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Kim Quarantello
kquarant@wellesley.edu

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The Bush Doctrine and Presidential Rhetoric
Change and Continuity in US Foreign Policy

Kim Quarantello
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Professor Nadya Hajj
Professor Paul MacDonald
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Wellesley College

Abstract
This research analyzes the presidential rhetoric employed to communicate the Bush Doctrine foreign policy objectives to the American public in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks until the declaration of war on Iraq. Strategic and ideological interests are quantified utilizing content analysis data collected from foreign policy speeches that President Bush delivered from September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003. The data and speeches are evaluated to classify the Bush grand strategy as realist, liberal or neoconservative and to determine whether the Bush Doctrine represents change or continuity in US foreign policy. Surveys from March 2003 are included to assess the impact of presidential rhetoric on public opinion. These results contribute to the debate surrounding the Bush Doctrine and US foreign policy in the Middle East after 9/11.
INTRODUCTION

In the post-Cold War world, the US emerged as a global superpower after its victory over the Soviet Union. This led to a shift in the international power balance and a domestic debate regarding the appropriate role for the US in the global community. The debate intensified after 9/11, a national trauma that prompted the Bush Administration to implement a grand strategy in response to an attack on American soil, balancing strategic and ideological interests at home and abroad. The grand strategy of President George W. Bush, encompassed in the Bush Doctrine, is one of the most criticized foreign policy strategies among political scholars and the American public. The Bush Doctrine significantly influenced US foreign policy pursuits in the Middle East, specifically the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, counterterrorism strategies and democracy promotion efforts.

Three central debates surrounding the Bush Administration grand strategy have emerged in foreign policy literature: First, should the Bush Doctrine be theoretically classified as a realist, liberal or neoconservative grand strategy based on its balance between strategic and ideological interests? Second, which rhetorical strategies did the Bush Administration employ in order to generate public support for foreign policy decisions and were these strategies successful? And finally, does the Bush Doctrine represent change or continuity in US foreign policy?

In “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” Robert Jervis identifies the four main pillars of the Bush grand strategy, which provide the basis of analysis for this research:

1. Democracy and Liberalism;
2. Threat and Preventive War;
3. Unilateralism; and
Some scholars emphasize the Bush Doctrine’s realist features due to its focus on security interests, while others analyze liberal and neoconservative trends reflected in President Bush’s rhetorical emphasis on American ideals. Based on their assessments regarding the interplay of strategic and ideological interests, scholars argue that the Bush Doctrine either represents a departure from foreign policy trends or a continuation of foreign policy traditions.

In order to more thoroughly address these debates, this research utilizes content analysis on a collection of President Bush’s foreign policy statements delivered from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to the declaration of the war on Iraq on March 19, 2003, a formative era in the development of the Bush Doctrine. By identifying strategic and ideological word indicators and calculating their recurrence throughout 59 speeches, the content analysis data quantifies the prevalence of strategic and ideological interests in the Bush Doctrine. The data reveals that strategic interests were predominant in President Bush’s foreign policy statements, indicating that the Bush Doctrine should be classified as realist.

The content of these speeches yields insight into the rhetorical strategies that the Bush Administration employed and the impact of presidential rhetoric on public opinion. Surveys conducted in March 2003 demonstrate that the Bush Administration enjoyed high public approval ratings, indicating that President Bush’s use of ideological rhetoric to justify strategic objectives successfully garnered domestic support for the Bush Doctrine. This research concludes by analyzing the National Security Strategies of the Clinton, Bush and Obama Administrations to contextualize the Bush Doctrine and to determine whether this grand strategy represents change or continuity in US foreign policy. Overall, the Bush Doctrine exemplifies continuity in US grand strategy, but a change in the policies implemented to achieve foreign policy goals, while the Obama Doctrine represents a more significant shift in US grand strategy.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Part I: US Grand Strategy and Strategic Adjustment in the Post-Cold War World

