediators, but also in their motivations. In the next sections, I describe different mediation strategies and mediator types, and argue that state mediators have the greatest capabilities to bring about peaceful settlements of conflict due to their unique ability to effectively use manipulation strategies, and also because most likely to be motivated by political factors in their execution of the mediation process.



Mediation Outcomes by Percentage

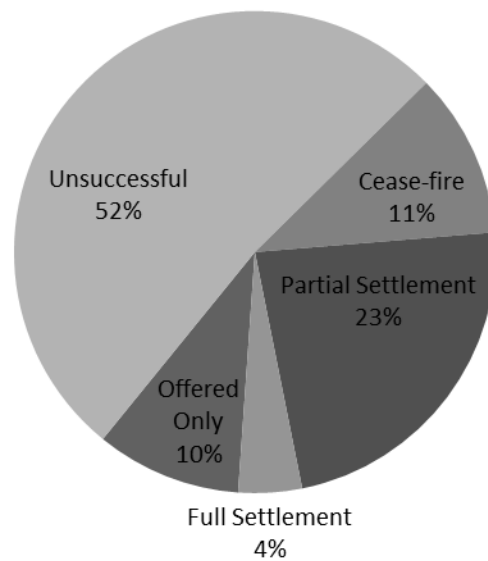


Figure 2.5: Summary of Mediation Outcomes (ICM Dataset 1945-1995, N=2111)

Traditional Approaches to the Study of Mediation

Traditionally, scholars of mediation have sought to understand the factors that lead to successful conflict resolution, thus creating a theoretical recipe that practitioners can then institute. The research program has yielded several generalizable conclusions about the scope and nature of mediation as a conflict resolution strategy. Bercovitch (1986) finds that three conditions are thought to most affect the likelihood that mediation is successful: the identity of the disputing parties, the nature of the conflict, and the characteristics of the mediator. Among these three factors, the nature of the dispute and the identity/characteristics of the conflicting parties have received the overwhelming majority of attention in the scholarly research. Because mediation is ultimately a voluntary exercise, the disputing parties have received the most scholarly attention. Mediators, however, play an important role in the conflict resolution process because of their ability to change the nature of the conflict, its potential outcomes, and the likelihood that peace can be arranged. Additionally, an emerging literature suggests that the conflict resolution research program should be brought into line with prevailing theories of foreign policy decision making, as the decision to offer, engage in, and accept mediation are political decisions. As such, theories explaining foreign policy behavior should try to be used to explain the dynamics of conflict resolution. Thus, from the perspective of the mediator, the decision to offer mediation is a strategic one, made from a range of policy options, both foreign and domestic.

Mediation Strategies

Mediators have several tools at their disposal, depending on who they are and who they represent, to bring about a peaceful resolution to conflict. The key to mediation success is for the appropriate actor to use the proper tools and resources to effectively address the nature of the conflict (Bercovitch 1992; 2002). In each case, however, there are several similarities in the mediator's goals. Specifically, the mediator is trying to do three things: change the conflict resolution environment, change disputants' perceptions of the stakes/payoffs, and change the level/nature of motivation that disputants have to come to an agreement (Bercovitch 1992:16). At the lowest level, they can use their good offices, and the prestige and persuading power of the government or the organization that they represent, to provide credible information about their adversary's intentions, capabilities, etc.; they can also use their own resources and information provision capabilities to guarantee that each side upholds the agreement. In many cases, however, mediators go beyond this simple provision of information by providing a venue and change the stakes of the conflict by introducing "carrots and sticks" to induce a certain end to the conflict, often with their own interests in mind.

Because mediation has generally been characterized within the normative framework of conflict resolution, it is assumed as a "good" at face value (Bercovitch 2002, 4). Success through mediation has thus become the primary dependent variable in academic studies. However, it has been made clear by scholars that not all mediation attempts and not all mediators should be considered equal in what they are able to achieve or willing to do (Bercovitch 1997: 137). Touval and Zartman (1985) outline a

typology of mediation that allows scholars to examine the range of mediation techniques systematically. Specifically, mediators have been shown to take three general approaches: information strategies, formulation strategies, and manipulation strategies. Such a typology focuses on mediator behavior, rather than the disputants, and introduces the notion that mediator actions are strategic, chosen to induce specific outcomes.

Communication strategies are those in which the mediator primarily serves as a facilitator of information (Touval and Zartman 1985). These mediations occur when communication between the disputing parties is strained or difficult to realize and when there is a minimal level of trust of between them. In these cases, a mediator has rapport with both parties and serves as a conduit between them, laying the groundwork for further substantive progress in the conflict resolution process. As such, information strategies are often executed away from negotiating tables, but work to create an environment in which the parties are willing to come together. Tactically, information provision works to clarify the grievances each side has with the other, to identify the key issues to be discussed, and to supply each side with a more transparent view of the situation by providing missing proprietary information. These mediations rarely resolve conflicts in their entirety, but rather pave the way for more formal discussions about a peace agreement.¹⁸

Formulation strategies are those where a mediator serves as a facilitator for actual negotiations by providing a meeting place, moderating discussions in such a way that the

¹⁸ Much of Henry Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy" in the 1970s involved the provision of information to the Israelis and Egyptians. Kissinger's primary goal in shuttling back and forth between them was to build a framework for further negotiations by clarifying the key issues, encouraging communication between the two sides, and suggesting that a peaceful agreement between them was feasible (see Rubin, ed. 1982)

disputing parties can save face and begin to suggest substantive measures and concessions for each side to make (Touval and Zartman 1985). The key goal with formulation strategies is to limit the number of variables in play during discussions and to manage the environment under they take place. Examples of tactics used in by mediators in formulation strategies are choosing/providing a meeting place, controlling the intensity/formality of discussions, and controlling the external environment (Bercovitch 1992:17). Thus, mediators can help to reduce tensions by providing secrecy and thus limiting the extent to which outside influences not at the table play a role in the outcomes of the talks.¹⁹ However, the mediator remains fairly removed from deciding the actual stakes and payoffs of any agreements, as well as the provision of guarantees or enforcement mechanisms.

Finally, manipulative strategies are those used when a mediator actively engages the parties and adds a dimension to the payoff structure for one or both of the disputing parties, whether it is an incentive or a guarantee (Bercovitch 1997, 137-138). Because of the “carrots and sticks” nature of this type of mediation, it is usually carried out by powerful actors who can “sweeten” or “sour” the deal for disputing parties.²⁰ Moreover,

¹⁹ Norway’s role in the Oslo Accords negotiations in August 1993 is prime example of a formulation strategy. The Norwegians did little to influence the actual nature of the agreement, but were able to provide an environment in which substantive discussions could take place. By providing secrecy and security, the press, pundits, and potential spoilers, such as HAMAS, were unable to take actions that would derail the process, thus allowing keen negotiators to focus on coming to an agreement (see Jones 1999).

²⁰ The US government’s role in the discussions leading up to the Camp David Accords signed in 1978 is an example of a mixed strategy with characteristics of both formulation and manipulative strategies. During the actual negotiations, the Carter administration worked to control the negotiation environment by setting an agenda and imposing time limits on sessions, thus working to keep representatives of both sides eager to forge an agreement. However, it also took an active role in carrying out the peace agreement, providing both sides with substantial amounts of military aid in addition to a guarantee to use its military power to enforce the agreement.

because the mediating party is taking responsibility for some aspect of the resolution, whether it be monitoring, enforcement, or rewards for concessions (Bercovitch 1992:17), it is the strategy most likely to be driven by the mediator's own political motivations.

As the previous paragraphs imply, different parties are best-suited to serve as mediators based on the strategy that is being employed (Bercovitch 1987). Individuals, acting on their own behalf, whether it be formally or informally, have a great deal more latitude to experiment with when acting as a mediator, but are unable to provide the guarantees or the “carrots and sticks” that are necessary to manipulate the disputing parties by changing their payoff structures. Similarly, international organizations have commitment problems when attempting to try to manipulate disputing parties because of their inability to guarantee security or certain payouts over the long term, largely because such organizations lack the clout that state actors have (Bercovitch 1997, Touval and Zartmann 1985, Kleiboer 2002). Thus, it is state leaders and those high level representatives thereof who are able to provide the most clear guarantees to disputing parties and, as a result, make their incentives to negotiate and come to a resolution strongest. The nuances and consequences of mediator types are discussed in the next section.

Mediator Types

Third-party mediation can be carried out by several different types of actors, from private individuals to international organizations whose members comprise most of the sovereign states in the international system. Variation in mediator type largely determines the process of the mediation effort due to the fact that different types of

mediators have different capabilities, in terms of the types of peaceful agreements they are able to broker and in terms of the different motivations for agreeing to or seeking to engage in mediation. Research has shown that individual mediators are often not judged on their ability to successfully resolve a conflict (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000). States or individuals who have a track record as successful mediators are not necessarily chosen to be mediators in other conflicts. Instead, a state's status on the international scene plays the most prominent role in how often it is a mediator, with the United States' role as hegemon having the largest effect (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000, Kleiboer 2002, Touval 1992). Such a finding suggests that perhaps only prominent and wealthy states have the wherewithal to engage in mediation, but also that they are more likely to have incentives to mediate. This result is coupled with another that suggests mediator neutrality is not important in the "market for mediation" (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000, 145). Such a conclusion suggests that states involved in mediation are motivated by more than simply success. A further discussion of the variation and relevant literature follows in the proceeding sections.

Private Citizens as Mediators

Private citizens of some prestige have attempted to mediate military conflicts and are thought to most credibly be neutral mediators whose purpose for engaging as mediator is altruistic. Often times private citizens who mediate use their status as a former official, religious leader, or academic expert to gain favor with the disputing

parties.²¹ Mediations by private individuals can be formal or informal, each having its own advantages. For instance, while formal mediators have procedural advantages in terms of creating agreements, in cases of civil conflict, informal mediators are often more successful because they are acting as a conduit between asymmetrical actors—such as where one is a state entity and the other a breakaway group (Hare 1992). Therefore, formal mediation would amount to formal recognition of both parties as politically legitimate political actors, a risk that most leaders will be unwilling to take. In these cases, mediators are usually not formally invited, but instead find a way, often through means of providing humanitarian relief, to earn the confidence of disputing parties.²²

Because they lack direct political ties, private citizens are thought to be able to be more flexible than representatives of states or international organizations and thus can suggest a broader range of potential agreements and outcomes (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000). However, in cases where the mediator represents a non-governmental organization or religious institution, the mediator may limit their efforts to outcomes synchronous with their organization's doctrine or ideology.²³ Because of the mutual trust

²¹ Perhaps the best example of a private citizen acting as a high-profile mediator is former Jimmy Carter's work in Haiti and Korea. While Carter carried the prestige associated with being a former president of the United States, he did not carry a political mandate to negotiate on behalf of the US administration. Thus, his reputation as a committed peacemaker gave him the necessary credibility with both parties to facilitate negotiations.

²² Quaker mediation in 1984 Sri Lanka demonstrates how informal mediation can be beneficial to building a framework for peaceful discussions. At a time when the Sinhalese majority was unwilling to publicly recognize the Tamil rebels, Joseph Elder of the London Quaker office was dispatched to help facilitate communication between the two parties. His efforts required that each side keep knowledge that the discussions were occurring secret and limited only to the top officials. Because of his powerless political position and his commitment to confidentiality (which meant receiving no formal credit for his work) Elder was able to carry messages between the two parties and begin to facilitate a peace process (Princen 1992; 1994; Bailey 1985).

²³ Quaker mediators have often focused on achieving consensus among parties before moving forward with peace discussions, as consensus is consistent with Quaker religious governance (Bailey 1985). Similarly,

the disputants often have in the mediator, he or she is thought to be most helpful in overcoming misunderstandings between them, but often lacks the power and capabilities to add substantive guarantees or oversight to the effort. Such guarantees are often necessary to assuage concerns the disputing parties have that the other will renege on any agreement that is made. Thus, the ability of private citizens to engineer peace on their own is considered to be somewhat limited.

The literature shows, however, that private citizens and other apolitical mediators can often play a substantive role in peace processes. Because of their relative lack of political ties, and thus political motivations, private citizens are more adept at providing information to both sides of a dispute. As previously discussed, conflict is often thought to be the result of information problems and the inability of actors to credibly demonstrate their resolve and capabilities to achieve their political goals (Fearon 1995). Consequently, individuals as mediators can play a key role in what Greig and Diehl (2001) call a “softening up” process—making both sides more amenable to a peaceful settlement by informing them about their adversary and creating a framework for subsequent discussions. In doing so, mediators are largely trying to change the culture or mindset of the disputants from one of a zero-sum game to one with mutually beneficial outcomes (Antrim and Sebenius 1992). Then, as both sides become more amenable to conflict resolution, more powerful mediators can enter the negotiations and attempt to add the necessary guarantees and enforcement mechanisms to create a peace agreement.

the Vatican has been criticized for seeking to mediate conflicts in Latin America in ways that protect its interests there (Princen 1992a; 1992b)

International Organizations as Mediators

Major international organizations, such as the United Nations, have a great deal of prestige in the international system as well as a great number of resources that can be brought to bear in guaranteeing the terms of peaceful agreements. Such organizations are thought to be relatively neutral in their approach to conflict resolution, as their reason for existence is to facilitate peace in the international system. However, they are thought to be less effective mediators than state actors when success is measured as a full settlement.

The most salient problems that international organizations have as mediators are collective action problems. Because international organizations are comprised of sovereign states, members have incentives to try to benefit from the actions of the organization, without contributing their own resources to those actions. As such, mediation attempts by international organizations often lack credibility from the perspective of guarantees and enforcement, although their ability to provide information and transparency may still be greater. Beyond that, the range of potential mediation strategies and conflict resolution outcomes is often limited by strategic bargaining by member states through institutional structures, such as the veto power held by permanent members of the UN Security Council. Because the decision to mediate, the mediation strategy, and the choice of enforcement and guarantee mechanisms are all political in nature, actions that the organization takes are often watered-down after several rounds of political compromising. Thus, member states' international political goals and concerns are likely to limit international organizations from putting their full weight behind peace

efforts. Along these lines, Zartman and Amoo (1992: 131) argue that regional organizations “are under pressure to endorse rather than to mediate.” Thus, while the stated goal of the organization might be to preserve peace and security in a region, its abilities to do so are subservient to its member states’ political and security goals. Accordingly, peace efforts by these international organizations are often cumbersome and rarely yield a full settlement of the conflict.

In a similar vein, the extent to which international organizations can induce conflicting parties to make concessions is limited, along with the extent to which they are able to provide guarantees and enforcement mechanisms. Unlike in arbitration and adjudication, where bias is seen as an obstacle to success, researchers have contended that a biased mediator may actually be more likely to engineer a successful conflict resolution agreement (Walter 2002, Kydd 2003, Crescenzi, et al. 2012). For instance, Kydd (2003) suggests that the Palestinian Authority was most willing to accept the United States as a mediator, despite a clear pro-Israel bias, because of its ability to best draw concessions from the Israeli government. Thus, neutral mediators who do not have a clear political stake in the outcome, other than perhaps the universal benefits the members of the international system enjoy from increased peace and stability, are less able induce the conflicting factions to make peace.

States as Mediators

State actors are thought to occupy a special place in the market for mediators due to the characteristic of sovereignty (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000; Kleiboer 2002; Touval 1992; 2003). Sovereignty, on its face, allows states to overcome the collective

action problems that international organizations face when seeking to induce conflicting parties to come to a peaceful agreement, and they possess more resources and thus greater capabilities to engineer such an agreement. As such, research has shown that powerful states are the most sought after mediators (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000).²⁴ Additionally, the likelihood that states will receive more mediation mandates does not increase with a record of mediation successes and states that have policies of neutrality are not more commonly involved in mediation than non-neutral states (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000). Therefore, it can be argued that powerful states are most often able to engage in mediation because of their unique ability to credibly commit substantial amounts of resources and political capital to a mediation attempt. Similarly, it can be argued that because they most often seek to manipulate the disputing parties using “carrots and sticks” to create more desirable payoffs, state mediators are ultimately attempting to improve their own political standing by mediating.

However, because states are political actors and thus their primary motivations for using such manipulation are unlikely to be altruistic or humanitarian, it can be said that they have their own payoffs for mediating conflict, which exist on different dimensions than those of the disputing parties (Kleiboer 2002, Touval 2003, Yuen and Werner 2005). In fact, state actors often seek to engage in mediation, even if it appears that an attempt at conflict resolution will be unsuccessful from the outset (Greig 2005; Bercovitch 1992). Along these lines, research shows that manipulated payoffs are likely to lead to relapses in violence, because both sides recognize that added resources may

²⁴ Nation-states accounted for roughly 53% of all mediations for the 1945-1995.

help their cause in the long run and give them an opportunity to regroup. Similarly, they argue because the agreement is not brought about “organically,” meaning that neither party is ready or willing to agree to terms without outside incentives, it is likely to break down (Yuen and Werner 2005). Further, sustained peace becomes incumbent on the mediator, who becomes the guarantor of the agreement and does not necessarily quell discord between the two factions (Pruitt 1982). Such a situation is most visible with the Camp David Accords where the large amounts of military aid and military guarantees that the US gives to both Israel and Egypt were the keystones of the agreement, and without which, no settlement would have been made. As such, the literature suggests that a greater examination of what these political motivations are needs to be done, in order to understand why mediators would knowingly mediate conflict in such a way that is unlikely to yield peace.

In order to bring about such an understanding, it should first be noted that different types of states are likely to engage in mediation for different reasons. For instance, as I discuss more thoroughly below, power considerations are likely to influence strong and weak states differently (Touval and Zartman 1985). Moreover, democratic states engage in mediation a great deal more regularly than do non-democratic states (Bercovitch and Schneider 2002). However, I argue that the common thread behind states’ motivations is the domestic standing of political leaders. For instance, as I outline further in the next sections, weaker states often seek to mediate in order to increase their international prestige and to open doors to trade agreements, which serves to help the incumbent leader’s domestic standing. In a similar vein, leaders of powerful states seek

to use their resources in ways that portray their regimes as competent when dealing with key international issues.

Weak States as Mediators

While powerful state actors are the most common mediators, and the USA is most common by an overwhelming margin, the occurrence of weaker state mediators may play an important role in the conflict resolution dynamic. Beardsley (2010) argues that belligerents will often seek out weaker states as mediators to provide themselves with political cover when making concessions. As discussed above, the making of concessions can make a political leader appear weak to his domestic constituency. Therefore, by seeking out mediation, the conflicting parties are seeking to manipulate their domestic audiences, deflecting some of the negative fallout for making concessions onto the mediator and the peace process.

The weak state mediator benefits from the international prestige that it gains as a peacemaker and the leaders thereof demonstrate competence handling difficult international problems (Beardsley 2010). Algeria's mediation of the Iran Hostage Crisis demonstrates several of these aspects of small state mediation (Slim 1992). Since its independence, Algeria struggled to find its own national identity and sought to build strong relationships with strategic allies. By helping to negotiate the hostage crisis, Algeria forged a relationship with Iran that enhanced its position in OPEC as well as demonstrated to the world and to rank and file Algerians that it was a viable political entity on the international stage. Similarly, the mediation effort worked to improve relations between Algeria and the United States, opening several trade doors in the

process. Finally, as a result of the international prestige Algeria gained from successfully managing conflict between two international heavyweights, President Chadli Ben Hadid bettered his domestic position by demonstrating managerial competence as a leader (Slim 1992; Tarar 2006).

Powerful States as Mediators

Despite the fact that several rationales exist for weak state mediation, it remains the exception to the rule. Powerful state actors are the most common state mediators (the USA being most common by an overwhelming margin).²⁵ They appeal to conflicting parties because of their ability to introduce guarantees and incentives to the conflict resolution process and change the landscape of negotiations. However, strong states commonly seek out mediation opportunities, rather than passively wait to be asked to do so (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000; Bercovitch and Fretter 2007). Such occurrences suggest that state actors see the potential for political gain through mediation. Thus, an understanding of how and where these actors expect to see political gains is necessary to fully understand whether or not the conflict resolution attempt will actually bring about peace and to understand the full dynamic of the conflict resolution process.

The sum result of these findings suggests that state actors' primary motivations are not resolution of the conflict, but rather some political benefit, whether it is international or domestic. As such, the motivations of the state and its political actors

²⁵ Bercovitch and Schneider (2000) report that the US mediated without help from other parties 84 times for the period 1945-1995, which accounts for roughly 31% of single-state mediation attempts. Permanent members of the UN Security Council account for roughly 42.5% of all single-state mediation attempts. However, China does not mediate on its own at all for that data period and the Soviet Union mediates only 5 times, accounting for less than 2% of all one-state mediations.

should be taken into account when assessing the likelihood that mediation will be offered and whether or not mediation attempts will be successful (Grieg and Beardsley 2009; Touval and Zartman 1985; Touval 1992), and whether or not the agreement reached will last (Yuen and Werner 2005). The question that stems from this broad analysis of state actors as mediators is: What political incentives drive states to want to engage in mediation?

Given that powerful states are most adept at using manipulative mediation strategies, taken along with research suggesting that manipulative interventions most often lead to short-lived agreements, it can be argued that state actors engaging in mediation are primarily driven by the political benefits of such a short-term agreement. In addition, it suggests that these leaders deem that the resources and effort needed to ensure a more durable peace agreement to yield little marginal political benefit. Because state leaders' primary goal is to stay in power (Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003), which is accomplished by compiling a record of policy successes (Neustadt 1960), mediation can be characterized as a tool to achieve that end. Also, because leaders stay in power by appealing to a domestic audience, it can be argued that the primary goal of any mediation attempt is to impress that domestic audience.²⁶ Thus, an understanding of mediation within the dynamics of leader decision making is necessary to fully explain its occurrence and process.

²⁶ Due to the lack of mediation attempts by internationally powerful, non-democratic states, such a statement can really only be made with regard to a democratic audience. While leaders of non-democracies must satisfy domestic audience, albeit often much smaller, to stay in power (see Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003), it is unlikely that mediation or other forms of diplomacy can be used to appeal to such an audience.

Mediation as a Foreign Policy Decision

Those who have examined mediator motivations systematically have argued that the decision to mediate occurs within the context of the existing foreign policy landscape and have criticized the conflict resolution program for largely ignoring such a fact (Touval 2003; Touval and Zartman 1985). However, to the extent that mediator motivations have been tested, examinations have been limited to structural explanations of foreign policy, focusing on alliance, economic, and historical ties (Kleiboer 2002; Greig and Regan 2008; Touval and Zartman 1985); more importantly, these studies have not focused on how domestic political factors affect leader decision making. Such an approach fits well within the Cold War thinking that international relations trumped domestic politics and that states acted in the international arena as rational unitary actors constantly seeking to increase their security (Waltz 1979). For instance, Kleiboer (2002) suggests that the United States sent Alexander Haig to help mediate the Falklands Crisis because conflict between two key Cold War allies, the United Kingdom, a prominent NATO ally, and Argentina, an influential member of the Organization of American States, threatened its position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Using a similar rationale, scholars have made several attempts to explain where states are likely to offer their services as mediators. However, in doing so, they overlook key dynamics in the conflict resolution process. Specifically, these explanations have difficulty distilling why we see variation in states' willingness to engage in mediation across time (even within one conflict) and why there is variation in the mediation strategies that states employ.

While Cold War stability was likely the overarching factor contributing to US involvement in the Falklands, inter-bloc armed conflict of this type is rare. In addition, we see a great deal of variation in interest from states in resolving ongoing conflicts over time. For instance, the US has at times committed large amounts of resources to resolving the ongoing conflict between Israelis, Palestinians, and the neighboring Arab states, including a great deal of the President's political capital, while at other times, the incumbent administration focuses its attention elsewhere. Such an occurrence suggests that a simple state-centric model of mediator motivation is too simple to explain the politics behind the decision to focus on conflict resolution.

Seeking to explain mediation occurrence (and offers) requires a more nuanced approach to foreign policy decision making that recognizes that diplomacy is chosen as one policy option out of the many that state leaders have at their disposal. And, moreover, a calculated decision process takes place in choosing to focus on mediation from this range of policy options, which includes domestic and international endeavors. In recent years, the field of international relations and the study of foreign policy have focused on political leaders as the key players in decision making. Specifically, because leaders act in both the domestic and international political realms, but are ultimately held accountable by a democratic voting audience, foreign policy endeavors are likely to be undertaken with their domestic political ramifications in mind. Similarly, leaders can attempt to use foreign policy as a tool to improve their domestic political standing. Thus, not only do international factors influence domestic politics, as neorealism contends, but

domestic motivations and constraints influence the way that leaders behave on the international scene (Putnam 1988; Gourevitch 1978).

Theory of Mediator motivations, Political Survival, and Two-level Games

The concept of two-level games focuses on the notion that domestic politics and international politics are linked, but only through certain specific actors, political leaders, who function in both areas and make decisions strategically to further their political fortunes (Putnam 1988). Thus, the domestic political landscape is not only driven by international factors, such as the distribution of international power, as neorealism claims, but also by the domestic political sphere influences international politics. These domestic factors, such as economic performance, public sentiment and institutional configurations (veto players, etc.) and institutional makeups (partisan makeup of the legislature) can expand and constrain the number of potential policy options a leader is likely to have available to them based on their political goals, the most paramount of which is political survival. As such, political leaders choose policy options from the range of options available to them, given domestic and international conditions.

To fully understand how such constraints are likely to influence mediation behavior, it is first important to understand the cognitive calculus leaders are thought to perform when making policy choices. Political leaders are thought to value their political survival above all else (Neustadt 1960; Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003). This finding has led to an emerging consensus among international relations scholars contending that foreign policy, like domestic policy, is aimed at enhancing a leader's domestic political fortunes (e.g., Ostrom and Job, 1986; Morgan and Bickers, 1992; Bueno de Mesquita et

al., 2003). Thus, rational political leaders will not select policy options that hinder their political fortunes or those of their co-partisans. Yet, systematic studies of mediator motivations, up to this point, have been largely silent as to this possibility. Additionally, the primary methodological approach to studying the motives of mediating parties has been the case study (e.g., Touval 2002; 1982; Kleiboer 2009). Examining the decision to engage in mediation systematically, in light of these domestic political conditions, the variations in which are likely to change incentives to engage in mediation, will yield a more complete understanding of the factors affecting such a decision-making process.

Diversionsary and Political Uses of Foreign Policy

The notion that political leaders use international politics to improve their domestic political fortunes has been debated at length when it comes to the use of military force (see Levy 1989; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Meernik 2001; Fordham 1998; Foster 2006; Foster and Palmer 2006; Brulé 2006; Brulé and Hwang 2010; Tarar 2006). The academic debate surrounding the political use of force has centered on identifying the causal mechanism: What is it about a focus on foreign policy that leaders believe will improve their domestic political standing? Two schools of thought have emerged: the rally effects hypothesis and the managerial competence hypothesis, both of which are outlined and discussed in the next sections.

Party Cover

The prevailing scholarly sentiment about when leaders choose to focus on foreign policy is embodied in Howell and Pevehouse's (2007) "party cover" conjecture. Their argument contends that the president is likely to focus on foreign policy endeavors when

he enjoys broad support in congress, so as to diffuse responsibility for the endeavor across branches of government and to keep partisan criticism to a minimum. Similar arguments suggest that presidents do not want to take actions which may later be hindered or by congress (Kriner 2006). Thus, while the president enjoys a great deal of autonomy in foreign policy dealings, his actions are not completely unilateral and the congress can function as a check on presidential behavior in the foreign policy realm, even if it does so in the form of partisan criticism or through *ex post* measures such as the withholding of funding for the president's agreements.

Despite the notion of the president's needing partisan support to "cover" the administration's actions, several arguments have been made suggesting that domestic political conditions, and not necessarily partisan support, create incentives for engagement in foreign policy. Several scholars suggest that foreign policy, especially the use of military force, is an appealing policy arena for politically vulnerable leaders seeking to better their domestic political standing. The next sections discuss the prevailing arguments in the literature concerning the matter.

Rally Effects

The initial explanation for how the use of military force can improve a leader's domestic political standing involves "rally effects." The rally effect occurs as result of the in-group/out-group dynamic (Simmel 1955), whereby presidents seek to divert attention from poor economic performance (James and Oneal 1991) or other domestic political woes (such as scandal) by using military force overseas. Thus, they create domestic political cohesion by shifting the focus of their domestic political audience

toward a common plight against a foreign adversary—invoking patriotism in the process. Research has shown, however, that when these rallies do occur, they are often short-lived and small, lasting only 1-2 months (Russett 1990:35) and yielding only a 2-3% increase in approval, which ultimately regresses to original levels (Lian and Oneal 1993:283). Beyond that, research suggests that the “prudent public” is capable of discerning the policy objectives and calculating the potential risks of a use of force; consequently, they are unlikely to blindly support the use of force (Jentleson 1992). In sum, these findings call into question the idea that a leader can actively choose to use force overseas in order to bolster his domestic approval ratings in an electorally substantive fashion.