The Bush Doctrine can be best understood as the Bush Administration’s grand strategy. In *Reluctant Crusaders*, Colin Dueck discusses grand strategy as the theoretical basis of US foreign policy and specifically analyzes the Bush Doctrine (Dueck 2006). Dueck explores the factors that influence US grand strategy as well as the balance between strategic and ideological interests (Dueck 2006). He defines grand strategy as “the prioritization of foreign policy goals, the identification of existing and potential resources, and the selection of a plan or roadmap that uses those resources to meet those goals” (Dueck 2006: 1). Grand strategies must outline specific policy guidelines for “levels of defense spending, foreign aid, alliance behavior, and troop deployments,” which in turn shape American military, political, diplomatic and economic engagements abroad (Dueck 2006: 1, 10, 11).

Two competing theories of international relations have historically influenced the development of US grand strategy and are especially relevant in discussing the interplay of strategic and ideological interests within the Bush Doctrine. The realist grand strategy tradition claims, “the world is a dangerous place characterized by international anarchy, the conflicting interests of states, and flawed human nature” (David 2006: 615). According to realism, states will augment national military, political and economic power in the absence of a dominant global ruler (Bowman 2005-2006: 92). Therefore, states must constantly prepare for potential attacks and focus on “short term and security-related interests” (Mowle 2003: 567). Realism suggests that alliances should be utilized to determine “the future distribution of national capabilities” and address immediate national interests (Mowle 2003: 569). Yet realist grand strategists argue that nations should not rely solely on partnerships to confront international challenges due to the
importance of national independence, as threats “must be addressed with or without assistance” (Mowle 2003: 569).

In contrast, liberalism promotes “individual freedom, equality of right, majority rule, progress, enterprise, the rule of law, and the strict limits of the state” (Dueck 2006: 21). Liberal scholars believe that because elected officials of democratic governments will be held accountable by the electoral system, they will preserve individual liberties for citizens and uphold liberal values within the global arena (Bowman 2005-2006: 22). The democratic peace theory, which proposes that “domestic political constraints…and free market economic ties” prevent democracies from fighting each other, is essential to liberalism (Bowman 2005-2006: 92-93). The US has a long tradition of promoting democratic ideals to achieve a “more liberal international order” (Dueck 2006: 22). Liberal grand strategies prioritize alliances and emphasize multilateral cooperation in the international community, even without clearly defined shared interests (Mowle 2003: 569). Adherence to international norms is also crucial, as liberalism dictates that states should promote such norms in the global community; thus states are likely to “defer to the group decision on actions to be taken, even if that decision is not the state’s ideal policy choice” (Mowle 2003: 569).

US grand strategy has vacillated between realist and liberal tendencies throughout history. Dueck characterizes these shifts in US grand strategy as “strategic adjustment,” which signify changes in American “strategy capabilities and commitments” (Dueck 2006: 12). These changes lead the US to enhance or minimize its influence abroad and alter its alliances (Dueck 2006: 12). This adjustment may additionally realign the balance between strategic and ideological interests and shift US grand strategy towards more realist or liberal policies (Dueck 2006: 37). External shocks or administration changes may challenge US grand strategy,
particularly when a “sense of policy failure” is perceived (Dueck 2006: 37). Although war or
global crisis would constitute an external shock, new threats to American security may also
provide an impetus for strategic adjustment (Dueck 2006: 37). A first order change in grand
strategy refers to a significant shift in American interests that is tangible in policy outcomes or
alliances changes, while a second order change encompasses only a minor strategic adjustment
(Dueck 2006: 12). This variation may encompass modifications to “military spending, alliance
commitments, foreign aid, diplomatic activism, and/or foreign policy stands toward potential
adversaries” (Dueck 2006: 13).

The agenda setting phase of strategic adjustment, which occurs in the aftermath of a new
threat or global crisis, allows for flexibility in grand strategy thinking (Dueck 2006: 38). Ofentimes, “interest groups, bureaucratic actors, or elected officials” present new ideas to
foreign policymakers during this window of opportunity (Dueck 2006: 39). Typically, the
president must determine which proposals should be pursued and generate political support for
his chosen grand strategy after an assessment of American national interests and the current
global environment (Dueck 2006: 40). Once the new grand strategy is institutionalized, “officials
are unlikely to make adjustments until policy failure occurs” (Dueck 2006: 40).