The causal mechanism used to explain rally effects in the diversionary literature is an indirect one, which assumes that an increase in patriotic sentiment or domestic cohesion translates into approval for the president (Levy 1989). While this correlation likely does exist in the very short term, many uses of force—the fleeting spike in George W. Bush’s approval after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, for instance—suggests that substantive boosts in presidential approval are more closely tied to policy success, or at least the image thereof, than to a public rally in response to the presence of a foreign adversary.

Managerial Competence

A second explanation for the strategic political use of foreign policy suggests that the president’s goal is to use international politics as an arena to demonstrate managerial competence when dealing with complex political issues, thus inducing an increase in his level of domestic political support (Tarar 2006). This explanation fits well with the

notions of policy availability and policy substitution (see Brulé 2006; Russett 1990; Gelpi 1997; Marshall and Prins 2011). Such arguments characterize the president as a rational actor using the resources and processes available to his office to engineer the image of success, given the institutional constraints he faces.

The policy availability argument, which is most clearly discussed in terms of the American case, specifically takes into account both the level of congressional support that the president enjoys, which in turn dictates the policies available to him, as well as how he is viewed by the public, either directly, through approval surveys, or indirectly, through economic performance.²⁷ Presidents must act in response to deteriorating domestic conditions in order to maintain credibility as a leader and favor with the electorate. However, they are constrained in the number of policy options available to them based on domestic institutional conditions, specifically an opposing Congress. Thus, while the passage of domestic legislation is most likely the ideal remedy, under such conditions an opposition Congress can act as a veto player on presidential attempts to change domestic policy, causing the president to fall out of favor with the public (see Mayer 2001, Howell 2005, Tsebelis 1995).

Research has shown, though, that this opposition alone is insufficient to significantly alter presidential behavior (see Foster and Palmer 2006). However, when there is congressional opposition and domestic conditions appear to be particularly poor, such as in times of economic decline, presidential action is necessary to maintain

²⁷ My analysis in this project is limited to the United States and its mediation efforts, primarily for reasons of manageability. The US can be characterized as a “most-likely” case, thus somewhat limiting the theoretical generalizability of the results. However, given the prominence of the US as a mediator and the large proportion that US mediations comprise of all mediation make such a limitation a worthwhile one.

credibility as a leader and to help his electoral fortunes and also those of his party. As a result, the President must go outside the domestic policy arena to demonstrate this competence (See Brulé 2006). In these situations, policy choices must be made from the range of available policies, which often do not directly address the source of domestic discontent but rather substitute opportunities for the president to make policy, build good will, and be portrayed positively in the media to the public. International relations has been shown to be a ripe policy area for such substitutions because of the president's relative autonomy in the foreign policy-making process (Howell 2005: 417, Johnson and McCormick 1977:117-123, Mayer 2001).

The managerial competence explanation aligns theories of foreign policy and domestic policy motivation. Like domestic policy, the central goal of foreign policy, from the president's perspective, is to help establish a record of successful policies and proposals that reap some domestic political benefit. Thus, he has incentives to mobilize the numerous resources and processes available to his office to achieve that end. This explanation also fits with theories of a "prudent public" and their interpretations of presidential action (Jentleson 1992). Rather than simply diverting attention from domestic problems by channeling patriotism, the president attempts to build a record of success through foreign policy and thus bolster support for himself domestically. While blind patriotism is likely to wane, a record of policy successes is more likely to help the president's political fortunes over the long term. Because foreign policy is often highly visible and because the president has a great deal of agenda-setting power in that arena (see Cohen 1995; Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Villalobos and Sirin 2012; Andrade and

Young 1996), attention to foreign policy issues is likely to provide him with many opportunities for success.

Policy Availability and Mediation

In applying this rationale to mediation, I begin with the assumption that presidents attempt to establish a record of policies, proposals, and positions that enhance their electoral fortunes or those of their party (e.g., Neustadt 1960; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Richards, et al. 1993). When poor domestic circumstances arise, the president proposes remedial policies in an effort to curtail potential voter dissatisfaction. If a president succeeds in implementing policies that are credited with alleviating the problem, the success of his legislative initiatives may contribute to his reputation as a skilled leader. In addition, partisan support for the president in congress is likely to provide “cover” for policy initiatives by diffusing responsibility for endeavors. The presence of an uncooperative Congress, however, reduces the number of remedial policies available (Bond and Fleisher 1990), compelling the president to look beyond the domestic arena for opportunities to demonstrate his competence (Richards, et al. 1993). This greater focus on foreign policy issues and the international arena increases the likelihood that the president pursues mediation during periods of domestic hardship and congressional opposition.

When an opposition Congress prevents the president from directly addressing poor economic performance, the president may concentrate on problems that either do not require the cooperation of Congress, or issues that transcend partisan and ideological lines. Success in addressing these types of issues may indicate to the public that the

president is an adept manager of national problems (Richards, et al. 1993). The president's de facto ascendancy in foreign policy provides an obvious stage for such demonstrations (see e.g., Hinckley 1994; Meernik 1994; Howell and Pevehouse 2005).

In this regard, the president may focus intently on international affairs, taking positions and offering solutions for international dilemmas. Because foreign policy issues frequently transcend partisan and ideological lines (e.g., Stoll 1987; Schultz 2001), a legislative opposition may be unwilling or unable to block foreign policy proposals in the same manner as they oppose the executive's socio-economic policy initiatives. Consequently, presidents should have a greater capacity to affect foreign policy than social or economic policy. In the context of international mediation, such capacity translates into greater credibility the president or his surrogates, increasing the likelihood that a mediation offer is accepted and ultimately, successful.

Mediation as an Appealing Policy Option

In positing this argument, it is important to note the unique characteristics that mediation has as a policy option that set it apart from others, and traits that are likely to make it appealing to leaders seeking to use foreign policy to improve their domestic political standing.

The literature on policy substitutions suggests that foreign policy substitution is possible, largely because the president enjoys a greater amount of latitude when it comes to such issues (Most and Starr 1984; Howell 2005, Johnson and McCormick 1977; Mayer 2001). Much of the empirical literature on this substitution effect has used the political use of force as the primary dependent variable. However, the theoretical argument can be

made that when faced with the domestic conditions of a worsening economy and congressional opposition, mediation should be an attractive policy for US Presidents due to the number of opportunities that such engagement provides for speeches, photo opportunities, and other outlets to build the image of being competent, as well as the chance to successfully create policy without the check of the opposing Congress.

Because the President is also constrained by the sentiments of potential voters, mediation should be attractive due to its low audience cost (see Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003). While the political use of force overseas has a higher potential audience cost because of the chance that lives will be lost, because other states in the system might be angered, or because the overall campaign will be billed as a loss, mediation, which is non-coercive, is relatively costless because it leaves the ultimate decision-making power in the hands of the disputing parties. Furthermore, the use of mediation as substitute for domestic policy under such conditions reconciles the policy availability argument with notion of strategic conflict avoidance, a critique of the diversionary use of force hypothesis. The strategic conflict avoidance theory contends that leaders in foreign states act strategically in response to the domestic conditions that face a US President. Because leaders know that a US President is likely to be more risk-accepting when faced with domestic opposition, coupled with the argument that democratic states are unlikely to lose conflicts that they initiate, they are less likely to make provocative statements or otherwise induce conflict (see Fordham 1998; Ostrom and Job 1986; James and O Neal 1991; Maoz and Russett 1993). Therefore, while an argument has been made that the use of force is less likely to be an available policy for the President when facing domestic

opposition, mediation will still be an available option due to its non-binding, non-violent nature.

Additionally, the range of possible outcomes for a mediation effort is greater than those for the use of military force. While military endeavors are most often portrayed as wins and losses, or successful and unsuccessful missions, diplomatic endeavors have many more “in-between” outcomes, all of which can potentially frame the president as a competent manager of complex political issues, if not be framed a policy win. Thus, engaging in military force, especially where victory, or more often “success” is not assured, is a risky proposition for leaders even if it may have some political payoffs. As previously discussed, most mediation efforts are unsuccessful, meaning no negotiated settlement occurs. However, given that an overwhelming proportion of mediation offers are accepted (90%), it is plausible that the mere ability to get two disputing factions to come together for peace talks can be framed as a policy success for a leader. Similarly, the ability to broker a cease-fire or partial settlement can be portrayed as a policy success as the result of a competent leader. Because, mediation is so often unsuccessful, it can be characterized as a difficult endeavor requiring a competent manager. Such a characteristic, which, unlike the use of force in many cases, satisfies Tarar’s (2005) contention that diversionary endeavors will only lead to improved domestic standing for leaders if the public recognizes them as sufficiently difficult.

While mediation has not been directly tested, scholarly evidence shows that the American public regularly rallies in support of peace-oriented foreign policy (Page and Shapiro 1992; Brace and Hinckley 1992), suggesting that there are political incentives for

mediation by US Presidents. Additionally, the practice of acting “dovish” in foreign policy in order to bolster domestic approval has been employed by several administrations in the post-World War II period (Burbach 2004). For example, Dwight Eisenhower’s administration sought to position him as a peacemaker at the conclusion of the Korean War, and, to that end, he was vocal in calling for an improvement in US-Soviet relations. In this regard, he engaged in a high-profile meeting with Nikita Khrushchev as the 1960 elections neared, in order to improve the prospects of Republican candidates, despite Eisenhower’s being a lame duck (Hughes 1962:106-117, Adams 1961). Similarly, Lyndon Johnson consciously sought to appear as a peacemaker in 1968, halting strategic bombings of Vietnam in the lead-up to elections. Even Richard Nixon, perhaps the most visible proponent of US operations in Vietnam, attempted to appear dovish, timing troop withdrawals to maintain public support (see Burbach 2004).

When taken in consideration with the risks associated with the use of force, third-party mediation should be attractive to presidents. Unlike the use of force, mediation has less potential to be a politically expensive policy choice because it incurs few costs up front and does not ultimately bear many of the costs of failure. Mediating an overseas dispute not only lacks the potential for violent loss of life associated with military force, it also requires a minimum commitment of resources and political capital from the mediator at the outset, which in turn minimizes the risk that he must accept in attempting to extract a political benefit. Failure to succeed is also less likely to negatively affect a president’s fortunes. As was seen in the case of the Iran Hostage Crisis, where the failure of a military operation negatively affected President Jimmy Carter’s domestic standing

and chance of re-election, failure in the use of force is likely to have dire consequences for a president. As a mediator, however, a president has less to lose. Should a president deem that mediation of a particular conflict will not yield the previously expected political benefits, or, if negotiations should break down, he can walk away having committed very few resources to the process. In cases where talks break down, the president can deflect much of the criticism for such a failure onto the conflicting parties, especially in cases where he sought to manipulate the payoffs with significant concessions or guarantees to one or both sides. Moreover, a presidential administration can claim victory, without having to share the credit with Congress, as the administration has a monopoly on formal foreign policy proceedings undertaken on behalf of the state. As a result, acting as a mediator is lower-risk policy option than the use of military force for leaders seeking to use foreign policy to demonstrate their competence as a leader to a domestic audience.

Models of Media and the Presidency

In addition to mediation's unique characteristics, leaders, such as the US president, have the ability to ensure that mediation attempts are sufficiently high-profile, so as to yield a positive through manipulation of information in the media. The presidency carries with it significant national prestige in the form of a high level of media attention, which the president can seek to manipulate for his political benefit and that of his party (Bennett 1990, Altheide and Snow 1991, Bennett, et al. 2007). This attention is primarily focused on the actions of the president himself, but a disproportionate amount of media attention is also focused on his high-level surrogates—such as the vice

president, cabinet secretaries, and special envoys—who are tasked by the president with representing the US in negotiating foreign policy issues requiring specific attention and expertise. A prominent explanation of the asymmetrical coverage of high level government officials is Bennett’s (1990) indexing hypothesis. According to this argument, the media relies upon the volume of reports, press conferences, sound bites, and other media moments provided by the president, his staff, and other components of government for a consistent supply of news. Such reliance, married with the numerous resources that the president has to craft his message and image, creates news that primarily serves to generate support for the government’s position.

In applying this framework to mediation, it appears as though the president and his high-level surrogates have a great deal of power to manipulate the manner in which they are depicted to the public via the media. Third-party mediation is highly visible in the media when conducted by high-level officials (Burbach 2004).²⁸ Therefore, when mediation is attempted and is likely to be successful, or to at least project the image of success, it is probable that the president will play a key role in the process in order to magnify the political benefits to be extracted as a result of a high level of media attention.²⁹ Likewise, high-level officials will likely serve as mediators when success is still probable, but not in cases where the administration expects little marginal benefit to

²⁸ Burbach’s data collection of New York Times articles pertaining to US mediations showed 20 front page stories pertaining on Kissinger’s 1974 “shuttle diplomacy,” 11 on the Dayton meeting to end hostilities in Bosnia in 1995, and 15 on Clinton’s Wye River conference in 1998.

²⁹ Perhaps the clearest demonstration of a president’s involvement increasing the political salience and media coverage of a mediation event is President Bill Clinton’s role at the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. Although he was not directly involved in the mediation process, the signing ceremony on the White House lawn and his image shaking hands with Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat increased the Accords’ visibility immensely and portrayed Clinton in a positive light as a peacemaker.

direct presidential involvement. In contrast, by employing lower level diplomats and officials to deal with the latter, the president can attempt to avoid policy issues that are not expected to generate political capital, could be potentially damaging, or could be disproportionately costly. By avoiding these pitfalls, the president can shift his policy focus, and thus media coverage, to areas and issues where he is likely to be more successful. Additionally, low-level officials can be employed in diplomacy to pay “lip service” to certain domestic constituencies who have an interest in some foreign policy outcome without occupying an inordinate number of the administration’s resources. Coupled with mediation’s minimal risk, especially relative to other available policy options, the president’s capacity to manipulate the news to project an image of success—along with the high level of media attention paid to presidential actions—suggests that an administration can expect to see political gains from engagement in mediation.

Findings in the Mediation Literature Suggesting Strategic Mediation

Mediator motivation is an aspect of the diplomatic process that has been largely unaddressed in the academic literature, despite theoretical and empirical evidence that suggests that mediators are motivated by more than the altruism associated with peacefully resolving a conflict (see e.g. Touval 2001, Kleiboer 2002). Some scholars have criticized the mediation research program for its lack of theoretical integration with the foreign policy literature (see Touval 2003), but little work has been done to reconcile the two. Because mediation is a voluntary, non-binding form of conflict resolution, the study of mediation has fallen under the greater normative auspices of conflict resolution and therefore focused primarily on the sources of mediation success (Touval 2003). As

previously discussed, scholars have often made the assumption that mediators are motivated primarily by conflict resolution, and the many factors thought to contribute to foreign policy motivations are not examined. Although several scholars note that mediation should not be seen as a purely altruistic enterprise (Bercovitch 2002, Kleiboer 2002) and that mediators have their own set of payoffs separate from those of the conflicting parties (Touval 1992, Princen 1992), these propositions have rarely been included in empirical tests. Instead, policy prescriptions in the form of systematically collected conclusions about peacefully resolving conflicts have dominated the mediation research program.

Where mediator motivation has been addressed, it has been explained in terms of structure level factors such as alliance ties (Bobrow 1981, Kleiboer 2002) or economic and historical ties (Grieg and Regan 2008), and mediators have been coded as unchanging in their capabilities and resolve toward mediation success. However, if mediation is to be considered an instrument/tool of foreign policy, then the factors driving leaders to engage in mediation should be taken into account when examining outcomes. Because of this strong consensus emerging in the foreign policy literature contending that leaders use foreign policy to enhance their own domestic political fortunes (and those of their party), structural and/or liberal explanations alone are not sufficient to explain leaders' foreign policy behavior (Ostrom and Job 1986; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). These conclusions have primarily been tested in studies that examine the use of force (see Brulé 2006; Marshall and Prins 2011; Foster and Palmer

2006), although their theoretical underpinnings suggest an application to the entire range of foreign policy options available to presidents.

Despite the lack of focus on mediator motivations, there are several findings in the mediation literature that highlight the discrepancy between mediators' goals and those of the belligerent parties in a conflict and thus indirectly suggest that mediators are using mediation as a tool to shore up their domestic political standing. First, mediators are the most common initiators of the mediation process, responsible for initiating roughly 50% of all mediations (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000; Bercovitch and Fretter 2007). Such activity on the part of leaders suggests that there is some political benefit to be gained by such action, especially given the primacy of political survival in leader's decision calculus. Additionally, mediators are most likely to intervene in a conflict when it is most hostile, and thus when the belligerent parties are least likely to be amenable to mediation (Greig 2005). However, overseas conflicts are most visible to the media and to voters at times when they are most hostile. By offering to mediate at such times, state leaders can be argued to be focusing primarily on the potential domestic benefits that can be gained through attempting conflict management and less on a long-term, durable peace agreement, the political benefits of which are likely more diffuse.

Beyond these considerations, conflicts in which mediators have used their power and resources to manipulate the belligerents' payoffs under a conflict resolution scheme are likely to experience relapses in violence (Yuen and Werner 2005). Such a finding suggests that manipulative mediation strategies, which powerful state mediators are most adept at using, are sufficient for inducing a short-term settlement, but not sufficient for

effectively guaranteeing long-term peace. Such a solution is likely politically beneficial to the mediator, who has incentives to focus on much shorter political horizons (those of the election cycle and domestic politics) than the belligerents, who have incentives to focus on the longer-term.

Similarly, Pruitt (1981) highlights the problems likely to stem from such mediator behavior in his analysis of Henry Kissinger's work in the Middle East. He argues that because Kissinger, and later President Jimmy Carter, used the US's resources to compensate both the Israelis and the Egyptians, they complicated the conflict resolution process. By compensating both sides for making concessions, the mediator assumes more responsibility for conflict resolution and each of the disputants gains incentives to try to improve their lot vis-à-vis the third party. These findings, taken together, suggest that mediators choose to become involved in conflict management efforts at times when conflicts are most visible to their respective domestic audiences, and that they use their many resources to induce a peaceful settlement, despite the fact that the mediation's timing and the orientation of the disputants are likely to preclude, or, at least complicate, a successful agreement over the long term. In sum, these findings point the act of mediation as a political one, most likely focused on its domestic political impact, rather than long term peace.

Implications of the Literature and Theory

This discussion of mediation, diversion, and foreign policy decision making suggests that several previously un-tested domestic factors play a role in the decision to seek out and engage in mediation. By integrating the conflict resolution literature with

the mainstream foreign policy literature, one can argue that presidents have incentives to use mediation in response to poor domestic performance, such as declining economic performance and declining approval ratings as a result of scandal, policy failure, etc., especially when the presence of an opposing Congress makes the passage of domestic legislation that directly addresses such problems difficult. It can also be argued that because leaders' primary objective is political survival, that election proximity increases these incentives, as well.

Such conclusions lead me to posit the following general hypothesis at the conceptual level:

When confronted with an opposition legislature and domestic vulnerability, leaders should be seen engaging in mediation behavior which is likely to help improve their domestic standing.

Concrete, testable hypotheses stemming from this general conjecture are discussed in the proceeding paragraphs.

Research on the economy, approval ratings, and voting suggest that voters evaluate incumbents based on recent and current economic conditions as well as future prospects of success for recent and proposed economic policies (e.g., Norpoth, 1996; Clarke and Stewart, 1994; MacKuen, Erikson and Stimson, 1992; Fiorina 1981). Voter dissatisfaction with the economy due to sluggish growth, or higher than expected unemployment or inflation, decreases incumbent parties' vote share (Palmer and Whitten 2000). The need to show managerial competence provides leaders with incentives to pursue foreign policy in an effort to reverse declining approval ratings (Tarar 2006; DeRouen 1995; Morgan and Bickers 1992) or to divert attention from deteriorating

economic conditions (e.g., Fordham 1998; Hess and Orphanides 1995). In other words, democratic leaders can make trade-offs between economic performance and foreign policy in their quest for votes (e.g., Gelpi 1997; Miller 1995). When the economy is performing poorly, leaders expect electoral punishment; but foreign policy success may reverse the leader's dire political prospects if voters reward the leadership for competence in foreign affairs (e.g., Richards, et al. 1993). Thus, I posit the following testable hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1a: Presidents are more likely to engage in mediations in response to poor economic performance when confronted with an opposition legislature.

Because the president and his high-level deputies command a disproportionate level of media attention, the rank of the mediator employed should increase in such situations:

Hypothesis 1b: Presidents are likely to dispatch higher ranked mediators in response to poor economic performance when confronted with an opposition legislature.

In addition to these domestic political factors influencing the occurrence of mediation, and who mediates, they are also likely to affect the way that mediation is carried out. For instance, I have argued at some length that leaders are likely to try to manipulate the payoffs for one or both conflicting parties in order to induce a peaceful agreement to end hostilities, but also to do so in a way that leads to short term boosts in their own prestige and credibility:

Hypothesis 1c: Presidents are likely to employ manipulative mediation strategies in response to poor economic performance when confronted with an opposition legislature.

Mediation should also be an attractive policy for a president to pursue when faced with declining approval and a hostile opposing Congress, due to the fact that it is a less costly than other options available to him. Mediation can be a high profile endeavor that gives a president exclusive media attention where Congress is largely absent. Thus, it is an opportunity for the president and other high ranking officials within the executive branch to appear competent as leaders and who are working toward policy success in difficult or important policy areas. Such a rationale suggests the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2a: Presidents are more likely to engage in mediations in response to low approval when confronted with an opposition legislature.

In a parallel argument to that above, the president and his high-level deputies command a disproportionate level of media attention. Because of this high level of media coverage the rank of the mediator employed should increase in situations where declining approval and a hostile legislature necessitate a policy success through foreign policy:

Hypothesis 2b: Presidents are likely to dispatch higher ranked mediators in response to poor economic performance when confronted with an opposition legislature.

Leaders also have incentives to manipulate in mediation when they face low levels of approval and an opposition legislature, which limit their ability to move domestic legislation:

Hypothesis 2c: Presidents are likely to employ manipulative mediation strategies in response to low approval when confronted with an opposition legislature.

Due to the need for political survival, mediation is also likely to be seen as a policy option when nearing elections necessitate policy victories. The primary avenue through which the president should seek to build a record of policy successes is moving

domestic legislation (Neustadt 1960; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Richards, et al. 1993). However, as previously discussed, an opposition Congress can make the passage of legislation to such ends difficult (Mayer 2001; Howell and Pevehouse 2005). In these cases, the president should be seen addressing those issues which do not require congressional cooperation.

A similar vulnerability is built into the political structure in the form of elections. Similar to declining domestic performance, impending elections make presidents vulnerable in that there is an increased focus on their behavior and thus a greater need for policy success. Such a perspective is supported by the literature that suggests leaders are less likely to use military force as the chances that they will be removed from office increase (Chiozza and Goemans 2003; 2011; Gaubatz 1991; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Nearing elections create a situation where that scenario is more likely. Thus, when confronted with both an opposition congress, which is likely to make the passage of domestic legislation difficult, and an upcoming election, presidents have incentives to focus on foreign policy to build this desired record of success.

Because presidents who use force as elections near are likely to be punished by voters, they generally use military force early in their tenures (Gaubatz 1991). Thus, in situations where domestic policy avenues are largely unavailable to the president, yet nearing elections create a need for high-profile policy successes, mediating overseas conflicts should be an attractive policy outlet. Because mediation is both high-profile and low-risk, relative to other available policy options, a high payoff for a presidential administration is likely:

Hypothesis 3a: Presidents are more likely to engage in mediations as elections near when confronted with an opposition legislature.

As I argued with regard to economic performance and approval, because the president and his high-level deputies command a disproportionate level of media attention, the rank of the mediator employed should increase in such situations where a hostile legislature makes passing domestic policy difficult:

Hypothesis 3b: Presidents are likely to dispatch higher ranked mediators in response to nearing elections when confronted with an opposition legislature.

Leaders also have incentives to manipulate in mediation when they confront nearing elections and an opposition legislature, which limits their ability to move domestic legislation:

Hypothesis 3c: Presidents are likely to employ manipulative mediation strategies as elections near when confronted with an opposition legislature.

Each of these three sets of hypotheses suggests how presidential administrations should act when confronted with domestic vulnerability that is best remedied through a series of policy successes, but legislative institutional configurations make the passage of domestic policy difficult or, at least, inefficient and cumbersome. Such conditions suggest that the president believes that he and his administration are likely to make political gains as a result of engaging in mediation. Thus, understanding the extent to which presidents actually benefit from such engagement is a key next step in understanding the dynamics of how domestic concerns drive mediator/mediation behavior. Because it has been argued that presidents use mediation endeavors to better their political fortunes, an increase in presidential approval should be seen as a result of

mediation occurrence. Additionally, increases in mediator rank and manipulative strategies should result in increases in presidential approval:

Hypothesis 4a: *An increase in the highest rank of mediator employed in a given quarter will result in an increase in presidential approval rating in the subsequent quarter.*

Hypothesis 4b: *As the public's attentiveness to foreign policy increases, the positive effect of a mediator's rank on presidential approval should also increase.*

Chapter 3: Data and Research Design

In this chapter, I outline the theoretical and practical aspects of my research design and discuss my reasons for using particular research techniques. First, I discuss my rationale for limiting my investigation to US mediations, as a starting point in the analysis of how mediation is driven by domestic political factors. Secondly, I discuss the structure of the proceeding empirical chapters. Then, I discuss the International Conflict Management Dataset broadly, pointing out several of its strengths and weaknesses for this type of analysis. Next, I describe the key dependent variables that I use to test the propositions I have made about leader behavior in light of domestic political conditions. From that point, I discuss the key independent variables that I argue are responsible for driving the relationships that should be seen, the controls that I use and the estimation techniques that I use and how the results should be interpreted.

In order to test the theoretical propositions that I outline in the previous chapter, large-N quantitative methods are most appropriate. Because the goal is to make theoretical generalizations about the relationship between domestic politics, leader decision making, and foreign policy behavior, such techniques can help to explain real-world events across time and presidential administration, rather than at one single point in time or in one case. Because there is a large literature suggesting that foreign policy is substitutable, meaning that several policy avenues can be pursued to yield a desired domestic outcome (Most and Starr 1984; Reed and Clark 2005), I specify models similar to those used to test the influence of domestic politics on the decision to use military force. After making this argument, I go further to test whether such behavior has

substantive effects on leaders' popularity, which should help their domestic political fortunes.

Case Selection

In this dissertation, I examine the decision to mediate in light of the policy availability argument for cases of US mediation behavior from 1945-1995. The decision to limit my analysis to the US case is largely based on matters of practicality and feasibility. However, there are some theoretically driven reasons for doing so as well, which I discuss below.

Pzeworski and Tuene (1970) famously argued that theory construction in the social sciences should be conducted in such a way that proper names can be removed from discussions, as they should apply to categories of phenomena, not just single cases. Similarly it has been (Sartori 1970; Verba 1967) argued that theories should have "travel," meaning that they should be sufficiently generalizable to apply to similar situations occurring in different places and times. As such, limiting the analysis to US mediation behavior somewhat limits the extent to which empirical results support a more general theory. However, given that the ultimate goal of studying mediation processes is to better understand how to peacefully resolve conflict and that the United States engages in an overwhelming proportion of international conflict mediation attempts (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000), limiting analysis to just US cases for practical matters does not necessarily hinder the attainment of such a goal.

As previously mentioned, practicality plays a large part in the decision to limit the analysis to one country. The ICM dataset was originally conceived to construct theories

about the factors contributing to mediation success. As such, variables concerning mediator identity were coded primarily by category, rather by individual or state.³⁰ Information about the individuals' identities and affiliations is contained in an appendix and is not part of the main dataset. In turn, a great deal of energy must be put in to coding mediator involvement, identities, ranks, etc. Limiting the analysis to the US makes such a study more feasible, while producing results that shed light on the plausibility that these relationships may exist across states, or, at the very least, across powerful states. Ideally a more comprehensive examination of the relationship between domestic politics and diplomacy can be undertaken in the future.

The policy availability argument, as posited, rests heavily on the interplay between Congress and the president peculiar to the United States' case. In the US, the president has a disproportionate amount of unchecked formal power in the conduct of foreign policy, relative to domestic policy. Congress is thought to be a veto player on presidential action; although this is an *ex post* veto when it comes to matters of foreign policy (Schultz 2001). However, in several states, especially those employing parliamentary systems, the executive and the legislature are more directly linked and therefore a more unified decision-making process occurs. Thus, the incentives for and constraints on foreign policy behavior for domestic gains are not as clearly defined (Tsebelis 1999).³¹ This difference in institutional structures has led to several studies that

³⁰For instance, the ICM codes "functional mediator identity," which codes individual mediators as "leader of a powerful state," "representative of a powerful state," "leader of a weak state," "representative of a weak state," "representative of an international organization," etc.

³¹ Some scholars have argued that a similar relationship exists in parliamentary governments with minority coalitions (Brulé and Williams 2009; Palmer, London, and Regan 2004; Prins and Sprecher 1999).

have taken similar approaches, whereby only the US is examined (see Ostrom and Job1986; Brule 2006; Foster 2006) or only parliamentary systems are considered (Prins and Sprecher 1999; Palmer, London, and Regan 2004) and relatively few studies (see Brulé and Williams 2009) address both government types at once. So, while limiting analysis to cases of mediation within a single state might limit the extent to which theoretical generalizations across states can be made from the results, it does not invalidate the research.

Structure of Empirical Chapters

In Chapter 2, I posited three sets of hypotheses, each of which implies a relationship between domestic politics and mediation behavior. I test and report each set of hypotheses in a separate empirical chapter. Chapter 4 tests hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c, as well as hypotheses 2a, 2b, and, 2c. I chose to report these results together because they both focus on how measures of the president's domestic performance and the makeup of Congress affect his decision making process. Hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c, all of which deal with the election cycle and decisions to engage in mediation, are tested and discussed in Chapter 5. Hypotheses 4a and 4b, which focus on the extent to which engagement in mediation helps to improve a president's domestic standing, are tested and discussed in Chapter 6.

My reason for structuring the empirical results in these three chapters is to present three theoretically related models that are theoretically supported and empirically plausible, rather than presenting a single model that has three parts. As, such the variables used as explanatory variables in one chapter are dependent variables in another.

Because this is a relatively new avenue of research, especially with regard to mediation, the goal is to present arguments that confirm the relationship between domestic and international politics. Ideally, it paves the way for further, more refined research that can specify the model more precisely, both in terms of theory and methodology.

Data

The International Conflict Management Dataset

The primary source of data on conflict resolution behavior is Jacob Bercovitch's International Conflict Management (ICM) dataset, which contains information about mediation and other types of conflict management from 1945-1995. Additionally, I introduce several independent variables commonly used in the foreign policy and linkage politics literatures to measure how domestic politics is likely to influence leader behavior in the international sphere.³² In this chapter, I begin by discussing my rationale for examining US mediation behavior.³³ Then, I continue by describing the data and then discuss my rationale for using such data in detail. From these discussions, I posit three sets of concrete, testable hypotheses (each to be analyzed in a subsequent chapter) about the relationships that should be observed, and then, finally discuss the statistical techniques that I use to test them and how the results should be interpreted.

³² These variables include data on economic performance, presidential approval, the partisan composition of Congress, the president's ability to pass legislation, and the public's attentiveness to foreign policy.

³³ I purposely use the term "mediation behavior" to describe not only the offer/occurrence of mediation, but also the strategy employed, official(s) sent, etc. which are likely to be calculated political decisions based on the expected utility of such choices.

The International Conflict Management dataset observes conflict management attempts in conflicts from 1945-1995, with data collected from several sources.³⁴ It contains data about the nature of the conflict, the belligerent parties, and the conflict management environment, including mediators. The dataset has several characteristics that make it especially good for testing propositions about the effect of domestic politics on mediation behavior. First, it focuses on process. Bercovitch (1986) developed his contingency framework of mediation process, which identifies roughly 50 variables that may affect mediation outcomes (Bercovitch and Fretter 2007). While some datasets, such as the International Conflict Behavior (ICB) dataset, choose to focus on the conflict as the level of analysis (see Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000), the ICM dataset allows scholars to look at mediation from the perspective of the mediator, as well as the conflict, and thus the perspective of two-level decision making. Similarly, the ICM dataset examines mediation behavior in both international and civil conflicts at the same time. Such a data structure allows for the testing of hypotheses concerning a leader's decision calculus and not merely characteristics of the conflict environment.

In addition to having the appropriate focus of data, the ICM dataset also draws from a broader set of conflicts, including inter-state and intra-state conflicts in the same dataset. Bercovitch and Fretter (2007; 148) define a conflict as “an organized and continuous militarized conflict, or the demonstration of intention to use military force by at least one state.” This characteristic, which differs from both the ICB and Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) datasets, recognizes that, from the perspective of the mediator,

³⁴ A table listing the data sources is published in Bercovitch and Fretter's (2007) *International Negotiation* article outlining the dataset on pp. 150-151.

decisions of when and where to engage in mediation are likely to be similar across conflict type. While research has shown that civil conflicts are more difficult to mediate than international conflicts (see Melin and Svensson 2009), the tools that mediators have at their disposal in each case are the same. Beyond that, excluding one type of conflict or the other introduces unnecessary selection bias, and interferes with the ability to test hypotheses pertaining to leaders' decision making, as mediation in one type of conflict may preclude or otherwise influence the decision to mediate elsewhere.³⁵

Additionally, the dataset has a lower threshold for an incident to be considered a conflict, than several other datasets coding international conflict events. As such, no minimum threshold for fatalities is used (Bercovitch and Fretter 2007: 153). This characteristic allows the examination of “conflict” where the resort to violence has not yet happened in addition to occasions where it has. Such a differentiation recognizes that all political “conflict” begins as some political disagreement and escalates through various levels of animosity and violence—the highest of which is war—but also that there is at least some potential for mediation at all levels (Dixon 1996; 656).

From such a framework, descriptive data were collected and coded with the conflict management attempt being the primary unit of analysis.³⁶ The data are divided into three primary subgroups, conflict management variables, party variables, and dispute variables. Conflict management variables deal with the conflict management process,

³⁵ Bercovitch and Fretter (2007) outline their rationale for including both inter-state and intra-state conflicts in the same analysis on pp154-155. Their reasons include the goal of establishing data that lead to broad and generalizable analyses about conflict management. Thus, a wide number of conflicts that vary in terms size/power of actors, international power structure, etc. are considered.

³⁶ Each “line” of data in the original dataset is a conflict management attempt.

including what type of mediator was involved, the strategies they employed, etc. Party variables describe characteristics of and relationships between the disputing parties. Dispute variables describe the nature of the dispute.

As Bercovitch and Fretter note in their 2007 article outlining and discussing the merits of the ICM dataset, analysis is largely limited to formal mediations and offers thereof. Due to the sometimes secretive nature of foreign policy, the number of mediations offered, but never accepted may be somewhat under-determined. Along these lines, it could be argued that there was more or less a standing offer from the Clinton administration to mediate between Israelis and Palestinians during his second term. Therefore, the data may be somewhat skewed, leaving out offers of mediation.

My analysis focuses on how constraints and incentives created by domestic politics influence the occurrence and strategy of mediation. Because these constraints and incentives vary over time, using times-series analytical techniques are necessary. Thus, I create a time-series of quarterly observations from 1945-1995 from which to analyze the variation in US mediation behavior.³⁷ Additionally, in order to test the hypotheses, I create three new dependent variables which measure US mediation behavior. I discuss these variables below and test this behavior in Chapters 4 and 5. Finally, because I argue that engagement in mediation should help a president's domestic

³⁷ Of the 227 US mediation attempts over the data period, only 6 last 3 months (1 quarter year) or longer. Consequently, the quarter is the most appropriate division of time to analyze. Because most mediation attempts last less than 1 quarter, it is most likely that quarterly measures of the key explanatory variables and controls will most validly influence the dependent variables within time period. For methodological reasons, some independent variables are lagged to ensure temporal precedence to the dependent variable. The rationale for such a decision is discussed later in this chapter.

political fortunes, I test how engagement in mediation influences presidential approval in chapter 6.

Dependent Variables for Chapters 4 and 5

Because Bercovitch's dataset attempts to make broadly applicable conclusions about mediation processes, the specific identities of mediators are relegated to an appendix for reference. General categories, such as "leader of a powerful state" are created in order to measure mediator characteristics. However, because my analysis focuses on how domestic independent variables influence a state's international conflict management behavior, dependent variables must capture the state's involvement in conflict management. Accordingly, I use the information from Appendix 2 to create three new dependent variables, which I use to test hypotheses sets 1-3: *US Mediations*, *US Mediator Rank*, and *US Mediation Strategy*, which are described in greater detail in the next three sections.

US Mediations

US Mediations is an event count variable that counts the number of new mediation attempts that the United States becomes involved in or offers in a given quarter. Care was taken to ensure that the mediator was sent on behalf of the US administration and was able to negotiate on its behalf.³⁸ Offers are included along with actual attempts because the goal is to examine the extent to which the US administration is focusing resources and attention on mediation.

³⁸ Thus, instances in which Americans served as mediators in a private capacity, such as Jimmy Carter's work as head of the Carter Center, have been excluded. Conflicts in which the US is a party are excluded as well, thus excluding mediation/negotiation attempts by the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

Table 3.1 shows the distribution of *US Mediations*. The modal value is 1 new mediation attempt per quarter, which occurs in 62 quarters from 1945-1995. The second-most common value is 0, no new mediations in a quarter. Frequency of values tends to decrease as the number of new mediation attempts/offers per quarter increases, with 48 quarters in which 2 new attempts/offers are made, 17 in which 3 are made, 6 in which 4 are made, 4 in which 5 are made, 1 in which 6 are made, 2 in which 7 are made, and 1 in which 8 are made. So, while it is common for the United States to become involved in/offer new mediations regularly, it becomes progressively less common for it to do so as a number of mediations have already been offered/undertaken.³⁹

By counting US mediations, the extent to which administrations focus on mediation can be tested. However, because the theoretical argument being posited here is that mediation is undertaken with the intent of inducing an increase in support for the administration from the domestic public, more focused dependent variables that capture the likelihood that mediation attempts are high in profile, as well as those capturing the urgency and vigor with which the administration pursues successful conflict management are appropriate.

US Mediator Rank

The second dependent variable that I use to capture US mediation behavior is *US Mediator Rank*. This is an ordinal variable used to measure the level of commitment and urgency with which an administration seeks to mediate, as well as the amount of media coverage that such an endeavor will receive. Because I argue that presidential

³⁹ It should be noted that several attempts/offers can be made for the same conflict, within a given quarter.

Table 3.1: Distribution of <i>US Mediations</i>			
US Mediations per quarter	Frequency	Percent	Cum. Percent
0	60	29.85	29.85
1	62	30.88	60.72
2	48	23.88	84.60
3	17	8.46	93.06
4	6	2.99	96.05
5	4	1.99	98.04
6	1	0.49	98.51
7	2	0.10	99.49
8	1	0.49	100.00
Total	201	100.00	
Mean = 1.40			
Variance = 2.04			

administrations seek to use mediation in order to generate the image of a policy success, presidents should be seen mediating themselves, or sending high-level deputies to mediate in their stead in order to garner the most media attention from such an endeavor.

Table 3.2 shows the distribution of values for *US Mediator Rank*, codes the highest-ranking new mediator in a given quarter. The rationale for using the highest-ranking mediator in a quarter is that the highest-ranking mediator employed by an administration is likely to most accurately denote the extent to which any mediation attempt is likely to be salient in the media and thus the extent to which the administration is likely to benefit from such an attempt being portrayed as a success. Because the president is visible at a higher level than any of his surrogates and he commands a great deal more media attention, mediation attempts in which he serves as the mediator are coded as a 3, the highest value for the variable. High-level surrogates of the president are coded as a 2, the second-highest value for the variable. These officials include the vice president, cabinet members, and special envoys sent by the president to mediate with his authority. While these officials are likely to warrant some media coverage and their efforts are likely to be discussed publicly, it will likely be at a lower level than that of the president. Low-level mediators, those who are likely to receive little to no media attention are coded as 1. These mediators included ambassadors, state department officials, military officers, etc. I argue that the administration can employ these mediators strategically, using them in cases where high-profile mediation may not yield positive feedback or to simply test the waters, after which higher-ranking mediators can

Table 3.2: Distribution of *US Mediator Rank*

Highest Rank	Mediator	Frequency	Percent	Cum. Percent
No mediation/ offered only		103	51.24	51.24
Low-ranking mediator		46	22.89	74.13
High-ranking mediator		38	18.91	93.03
President mediator		14	6.97	100.00
Total		201	100.00	

come in if it is deemed that the effort will be billed as a policy success. Quarters in which no mediations occur or mediation is offered, but not accepted are coded as 0.

US Mediation Strategy

Similar to the mediator rank variable is *US Mediation Strategy*. This variable is an ordinal variable that codes the highest level (most involved) of mediation undertaken by the United States in a given quarter, as defined by Zartman and Touval's (1985) typology of mediation strategies. Stemming from the argument that presidents are seeking mediation as a tool to engineer policy victories in light of poor domestic performance and a hostile legislature, they should be seen using more manipulative strategies in order quickly engineer a policy success. Corresponding to Zartman and Touval's (1985) typology, manipulation strategies, those in which the mediator seeks to use his resources to manipulate the payoffs for one or both parties are coded as a 4, the highest value. Occurrences of formulation strategies in which the administration seeks to provide a venue for discussions and suggests potential compromises, but falls short of guaranteeing the peace or inducing it through carrots and sticks are coded as a "3". Instances in which the US uses its good offices to provide credible information to one or both sides are coded as a "2". In quarters where no mediation is offered only, a "1" is entered, and where no mediations occur a "0" is entered. (see Table 3.3)

Each of these variables is designed to capture an element of the extent to which presidents seek to use mediation as a tool to better their domestic fortunes. The occurrence of more mediations suggests that the administration deems that such attempts are the best likely to better these fortunes, relative to other available policy options. The

Table 3.3 Distribution of *US Mediation Strategy*

Highest Mediation Strategy	Frequency	Percent	Cum. Percent
No Mediations	95	47.26	47.26
Offered only	8	3.98	51.24
Information Strategy	30	14.93	66.17
Formulation Strategy	8	3.98	70.15
Manipulation Strategy	60	29.85	100.00
Total	201	100.00	

use of higher-ranking mediators and more manipulative mediation strategies suggests that the administration is attempting to commit more resources to the mediation effort in the hopes that it will be billed as a policy success, as well as engineer an agreement quickly, thus boosting the president's political standing.

Independent Variables for Chapters 4 and 5

Economic Performance

The frequency of mediation efforts is hypothesized to be a function of congressional support and economic conditions. As a measure of economic conditions, I include *GDP growth*.^{40, 41} GDP growth is the quarterly/annual rate of growth in U.S. gross domestic product. Lower rates of GDP growth are expected to provide the motivation for presidents to seek policy success in the realm of foreign affairs when efforts to address the domestic economy are forestalled by congressional opposition.

Presidential Approval

The frequency of mediation and the rank of the mediator dispatched, and the strategy selected are hypothesized to be functions of congressional support and presidential popularity. A measure of presidential approval is included to capture the public's evaluation of the president's job performance. *Presidential approval* is measured as the quarterly average of all Gallup presidential job approval polls.⁴²

⁴⁰ The source for *GDP* the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (retrieved from <http://www.bea.doc.gov/>).

⁴¹ In analyses not presented in this work, I also use measures of inflation, the misery index, and unemployment as robustness checks. Each variable yielded similar results to GDP growth.

⁴² The Gallup polls ask "do you approve of the job (name of president) is doing as president?" These polls were retrieved from The Roper Center via Lexis-Nexis.com.

Measures of Divided Government

The analysis considers the influence of three measures of congressional support. The first, *Partisan support*, takes account of congressional partisanship. As the number of seats held by the president's co-partisans declines, Congress should be less likely to support the president's proposals, leading the president to respond to poor economic performance with a mediation attempt. Partisan support consists of the percentage of seats held by the president's co-partisans in the chamber of Congress in which the president's co-partisans hold the fewest seats. For example, in 1978, when President Jimmy Carter's administration was brokering a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, the house of Congress with the fewest Democratic members (Carter's party), was comprised of 61% Democrats.⁴³

The second measure of congressional support is *Cohesive partisan support*. Partisanship alone is not always an appropriate indicator of shared preferences over domestic policy. Southern Democrats frequently opposed the policies of Democratic presidents during the period of study and supported the policies of Republican presidents (see e.g., Bond and Fleisher 1990). Even when the president's party constitutes a majority of members, a lack of cohesion among the president's co-partisans in Congress may complicate presidential efforts to gain approval for his initiatives. Similarly, a cohesive opposition majority party in Congress has the strength and incentives to thwart presidential initiatives (e.g., Fleisher and Bond 2000; Fiorina 1992). Cohesive partisan support is derived from the "legislative potential for policy change" (LPPC) scores

⁴³ The value of 61% partisan support in congress is in roughly the 95th percentile for values in years 1949-1995.

(Brady, Cooper and Hurley 1977). LPPC scores are based on the size and cohesiveness of the two parties relative to each other.⁴⁴ Like Partisan support, the score from the chamber with the lower cohesive partisan support score is included in the analysis. Thus, in 1978, the cohesive partisan support measure for the house of congress containing the smaller proportion of Democrats was 15.23, signifying a high level of cohesive partisan support.⁴⁵

The third measure, *Presidential success*, corresponds to the percentage of congressional roll call votes that concurred with the president's position.⁴⁶ This is a relatively direct measure of the president's ability to pursue remedial policy and most directly embodies the concept being tested when using measures of divided government (see e.g., Foster 2006; Marshall and Prins 2011). Given that both chambers of Congress must approve the president's proposal, I use the score corresponding to the chamber in which the presidential success score is lower. For the year 1978, for instance, the house of congress passing fewer bills concurring with the president's position, passed 69.6% of bills concurring with the president's position, signifying broad ability to pass legislation in congress.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Following Howell and Pevehouse (2005), Cohesive partisan support is computed as follows: President's party power = [(president's party size in percent) X (cohesion of president's party)] – [(opposition's party size in percent) X (cohesion of opposition's party)]. Party cohesion scores are from Cooper and Young (2002).

⁴⁵ A cohesive partisan support score of 15.23 is in the 95th percentile for values in years 1949-2000.

⁴⁶ The source for Presidential success is Ragsdale (1998). Presidential success scores are available for the time period 1953 through 1996.

⁴⁷ A presidential success score of 69.6% is in slightly less than the 75th percentile years 1949-1995.

Measures of the Election Cycle

The introduction of the electoral cycle as a factor in the choice of foreign policy options, suggests, however, that conflict initiation should be less likely leading up to election day. Gaubatz (1991) finds that democratic leaders are most likely to use military force early in their tenures, with that likelihood decreasing as elections near. The proposed explanation for such a conclusion is that democratic societies are likely to punish leaders at the polls for pursuing policies that put lives at risk. Thus, impending elections should cause US presidents to shy away from military conflict, regardless of the need for policy success. Truman's and Johnson's experiences in 1952 and 1968, respectively, suggest anecdotal support for this conjecture, given that in both cases Presidents involved in military conflict chose not to seek re-election in the face of mounting public discontent with military conflict.

Such domestic considerations have been largely absent from explanations of how and when non-military foreign policy occur, however. I argue that given this desire to produce a record of policy success when confronted with impending elections and low levels of support in Congress, presidents should be seen substituting non-military foreign policy options, such as third-party mediation, for military force. As a result, I use three measures of the election cycle, *Election Year Dummy*, *Election Countdown*, and *Campaign Quarters Dummy* in order to test the influence of elections on mediation. Because it has been argued that presidential administrations use policy success to help their political fortunes, but secondarily those of their party, I examine mediation in as a

function of all presidential election years and only those years in which an incumbent president is running for re-election.

Election/Re-election Year Dummy

Because US Presidents are under increased scrutiny as elections near, it is likely that the policy options that they pursue during such times are crafted to better their chances of re-election and those of their co-partisans. However, it is plausible that these efforts will take different shape when the president is running for re-election as opposed to when he is not running. Thus, *Election Year Dummy* is coded as a “1” for each quarter in a US presidential election year and *Re-election Year Dummy* is coded as a “1” for each quarter of US presidential election years in which the incumbent is running for re-election. Although this is a fairly blunt measure of how elections might influence the president’s decision making, it is a common starting point.

Election Countdown

Recent research has employed a variable that counts down from the time a president takes office until the next election (see Koch 2009; Williams 2010). The argument for using such a variable is that as elections near, policy choices are increasingly chosen to directly influence the outcome of that elections. Thus, *Election Countdown* is coded such that the first quarter in which is a president in office is entered as “16” and counts downward quarter-by-quarter to “1,” the quarter in which the next election occurs. The hypotheses suggest an inverse relationship between the time until an election and the frequency and or magnitude of mediation behavior. Such a measure is useful because it recognizes the increasing urgency with which a president must act as the

election becomes nearer. However, given that incumbents, especially those running for re-election, are most likely to spend a great deal of time campaigning as elections near, mediation behavior might not be seen in the last few months.

Campaign Cycle Dummy

I also employ variables that account for the fact that presidential campaigns last longer than the calendar year prior to the election and that presidential behavior is likely to be different if the incumbent is running for re-election. Given that presidents and political parties often launch their campaigns in the year prior to the election, it is to be expected that presidents would seek to use mediations to their advantage in the year before the election. Furthermore, because presidents, in the few months prior to the election, especially those running for re-election, are likely concentrating their efforts domestically, *Campaign Cycle Dummy* is coded as “1” for the last six quarters of a presidential term where the incumbent is not running for re-election. In cases where the incumbent is running for re-election, I code the penultimate five quarters of the presidential term as a “1,” but code the final term, that in which the election is held, as a “0.” My rationale for such using such a scheme is that presidents running for re-election are almost certainly going to focus their attention domestically during the final months of a campaign, regardless of domestic performance or the makeup of congress. However, lame duck presidents are more likely to attempt to help their parties in an election via foreign policy success when congressional support for his initiatives is low and the impending election draws increased attention to the incumbent’s record. I also test these

two phenomena separately, examining re-election campaign cycles and non-re-election campaign cycles individually.

Control Variables for Chapters 4 and 5

To control for other processes that may be affecting the occurrence of mediation behavior, I employ several control variables consistent with a “use of force” model. The use of force model is most often specified to test how variation in domestic political conditions influences the use of military force. Given that foreign policy is thought to be substitutable (Most and Starr 1984; 1989) and my argument suggests that leaders are substituting mediation, such a model is appropriate.

First, I include a variable indicating *War*, which taps U.S. war involvement. The United States’ involvement in wars is likely to reduce the pool of available resources with which presidents can address other crises. Thus, the analysis controls for the impact of wars by including a dummy variable that takes on the value of “1” for years corresponding to the Korean, Vietnam, and first Gulf War conflicts.

Similarly, I take account of quarterly and annual *Uses of force*. If presidents are taking decisions to deploy military forces against targets abroad, they are likely to have less time to consider peacemaking efforts. Consequently, as the number of uses of force increases, presidents should initiate fewer mediation efforts. In the quarterly dataset, *Uses of force* are drawn from the Blechman-Kaplan/Fordham list of U.S. uses of force (Fordham 1998; Fordham and Sarver 2001).

To control for opportunities to offer mediation, I control for the “population” of ongoing interstate disputes with a variable called *World disputes*. *World disputes* is a

count of all new or ongoing disputes according to the MID data set in which the U.S. is not a party. The values for *World disputes* correspond to the units of analysis – quarterly count for the quarterly analyses and annual count for the annual analyses.

Because variables are observed quarterly, it is possible that observations of independent variables and control variables that are discrete events (for instance uses of force) occur later in the quarter than the mediation attempt. In these cases, it is not possible that these events would have affected mediation occurrence or strategy. Therefore, to protect against such a problem, I have lagged these independent variables to ensure a proper temporal relationship for causality.

Estimation Techniques for Chapters 4 and 5

Because my dependent variables for these chapters are either event counts or discrete ordinal variables, Ordinary Least-Squares (OLS) estimators are inappropriate for testing the hypotheses. *US Mediations* is an event count variable, meaning the number of mediation attempts in each quarter is counted. The most basic regression model for examining such variables is the Poisson regression model. The distribution of values for *US Mediations* fits that of a Poisson distribution (Long 1997: 229-230). (See Table 3.1) However, the Poisson regression model assumes the mean of the distribution is equal to the variance (Long 1997; Wooldridge 2008), an assumption not met in this case (mean = 1.40, variance = 2.04). Thus, the negative binomial regression estimator, which relaxes this assumption, is more appropriate.

The other two dependent variables examined are ordinal variables, meaning that “its categories can be ranked from low to high, but the distances between adjacent categories are unknown.” For those, I use an ordered logit estimator (Long 1997: 115).

For each model, I cluster the standard errors on presidential administration to account for variation in mediation across them. Such a technique is more efficient than using fixed effects, which limits the degrees of freedom and essentially concedes that each presidential administration is qualitatively different, without providing an explanation of those differences.

Conditional Hypotheses and Interaction Terms

Because the hypotheses are conditional, the measures of executive-congressional relations are interacted with GDP growth and presidential approval to assess the effect of low public approval on mediation efforts conditioned by congress. All three measures of the president’s support in congress are interacted with both measures of presidential vulnerability as robustness checks. The marginal effects for the interaction terms should indicate a relationship between low public approval/low economic performance/impending elections and an increase in the propensity for mediation during periods in which congressional opposition is sufficient to block presidential domestic policy reform. Marginal effects should also indicate that approval is negatively associated with mediator rank when congressional support is low. Such conditional relationships are typically tested with a multiplicative interaction term.

Because of these conditioning effects, there are different effects of the conditioned variable (public approval/low economic performance/impending elections)

on mediation/mediator behavior as a result of different levels of the conditioning variable (levels of congressional support). Because these hypotheses test conditional relationships using multiplicative interaction terms, the coefficients and standard errors are not sufficient for interpreting the results (see Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006; Braumeoller 2006; Kam and Franzese 2005). In order to interpret model models, I plot the marginal effects along with the upper and lower bound 90% confidence intervals across the range of the conditioning variable. The results are discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Research Design for Chapter 6

Stemming from the argument tested in the previous two chapters, that leaders have incentives to engage in mediation in when they need a policy victory to ensure their political longevity, but domestic policy avenues are blocked, is the question of whether or not leaders enjoy a boost in the level of public approval they enjoy as a result of such behavior. While such a relationship is implied in much of the diversionary literature, most studies have focused overwhelmingly on the presence of this leader behavior and less on whether such behavior has the desired effect.

Mediation should be an attractive policy option for leaders, given minimal costs and risks, relative to other policy options, both foreign and domestic. It is also important to address the notion that the president enjoys an inordinate amount of sympathetic media coverage, which can be directed toward those policies that he deems most likely to generate the greatest domestic advantage (Bennett 1990). High level administration officials enjoy an increased media profile as well, but to a lower degree than the president.

While I expect the dispatching of higher-ranking mediators to have a positive effect on presidential approval, the positive effect of a mediator's rank should be magnified by the extent to which the public is attentive to foreign policy. Research suggests that public sentiment about the salience of foreign policy should play a key role in determining the extent to which the administration's focus on such issues is likely to be rewarded by an increase in approval rating (Edwards, Mitchell, and Welch 1995). Although the president and his high-level surrogates command a great deal of media attention, which they often manipulate well, focusing on foreign policy when public attentiveness to such issues is high will likely yield a greater boost in approval. For this reason, increasing the visibility of mediation attempts by employing higher ranking, and thus higher-profile, mediators when the public is attentive to foreign policy should compound the subsequent increase in approval rating.

Because foreign policy initiatives are less likely to be heavily criticized in Congress, and because the president can make foreign policy with more autonomy than he can domestic policy, mediation should be an appealing policy option to boost presidential approval. Although a presidential administration is able to manipulate how its image is portrayed with regard to a policy initiative, the extent to which the president's approval rating is likely to increase is tempered by the extent to which US voters deem foreign policy to be an important issue area.

Dependent Variable for Chapter 6

I examine the effect of mediator's rank on presidential approval after mediation efforts from 1945-1995, where time is observed in quarters. The dependent variable,

Approval is the Gallup Presidential Approval Score. This approval score is generated from the proportion of respondents who responded positively to the survey question, “Do you approve of the job (insert name of President) is doing as president?”⁴⁸

Independent Variables for Chapter 6

The first key independent variable in the analysis is *Mediator Rank*, which was coded from appendix 2 of Jacob Bercovitch’s (1999) International Conflict Management Data Set Codebook. The appendix gives the names, ranks, and nationalities of individual mediators associated with a given conflict. For the purposes of this analysis, only US mediators working in an official US government capacity were included. The dataset was then converted into a quarterly time series. *US Mediator Rank* is a four category ordinal variable that captures the highest political rank of a US mediator in a given quarter.⁴⁹ Mediator rank is hypothesized to positively influence presidential approval because of greater levels of media coverage afforded administration officials of higher ranks and the ease with which these officials are able to influence how the media reports on a mediation effort. Because of the hypothesized relationship between variables, the value of *US Mediator Rank* for the previous quarter (t_{-1}) is used to explain presidential approval during quarter t_0 .

The second set of key independent variables that I use is the same measures of mediator rank described above, but broken into dichotomous variables. Thus, in quarters where the president is directly involved in mediating a conflict *President as Mediator* is

⁴⁸ This survey data was retrieved from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut via Lexis-Nexis.com.

⁴⁹ *US Mediator Rank* is described in detail earlier in this chapter.

coded as “1” and all other quarters are entered as “0.” In quarters where the vice president, a cabinet secretary, or special envoy is the highest-ranking mediator, *Vice President or Cabinet-level Mediator*, is coded as a “1” and all other quarters are entered as “0.” Quarters with lower-ranking mediators (below cabinet-level or special envoy) have *Lower-level Mediator* entered as “1” and all other quarters entered as “0.” *No Mediation* is used as the reference category. Similar to the rationale described above, the variables are coded in such a way that captures the level of attention likely to be paid to the mediation attempt. Likewise, because of the hypothesized relationship between variables, the values of these dichotomous variables for the previous quarter (t_{-1}) are used to explain presidential approval during quarter t_0 .