An example of US strategic adjustment is evident at the conclusion of the Cold War in
November 1989 (Leffler and Legro 2011: 2). The bipolar international structure of the US and
the Soviet Union as global superpowers, which had thrived since World War II, had officially
come to an end, changing the “alignments and dynamics of major-power geopolitics” (Jentleson
2004: 290). These changes led to a debate about US grand strategy and the American role in the
global community, encouraging foreign policy officials to consider new interests and objectives
as well as potential threats and strategic responses (Posen and Ross 1997: 3). Based on the
immense power that the US commanded after the Cold War victory, Daalder and Lindsay state, “the foreign policy questions Americans faced…had little to do with what the United States could do abroad…[but] what the United States should do abroad” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 8).

In order to contextualize the Bush Doctrine in the grand strategy debate after the Cold War, Barry Posen and Andrew Ross assess the four primary grand strategies in “Competing Visions for US Grand Strategy”: neo-isolationism, selective engagement, cooperative security and primacy (Posen and Ross 1997: 3). Although these grand strategy theories are not mutually exclusive, they “contain fundamental disagreements about strategic objectives and priorities” in US foreign policy (Posen and Ross 1997: 50).

Neo-isolationism is an unpopular and unambitious grand strategy proposal that holds “a constricted view of US national interests that renders internationalism not only unnecessary but counterproductive” (Posen and Ross 1997: 7). This strategy is unequivocally dictated by realism, as it emphasizes national defense and security (Posen and Ross 1997). Neo-isolationism relies exclusively on US economic and military power to defend against potential aggressors and discourages American involvement abroad (Posen and Ross 1997: 10). The selective engagement grand strategy theory, also influenced by realist ideals, emphasizes the importance of peace among the great powers (Posen and Ross 1997: 15). This theory asserts that because great powers pose the gravest potential threat, selective engagement in the international community with a focus on peace will best ensure American security and prevent unnecessary costs (Posen and Ross 1997: 16).

Cooperative security is the only grand strategy influenced by liberalism rather than realism and proposes the most expansive view of American interests, asserting, “the United States has a huge national interest in world peace” (Posen and Ross 1997: 21-22). This strategy
underscores the importance of international institutions and alliances, which can address threats, maintain deterrence capabilities and coordinate collective action (Posen and Ross 1997). Although cooperative security emphasizes strategic interdependence, it asserts that the US should lead according to shared values with allies (Posen and Ross 1997: 28). Primacy, the fourth grand strategy alternative, is centered on American unipolarity due to the great power competition that threatens American security and global peace. Therefore, the US should seek political, economic and military dominance within the global community (Posen and Ross 1997: 30). This grand strategy rejects a reliance on allies and promotes unilateralism, arguing that the US operates best alone (Posen and Ross 1997).

Posen and Ross identify *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, published by the Clinton Administration in February 1996, as a symbolic document that outlines the Clinton grand strategy (Posen and Ross 1997: 42). This policy document “contains within it the language of cooperative security and selective engagement, plus a dash of primacy” (Posen and Ross 1997: 42). This phrasing aptly describes the inherent tensions within the grand strategy, which had important implications for the foreign policies pursued throughout the 1990s. The Clinton Administration sought greater interconnectedness among nation states and the global spread of political, economic, cultural and technological institutions in addition to political frameworks that would “link security and economic interests” and “evolve to meet changing circumstances” (Leffler and Legro 2011: 26). These goals led to a multilateral approach in addressing new security challenges in the post-Cold War world, as the global community forged alliances, implemented treaties and established behavioral norms (Leffler and Legro 2011: 27). American leadership in such institutions allowed the US to share responsibility with the international community in addressing common challenges (Leffler and Legro 2011: 27). The
US promoted free trade and open markets to increase prosperity and emphasized global economic competition (Dueck 2006: 130).