Finally, to capture the conditioning effect of the public’s foreign policy attentiveness on the *Mediator Rank*, I create an interaction term with *Foreign Policy Salience*.⁵⁰ The extent to which the public is attentive to foreign policy is thought to condition the effects of *Mediator Rank* on presidential approval. Given the argument that the President and his high-level deputies can dominate and manipulate the mainstream news so that it portrays the administration favorably, the impact of diplomacy on presidential approval should be greater when the public is particularly attentive to foreign policy.

Control Variables for Chapter 6

Research on factors that influence presidential approval suggests that a primary dimension upon which presidents are judged by voters and reflected in approval ratings is

⁵⁰ Foreign Policy Attentiveness is the proportion of people who chose foreign policy as the most important policy area. The source for *Foreign Policy Salience* is the Gallup Poll.

economic performance (Lewis-Beck 1988, Mueller 1973, Anderson 1995). Leaders in office during good economic times are viewed more positively by voters than their counterparts who are in office during economic decline. Therefore, an important control variable in modeling the effect of a mediator's rank on presidential approval is a measure of economic performance. I use three different measures of economic performance in different models. The first measure, *GDP growth*, is the quarterly rate of growth in the US gross domestic product.⁵¹ In subsequent models, I measure economic performance with the variables *inflation* and *unemployment*, respectively. *Inflation* is the quarterly change in the US consumer price index and *unemployment* is the quarterly average level of unemployment in the US workforce.⁵²

In addition, I control for war. *War* captures US war involvement and is coded with a "1" for each of the quarters corresponding with the Korea, Vietnam, and first Gulf War conflicts. War is thought to reduce the number of available resources that a president has at his disposal to commit to a mediation effort. Additionally, it is unlikely that a president will personally mediate a conflict involving two other parties during a time of war. Instead, his focus will be on fighting the war and attempting to manage the risks and costs associated with that conflict. However, lower-level mediators may be employed during these times. In terms of presidential approval, support for the president is likely to be higher during times of war than during peace time.

⁵¹The source for *GDP* is the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (retrieved from www.bea.gov).

⁵² The source for both *inflation* and *unemployment* is the Bureau of Labor Statistics (retrieved from www.bls.gov).

Divided Government is a dichotomous variable that is coded with a 1 if either of the houses of Congress is controlled by the opposing party to the president's. Divided government is likely to play a role in the overall calculation of presidential approval due to the fact that Congress is thought to be a check on the president's ability to successfully make policy, although this is argued above to be less effective toward matters of foreign policy (Howell and Pevehouse 2005, Schultz 1998). Thus, presidential approval is likely to be lower when there is divided government.

Estimation Techniques for Chapter 6

The effect of mediator rank on presidential approval is analyzed using a Prais-Winsten GLS regression model with semi-robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration.⁵³ Because the dependent variable, *Approval*, is measured across time, the presence of autocorrelation is likely. As signified by a significant spike in the first lag of its partial autocorrelation function, the variable exhibits first order autocorrelations. (3.1) The AR(1) specification of the Prais-Winsten estimator corrects for first order autocorrelation.

Hypothesis 4b, which employs a multiplicative interaction term should be interpreted graphically as discussed above in the section discussing interpretation of interaction terms for Chapters 4 and 5.

Conclusion and Research Process

In this chapter I have discussed my rationale for using the ICM dataset and have described the nature of the key variables that I use to test the hypotheses. Additionally I

⁵³ Clustering standard errors on presidential administrations corrects for different average levels of presidential approval across administrations (see Zorn 2001).

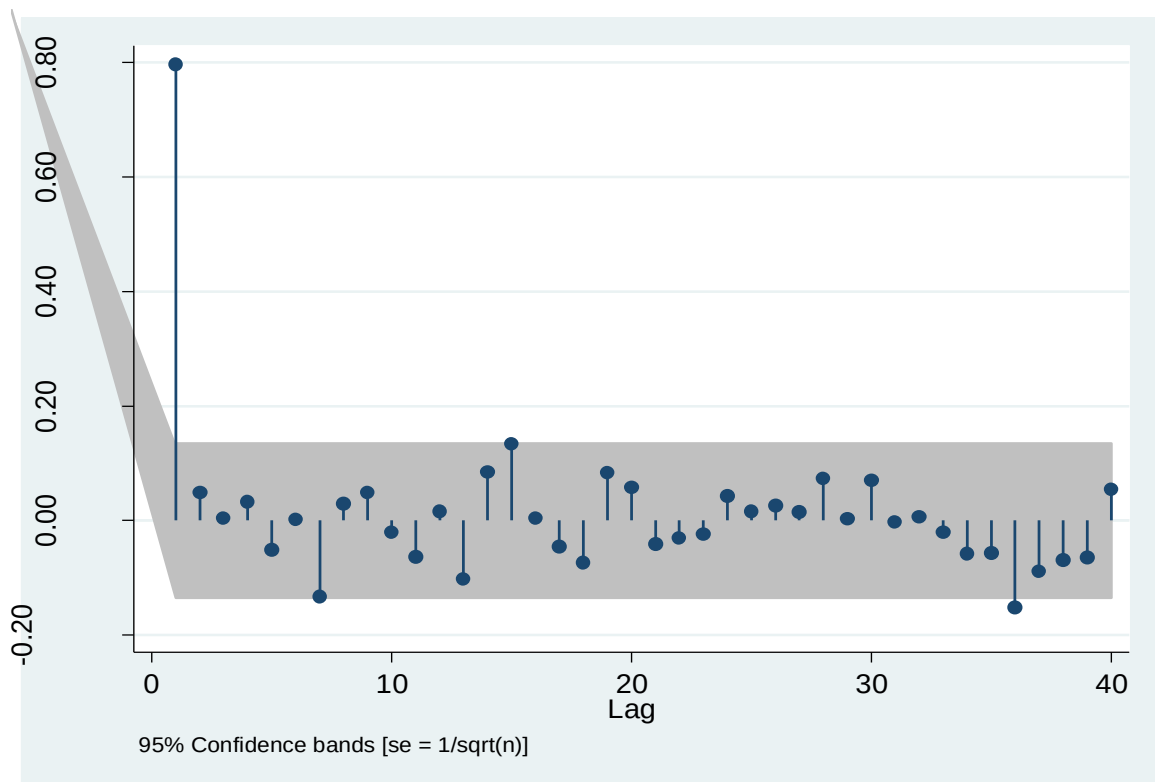


Figure 3.1: Partial Auto-correlation Function for Presidential Approval

have discussed the statistical techniques that I use to measure each dependent variable. In the next three chapters, I revisit the arguments behind the hypotheses and then present the results from regression analyses and discuss the implications of such results.

Chapter 4: Domestic Performance and Diplomacy

In this chapter, I report and discuss the results from models testing hypotheses concerning the effects of domestic performance and legislative configurations on mediation behavior. Operating under the assumption that presidents seek to further their own domestic political fortunes and those of their party, they should be seen seeking to build a record of policy successes (Neustadt 1960). Domestic policy is thought to be the most efficient method through which leaders can achieve such a success. However, passing domestic legislation requires the support of congress. If congress is made up of a majority of members from an opposing political party, it has incentives to block the president from achieving such successes. In these situations, where the president's primary avenue for addressing poor domestic performance is essentially blocked, presidents should be seen seeking to portray themselves as competent managers of complex political phenomena that do not require the stamp of Congress. Thus, it has been hypothesized that US Presidents have incentives to seek out opportunities to mediate overseas conflicts when poor domestic performance necessitates a policy victory, but legislative configurations, mainly an opposition Congress, make the passage of legislation difficult. Because mediation has the potential to be a high reward endeavor that incurs minimal risks, relative to other available policy options, it should be an attractive policy choice. In addition, under such circumstances, presidents should be seen mediating in ways most likely to garner ample media attention, in order to increase the extent to which he benefits publicly from such actions, and in ways most likely to yield a short-term settlement.

Economic Performance and Mediation

Hypothesis 1a contends that as economic performance declines and in the presence of an opposition congress, presidents should seek to engage in more mediation attempts. This proposition is first tested in Models 4.1 and 4.2, shown in Table 4.1, using the proportion of the president's co-partisan's in congress as a measures of the president's ability to pass legislation. Model 4.1 shows the effects of both GDP growth and the partisan composition of congress on the number of US mediations undertaken, independent of one another. With all other variables held equal, the negative binomial estimates show that, on average, GDP growth has a negative and statistically significant effect on the number of new mediations attempted. Partisan support in congress has a positive and statistically significant effect on the number of new mediations. This finding suggests that presidents see political value in engaging in mediation when the economy is performing poorly, independent of their ability to move legislation through congress. It confirms the notion that the president seeks to demonstrate managerial competence. Additionally, the model suggests that presidents who enjoy broad support in congress are able to focus on diplomacy. Such findings are also consistent with research suggesting that congress acts as a constraint on the president's foreign policy behavior (Schultz 2001; Tsebelis 1995; Mayer 2001). However, the two findings taken together pose an interesting question: if domestic policy avenues are available to presidents, why would they focus on diplomacy? Since diplomacy is likely to pay smaller political dividends than domestic policy, it would seem rational for the president to focus on domestic policy if available.

Table 4.1: Effects on GDP growth on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.1	4.2
GDP Growth	-0.025 (0.009)***	-0.007 (0.048)
Partisan Support in Congress	2.531 (0.730)***	2.661 (0.821)***
GDP Growth x Partisan Support in Congress	_____	-0.037 (0.096)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	-0.004 (0.048)	0.004 (0.048)
War	-0.622 (0.187)***	-0.618 (0.185)***
Election Year	-0.087 (0.259)	-0.092 (0.261)
Approval	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.007)
World Disputes	0.025 (0.025)	0.025 (0.025)
Constant	-0.442 (0.474)	-0.410 (0.447)
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

The control variables in the model function largely as expected. Uses of force, short of war, do not have a statistically significant effect on the number of mediations initiated. However, quarters in which the US is at war, significantly fewer new mediation attempts are undertaken. Because the president is likely to be focusing his efforts on winning a longer-term conflict, which likely has high stakes for his political longevity, he is less apt to seek out third-party mediation as a way to demonstrate his managerial competence. Similarly, the president's approval rating is shown to have no statistically significant effect on the number of mediations undertaken. Such a result, coupled with the negative effect of GDP growth, suggests that presidents may seek to use diplomacy to address poor domestic conditions that will negatively affect him at the ballot box, independently of his ability to move legislation through congress. Moreover, the lack of correlation between approval and mediation, along with the presence of the negative correlation between GDP growth and mediation, suggests that the president is attempting to address poor performance, rather than merely divert public attention from scandals or other reputation damaging behavior. On a related note, the president is not more likely to engage in more mediation attempts in election years in order to engineer policy successes that might help him in the upcoming election.

Finally, perhaps the most interesting of the null findings involves the number of ongoing disputes, which can be viewed as opportunities to engage in mediation. Specifically, as the number of opportunities to mediate increases, the president is no more likely to engage in more mediation attempts. This result implies that the president and his administration are focusing mediation attempts strategically, likely on those conflicts

in which diplomatic success would yield the greatest domestic political benefit.⁵⁴ Conventional wisdom suggests that president would focus his attention on domestic policy to remedy the negative effects of poor GDP growth. However, these results suggest that diplomacy is not necessarily a less preferred policy option for presidents seeking to sure up their domestic political fortunes than domestic policy itself.

Model 4.2 shows the negative binomial estimates testing the conditional relationship. Because interaction terms are most easily interpreted graphically, the marginal effects of Partisan Support in Congress on GDP Growth are plotted in Figure 4.1, along with 90% confidence intervals. For values of Partisan Support in Congress from roughly 40 to 65%, the effect of GDP growth on the number of new mediations attempted is both negative and statistically significant. Thus, it can be argued that when the president has less than a majority of his co-partisans in congress, a declining economy is likely to induce the administration to engage in more mediation attempts. While the results in Figure 4.1 suggest some support for hypothesis 1a, they do not completely conform as expected. First, given the weak-link justification for using the percentage of the presidents co-partisans that is the smaller of the two houses of congress,⁵⁵ it should not be expected that a president has incentives to engage in more mediation attempts for values of the variable up to 65%. According to the model, when each house of congress is made up of at least 65% of the president's co-partisans, declining economic growth should induce the administration to attempt more mediation. However, with 65% support

⁵⁴ Because such a finding is widespread throughout my analysis, I discuss its implications in greater detail in the concluding chapter.

⁵⁵ The weakest-link justification contends that because legislation must pass both houses of congress to become law, the house with the fewer of the president's co-partisans is where legislation is likely to be blocked by the opposition. Thus, the value for the house of congress containing fewer of the president's co-partisans is used.

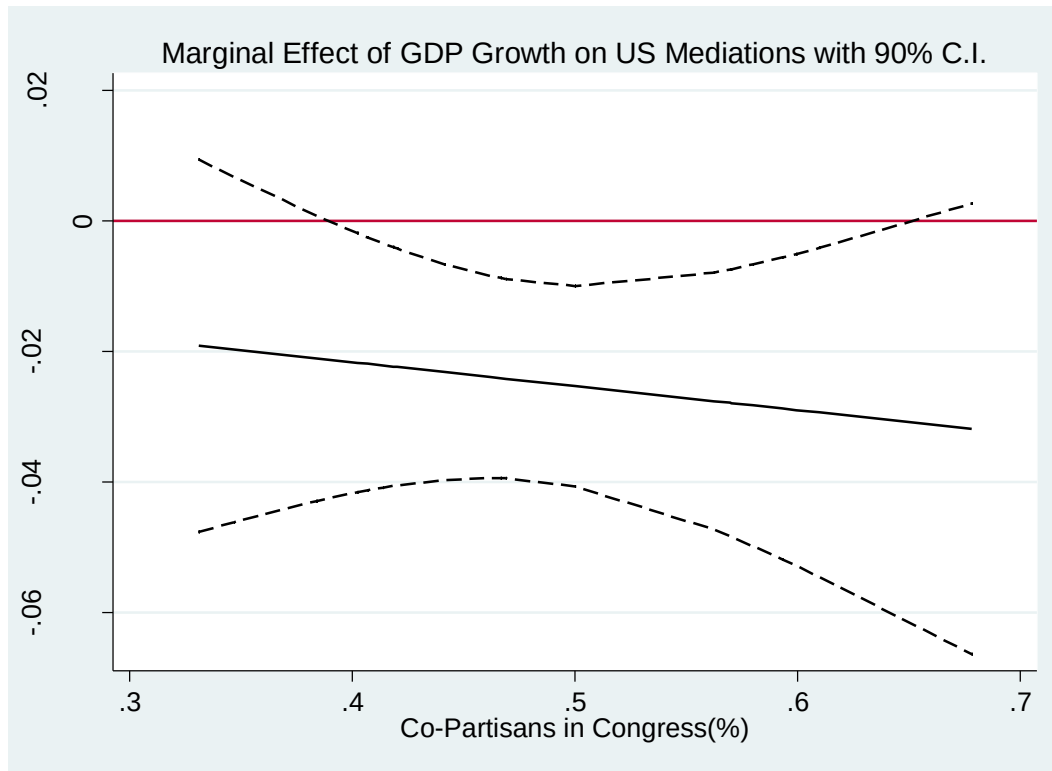


Figure 4.1: Effects on GDP growth on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

from co-partisans in both houses of congress, the president should have more than sufficient capabilities to pass legislation that directly addresses poor economic performance and should not have to rely on the use of diplomacy to demonstrate competence as a leader. However, given that Model 4.1 suggests that presidents engage in more mediations when confronting poor economic performance, independent of congressional support, the conditioning effect of congress shown here may be less important.

A second peculiarity is the slope associated with partisan support's conditioning effect. Higher levels of partisan support in congress, according to policy availability theory, should decrease the extent to which a declining economy creates incentives for mediation. However, in Figure 4.1, the slope of the conditioning effect declines as partisan support in congress increases, calling into question the extent to which the model supports Hypothesis 1a.

Scholars have argued, however, that the simple measure of partisan support in congress does not accurately reflect the president's ability to pass legislation efficiently. As such, I employ two other, more refined measures of divided government that should represent the president's ability to move legislation through congress more accurately: Cohesive Partisan Support and the Presidential Success Score.

The variable Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress, takes into account the extent to which the president's co-partisans are likely to vote along with him. As previously discussed, Fleischer and Bond (1990) point out that southern Democrats in congress routinely voted against the policy initiatives of democratic presidents, thus limiting their abilities to move legislation despite having a legislative majority. In addition, a cohesive

opposition has incentives to block presidential initiatives and the power to do so (e.g., Fleisher and Bond 2000; Fiorina 1992). Thus, such a measure should more accurately demonstrate the extent to which the president can move legislation through Congress.

Models 4.3 and 4.4 (See Table 4.2) show the statistical results testing Hypothesis 1a using the Cohesive Partisan Support variable. In Model 4.3, which, like model 4.1 above, does not consider the conditioning effect of congress, GDP growth is inversely correlated with the number of new mediation attempts. Cohesive partisan support is positively correlated with new mediation attempts. Taken together, these results suggest, as argued above, that presidents are seen focusing on mediation more when the economy is performing poorly, but also when they enjoy a broad base of congressional support. Thus, the use of such policy options to address declining economic performances, under such conditions, is likely, but not likely to be conditioned by congress, which is contrary to hypothesis 1a.

Model 4.4, like Model 4.2 above, considers the conditioning effect that Congress is hypothesized to have on presidential incentives to engage in mediation. The marginal effects of Cohesive Partisan Support are graphed in Figure 4.2 with a 90% confidence interval. The results support Hypothesis 1a, in that where the president enjoys lower levels of cohesive partisan support in Congress, the effect of GDP growth is negative and statistically significant. Additionally, the slope of the marginal effects curve behaves largely as expected, becoming less negative as Cohesive Partisan Support increases. However, the slope remains negative and significant for higher values of Cohesive Partisan Support than the hypothesis suggests. Although the marginal effects curve

Table 4.2: Effects on GDP growth on US Mediations, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.3	4.4
GDP Growth	-0.022 (0.009)***	-0.007 (0.048)
Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	0.014 (0.005)***	2.661 (0.821)***
GDP Growth x Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	_____	-0.037 (0.096)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	-0.006 (0.048)	0.004 (0.048)
War	-0.615 (0.160)***	-0.618 (0.185)***
Election Year	-0.107 (0.273)	-0.092 (0.261)
Approval	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.007)
World Disputes	0.028 (0.025)	0.025 (0.025)
Constant	0.805 (0.481)	-0.410 (0.447)
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

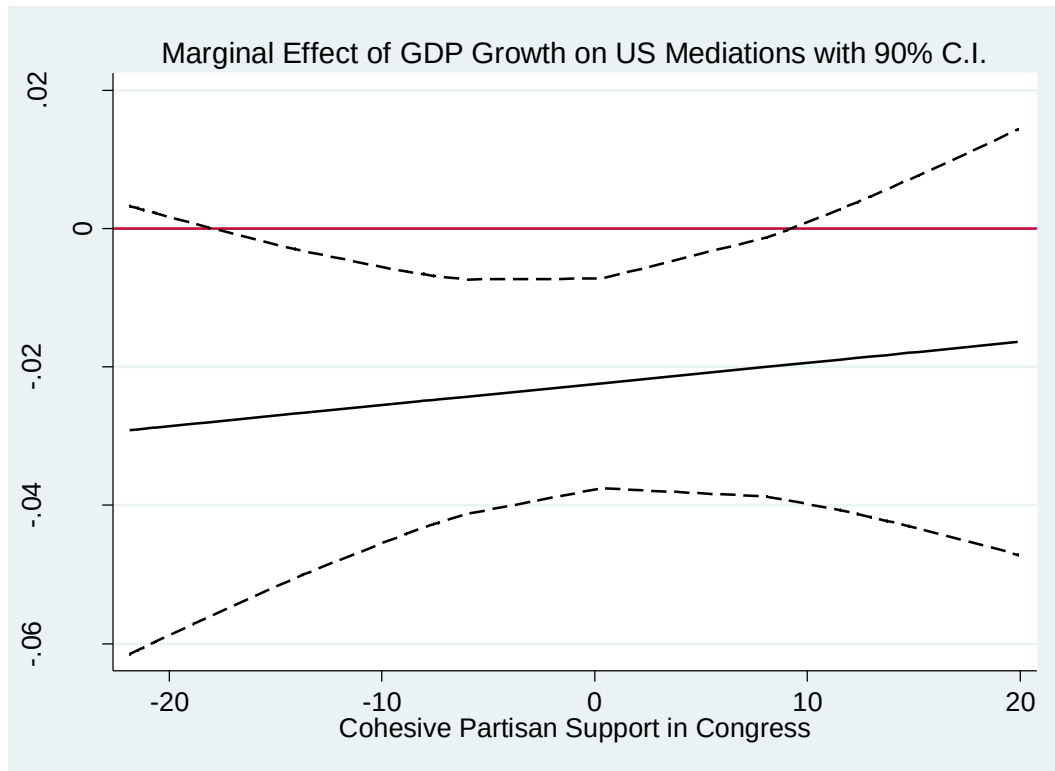


Figure 4.2: Effects of GDP Growth on US Mediations, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

becomes statistically insignificant for extreme high values of Cohesive Partisan Support, the models shows an inverse effect on GDP Growth where the president would likely have the ability to move legislation through Congress. Therefore, the results suggest a limited level of support for Hypothesis 1a, although ambiguities about its validity remain.

Finally, I test Hypothesis 1a using the presidential success score, which is the percentage of roll call votes in Congress that concurred with the president's opinion. This measure is a fairly direct way of measuring the president's ability to move legislation efficiently and scholars have suggested that is perhaps the most appropriate measure to use when examining the presidential incentives to focus on foreign policy (see Marshall and Prins 2011). Similar to the previous two analyses, Model 4.5, which only takes into account the independent effects of GDP growth and presidential success, behaves largely as expected. GDP growth is inversely correlated but has no statistically significant effects on US Mediations; the presidential success score is positively correlated with US Mediations and is statistically significant. These results suggest that, all other variables held equal, presidents and their administrations should be seen mediating overseas conflicts when the economy is performing poorly and when they are able to move legislation through Congress efficiently. Moreover, the control variables behave as expected and in similar ways to those discussed in the models above.

Model 4.6 shows the effect of GDP growth on US Mediations, conditioned by the presidential success score. The marginal effects curve, plotted in figure 4.3, behaves as expected, becoming less negative as values of the presidential success score increase. However, despite the fact that the presidential success score is the most direct measure of the president's ability to move legislation through congress, the model is only statistically

Table 4.3: Effects on GDP growth on US Mediations, Conditioned by Presidential Success in Congress

Independent Variable	4.5	4.6
GDP Growth	-0.011 (0.012)	-0.122 (0.103)
Presidential Success in Congress	0.007 (0.004)**	0.003 (0.005)
GDP Growth x Presidential Success in Congress	_____	0.002 (0.002)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	-0.044 (0.039)	-0.056 (0.046)
War	-0.511 (0.129)***	-0.528 (0.123)***
Election Year	-0.142 (0.293)	-0.110 (0.295)
Approval	-0.011 (0.008)	-0.012 (0.008)
World Disputes	0.024 (0.023)	0.027 (0.023)
Constant	0.651 (0.629)**	1.022 (0.760)*
N	172	172

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

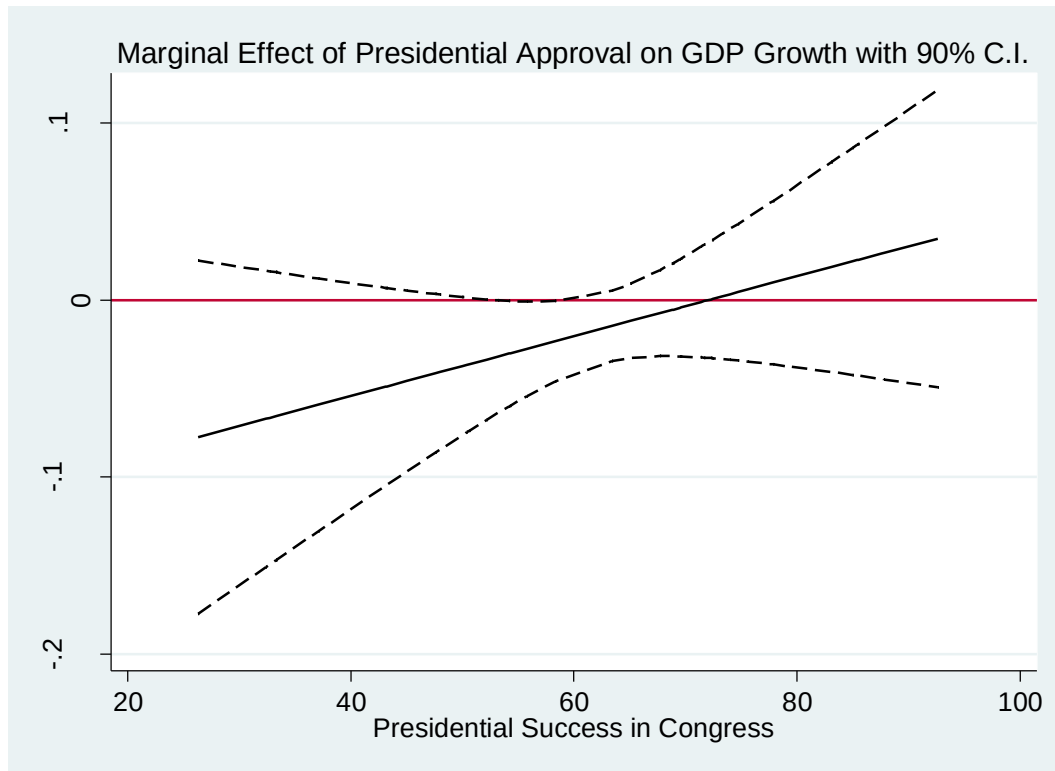


Figure 4.3: Effects of GDP Growth on US Mediations, Conditioned by Presidential Success in Congress

significant for a small range of presidential success score values: roughly 45-55% success. Thus, the results only show limited support for the policy availability argument.

In order to further test the policy availability argument I use two different dependent variables that are designed to better capture the urgency with which a president should seek policy successes when confronted with poor economic performance and an opposition legislature. These dependent variables are mediator rank and mediation strategy. While a quarterly count of mediation attempts captures an administration's level of focus on diplomacy, it might not accurately convey the urgency with which a policy victory is sought. Given the need to engineer a policy success to counter the negative effects of poor economic performance, the president should be seen committing a greater number of resources to mediation. However, a simple count variable treats each mediation attempt as if it is the same and therefore does not capture effort and/or commitment to success. In some ways, an increased number of attempts might actually detract from the urgency with which the president is seeking to show managerial competence, or at least the public's perception thereof, through diplomacy.

In order to magnify the extent to which demonstrating managerial competence is likely to benefit the president, he should attempt to increase the mediation effort's media profile. One way that he can do this is to dispatch higher-ranking mediators, who are likely to command a greater level of media attention. The US Mediator Rank variable is an ordinal variable that codes for the highest ranking mediator employed by the US in a given quarter.⁵⁶ Thus, I posit Hypothesis 1b, which suggests that higher-ranking

⁵⁶ Mediator ranks are divided into four categories based on the level of media attention the mediator is likely to bring to the endeavor. The categories are: 0 = no mediation/ offered only, 1 = low-level

mediators should be dispatched when an administration confronts both poor economic performance and an opposition congress.

Models 4.7 and 4.8, shown in Table 4.4, use ordered logit regression to test Hypothesis 1b. Model 4.7 shows the ordered logit results without the interaction between cohesive partisan support and GDP Growth. It demonstrates a negative and significant correlation between GDP growth and mediator rank. When the president must confront poor economic performance, he should attempt to increase the profile of remedial policies, or, in this case, the substituted policy. Cohesive Partisan Support, though, does not achieve statistical significance in the model. All other controls largely act as expected. War has a negative and significant impact on the rank of mediator, which suggests that the president and his high-level deputies are focusing their attention on winning the war, as losing would cause them to incur high political costs, rather than on diplomacy. Interestingly, however, uses of force short of war are positively correlated with mediator rank and statistically significant, suggesting perhaps that high-ranking mediators are employed as a part of a mixed foreign policy strategy, using both diplomacy and military force. Since the measurement of the dependent variable is an aggregated one, measuring the *highest-ranking* mediator in a given quarter, it is difficult to make this conclusion with much certainty. More precise measures of the dependent variable, as well as a time series-cross sectional data format, which could account for characteristics of the conflict, would help to better clarify the nature of such a relationship.

mediators, 2 = cabinet-level mediators, special envoys, and the vice president, 3 = president as mediator. See chapter 3 for more discussion.

Table 4.4: Effects on GDP growth on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.7	4.8
GDP Growth	-0.049 (0.036)*	-0.042 (0.360)
Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	0.003 (0.014)	0.004 (0.023)
GDP Growth x Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	_____	-0.001 (0.003)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.183 (0.129)*	0.189 (0.129)*
War	-1.092 (0.466)***	-1.020 (0.448)**
Election Year	-0.338 (0.504)	-0.354 (0.474)
Approval	-0.017 (0.018)	-0.018 (0.018)
World Disputes	-0.043 (0.067)	-0.046 (0.069)
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the highest mediator rank per quarter. Negative binomial estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

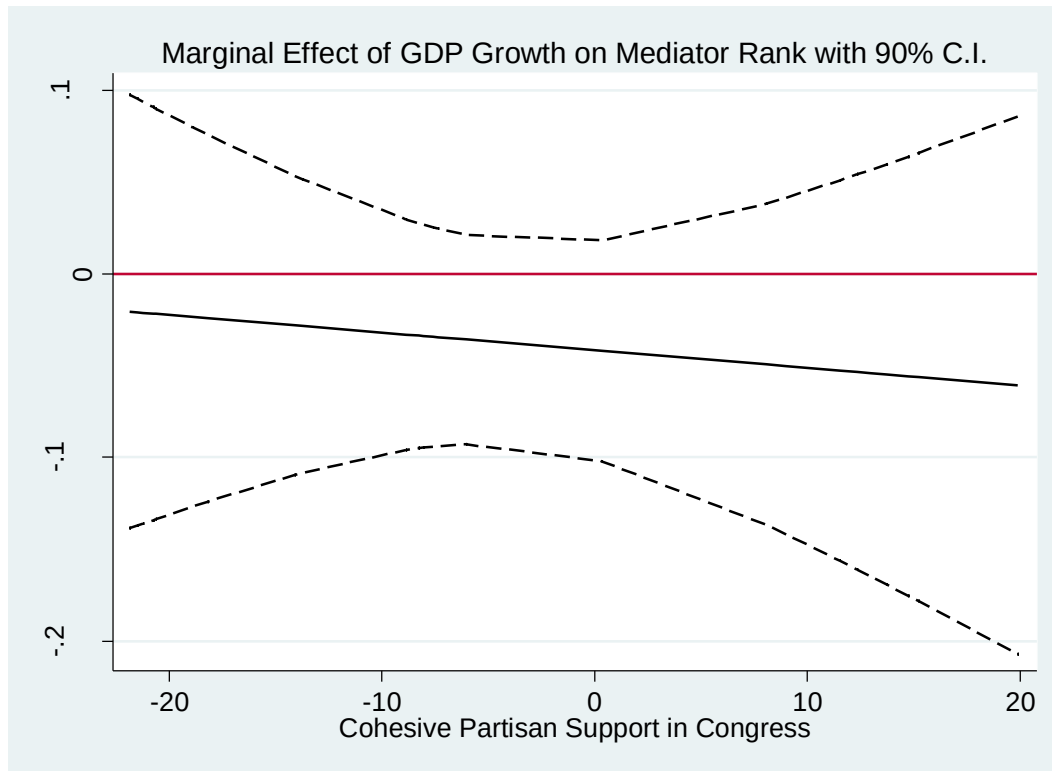


Figure 4.4: Effects of GDP Growth on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

According to the policy availability argument, mediator rank should be negatively associated with GDP growth for low levels of cohesive partisan support in congress. Model 4.8 tests this proposition directly, and the substantive results are shown graphically in Figure 4.4. However, the relationship with GDP Growth is not statistically significant for any value of cohesive partisan support. Such a result suggests no relationship between GDP growth and mediator rank and fails to provide evidence in support of policy availability and policy substitution.⁵⁷

Finally, the third test of the policy availability is done with a variable that captures the highest (most manipulative) strategy undertaken by the United States in a given quarter. Presidents in need of a policy victory to boost their domestic political standing have incentives to commit a greater number of resources to mediation efforts to increase the likelihood of engineering peaceful settlement, at least over the short term. Manipulating the payoffs for the disputing parties should be an appealing way for presidents to induce an agreement quickly and create a policy victory likely to help his domestic political standing.

Hypothesis 1c suggests that when confronted with both poor economic performance and low levels of support in congress, the president should be seen using manipulative mediation strategies. Models 4.9 and 4.10 (See Table 4.5) show the results for ordered logit regression models testing Hypothesis 1c. Both models show no relationship between GDP growth, congressional composition, and mediation strategy.

⁵⁷ In addition to the models presented, I tested the effects of GDP growth on mediator rank with both Partisan Support in Congress and Presidential Success Score as conditioning variables. Neither model showed a statistically significant relationship between key independent variables and mediator rank. Each behaved similar to the model presented above and are therefore, for the sake of brevity, omitted from my discussion.

Table 4.5: Effects on GDP growth on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.9	4.10
GDP Growth	-0.027 (0.041)	-0.019 (0.040)
Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	0.011 (0.012)	0.006 (0.017)
GDP Growth x Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	—	0.0009 (0.003)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.043 (0.112)	0.025 (0.107)
War	-1.158 (0.457)***	-1.150 (0.447)***
Election Year	-0.418 (0.579)	-0.403 (0.559)
Approval	-0.017 (0.015)	-0.019 (0.014)*
World Disputes	-0.038 (0.063)	-0.033 (0.065)
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the highest mediation strategy per quarter. Ordered logit estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

Figure 4.5 shows the conditional effects of cohesive partisan support on GDP growth's effect on mediation strategy. It fails to achieve statistical significance for all values of cohesive partisan support. Therefore, it does not support the policy availability argument, nor does it support the more general managerial competence explanation.⁵⁸

A probable explanation for the lack of support for hypothesis 1c is that manipulative mediations are almost entirely unique to states. Given the unique ability that states have to manipulate in mediation attempts, such strategies are likely used regardless of the president's domestic standing. In the US case, manipulation is the strongest strategy used in roughly 30% of quarters, while information strategies are employed only in only 15% of quarters; formulation strategies are most rare, being the highest strategy employed only 4% of the time (see Table 3.3). Thus, while the ability to engineer a policy success quickly might be appealing to a president, it is unlikely that lesser strategies would have been considered or employed, even if the economy had been performing better.

Presidential Approval and Mediation

While substantial research shows that presidents are judged overwhelmingly on the performance of the economy, a more general measure of his public standing is his job approval rating.⁵⁹ The approval rating captures the aggregate voter sentiment and can explain public dissatisfaction with the president, even when the economy is performing well. Because presidents are thought to want to establish a record of policy successes in

⁵⁸ In addition to the models presented, I tested the effects of GDP growth on mediation strategy with both Partisan Support in Congress and Presidential Success Score as conditioning variables. Neither model showed a statistically significant relationship between key independent variables and mediator rank. Each behaved similar to the model presented above and are therefore, for the sake of brevity, omitted from my discussion

⁵⁹ Gallup asks respondents "How well do you think (insert president's name) is doing as president of the United States?"

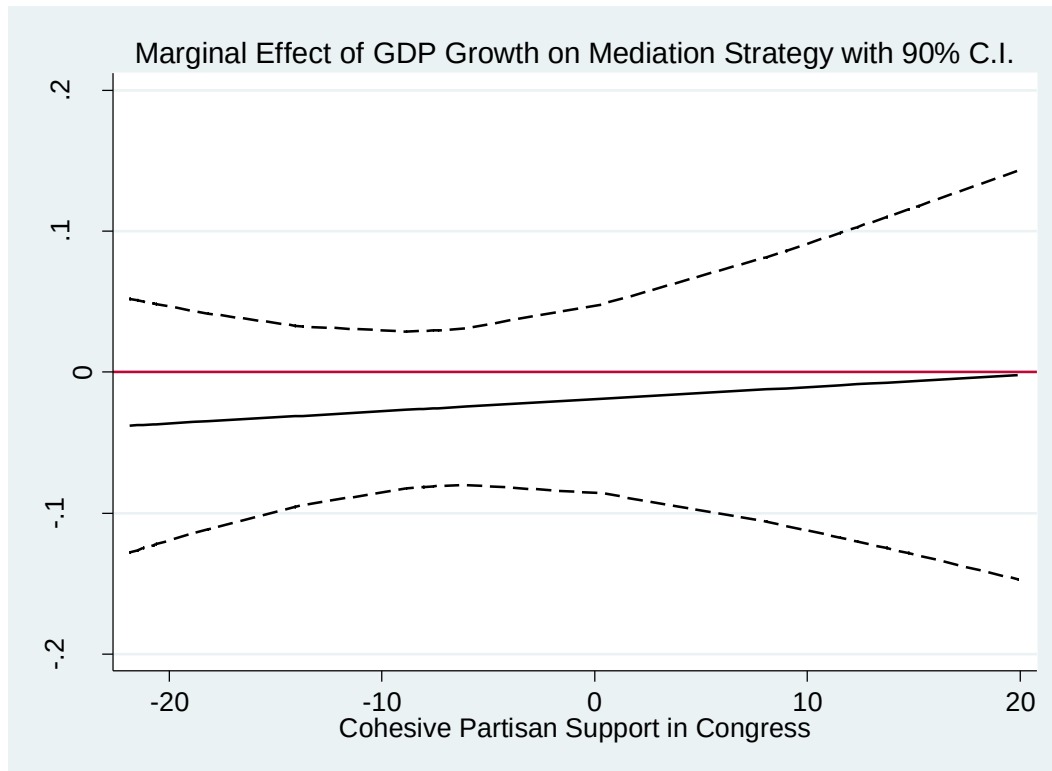


Figure 4.5: Effects of GDP Growth on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

order to boost public approval, mediation is likely to be a low-risk, high-profile policy option when approval numbers are low and congressional opposition makes passing domestic legislation difficult.

Hypothesis 2a concerns the number of US mediations being undertaken in a quarter, which I argue should increase in light of low approval ratings and the presence of an opposition congress. Models 4.11 and 4.12 test this hypothesis; coefficients are reported in Table 4.6. Presidential approval rating has no significant effect on US mediations. The Cohesive Partisan Support Variable has a positive and significant effect on the number of mediations attempted, suggesting, as with the models presented above, that more mediations occur, all other variables held equal, when the president enjoys broad support in Congress. As expected, control variables for war suggest a strong negative and significant effect. Interestingly, this is one of the few models showing GDP growth not having a statistically significant effect on US mediations. Similarly, controls for election year and world disputes have no statistically significant impact. These results suggest that presidents do not see mediation as a way to better their political standing when their approval ratings are low.

Model 4.12 tests the hypothesized conditioning effect of the president's ability to move legislation through congress on presidential approval's effect on US mediations. The results are shown graphically in Figure 4.6, and are inconsistent with the hypothesis. In fact, high levels of presidential success in congress are shown to negatively condition presidential approval's impact on US mediations, while lower levels of presidential

Table 4.6: Effects on Presidential Approval on US Mediations, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.11	4.12
Presidential Approval	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.006)
Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	0.014 (0.005)***	0.036 (1.063)***
Presidential Approval x Partisan Support in Congress	—	-0.024 (0.012)**
Uses of Force (1 lag)	-0.006 (0.048)	-0.0037 (0.049)
War	-0.615 (0.160)***	-0.608 (0.158)***
Election Year	-0.107 (0.273)	-0.103 (0.263)
GDP Growth	-0.023 (0.009)***	-0.021 (0.009)***
World Disputes	0.028 (0.025)	0.022 (0.025)
Constant	0.805 (0.481)**	-0.078 (0.477)**
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

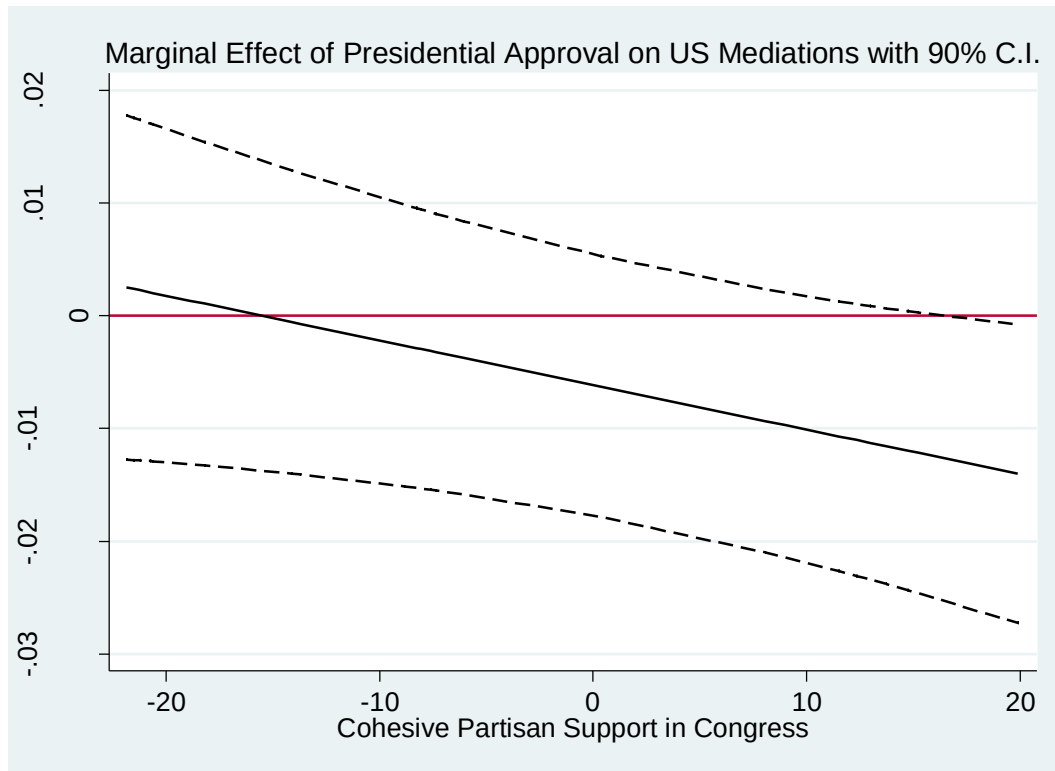


Figure 4.6: Effects of Presidential Approval on US Mediations, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

success have a positive, but statistically insignificant effect—the opposite of what is expected from Hypothesis 2a.⁶⁰

Further tests of presidential approval's effects on mediation behavior are conducted using mediator rank and mediator strategy as dependent variables. Models using the Mediator Rank variable demonstrated some support for the policy availability argument. Models 4.13 and 4.13 show the ordered logit results testing the relationship between presidential approval, cohesive partisan support and mediator rank and are reported in Table 4.7. In Model 4.13, approval is not statistically significant, nor is cohesive partisan support. GDP growth and war are both negatively correlated with mediator rank and statistically significant, which is consistent with the other models presented in this discussion. Model 4.14 tests the conditional relationship between presidential approval and cohesive partisan support in congress. The interaction term is shown graphically in Figure 4.7. The conditioning effect of cohesive partisan support on presidential approval's effect on mediator rank is negative and significant for extreme low levels of cohesive partisan support in congress. Additionally the marginal effects curve behaves as the policy availability argument suggests it will: increasing as cohesive partisan support increases and becoming statistically insignificant once the president has sufficient support in congress to move legislation. Thus, the model shows some support for the policy availability argument. However, as is with the other models presented,

⁶⁰ Results for the models using partisan support in congress and presidential success score are omitted for the purposes of brevity. They behave in the same manner as the models using cohesive partisan support in congress and do not achieve statistical significance.

Table 4.7: Effects on Presidential Approval on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.15	4.16
Approval	-0.017 (0.018)	-0.013 (0.018)
Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	-0.003 (0.014)	-0.135 (0.072)**
Approval x Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress	_____	0.002 (0.001)**
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.183 (0.130)*	0.025 (0.107))
War	-1.092 (0.466)***	-1.08 (0.488)***
Election Year	-0.338 (0.579)	-0.369 (0.414)
GDP Growth	-0.049 (0.036)*	-0.055 (0.037)*
World Disputes	-0.043 (0.067)	-0.060 (0.072)
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the highest mediation strategy per quarter. Ordered logit estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

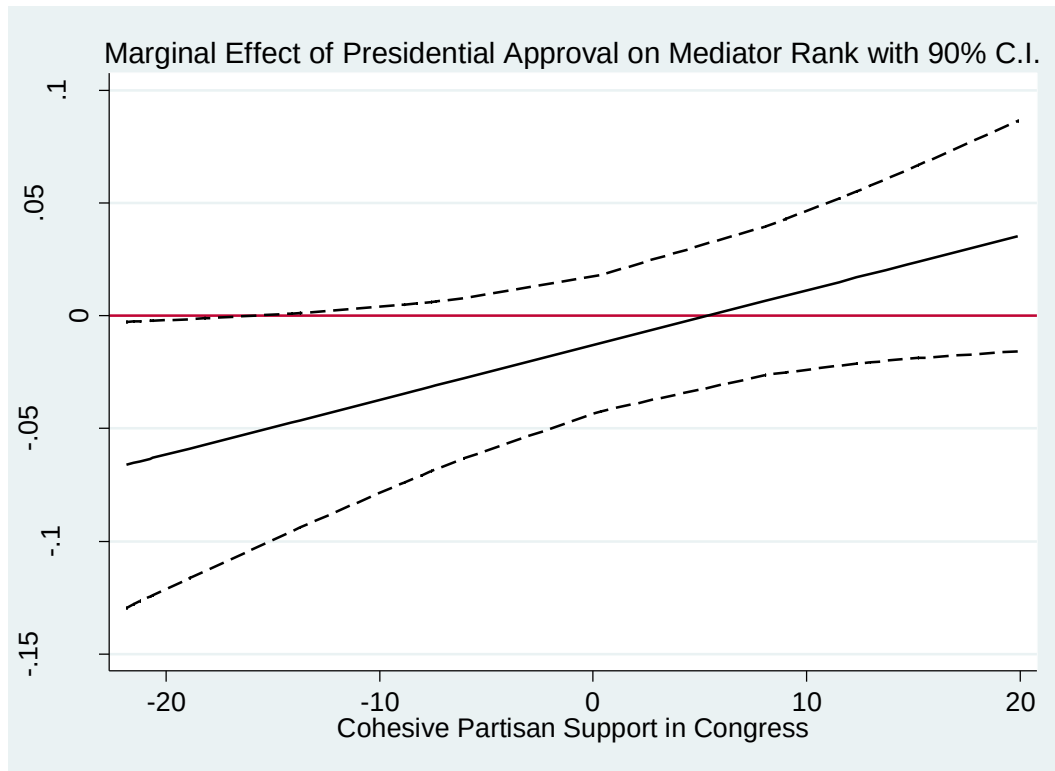


Figure 4.7: Effects of Presidential Approval on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

perhaps the most theoretically salient finding is the negative correlation between GDP growth and mediator rank, independent of cohesive partisan support in congress.⁶¹

Finally, I test the relationship between presidential approval and mediator strategy in model 4.15 and introduce the conditioning effect of cohesive partisan support in model 4.16. Model 4.15 shows no significant variables except for the strong negative effect of war. The conditional effect of cohesive partisan support on presidential approval's influence on mediation strategy behaves as hypothesized. The interaction term is plotted graphically in figure 4.8. For lower values of cohesive partisan support, the effect of presidential approval on mediation strategy is negative and significant, but becomes less negative and statistically insignificant as values of cohesive partisan support increase to where the president has sufficient support in congress to move legislation. These results support the argument that presidents commit more resources to mediation efforts when they are politically vulnerable and do not have the ability to move legislation through congress efficiently.⁶²

Summary and Discussion of Results

By and large, the results presented in this chapter fail to support the primary general hypotheses posited: those expecting evidence of supporting the policy availability argument. Only four of the interaction models testing the conditional relationship between domestic performance and the president's ability to move legislation through congress behaved as expected and thus provided support for the hypothesized

⁶¹ I also examined models using the Partisan Support in Congress and Presidential Success Scores, but failed to obtain statistically significant results.

⁶² I also examined models using partisan support in congress and the presidential success score, but none showed significant results and thus, they are not reported.

Table 4.8: Effects of Presidential Approval on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	4.15	4.16
Presidential Approval	-0.017 (0.0315)	-0.147 (0.016)
Cohesive Partisan Support	-0.111 (2.155)	-0.081 (0.053)
Presidential Approval x Partisan Cohesive Support	—	0.002 (0.001)**
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.043 (0.112)	-0.012 (0.119)
War	-1.158 (0.457)***	-1.148 (0.468)***
Election Year	-0.418 (0.458)	-0.466 (0.561)
GDP Growth	-0.027 (0.041)	-0.034 (0.038)
World Disputes	0.037 (0.063)	-0.049 (0.068)
N	187	187

Note: Dependent variable is the highest mediator strategy per quarter. Negative binomial estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

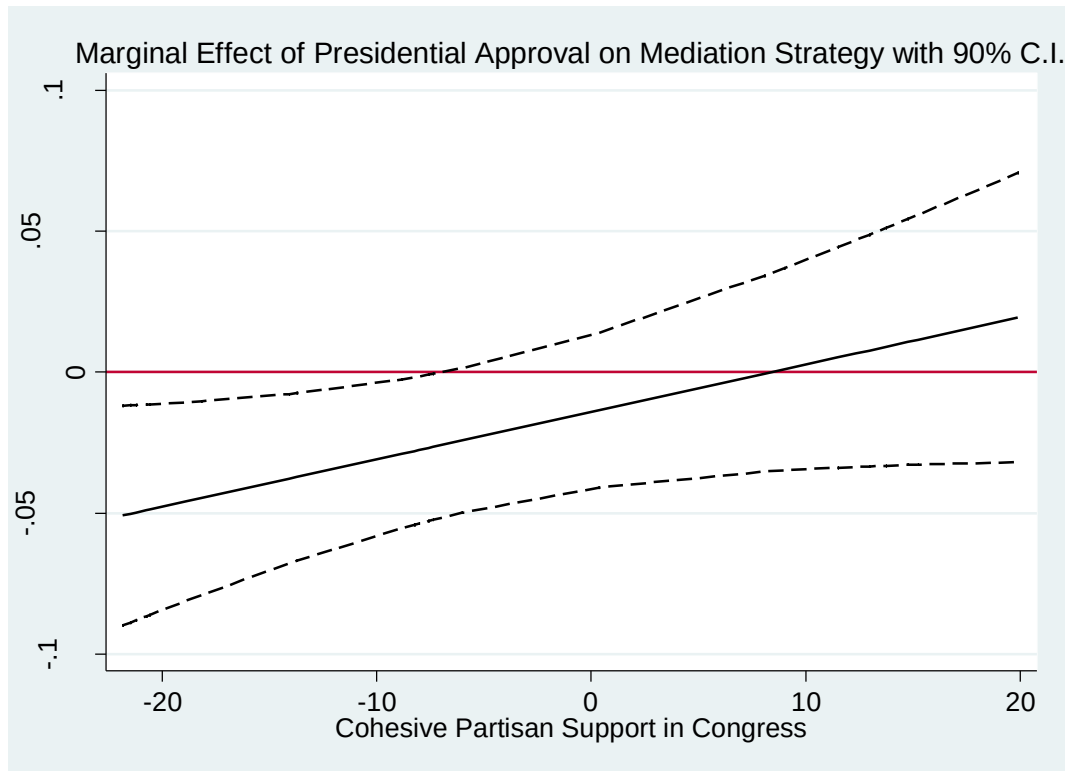


Figure 4.8: Effects of Presidential Approval on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Cohesive Partisan Support in Congress

relationship. Consequently, I can only contend that there is limited empirical support for the policy availability argument as an explanation for why we see variation in the focus on and level of commitment to conflict mediation across time.

The notion that mediation behavior is influenced by domestic politics is well supported, however, as is the managerial competence explanation for the political use of foreign policy. In the models where the individual effects of GDP growth and congressional support are measured independently of one another, the relationship between GDP growth and the number of new mediations and the relationship between GDP growth and mediator rank are negative in all model specifications. Accordingly, there is support for the argument that presidents engage in a higher volume of mediations in response to a poorly performing economy and use higher-ranking mediators to give the efforts a high media profile, with the aim of demonstrating their ability to competently manage complex international events and thereby improve their standing with the public.

However, results showing that presidents engage in more mediation efforts, independently of congressional support, in response to poor economic performance bring up the question of why presidents choose to focus on foreign policy in response to poor economic performance when passing legislation that directly addresses the source of such poor performance is an available policy option. Such a question cannot be directly addressed with the results presented in this chapter. The models without an interaction term, which consistently show this negative and significant relationship, do not suggest that the president and his administration are not trying to pass domestic legislation as well as focus on mediation.

One potential explanation for why leaders would focus on mediation as well as domestic legislation that directly addresses the sources of poor economic performance or otherwise seeks to remediate it is that the different policy options have different time frames over which they pay off politically. For instance, legislation aimed at boosting the economy might take some time to take root and thus the political benefits thereof would likely be delayed, although they might be more durable, improving the president's political standing over the long term. Mediation, however, may function as a bridge in these circumstances helping to boost the president's domestic standing in the short term. Lian and Oneal (1993) argue that diversionary uses of force often create short-term spikes in the president's approval rating, but that those increases regress to the mean within a few months. Perhaps the same can be said of mediation behavior, which, given its high profile and low threshold for success, is more likely to provide quicker improvements to the president's domestic political standing, even if they are smaller and less durable over the long term. Thus, any subsequent research should attempt to control for the volume of domestic legislation being pursued by the president as he pursues mediation.

An additional interesting finding suggests that the makeup of congress may also work as a constraint on the ability to pursue foreign policy initiatives. Given the robust positive and significant coefficients describing the influence of congressional makeup on mediation behavior, it appears that the president is less likely to engage in mediations or attempt to increase the level of attention paid to them at times when he lacks ample support in congress. This result is consistent with Howell and Pevehouse's "party cover"

argument, which suggests that in order for the president to be able to engage in foreign policy for political gain he must have sufficient “cover” from co-partisans in congress. Thus, such a finding could be attributed to the fact that mediation does not directly address the sources of poor economic performance, something which a strong opposition is likely to point out and criticize.

A final interesting finding presented in the models is the consistently insignificant coefficient for world disputes. This result is important because it suggests that the president is not simply seeking to mediate any conflict, as there is no variation in the president’s propensity to engage in mediation based on the number of opportunities to do so. We can thereby infer that, it is likely that the president and his administration are not only choosing when and how to get involved in mediation, but where. Therefore, some account of which conflicts the president is most likely to benefit from mediating should be incorporated into further research. This ability would also allow for finer examination of mediation behavior than the rather blunt measures used here allow.

In sum, I find strong support for the managerial competence explanation for the political use of foreign policy to address declining economic performance. On average, presidents engage in more mediation attempts, as well as mediate in a more high-profile fashion, when GDP growth is low. I also find limited support for the policy availability explanation, which argues that, on average, presidents engage in mediation behavior in order to offset the negative political effects of poor economic performance when an opposition congress is likely to make passing legislation difficult. To a lesser extent, I

find empirical support for the policy availability argument as it pertains to declining presidential approval ratings and mediation.

Chapter 5: Election Cycles and Mediation

The policy availability research agenda has focused primarily on presidential vulnerability due to poor domestic performance, arguing that presidents are limited in the policy options available to address such poor performance when an opposition congress can block the passage of legislation. However, in democracies, elections are a built-in vulnerability that presidents must contend with at regular intervals. Thus, it can be argued that as elections near, presidents should seek to build and highlight a record of policy successes in order to be re-elected, or, when they are term-limited, help secure election for a co-partisan. Presidents should seek to build such a record through passing legislation. However, such endeavors can be difficult or inefficient when an opposition congress can hold up or block the president's initiatives. Because the president faces time constraints, namely the need to establish his record of successes before the election, he has incentives to circumvent congress by focusing on foreign policy, an area in which he enjoys a greater deal of autonomy.

Research on diversionary conflict has shown that the president can seek to better his standing with the public through the use of military force (Levy 1989; Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Brulé 2006). However, the use of military force is risky. Presidents who lose military conflicts are almost certain to be removed from office and the costs of winning can be high, in terms of loss of life, controversy of motives, etc. To this end, Gaubatz (1991) has shown that presidents shy away from military conflict as their tenures in office progress, a trend that he argues occurs because presidents fear punishment at the ballot box. So, as elections near, they become more risk averse, seeking policy options that are less risky, even if the potential political reward is lower as

well. Because an opposition congress serves as a check on the president's ability to pass legislation, however, there may come times when the president needs to engineer a policy victory, but cannot move bills through congress and does not want to risk military conflict because of nearing elections. I argue that mediation of overseas conflict should be an attractive substitutable policy option confronting such situations.

Testing such a proposition presents several challenges, as creating a theoretically justified measure of when elections are likely to incentivize foreign policy behavior is difficult. On one hand, presidents have incentives to engage in mediation as elections near, but, on the other, there are great incentives to be focusing on direct campaigning, especially in the last few months leading up to an election. To address this ambiguity, I employ several measures of the election cycle that are designed to capture windows of time in which the administration is most likely to attempt to use mediation to boost their electoral fortunes.

First, I employ the bluntest measure of the election cycle, the election-year dummy variable. Each quarter of a presidential *election year* is coded as "1." This measure captures the notion that parties and presidential administrations focus an inordinate amount of their time on elections in the year leading up to it. Additionally, I use a similar dummy variable for *re-election year*, coding "1" for each quarter of presidential election years in which the incumbent is running for re-election. However, it can be argued that the "year" is an arbitrary measure, and that, in fact, parties and administrations begin campaigning earlier. As such, the second measure that I employ, *campaign cycle*, extends the election cycle to the final two quarters of the year prior to the election or re-election. Then, a third measure, *election countdown*, employed in

studies examining the relationship between elections and the use of force, counts down the number of quarters from one election to the next, beginning at quarter 15, the quarter after the election and in which the president takes office and counting down to zero. While none of these measures can perfectly capture when the president is likely to seek mediation as a policy option, relative to the elections, each captures theoretically plausible scenarios that are easily testable.

Elections and Mediation Attempts

To test Hypothesis 3a, I employ negative binomial regression and the *US Mediations* variable, which counts the number of US mediation attempts begun in a given quarter as the dependent variable. I use, *Partisan Support in Congress*, *Cohesive Partisan Support*, and *Presidential Success Score* in separate models to measure the president's ability to move legislation through congress.

The influence of elections on mediation conditioned by congressional support is assessed using negative binomial regression. Table 5.1 shows the negative binomial estimates for the relationships between the congressional conditions, the election cycle, and U.S. mediation efforts across quarters from 1945-1995. Models 5.1, and 5.2 assess the effect of all presidential elections on the number US mediations initiated per quarter. Model 5.2 contains a multiplicative interaction term, which is plotted graphically in Figure 5.1. Model 5.1 shows that the election year variable has no statistically significant effect on the number new mediation efforts made in a given quarter. However, the effect of partisan support in congress is positive and significant, supporting Howell and Pevehouse's (2007) party cover conjecture. This conjecture suggests that the president is able to focus on foreign policy because of the high level of support he enjoys in congress.

Table 5.1: Effects on Elections on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4
Election Year	-0.084 (0.259)	1.689 (0.951)***	—	—
Re-election Year	—	—	0.070 (0.257)	1.768** (0.783)
Partisan Support in Congress	2.447 (0.755)***	3.251 (1.01)***	2.562 (0.730)***	3.180 (0.871)***
Election Year x Partisan Support in Congress	—	-3.856 (1.792)***	—	—
Re-election Year x Partisan Support in Cong.	—	—	—	-3.690 (1.671)**
Uses of Force (1 lag)	-0.002 (0.028)	0.007 (0.035)	-0.005 (0.024)	0.005 (0.030)
War	-0.612 (-0.618)	-0.570 (0.194)***	-0.619 (0.205)***	-0.620 (0.211)***
GDP Growth	-0.023 (0.009)***	-0.028 (0.009)***	-0.023 (0.009)***	-0.029 (0.010)***
Approval	-0.007 (0.007)	-0.007 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.006 (0.010)
World Disputes	0.027 (0.026)	0.026 (0.026)	0.027 (0.027)	0.028 (0.027)
Constant	-0.397 (0.446)	-0.788 (0.591)*	-0.494 (0.387)*	-0.852 (0.508)***
N	188	188	188	188

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (*p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

As a result, congress's constraint on presidential action is decreased, as is the opposition's ability to substantively criticize the policy choices. Additionally, controls war and GDP growth are negatively correlated and significant, as expected. The results suggest that, independently of one another, election years have no significant effect on the number of new US mediations undertaken, while the level of partisan support in congress that the president enjoys has a strong positive influence.

Model 5.2 shows the results of the interacted model, testing the extent to which the president's partisan support in congress conditions his decisions to seek out and engage in mediation in election years. While the signs of the coefficients act as expected and the significance level of the interaction term appears to support the hypothesis, the levels of certainty calculated with the interaction terms' coefficients and their associated standard errors are unsuitable for testing hypotheses about marginal effects (e.g., Kam and Franzese 2005; Brambor, Clark and Golder 2006). In order to properly assess statistical significance, I plotted the marginal effects of elections and re-elections along with upper and lower 90% confidence levels across the range of the presidential success variable. Figure 5.1 shows the effect of election years conditioned by the president's level of partisan support in congress. The level of partisan support at which the upper bound of the 90% confidence interval does not cross the zero line indicates that the marginal effect of the election year is negative and significant when the president has roughly 50% partisan support in congress. Such a result is indirectly supportive of the hypothesis because presidents enjoying broad congressional support do not need to rely on mediation for policy success. However, for values of the partisan support that are lower than roughly 45%, the coefficients are positive, but decreasing, which is supportive

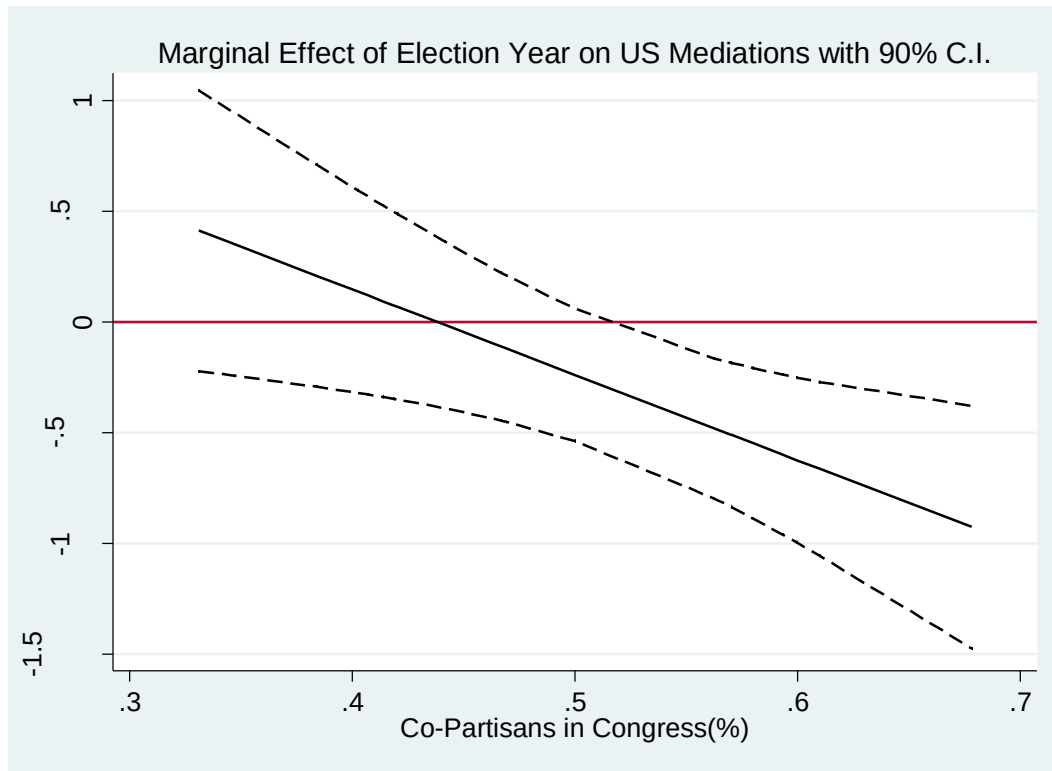


Figure 5.1: Effects of Election Year on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

of the hypothesis—but because the 90% confidence intervals cross zero, they are not statistically significant and thus cannot be shown to support the argument. These results demonstrate limited and indirect support for the policy availability argument because, while presidents are not seen engaging in more mediation attempts during election years because they lack partisan support in congress, presidents enjoying broad partisan support in congress engage in fewer mediations.

Stronger support for the argument exists in Models 5.3 and 5.4, the latter of which is shown graphically in Figure 5.2, which tests the argument using only the presidential elections in which the incumbent president is running for re-election. Model 5.3 behaves as expected, with re-election year having no independent effect on the number of US mediations attempted. Control variables behave largely as expected with war and GDP growth showing negative and significant effects. Model 5.4, which tests the conditional effects of partisan support in congress on the president's propensity to seek out and engage in third-party mediation in re-election years, shows support for the policy availability argument. Figure 5.2 shows that, consistent with Hypothesis 3a, the effect of elections is positive and significant for low levels of partisan support in congress (roughly 40% and below). Thus presidents who lack broad congressional support are likely to seek out mediation when running for re-election. Additionally, similar to Model 5.2, presidents who have broad support in Congress do not use mediation when running for re-election, as demonstrated by the negative and significant values of the marginal effects curve for levels of congressional support greater than roughly 65%.⁶³

⁶³ Hypothesis 2a was also tested using Cohesive Partisan Support and the Presidential Success Score. The results are not reported for purposes of brevity. Results are supportive of Hypothesis 2a, nearly identical to the results shown here.

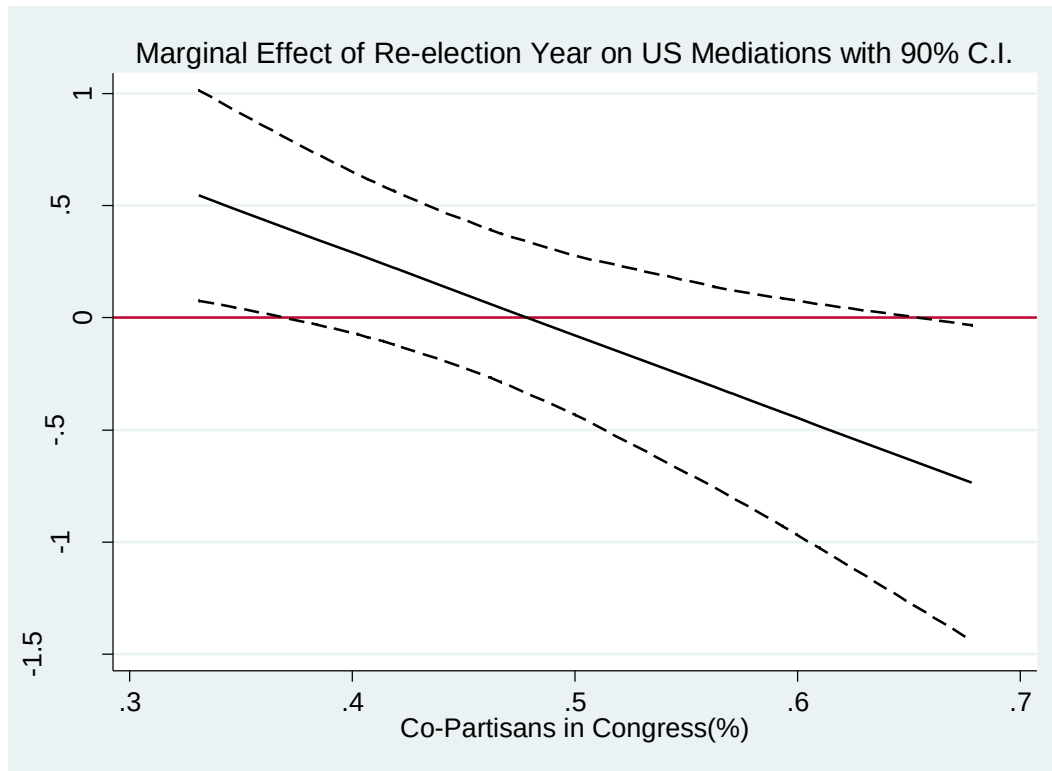


Figure 5.2: Effects of Re-election Year on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

The presence of significant results in the model using only re-election years, along with the lack thereof in the model using only elections, suggests that presidents running for re-election seek to use their incumbency advantage to secure re-election by engaging in diplomacy, which challengers are not able to do. Thus, while it can be argued that presidents seek to establish a record of policy successes in order to better their electoral fortunes and those of their party, the empirical results suggest that they do so with a greater eye toward their own electoral fortunes.⁶⁴

Because the election year and re-election year may not accurately capture the period of time in which the president is seeking to shore up domestic support through foreign policy initiatives before turning his focus to campaigning for re-election I employ the two other measures of the election cycle discussed above and in Chapter 3. The results for models using the *Campaign Cycle* variable, which codes a “1” for the final six quarters of the presidential term, behave almost identically to those using the election year and re-election year dummy variables.⁶⁵

The *Election Countdown* variable which counts down the number of quarters until the next election shows that partisan support in congress has a positive and significant effect on the election cycle’s influence on the number of new mediation attempts made in a given quarter. The results, which are reported in Table 5.2 (Models 5.5 and 5.6), show

⁶⁴ It should be noted that President Bill Clinton’s lame duck attempt at mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is outside the data period of the ICM dataset and thus not included in these models. Given that the Clinton administration made a concerted effort at mediating this conflict, while facing strong opposition in congress and knowing he would not for re-election, the results of these models could be different with more current data.

⁶⁵ For purposes of brevity, these results are not reported.

Table 5.2: Effects of Time Until Elections on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	5.5	5.6
Election Countdown	-0.007 (0.017)	-0.134 (0.076)**
Partisan Support in Congress	2.626 (0.750)***	0.692 (0.962)
Election Countdown x Partisan Support in Congress	_____	0.261 (0.143)**
Uses of Force (1 lag)	-0.005 (0.024)	0.003 (0.025)
War	-0.627 (0.198)***	-0.608 (0.204)***
GDP Growth	-0.024 (0.009)***	-0.029 (0.009)***
Approval	-0.006 (0.008)	-0.007 (0.007)
World Disputes	0.028 (0.027)	0.023 (0.027)
Constant	-0.491 (0.391)	-0.491 (0.615)
N	188	188

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (*p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

that the amount of time remaining before an election has no independent effect on how partisan support in congress affects the number of new mediation attempts undertaken.

However, the interaction term model, plotted in Figure 5.3, shows that for high levels of partisan support in congress, the number of quarters until the next election has an increasingly positive effect on the number of new mediations attempted, which is only statistically significant for values above 65% partisan support. For low levels of partisan support, as expected, partisan support in congress has a negative, but increasing marginal effect on how the number of quarters remaining till the next election influences the number of new mediations attempted. Thus, as the number of quarters till the election decreases, the number of mediations should increase, when the president has low levels of partisan support in congress. While these results behave as expected, they fail to achieve statistical significance.⁶⁶

Elections and Mediator Rank

Table 5.3 shows results for tests of hypothesis 3b, examining the marginal effects of elections on the rank of the official chosen to mediate, as conditioned by presidential success in congress. Given that the president's policy initiatives are more likely to be scrutinized in election years, he has incentives to send higher-level mediators to mediate where he thinks the chances for success, or the likelihood that the administration's efforts will be portrayed as such, are high, so as to increase the level of media attention the endeavor receives. In both models 5.7 and 5.9, which test the effects of election year and re-election year, respectively, as well as, partisan support in congress independently of one another, the results show no statistically significant relationship between key

⁶⁶ Models were also tested using Cohesive Partisan Support and the Presidential Success Score, which produced similar results not reported here, for purposes of brevity.

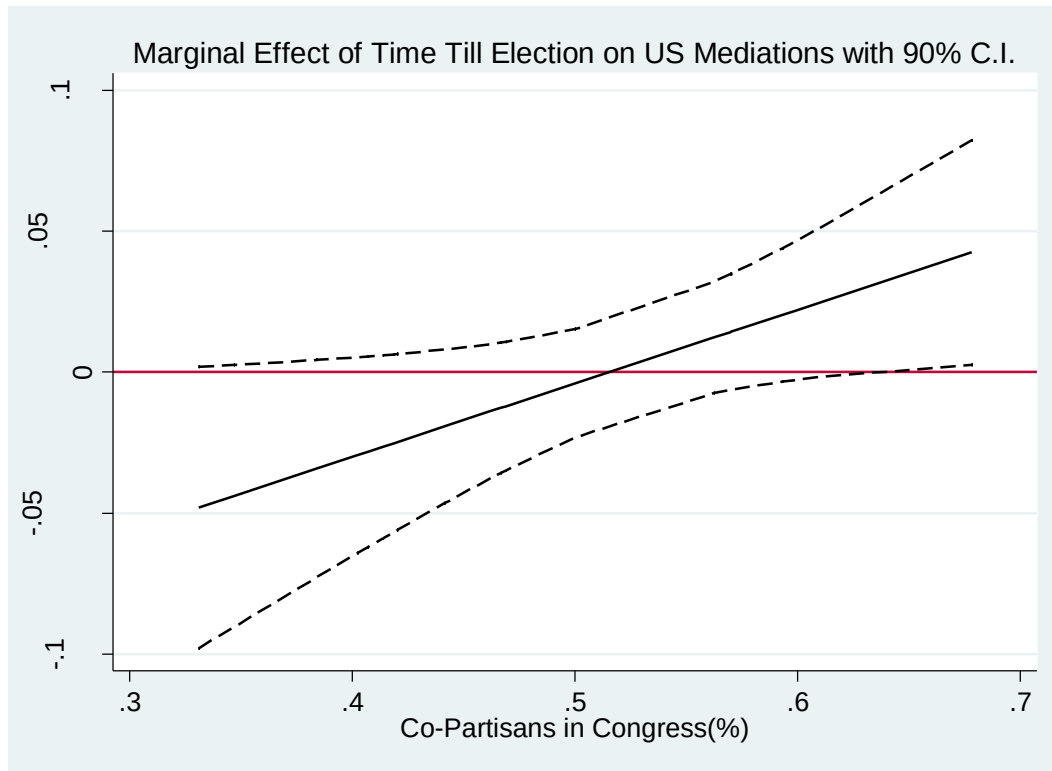


Figure 5.3: Effects of Time Till Election on US Mediations, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Table 5.3: Effects on Elections on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	5.7	5.8	5.9	5.10
Election Year	-0.350 (0.458)	1.938 (3.684)	—	—
Re-election Year	—	—	0.057 (0.612)	3.811 (4.170)
Partisan Support in Congress	-0.182 (2.155)	0.904 (2.916)	0.269 (2.241)	1.628 (3.125)
Election Year x Partisan Support in Congress	—	-5.102 (8.771)	—	—
Re-election Year x Partisan Support in Congress	—	—	—	-8.464 (10.118)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.183 (0.122)*	0.193 (0.119)*	0.177 (0.107)**	0.197 (0.113)
War	-1.017 (0.413)***	-0.956 (0.420)**	-1.041 (0.431)***	-1.041 (0.447)***
GDP Growth	-0.038 (0.033)	-0.046 (0.032)*	-0.042 (0.036)	-0.052 (0.031)**
Approval	-0.018 (0.018)	-0.017 (0.018)	-0.017 (0.019)	-0.147 (0.020)
World Disputes	-0.043 (0.065)	-0.042 (0.069)	-0.040 (0.065)	-0.037 (0.072)
N	188	188	188	188

Note: Dependent variable is the highest ranking new mediator per quarter. Ordered logit estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

independent variables and the rank of mediators. Controls behave largely as expected. However, interestingly, US uses of force, short of war is positively correlated with mediator rank and statistically significant, suggesting, perhaps, that mediation and the use of military force are not mutually exclusive.

Figures 5.4 and 5.5 show the marginal effects of election years and re-election years on mediator rank, respectively, conditioned by the president's level of partisan support in congress (coefficients are shown in Models 5.8 and 5.10, respectively). The models behave as expected in terms of sign, but are not statistically significant for low levels of partisan support in congress. Such a result yields no support for hypothesis 3b. However, such a result can be explained by the fact that the president, who occupies the highest category of the mediator rank variable, has incentives to stay in the United States during election years. Instead, he may be sending lower-ranking mediators to mediate during these times. Furthermore, the president does not have to serve as the actual mediator to draw attention to mediation efforts; he can simply make it a policy priority and can highlight it through press conferences, media releases, and the White House Press Office, among other ways, while continuing to campaign domestically.

Similar to the models above, the election and re-election year dummy variables may not completely capture the period of time in which the president is likely to have incentives to use diplomacy to boost his domestic standing before turning his focus homeward and to the election campaign. To that end, I employ two other theoretically plausible measures of when the election cycle might create incentives for the president to mediate conflict overseas, or send high-level surrogates to do so in his stead. The first set

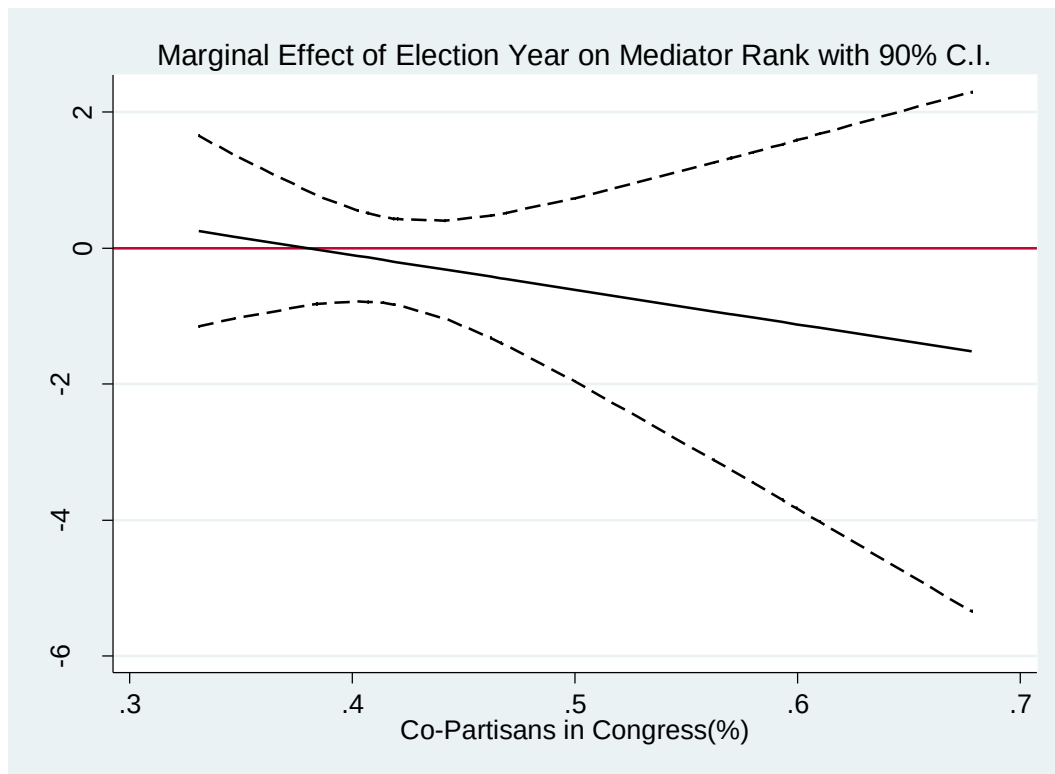


Figure 5.4: Effects on Election Year on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

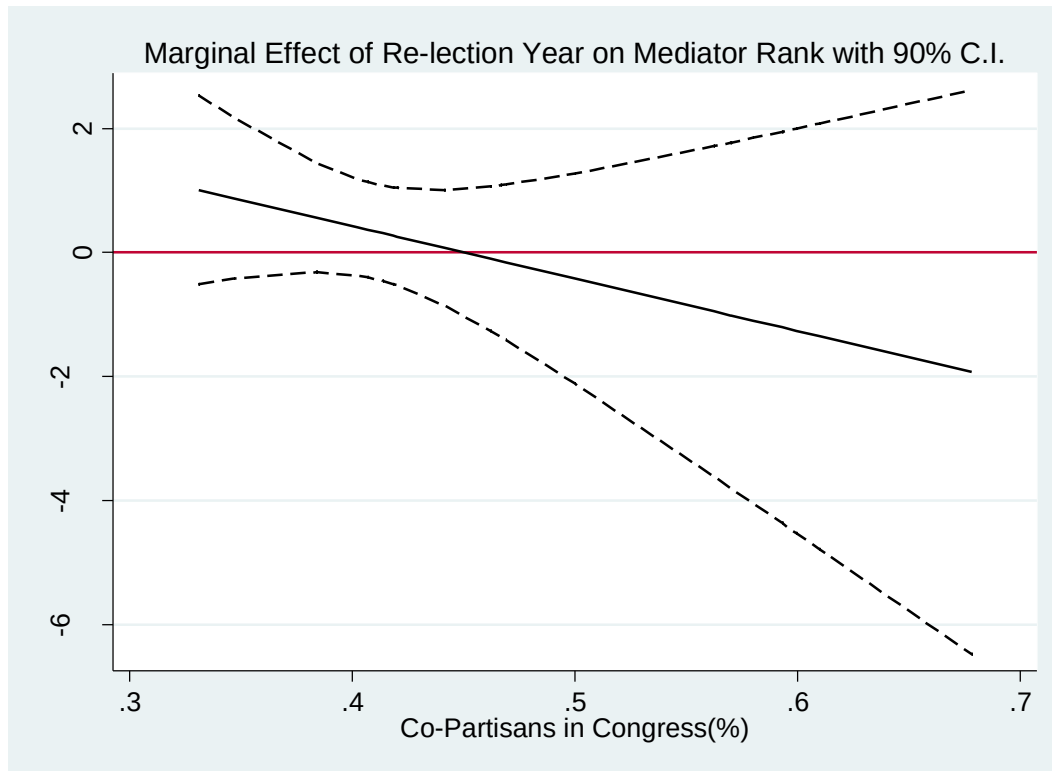


Figure 5.5: Effects on Re-election Year on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

of models, using the *Campaign Cycle* variable, does not produce statistically significant results for either election campaigns or re-election campaigns.⁶⁷ Finally, I employ the *Election Countdown* variable, which measures the number of quarters remaining till the next election. Results are reported in Table 5.4. The results of the independent model, shown in Model 5.11, yield no statistically significant results from key independent variables, nor did the results from the interacted model shown in model 5.12. The marginal effects curve, plotted in Figure 5.6 shows that the interacted model behaves as expected with regard to sign, but failed to achieve statistical significance.

The absence of significant results for tests of mediator rank, but the presence of them for tests of the number of mediation attempts, may suggest that while the president sees political value in attempting to resolve overseas conflicts, there is an opportunity cost incurred when serving as the mediator himself or when sending other high-level officials. Given that elections are nearing, the president likely sees more benefit to his campaign and those of his co-partisans to focus on domestic policy, regardless of the makeup of congress. However, sending lower level officials to mediate has potential to pay political dividends as well. And, as previously mentioned, the president has the ability to use his office to bring attention to mediation attempts in which lower-ranking mediators are working.

Elections and Mediation Strategy

Finally, I test hypothesis 3c, which focuses on the highest-level (most manipulative) mediation strategy employed in a given quarter. *Mediation Strategy* is a 4-value ordinal variable, which codes a “0” for cases in which no mediation occurs,

⁶⁷ Results for these models are shown in not reported for purposes of brevity..

Table 5.4: Effects of Time Until Election on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	5.11	5.12
Election Countdown	0.024 (0.048)	-0.231 (0.2887)
Partisan Support in Congress	-0.177 (1.877)	-4.348 (5.464)
Election Countdown x Partisan Support in Congress	_____	0.541 (0.665)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.180 (0.119)*	0.192 (0.106)**
War	-1.024 (0.413)***	-0.970 (0.414)***
GDP Growth	-0.038 (0.040)	-0.047 (0.038)
Approval	-0.019 (0.018)	-0.021 (0.018)
World Disputes	-0.042 (0.063)	-0.050 (0.058)
N	188	188

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, one-tailed test)

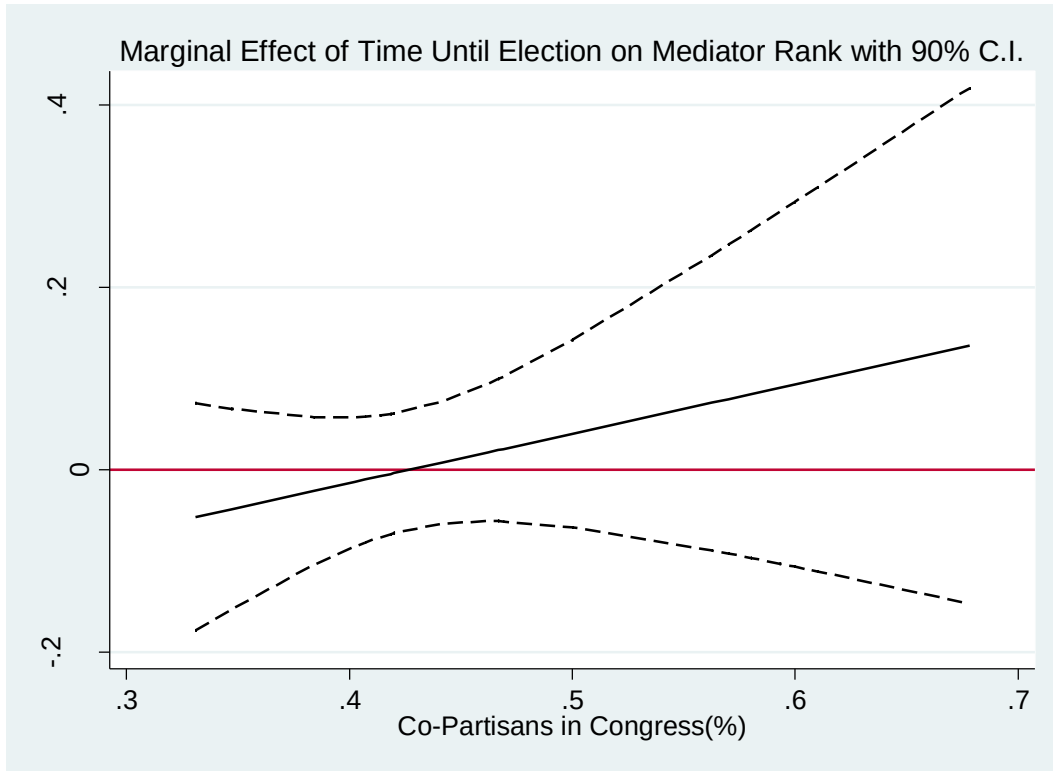


Figure 5.6: Effects of Time Until Election on Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Presidential Success in Congress

including times when it was offered, but not accepted. A “1” is coded when the most manipulative strategy used in the information strategy, where the mediator uses his good offices to bring the truth to light and add credibility to each side’s concessions. A “2” is coded when the highest strategy employed in a given quarter in a formulation strategy, where mediators provide a venue, set the agenda, and discuss potential terms, but stop short of adding any of their own resources to the settlement. And, a “3” is coded when the highest strategy employed is a manipulative strategy, where the mediator uses carrots and sticks to manipulate the payoffs for one or both parties. According to Hypothesis 3c, the president should seek to use more manipulative strategies as elections near, when confronted with an opposition congress, so as to increase the likelihood that the carrots and sticks used to induce the disputing parties will yield some type of settlement and thus boost the president’s domestic standing. As in the models above, I test this argument using measures of the president’s support in congress and measures of the election cycle, which are likely to capture how the president’s incentives to focus on foreign policy change leading up to elections.

Models 5.13-5.16, shown in Table 5.5, test the effects that election years and re-election years have on which mediation strategies are employed, given the president’s level of support in congress. The independent models (Models 5.13 and 5.15) do not show statistically significant results for any key independent variables. Thus, the presence of impending elections, and the partisan composition of congress do not independently influence the decision of what mediation strategy to employ. Models 5.14 and 5.16 test the conditional effects of the president’s partisan support in congress on an election year’s or re-election year’s influence on mediation strategies. In both cases, the

Table 5.5: Effects of Elections on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Independent Variable	5.13	5.14	5.15	5.16
Election Year	-0.417 (0.562)	1.545 (3.003)	—	—
Re-election Year	—	—	-0.296 (0.484)	2.867 (3.171)
Partisan Support in Congress	1.188 (2.028)	2.174 (3.003)	1.373 (2.126)	2.544 (3.047)
Election Year x Partisan Support in Congress	—	-4.303 (7.039)	—	—
Re-election Year x Partisan Support in Congress	—	—	—	-7.045 (7.571)
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.032 (0.010)	0.046 (0.089)	0.033 (0.088)	0.058 (0.091)
War	-1.110 (0.434)**	-1.050 (0.452)**	-1.158 (0.448)**	-1.158 (0.480)***
GDP Growth	-0.021 (0.037)	-0.026 (0.034)	-0.022 (0.038)	-0.030 (0.033)
Approval	-0.007 (0.007)	-0.018 (0.015)	-0.017 (0.0016)	-0.014 (0.016)
World Disputes	-0.035 (0.063)	-0.036 (0.064)	-0.031 (0.064)	-0.029 (0.068)
N	188	188	188	188

Note: Dependent variable is the highest mediation strategy employed in a quarter. Ordered logit estimates with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (*p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

marginal effects curve behaves as expected, with positive effects for low levels of partisan support in congress that decrease and become negative as levels of partisan support increase. However, the model fails to achieve statistically significant results for all values of partisan support in congress (see Figures 5.7 and 5.8).⁶⁸

Finally, I test the relationship between congressional support for the president and elections using Koch's (2009) *Election Countdown* variable, which measures the amount of time, in quarters, remaining until an election. Results are presented in Table 5.9. In Models 5.17 and 5.18, I use the Presidential Success Score as a measure of support for the president in congress. Results are supportive of the policy availability argument. While Model 5.17, which measures the effects of time remaining until an election and presidential success in congress independently of one another, fails to show significant results for the key independent variables, the interacted model behaves as expected.

Model 5.18, which is plotted graphically in Figure 5.7, shows the marginal effects of time until the next election having a negative and statistically significant impact on mediation strategy given low levels of presidential success in congress. Thus, as time till the election decreases, when the president has difficulty moving legislation through congress (roughly 40% success and below), the highest (most manipulative) mediation strategy employed in that quarter is likely to increase. Such a result supports the policy availability argument for why we see variation in mediation strategy.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Nearly identical results are found employing the *Campaign Cycle* variable, and, for the purposes of brevity are not reported.

⁶⁹ Similar models were tested using Partisan Support in Congress and Cohesive Partisan Support. These models behaved as expected in terms of the sign and slope of the marginal effects curve, but they failed to achieve statistical significance for all values of presidential support in congress.

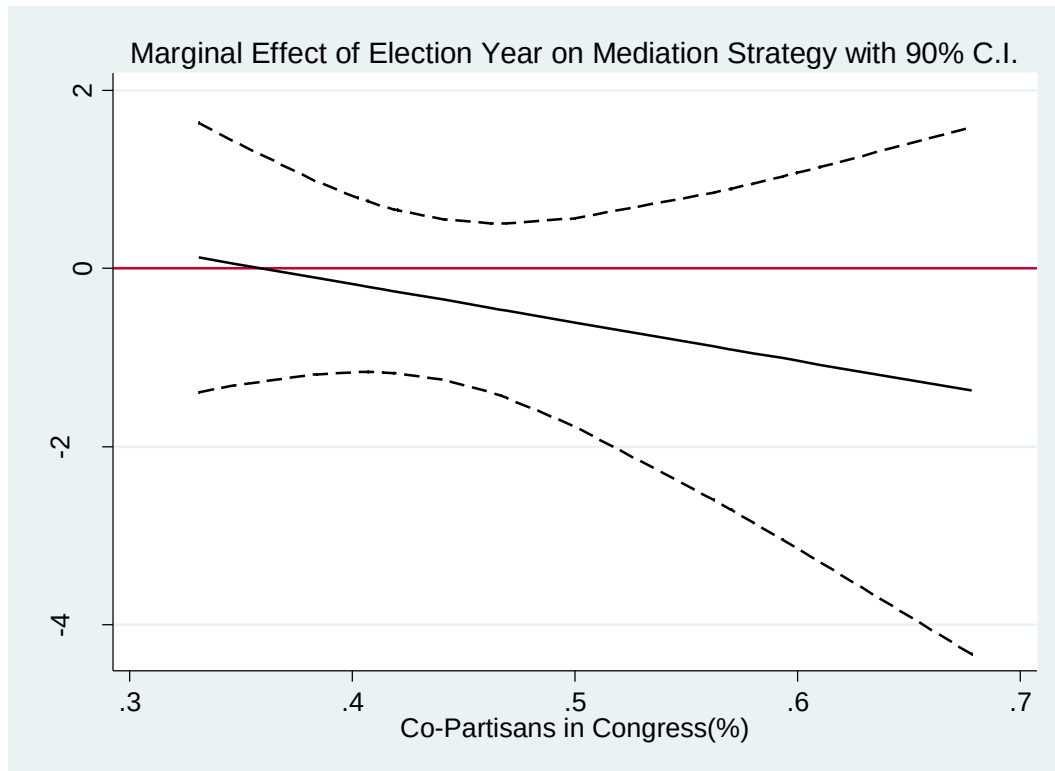


Figure 5.7: Effects on Election Year on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

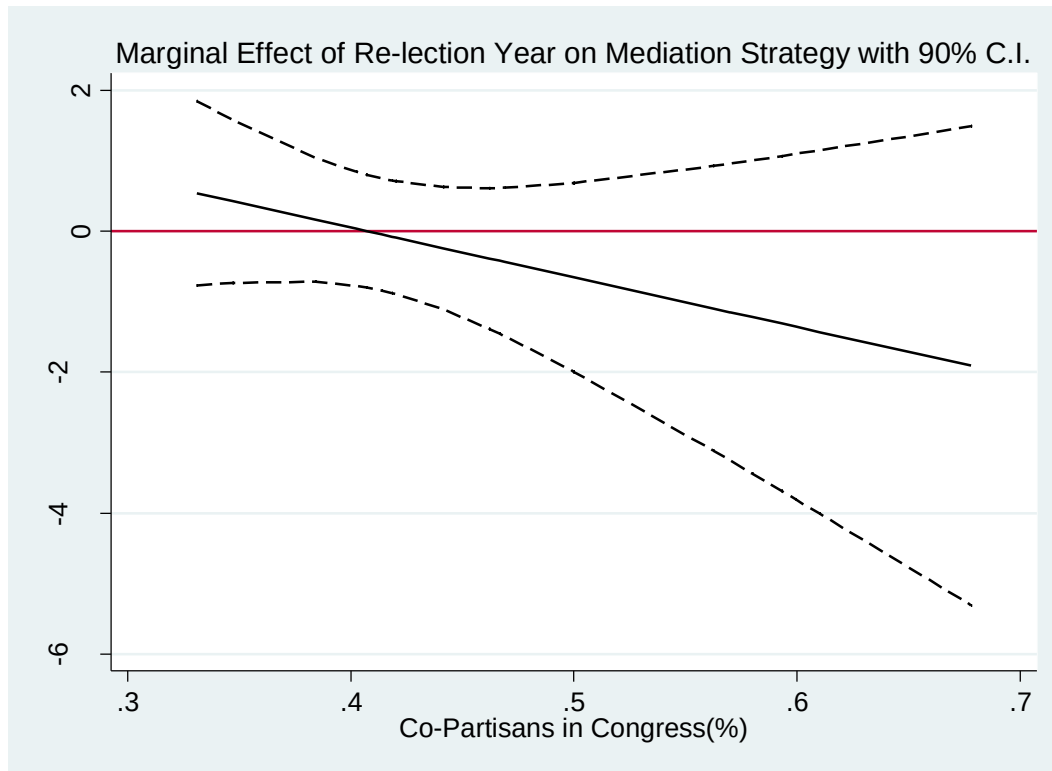


Figure 5.8: Effects on Re-election Year on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Partisan Support in Congress

Table 5.9: Effects of Time Until Election on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Presidential Success in Congress

Independent Variable	5.17	5.18
Election Countdown	0.042 (0.058)	-0.267 (0.123)**
Presidential Success Score	0.008 (0.011)	-0.030 (0.018)**
Election Countdown x Presidential Success Score	_____	0.005 (0.002)**
Uses of Force (1 lag)	0.10 (0.107)	0.043 (0.102)
War	-1.10 (0.539)**	-1.13 (0.521)**
GDP Growth	-0.009 (0.052)	-0.024 (0.055)
Approval	-0.029** (0.018)	-0.027 (0.020)*
World Disputes	-0.050 (0.057)	-0.060 (0.056)
N	188	188

Note: Dependent variable is the quarterly count of new US mediation attempts. Negative binomial estimated with robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration in parentheses. (* p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01, one-tailed test)

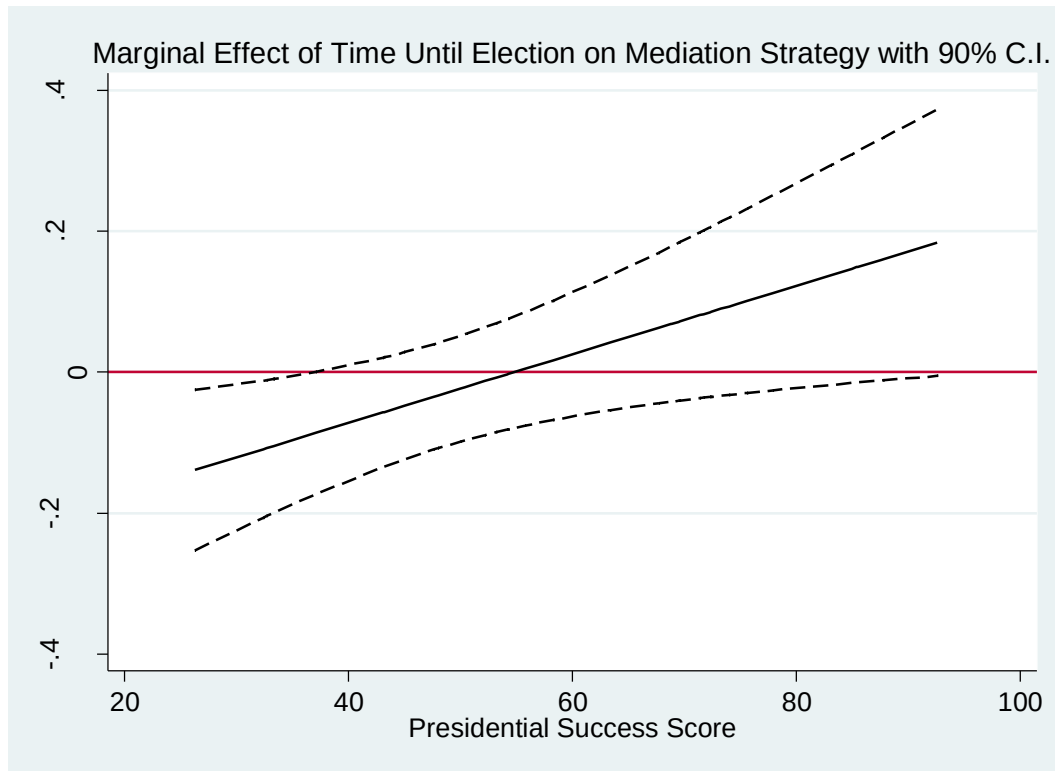


Figure 5.9: Effects on Time Till Election on Mediation Strategy, Conditioned by Presidential Success in Congress

Conclusion and Discussion of Results

In all, the empirical results in these models produce varied levels of support for the hypotheses. With regard to hypothesis 3a, there is some empirical support. In the specific case of an incumbent president running for re-election, the models suggest that the inability to move legislation through Congress conditions the president's decision to mediate overseas conflicts. The models also suggest that the number of mediations attempted decreases in election years in which the president enjoys broad support in congress and can thus add to his record of policy successes through domestic policy, making endeavors in foreign policy risky and unnecessary. Such findings are particularly interesting because they suggest that a president seeks to use foreign policy when he is running for re-election, and thus trying to boost his own political fortunes, in ways that are not used when he is a lame duck, and thus posturing to help elect a successor from his party.

I find no empirical support for Hypothesis 3b, which suggests that elections should lead to higher-ranking mediators being employed, when a president lacks the wherewithal to efficiently move legislation through congress. So, the fact that no significant results are seen in such cases can be explained by the incentives that the president and his administration have to focus on campaigning in election years. Because the president spends much of his time in an election year on the campaign trail, it is unlikely that he will serve as a mediator himself. However, because presidential mediations occupy the top category of the ordinal *Mediator Rank* variable, the results might be skewed somewhat as a result. Similarly, the president can draw attention to

mediation attempts that are likely to positively reflect his managerial competence even when he is not the mediator. He can use the numerous resources of the executive office and his high media profile to shed a positive light on mediation endeavors being carried out by his deputies.

Such an explanation appears quite plausible when the lack of significant results in models using *Mediator Rank* as the dependent variable is combined with the presence thereof in models using *US Mediations*, an event count variable measuring mediation volume, as the dependent variable (when a president is running for re-election). Taken together, the results suggest that the administration makes more attempts at mediation in re-election years, but does so with lower level officials, ostensibly because the president is at home campaigning. Thus, in order to benefit politically from these mediation attempts, the president would have to project media attention to them by discussing them in campaign speeches, press conferences, etc.

Finally, I find limited support for hypothesis 3c, which contends that more manipulative mediation strategies are likely to be employed as elections near, when the president is unable to efficiently move legislation through congress. Given that state actors use manipulative tactics most often, this result is less novel than the other findings in the chapter. However, it provides support for the policy availability argument, which suggests that politically vulnerable presidents have incentives to focus their attention on foreign policy when congressional composition makes the passage of legislation difficult. Given the need to secure policy victories before election day, the president should commit more resources toward political endeavors as the elections near. Thus, he is more

likely to try to induce disputing parties to come to an agreement for which he can take credit, even if it is only successful in the short term.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the lack of significant findings for the *World Disputes* control variable is an interesting one that suggests that mediation efforts are strategically aimed at conflicts where the president would benefit from the creation of a peaceful settlement. While such an argument is to be expected given the assumption that the president is a rational actor, the data, in its current format, is incapable of testing such a hypothesis. As such, the creation of a data-set that can account for the president's domestic political standing and motivations as well as specific characteristics of individual conflicts is necessary for this research agenda to progress.

The results presented in this chapter provide support for the more general premise that this dissertation seeks to address: domestic political structures and motivations affect the offer, occurrence, and process of third-party mediation. Similar to the suggestion made above, research examining the outcomes of mediation efforts in light of mediators' domestic political standing would yield increased support for the arguments presented here, and is thus a necessary next step in the research program.

Chapter 6: Mediation and Presidential Approval

Several studies in the foreign policy research program suggest that US presidents have incentives to use foreign policy in order to boost their domestic political standing (see Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Miller 1995; Foster and Palmer 2006; Brulé 2006, etc.) However, in nearly every case, the research focuses on the presence of foreign policy behavior and not the result. Lian and Oneal (1993) test the substantive impact of the rally-round-the-flag effect and argue that the net benefit of the political use of force over time is roughly a zero percent increase in the president's approval rating. Scholars have since sought to show that the use of foreign policy for domestic political gains is not about inducing rallies around the flag, but rather an opportunistic attempt to demonstrate managerial competence when handling complex and highly salient political issues (Tarar 2006), much the same as any other policy initiative. However, attempts to test whether the president enjoys domestic gains from such action have been few. In this regard, to this point, I have argued that the president has incentives to engage in higher levels of mediation behavior given domestic vulnerability and, in some cases, an uncooperative legislature. In this chapter, I test the effects of mediation behavior on the president's approval rating, perhaps the most basic indicator of his domestic political standing.

The dependent variable, *Approval*, is the Gallup Presidential Approval Score. This approval score is generated from the proportion of respondents who responded positively to the survey question, "Do you approve of the job (insert name of President) is

doing as president?”⁷⁰ Such a measure is thought to reflect the president’s chances at re-election as well as his ability influence policy and set the political agenda. By engaging in mediation, the president and his administration are seeking to demonstrate their ability to lead, to build consensus and to make peace, thus creating the image that the president is doing his job well.

Mediation appears to be a well-suited policy area for presidents to portray themselves as capable leaders. It is unique in that it is a policy endeavor that has numerous outcomes, nearly all of which can be framed as a success for the mediator. For instance, the mere occurrence of peace talks between two long disputing parties at the behest of a third is likely to be heralded as a positive step toward a more durable peace agreement, even if no such agreement is forged. Similarly, the mediating party is likely to be heralded as a leader and a peacemaker, despite the fact that no long-term agreement has been made. Such an image might not be a lasting one, but it is likely to pay political dividends in the short term. Thus, the perception of the mediator and how mediation efforts are portrayed to the public are likely to play a major role in how the public reacts to such efforts. Leaders seeking to enhance their political fortunes likely act strategically when making decisions about when to mediate, who mediates, and how they mediate.

Mediation Volume, Strategy and Presidential Approval

In Chapters 4 and 5 I find limited evidence that presidential administrations engage in a greater number of mediation attempts per quarter in response to domestic vulnerability. Such a finding may suggest that presidents expect to see political benefit from focusing on conflict resolution. However, it is unlikely that a mere increase in the

⁷⁰ This survey data was retrieved from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut via Lexis-Nexis.com.

volume of mediation attempts, all other variables held equal, will yield an increase in the presidential approval rating. The increased number of mediation attempts made likely reflects an increased commitment to finding a suitable agreement in key conflicts around the world. In this vein, an escalation of mediation strategy is unlikely to increase presidential approval on its own. An escalation of strategy should increase the likelihood of success, which is, in turn, likely to increase presidential approval. Because of the structure and format of the data, though, it is difficult to test these relationships, as the ICM dataset has imprecise data about the timing of mediation successes/ end points. As such, I propose to test hypotheses concerning these variables in further research, when more precise data about the timing of mediation outcomes is available.

Mediator Rank and Presidential Approval

Higher ranking mediators, however, are argued to increase the profile of the mediation effort so as to portray the president as successful. Given the media's dependence on the administration for information, the president can use his office to increase the media profile of a mediation attempt when and where he believes it will help him politically. Additionally, he can use low-ranking mediators in situations that are likely to be cumbersome, that have low prospects for success, or that will be politically unpopular. Thus, conflict resolution is a policy area in which simply increasing the profile is a rational move that a president is likely to make when he sees the potential to gain politically from focusing his attention there.

To test this hypothesis, I examine the effect of mediator's rank on presidential approval after mediation efforts from 1945-1995. The first key independent variable in the analysis is *Mediator Rank*, which was coded from Appendix 2 of Jacob Bercovitch's

(1999) International Conflict Management Data Set Codebook. The appendix provides the names, ranks, and nationalities of individual mediators associated with a given conflict. The dataset was then converted into a quarterly time series. *Mediator Rank* is a four category ordinal variable that captures the highest political rank of a US mediator in a given quarter. Mediator rank is hypothesized to positively influence presidential approval because of greater levels of media coverage afforded administration officials of higher ranks and the ease with which these officials are able to influence how the media reports on a mediation effort.

Recall from the previous chapters that the *Mediator Rank* variable is coded in such a way that measures the level of media attention paid to mediation efforts in a given quarter. The highest-ranking new mediator employed in a given quarter is coded.⁷¹ The coding scheme is as follows: due to the fact that presidents' actions command a higher level of media attention than other officials, presidential mediation attempts are categorized separately. A "3" is entered if the president himself mediated an overseas conflict in a given quarter. Those mediators who are high-level representatives of the president, and whose actions are thus likely to command significant media attention, are grouped into their own category. A "2" is entered if the highest ranking mediator was the vice president, a cabinet secretary, or a presidentially appointed special envoy. Finally, low-level mediators, whose actions are likely to go unnoticed or receive little media or public attention, are categorized together. US officials such as ambassadors,

⁷¹ The ICM dataset codes for individual mediation attempts within a conflict, based on the date each attempt begins. Thus, if a high-level mediator enters as mediator where a lower-ranking mediator has been previously employed, the higher-ranking mediator is coded for the quarter in which the higher-ranking mediator becomes involved. Of the 227 US mediation attempts over the data period, only 6 last 3 months (1 quarter year) or longer.

undersecretaries of state, and military officers are coded with a “1.” Quarters without a new mediation attempt are coded as “0.” Because of the hypothesized relationship between variables, the value of *Mediator Rank* for the previous quarter (t_{-1}) is used to explain presidential approval during quarter t_0 .

Research on factors that influence presidential approval suggests that a primary dimension upon which presidents are judged by voters and reflected in approval ratings is economic performance (Lewis-Beck 1988, Mueller 1973, Anderson 1995). Leaders in office during good economic times are viewed more positively by voters than their counterparts who are in office during economic decline. Therefore, an important control variable in modeling the effect of a mediator’s rank on presidential approval is a measure of economic performance. I use three different measures of economic performance in different models. The first measure, *GDP growth*, is the quarterly rate of growth in the US gross domestic product.⁷² In subsequent models, I measure economic performance with the variables *inflation* and *unemployment*, respectively. *Inflation* is the quarterly change in the US consumer price index and *unemployment* is the quarterly average level of unemployment in the US workforce.⁷³

In addition, I control for war. *War*, captures US war involvement and is coded with a “1” for each of the quarters corresponding with the Korea, Vietnam, and first Gulf War conflicts. The control for war is thought to reduce the number of available resources that a president has at his disposal to commit to a mediation effort. Additionally, it is unlikely that a president will personally mediate a conflict involving two other parties

⁷²The source for *GDP* is the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (retrieved from www.bea.gov).

⁷³ The source for both *inflation* and *unemployment* is the Bureau of Labor Statistics (retrieved from www.bls.gov).

during a time of war. Instead, his focus will be on fighting the war and on attempting to manage the risks and costs associated with that conflict. However, lower-level mediators may be employed during these times.

Divided Government is a dichotomous variable that is coded with a 1 if either of the houses of Congress is controlled by the opposing party to the president's. Divided government, is likely to play a role in the overall calculation of presidential approval due to the fact that Congress is thought to be a check on the president's ability to successfully make policy, although this is argued above to be less effective toward matters of foreign policy (Howell and Pevehouse 2005; Schultz 1998).

The effect of mediator rank on presidential approval is analyzed using a Prais-Winsten GLS regression model with semi-robust standard errors clustered on presidential administration.⁷⁴ The results are reported in Table 6.1. Because the dependent variable, *Approval*, is measured across time, the presence of autocorrelation is likely. As signified by a significant spike in the first lag of its partial autocorrelation function, the variable exhibits first order autocorrelation. The AR(1) specification of the Prais-Winsten estimator corrects for first order autocorrelation. Model 6.1 shows the Prais-Winsten estimates of the effect of mediator rank on presidential approval. The coefficient for mediator rank, the key independent variable, is positive and significant, suggesting that increases in mediator rank have positive effects on presidential approval. These results support Hypothesis 4a. Additionally, consistent with the literature, GDP growth is positively correlated with presidential approval and statistically significant, as the public

⁷⁴ Clustering standard errors on presidential administrations corrects for different average levels of presidential approval across administrations.

Table 6.1: Effect of Mediator Rank on Presidential Approval

Independent Variable	6.1	6.2	6.3
Mediator Rank (1 lag)	1.277** (0.511)	1.153** (0.533)	1.242** (0.500)
GDP Growth (1 lag)	0.248* (0.153)	—	—
Inflation (1 lag)	—	-0.494 (0.526)	—
Unemployment (1 lag)	—	—	-1.18 (1.100)
War	0.998 (2.381)	0.762 (2.483)	-0.098 (2.311)
Divided Government	-7.841* (5.274)	-7.39 (5.033)	-7.773* (5.407)
Constant	57.78*** (5.398)	60.378*** (6.716)	65.642*** (10.737)
N	188	188	188
R-squared	0.1121	0.1027	0.1002
Rho	0.813	0.789	0.807

Note: Prais-Winsten Estimates. Dependent variable is the Gallup Presidential Approval Score. Semi-robust standard errors in parentheses are clustered on presidential administration. *p<.01, **p<.05, ***.10, one-tailed tests.

should react positively to a growing economy. Further, divided government is negatively correlated with presidential approval and statistically significant, as divided government is thought to be an obstacle to presidential success. In terms of substantive effects, the results from Model 6.1 demonstrate that a US president can significantly improve his approval rating by serving as a mediator by or sending high-level representatives to do so. According to the model, direct presidential involvement in conflict mediation will, on average, increase the president's approval rating by nearly 4 percentage points. Thus, mediation becomes a useful tool in times of economic decline, when poor economic performance begins to negatively affect the public's perception of the president and his administration. For instance, in a situation where the GDP growth rate is two standard deviations below its mean (-4.86), and the president is faced with an opposing Congress, engagement in mediation is likely to lift his approval rating in the subsequent quarter from 48.7%, with no mediation, to 52.56%. This result suggests that the president can use mediation as a strategic policy instrument to shift attention toward an issue area where he can portray himself as a successful leader, and thus stop falling approval ratings or perhaps overcome institutional hurdles to policy success, such as an opposition Congress.

Because presidential approval is thought to be primarily influenced by economic conditions, Models 6.2 and 6.3 have been employed using different economic indicators as robustness checks. In Model 6.2, the sign of the coefficient for inflation is negative, as is the coefficient sign for unemployment level in Model 6.3. While the signs in both of these models behave as expected, neither is statistically significant. However, the overall

results from this set of models suggest robust support for the theoretical argument that increases in mediator rank have a positive effect on presidential approval.

The second set of key independent variables that I use are the same measures of mediator rank described above, but broken into dichotomous variables. Thus, in quarters where the president is directly involved in mediating a conflict *President as Mediator* is coded as “1” and all other quarters are entered as “0.” In quarters where the vice president, a cabinet secretary, or special envoy is the highest-ranking mediator, *Vice President or Cabinet-level Mediator*, is a coded as a “1” and all other quarters are entered as “0.” Quarters with lower-ranking mediators (below cabinet-level or special envoy) have *Lower-level Mediator* entered as “1” and all other quarters entered as “0.” *No Mediation* is used as the reference category. Similar to the rationale described above, the variables are coded in such a way that captures the level of attention likely to be paid to the mediation attempt. Likewise, because of the hypothesized relationship between variables, the values of these dichotomous variables for the previous quarter (t_{-1}) are used to explain presidential approval during quarter t_0 .

The results for this additional test of Hypothesis 4a are reported in Table 6.2. A Prais-Winsten GLS model is used for the reasons described above, as the dependent variable has not changed. By using dichotomous variables in this model, the individual effects of the various mediator ranks on presidential approval are tested. Thus, while the models in Table 6.1 assume a linear increase in the effect of mediator rank on presidential approval, the models in Table 6.2 test the different categories of mediator rank for varying magnitudes of effect. Consequently, Model 6.4 is specified similar to Model 6.1, but includes the three dichotomous mediator rank variables as the key independent

Table 6.2: Effect of Mediator Rank on Presidential Approval: Dichotomous Variables (Quarterly Data, Prais-Winsten GLS Estimates)			
Independent Variable	6.4	6.5	6.6
President as Mediator (1 lag)	3.196** (1.646)	2.651* (1.700)	3.020* (1.650)
Vice President/ Cabinet-level Med. (1 lag)	3.662** (1.356)	3.605*** (1.208)	3.681*** (1.241)
Lower-level Mediator (1 lag)	0.224 (0.945)	0.120 (0.925)	0.207 (0.881)
GDP Growth (1 lag)	0.241* (0.150)	—	—
Inflation (1 lag)	—	-0.518 (0.538)	—
Unemployment (1 lag)	—	—	-1.149 (1.154)
War	0.727 (2.468)	0.768 (2.464)	-0.080 (2.382)
Divided Government	-7.990* (5.410)	-7.557* (5.183)	-7.941* (5.541)
Constant	57.962*** (5.824)	60.592*** (6.867)	65.585*** (11.224)
N	189	189	189
R-Squared	.1243	.1106	.1129
Rho	0.8185165	0.7951502	0.8128555

Note: Prais-Winsten Estimates. Dependent variable is the Gallup Presidential Approval Score. Semi-robust standard errors in parentheses are clustered on presidential administration. ***p<.01, **p<.05, *.10, one-tailed tests.

variables. The model suggests that both presidential and vice-presidential/cabinet-level mediators are positively correlated with increases in presidential approval, but that low-ranking mediators are not. More interesting is that the model suggests that vice-presidential/cabinet-level mediators have a greater positive impact on presidential approval than do presidential mediators.⁷⁵ Substantively, presidential mediations are likely to yield a 3.2 percentage point increase in approval, while vice-presidential/cabinet-level mediations are likely to yield a 3.7 percentage point increase in approval, with all other variables held constant. Because the equality of two variables test suggests that the substantive impact of presidential mediators and vice-presidential mediators is roughly the same, these results do support the theoretical argument more generally, suggesting that high-profile mediations should lead to increases in presidential approval and that administrations can seek to manipulate public opinion by engaging in diplomacy.

The substantively equal positive impact of vice-presidential/cabinet-level mediations on presidential approval can likely be explained by the presence of an opportunity cost associated with the president acting as a mediator. Because the president must focus on so many issue areas, committing to mediate an overseas dispute may detract from his ability to focus on domestic policy, success at which likely yields greater political dividends than successful diplomacy. Additionally, the fact that the president is not directly involved in negotiations with the disputing parties does not mean that he is not making public comments on the matter or directing the media attention paid

⁷⁵ I conducted an equality of two variables test to see if indeed the vice-presidential/cabinet-level mediators had a greater positive effect on presidential approval in subsequent quarters. For the hypothesis H_0 : *Presidential mediator* – *vice-presidential/cabinet-level mediator* = 0, $F=0.14$, $p(F) = 0.72$. Thus, I fail to reject H_0 ; vice-presidential/ cabinet-level mediator has the same substantive impact on presidential approval as a president acting as mediator.

to his office to a mediation effort that is being spearheaded by one of his top-level representatives. Such a rationale is also consistent with Burbach's (2004) finding that presidential speeches concerning peace-making creates a "dovish" foreign policy image for his administration and leads to increases in his approval rating. Thus, the president can drive the initiative while one of his top deputies engages in negotiations on the ground.

This model is also consistent with several cases of US mediation where the president has dispatched a top-level deputy to lead the administration's diplomatic effort, and has used his office to spotlight the goings on. For instance, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's series of shuttle diplomacy attempts between Israel and its Arab neighbors in the 1970s was portrayed positively in the media and resulted in substantive, albeit brief, increases in presidential approval for the Ford administration. Similarly, Secretary of State Alexander Haig's attempt at mediating the Falklands Crisis between the United Kingdom and Argentina coupled with his successor's, George Schultz's, mediation attempts between Israel and various factions involved in the Lebanese Civil War, led to spikes in presidential approval in early 1983 and again in early 1985 with the negotiation of the partial Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

In addition to its consistency with real world events, model 6.4 suggests that low-level mediations have no systematic substantive effects on presidential approval. Given that these mediation attempts are carried out by low-level diplomats, and other administration officials who do not command the same level of media attention as their higher-ranking colleagues, their efforts alone are unlikely to have an impact how the public views the president.

Models 6.5 and 6.6 are employed as robustness checks, similar to models 6.2 and 6.3. As seen above, inflation and unemployment level are signed in the direction expected, but lack statistical significance. In all, these controls lend support to the theoretical argument.

Finally, I test Hypothesis 4b, which suggests that mediator rank's effect on presidential approval is likely to be conditioned by the public's attentiveness to foreign policy. In order to capture the conditioning effect of the public's foreign policy attentiveness on the *Mediator Rank*, I create an interaction term with *Foreign Policy Salience*.⁷⁶ The extent to which the public is attentive to foreign policy is thought to condition the effects of *Mediator Rank* on presidential approval. Given the argument that the President and his high-level deputies can dominate and manipulate the mainstream news so that it portrays the administration favorably, the impact of diplomacy on presidential approval should be greater when the public is particularly attentive to foreign policy.

The results for the test of Hypothesis 2 are reported in Table 6.3. This hypothesis contends that different levels of foreign policy attentiveness by the public conditions the effect of mediator rank on presidential approval. Thus, there are different effects of mediator rank's effect on the approval rating for different levels of foreign policy salience. Because this hypothesis tests a conditional relationship using a multiplicative interaction term, the coefficients and standard errors are not sufficient for interpreting the results (see Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006; Braumeoller 2006; Kam and Franzese 2005). In order to interpret model 6.7, I have plotted the marginal effects of mediator

⁷⁶ Foreign Policy Attentiveness is the proportion of people who chose foreign policy as the most important policy area. The source for *Foreign Policy Salience* is the Gallup Poll.

Table 6.3: The Effect of Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Foreign Policy Salience, on Presidential Approval

Independent Variable	6.7
Mediator Rank (1 lag)	0.560 (0.524)
Foreign Policy Salience	0.162 (0.155)
Foreign Policy Salience x Mediator Rank	0.029** (0.015)
GDP Growth (1 lag)	0.256* (0.151)
War	-2.213 (2.971)
Divided Government	-7.317* (5.16)
Constant	53.808*** (6.323)
N	189
R-squared	0.1418
Rho	0.792

Note: Prais-Winsten Estimates. Dependent variable is the Gallup Presidential Approval Score. Semi-robust standard errors in parentheses are clustered on presidential administration. *p<.01, **p<.05, ***.10, one-tailed tests.

rank in Figure 6.1 along with the upper and lower bound 90% confidence intervals across the range of the foreign policy salience variable. The graph in Figure 1 shows the coefficients for mediator rank's effect on presidential approval given the range of values of foreign policy salience. The upper and lower bounds of the 90% confidence interval do not cross the zero line for values of foreign policy salience above roughly 15%. This result means that the coefficients for mediator rank are significant at the 90% confidence level for values of foreign policy salience above roughly 15%.

Model 6.7 suggests that as more voters become focused on foreign policy, the greater influence an increase in mediator rank will have on presidential approval. Thus, presidents can magnify the increase in their approval rating by dispatching higher level mediators to engage in diplomacy when foreign policy salience is high. The substantive implications of this conditioning effect are great. A one standard deviation increase in foreign policy salience (about 20%) from its mean of roughly 28% doubles the extent to which mediator rank influences presidential approval (the coefficient for mediator rank increases from about 1 to 2). Given this relationship, a president can use the resources and characteristics of his office to his advantage, by choosing to engage in diplomacy when the voting public is most likely to react positively to such an action. Additionally, the administration can employ higher ranking mediators at politically critical times, should it need to, to maximize its domestic political return on a mediation effort. The findings are also consistent with those found by Edwards, Mitchell, and Welch (1995) arguing that for issues to substantively effect the president's approval rating, they must be politically salient.

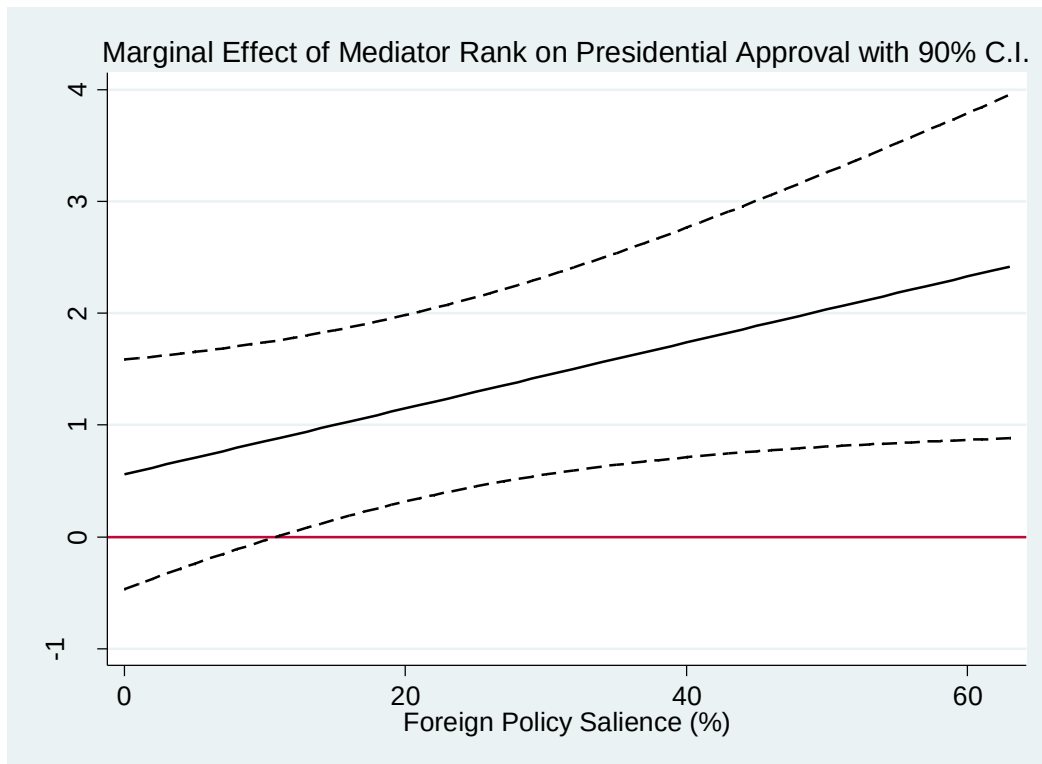


Figure 6.1: The Effect of Mediator Rank, Conditioned by Foreign Policy Salience, on Presidential Approval

Overall, these analyses support my hypotheses and theoretical argument that US presidents are primarily driven by the desire to stay in office and seek to use foreign policy to enhance their electoral fortunes (Ostrom and Job 1986; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). To that end, presidents can capitalize on the great amounts of media attention paid to them and their high-level surrogates by engaging in diplomacy when they are most likely to be successful and at those points in time when such actions are most likely to elicit a positive response from voters.

Conclusions and Discussion of Results

This analysis suggests that unlike suppositions underlying the “rally effects” explanation for political uses of force, the mechanism by which the president gains in domestic support from foreign policy initiatives is tied to policy success, or at least to the image thereof, being communicated to the public through media. Thus, as with domestic policy, the president seeks to use foreign policy to build a record of success and to appear competent as a leader in order buttress and bolster his level of domestic support. Because of the president’s prominent role in foreign policy issues and his ability to manipulate media portrayals of his administration, mediation is a policy option whereby he can efficiently seek to improve his domestic standing. It is important to note, though, that results show mediator rank influences presidential approval because high-ranking officials acting as mediators are paid a disproportionate of attention by the media. Thus, the president and his top deputies are likely to mediate those conflicts from which they expect to gain a significant political benefit, a benefit that is magnified by this heightened level of media coverage.

These results provide empirical support for theories suggesting that Presidents' use foreign policy actions to improve their domestic political standing. Taken with the results found in previous chapters, the findings presented here suggest that engaging in mediation is likely a useful short-term remedy to boost the president's approval rating. Such boosts may be critical as elections near or at times when poor economic performance requires presidential actions and legislation that would directly address the economy might take some time to bear fruit.

More generally, these results begin to reconcile theories of mediation with more general theories of foreign policy. This theoretical reconciliation has important implications for the conflict resolution research program and suggests several avenues for further research, a few of which I will mention here. To this point, few studies of mediation have heeded Saadia Touval's (2003) suggestion that mediation should be considered an instrument of foreign policy and, as such, motivations for engaging in mediation should be treated like motivations for other foreign policy engagement. However, given that domestic political considerations have been shown to be a major driving factor in the nature of the mediation process, states should not be considered unchanging unitary actors in studies attempting to explain mediation success. In addition to mediator rank, the extent to which engaging in mediation is likely to enhance leaders' domestic political fortunes could be argued to drive the strategy selected by a mediator, as well as the decision to choose mediation from the number of foreign policy options at a leader's disposal.

In addition to suggesting avenues for new research, this theoretical perspective can be further incorporated into what is already thought to be known about mediation

processes and better inform those findings. Since most mediation attempts end in failure, and because many “successful” attempts lack durability, with violence returning after an agreement, it seems appropriate to pursue an examination of whether leaders driven by the desire and the need to improve their domestic political standing choose to engage in mediation in ways that are more conducive to quick, short-term successes that improve domestic standing—perhaps at the expense of lasting peace abroad. Moreover, Greig’s (2005) finding that mediation is most often offered at times when it is least likely to be successful could be examined further, specifically to see how domestic political objectives influenced the decision to offer mediation at a time when the conflict is highly visible to the public, but not amenable to peaceful negotiations. Such forays would do a great deal to both improve understanding of the conflict resolution process and to integrate the conflict management literature with mainstream theories of foreign policy.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

This dissertation set out to address the question of why mediation by state actors, despite characteristics suggesting that such mediations are likely to be successful, regularly ends in failure. I have argued that domestic politics plays a key role in providing state leaders with incentives and constraints to focus on mediation as a policy option and that short-term, domestic political goals often preclude these leaders from mediating conflict in ways that lead to durable long-term peace agreements. Moreover, such an argument begins to reconcile the conflict resolution research program with the mainstream foreign policy decision making research program, which, up to this point, have largely developed independently of one another. This work builds on research suggesting that conflict resolution is a political endeavor and not an altruistic one. Even in cases where leaders have strong moral convictions driving them to seek resolution of a given conflict, by acting through the state apparatus, they are constrained and incentivized by domestic political considerations. Therefore, the need to secure re-election and maintain office is likely to determine when and how leaders are likely to engage in mediation, which, in turn, is likely to explain the results of mediation attempts.

In this chapter, I briefly revisit this argument and discuss my findings. Then, I proceed to discuss the implications of these findings, both empirically and theoretically, and point to shortcomings and limitations of the research. From this point, I evaluate the state of both the conflict resolution and foreign policy decision making research programs and make suggestions for further research in light of the findings that I have presented.

The Conflict Resolution Research Program

Up to this point, research on conflict resolution has largely been conducted independently of the foreign policy decision making research program. Because of its normative goal of finding ways to peacefully resolve conflict, mediators have largely been thought to be altruistic in their motives, or, at the very least, unchanging in their motives. However, a large literature has emerged that focuses on the motivations of state leaders (see Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 2003; Ostrom and Job 1986, etc.), suggesting that they use foreign policy in the same way they use domestic policy, to improve their domestic political fortunes. Such a rationale suggests that the motivations that a leader has to seek mediation are likely to influence how that mediation effort is carried out, the number of resources committed to it, and the extent to which the mediator is likely to see the effort through to a durable peace settlement. This argument also suggests that while states might have the greatest ability to engineer peace agreements through mediation, the incentives and constraints state leaders face from their domestic audience are likely to create incentives for engaging in mediation, but also limit the extent to which they likely to be committed to ensuring a long-term settlement. Thus, as leaders' incentives and constraints change, based on domestic political issues, mediation behavior should as well. The results found in the preceding chapters are largely supportive of this argument, although they vary in their robustness.

Key Empirical Findings in Chapter 4

Chapter 4 examines the extent to which domestic performance influences mediation behavior. I use two key independent variables to measure domestic

performance, the rate of GDP growth, which is a strong indicator of overall economic performance, and the presidential approval rating, which captures a broader measure of how voters view the president's performance. In addition, I test how this influence is conditioned by the makeup of congress. I draw upon literature suggesting that presidents have incentives to focus on foreign policy when domestic conditions are poor, necessitating presidential action, and when low levels of support make passing legislation that more directly addresses these poor conditions is difficult (Brulé 2006; Oneal and Russett 1993; Marshall and Prins 2011). Because congress has a less direct check on foreign policy than on domestic policy, low-risk foreign policy options like diplomacy should be appealing to presidents, as domestic policy avenues are not available.

I find evidence for my general argument, contending that domestic politics drives mediation behavior, as well as for more specific arguments contending that leaders use mediation to demonstrate managerial competence of complex political events to their constituents. Support for the policy availability argument, specifically, is more limited. There is some evidence suggesting that the president's ability to move legislation through congress conditions the extent to which economic performance influences mediation behavior. However, the most salient finding in the dissertation is the negative correlation between GDP growth and mediation, which occurs independently of the makeup of congress. Such a result is found using multiple dependent variables that are indicators of mediation behavior. Such a finding is novel, because presidential administrations are thought to prefer to seek domestic policy avenues to address poor economic performance. This negative correlation, independent of the makeup of congress suggests that presidents

are using mediation in response to poor economic performance even when domestic policy avenues are open to them. Future research will need to address the reasons for such a finding. One plausible argument is that legislation seeking to improve economic conditions may take time to bear fruit, even if passed easily. Successful diplomacy might be a stop-gap measure that pays quick dividends, even if they are short-lived, as research on the political use of foreign policy suggests (see Lian and Oneal 1993). The results for models measuring the extent to which presidential approval has an effect on mediation behavior yield few significant results, indicating that low approval ratings do not induce the president to take action the way that poor economic performance does.

Scholars have argued about the causal mechanism operating behind the political use of foreign policy. Because most studies on the subject focus on the use of military force, rally-round-the-flag effect arguments have been made. Such an argument contends that vulnerable leaders seek to use military force to divert attention from poor domestic performance and induce a rally in levels public support by invoking patriotism against an external enemy. A competing claim, the managerial competence argument, suggests that, as with any other policy initiative, the president seeks to demonstrate his competence as a leader through foreign policy. The presence of this inverse relationship between economic performance and mediation behavior lends support to the managerial competence argument. First, because rally-round-the-flag effects involve an appeal to patriotism in the face of an enemy, it is unlikely that mediation would induce such an effect. However, because protracted overseas conflicts are complex political phenomena which can be portrayed as relevant to voters, it is more likely that the president will seek

to use them in order to develop a record of success, especially when poor domestic performance presents the need for quick policy victories.

A second interesting finding is the positive correlation between congressional composition and mediation behavior. Such a finding suggests support for Howell and Pevehouse's (2007) party cover hypothesis, which suggests that higher levels of partisan support in congress provide the president cover to focus on foreign policy. Thus, more foreign policy behavior should be seen when the president has significant partisan support in congress. Such an effect is found to occur directly with more robustness than the conditional policy availability argument. This finding is interesting because it suggests that foreign policy is used most often when the president can diffuse responsibility for the effort across branches of government. To this end, it is likely that mediation endeavors undertaken when the president lacks ample support in congress may not be seen through to completion, as he is not likely to expose his administration to criticism. The presence of empirical support for the party cover conjecture also suggests that congress not creates incentives for engaging in mediation, but also that it can serve as a constraint, limiting the extent to which a president can pursue conflict resolution as a policy option.

In sum, the results support the notion that domestic politics play a key role in how and when mediation occurs, and thus such factors must be taken into consideration when attempting to identify and explains the conditions under which mediation is likely to be successful. Because states are not likely to be unitary actors when it comes to foreign

policy, as the incentives and constraints associated with engaging in foreign policy change, so too should the practice of mediation, and thus, perhaps, its success.

Key Empirical Findings from Chapter 5

Chapter 5 tested a similar argument, which contended that elections were simply built in vulnerabilities with which the president must deal regularly. As a result, his policy record is likely to come under greater scrutiny as elections near and the president should seek to shore up support through a series of policy successes. However, an opposition congress can make such an endeavor difficult. To that end, the president should be seen substituting foreign policy, an area in which he has increased autonomy, in order to build such a record of successes. However, given the fact that policy failure is likely to negatively affect the president leading up to an election, he should be seen selecting policy options that are low-risk, relative to other available policy options. Because the use of military force is risky, given the potential for loss of life or the lack of a victory prior to election day, it is unlikely that such policy options will be employed as elections near (Gaubatz 1991). Mediation is a policy option which is relatively low-risk, but still has the potential to be billed as a high-profile policy success.

There is strong evidence that presidents seeking re-election engage in more mediation attempts as elections near, when confronting an opposition congress. Such a finding supports the policy availability hypothesis, suggesting that presidents have incentives to focus their attention on foreign policy when vulnerability requires action, but the lack of congressional support makes passing domestic legislation difficult or inefficient. However, when incumbent presidents are not running, no such relationship is

present. In cases when the president is not running for re-election, he engages in fewer mediation attempts, when he enjoys broad support in congress. This finding provides indirect support for policy availability.

No support is found for the notion that presidents employ higher ranking mediators when elections are near and opposition in congress makes the legislative process cumbersome. A mitigating factor that is likely to contribute to this finding is the fact that the president has incentives to devote an overwhelming amount of his time to campaigning during the months leading up to an election. Moreover, especially in cases when the president is not running for re-election, the media pay more attention to the campaign than on the sitting president, making mediation a less-beneficial political tactic for the president's party.

Of the three major questions addressed in this chapter, the one pertaining to elections and mediation has yielded the most ambiguous findings. However, given the aggregated nature of the data, such findings are perhaps to be expected. The measures of the election cycle may not properly capture the window of time in which the president has incentives to focus his energy on foreign policy. Additionally, the president may feel the need to keep his focus on domestic politics during the campaign cycle and thus any international policy initiatives from which he hoped to benefit would have been carried out earlier in the term. Due to these ambiguities, it is difficult to argue in support of the hypotheses suggesting that elections have a major impact on mediation behavior.

Key Empirical Findings from Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, I test one of the major assumptions underlying the analysis in the previous chapters. In each of the previous chapters, it is assumed that presidents are likely to enjoy a rally in public support by demonstrating competence in managing overseas conflict. The models shown in Chapter 6 show support for this assumption when mediator rank is used as the independent variable. However, no such support is found for the other two independent variables, the number of new mediations and mediation strategy. Because the ICM dataset is vague about when mediation outcomes occur, it is difficult to directly test when mediation success leads to increases in presidential approval. Therefore, these three independent variables are proxies and perhaps indirect tests of effects of mediation on presidential approval ratings.

The models using mediator rank variable demonstrate that the higher media profile associated with higher-ranking mediators leads to increases in presidential approval. Such a finding suggests that the president and his high-ranking deputies have significant command over the media and can induce rallies in support of the administration independent of success. Additionally, the effect of mediator rank's influence on presidential approval is magnified when people are paying more attention to foreign policy. These findings, taken together, further support the notion that domestic political sentiment introduces both incentives for and constraints on an administration's decision to engage in mediation. Furthermore, leaders can use this domestic focus to their advantage engaging in high-profile mediations at times when the public is most likely to respond positively to such endeavors.

While high-profile mediation is shown to lead to an increase in presidential approval, it is unclear from the results presented here how durable or long lasting such an increase is likely to be. Further research is necessary to understand leaders' short-term and long-term motives for engaging in mediation. For instance, if the president is engaging in mediation in response to poor economic performance, but is also able to pass legislation that directly addresses the source of such economic problems, mediation is most likely a stop gap measure. However, if the president lacks efficient access to the legislative process, engagement in mediation is likely to be a move of desperation.

Theoretical Implications of the Research

Despite the variation in robustness of results, the empirics taken together strongly suggest that domestic politics is likely to condition the occurrence and practice of third-party mediation by state actors, as well as the likelihood that the mediation will. As such, states cannot be considered unitary actors when attempting to construct theories about the likelihood that mediation will succeed in bringing about peace. Instead, leaders' domestic political circumstances must be taken into account, as should the range of policy options that are likely to be available to the leader. In the case of the US president, he is likely more driven by shorter-term, domestic political goals than durable long-term peace agreements overseas. Thus, he is likely to focus on mediating conflict when he sees it as politically advantageous to do so, but is also likely to shift his focus away from such efforts when policy options that pay higher political dividends become available or when he has achieved such goals as re-election, and thus can focus on other policy preferences.

Similarly, focusing on foreign policy, even in low-risk endeavors such as mediation, involves an opportunity cost. The evidence shown here suggests that the president is more likely to engage in mediation when he has sufficient “party cover” in congress, meaning that his co-partisans can shield him from major criticism, or at the very least, ensure that public criticism has minimal political effects. However, there is also some evidence for the policy availability argument. In extreme cases, where congress has essentially blocked the president’s ability to move legislation and poor economic performance, low approval ratings, or nearing elections require a policy success, the president becomes more risk accepting and engages in more diplomacy.

These findings, as previously mentioned, can also be applied in order to help better explain what is already thought to be known about conflict resolution processes. For instance, Yuen and Werner’s (2005) finding that manipulated outcomes are likely to relapse into conflict can be explained by the fact that the mediating party was focused on generating a policy success in the short term to boost his domestic political fortunes, and thus less concerned with the longer-term ramifications of the effort. In this vein, and perhaps most clearly, the finding that mediators seek to intervene when conflict is most fierce, but also most visible internationally, can be explained by the fact that political leaders see the potential to benefit domestically from an attempt to quell the violence that is absent at lower levels of intensity and visibility. And, finally, the mere observation that most mediation attempts are unsuccessful suggests that leaders engage in mediation with other political goals in mind. Otherwise, mediation would be carried out in ways more likely to guarantee long-term peace.

The results also provide support for the notion that the president's goal in focusing his attention on foreign policy is much the same as that of domestic policy: to demonstrate his competence as a leader and build a record of policy success. The fact that we see presidents using diplomacy to build support for themselves while domestic conditions are poor cannot be explained by the rally-round-the-flag effect, which suggests that the president is attempting to divert the public's attention from these poor conditions by invoking patriotism and shifting animosity toward an outside adversary.

Suggestions for Further Research

Like so much empirical research, this project was limited by the data. In turn, the creation of a dataset that allows researchers to test both mediator characteristics, such as their domestic political circumstances, and conflict characteristics is necessary for the research agenda to move forward. The consistent null finding for world disputes suggests that there is no variation in the number of new mediation attempts undertaken by the US in light of the number of opportunities available for mediation. Thus, it is likely that the US is returning to the same enduring conflicts, which are of strategic or political relevance to the administration. Such research is also likely to help explain why the president chooses mediation over other foreign policy options when seeking to boost domestic support.

Additionally, this research approach can be extended to other non-military foreign policy options such as the provision of foreign aid and the use of sanctions. Given that military conflict has the potential to be costlier than these non-violent, less-coercive policy options, it is likely that vulnerable, risk-averse leaders will consider employing

such policies to shore up domestic support, or at least stop the deterioration thereof. Moreover, given the observation that most mediation attempts are unsuccessful and many of those that enjoy success over the short term see relapses in violence later, mediation should be studied in a signaling framework. Due to the fact that powerful states are thought to have the wherewithal to guarantee peace, the process and strategy of mediation is likely to signal the level of commitment that the state's leader has for engineering a peace agreement. Similarly, domestic political institutions likely constrain leaders who, motivated by preferences, are likely to attempt to mediate conflict.

Concluding Remarks

The findings presented in this dissertation present a bleak outlook for mediation success, despite the need for such efforts around the world and the thought that states are equipped with the characteristics and capabilities to best resolve conflicts. Given that political leaders are incentivized and constrained by their domestic political sphere, which is the arena that ultimately keeps them in power, it is likely that successful mediation will always be subordinate to domestic politics. In addition to the need for better understanding of mediation processes, such a scenario suggests that a great deal more attention should be paid to improving informal mediation and creating better international and regional institutions to help create and maintain peace.

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VITA

Jamie Todhunter is the son of William and Joni Todhunter, brother of Lindsay Sauers, brother-in-law of Eric Sauers, and dogfather of Ernie Todhunter. He grew up in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, went to high school at St. Andrew's School in Middletown, Delaware, and graduated from the Pennsylvania State University in 2004 with a B.A. in political science. He spent his junior year studying abroad at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. After graduation, he worked as a study abroad advisor at the Institute for Study Abroad at Butler University from 2004-2007. Arriving in Knoxville in the Fall of 2007, Jamie studied at the Trans-Atlantic Summer Academy, University of Bonn, Germany in 2008 and earned a Masters in Political Science in from UT in 2009. While at Tennessee, he served as the vice-president of Political Science Graduate Student Organization for the 2008-2009 school year and President for 2009-2010. The Political Science Department awarded him the William G. McCall award for dissertation assistance in 2010 and the Best Conference Paper Award in 2012. He completed his Ph.D. in 2012, and will spend the 2012-2013 school year as a lecturer in the Political Science Department at UT. He hopes to build a career as a professor of political science.