The initial hopefulness about the promise of multilateral institutions and global cooperation was tempered by harsh political realities faced in the 1990s, as conflict in Haiti, Rwanda and the Balkans compelled American intervention (Dueck 2006: 137). Although the US aimed to serve as a leader among allies, the Clinton Administration sought to limit costs incurred during grand strategy implementation and officials were reluctant to commit force to realize foreign policy goals (Dueck 2006: 137). The US had developed the military capacity to “launch airstrikes, cruise missiles precision guided weapons, arms sales, economic and covert military aid” and sought to overpower “any possible combination of hostile powers” while defending American interests within the new international order (Dueck 2006: 114). Ambitious attempts at engagement and enlargement were unmatched by resources, leading to “a serious and continuing gap between capabilities and commitments in the conduct of US grand strategy” and tension between internationalist ideals and national interests (Dueck 2006: 146).

In the aftermath of the Cold War, foreign policy officials operated under the assumption that the US should serve as a global leader due to its unique liberal values (Dueck 2006: 114). The Clinton Administration emphasized that the US was an “indispensable nation” and presented America as a symbolic example of freedom and democracy, values that guided US involvement in global conflict (Dueck 2006: 131). The US additionally maintained unilateral military capacity, despite willingness to engage in the international community and support alliances, indicating an inclination toward primacy (Posen and Ross 1997).

Despite debates regarding American grand strategy in the aftermath of the Cold War, US foreign policy was notably consistent throughout the 1990s (Dueck 2006: 115). Because the US
perceived its Cold War victory as an affirmation of the success of democratic ideals, there was little incentive for American officials to reevaluate Cold War foreign policies or undergo strategic adjustment in grand strategy (Dueck 2006: 115). This continuity was especially apparent in US foreign policy in the Middle East (Terry 2008). Although the US shifted its focus from containing communism to other foreign policy priorities in the region, the US continued to view the Middle East as a critical region for American interests (Terry 2008: 338). US foreign policies pursued in the Middle East directly after the Cold War are especially important in establishing the context to examine the Bush Doctrine, which was developed in response to the punitive threats emanating from this region after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The Gulf War in 1990-1991 was the most significant and costly American commitment in the Middle East immediately after the Cold War (Terry 2008: 338). During the 1979 Iran Revolution, which threatened to spread the Shiite vision of Islam throughout the Middle East, the US and Gulf allies encouraged Iraq to challenge the new Iranian regime (Terry 2008: 338). The US shared armaments and intelligence information with Saddam Hussein and enhanced its military presence in the Middle East (Terry 2008: 338). The war cost Iraq approximately $561 billion, much of which was borrowed from Kuwait and other Gulf nations (Terry 2008: 339). Although Saddam Hussein assumed that the war loans would be forgiven, Kuwait demanded reimbursement and Gulf War allies denied funding for reconstruction efforts, leading to the “economic strangulation of Iraq” (Terry 2008: 339).

Driven by paranoia and economic paralysis, Saddam Hussein commanded Iraqi forces to invade Kuwait on August 2, 1990 (Khlaifat and Bashayreh 2010: 334). The invasion led to the collapse of the Kuwaiti government and the evacuation of the royal family as Iraq occupied the country and proclaimed this territory the nineteenth Iraqi province (Terry 2008: 339). President
H.W. Bush outlined American demands of Saddam Hussein on September 11, 1990: “the unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, the restoration of Kuwait’s legitimate government, the assurance of stability and security within the Gulf, and the protection of US citizens abroad” (Khlaifat and Bashayreh 2010: 334). Although Arab states attempted diplomacy, the US launched air strikes against Iraq in January 1991, destroying Iraqi infrastructure (Terry 2008: 340). On February 24, Allied forces initiated the ground war to reclaim Kuwait city and its airport, leading to a clear victory for the American-led operation and a crushing loss for Saddam Hussein’s Iraq (Terry 2008: 340).

In the aftermath of the Gulf War, the US endured international criticism for its unclear war motives and Iraq continued to challenge American foreign policymakers (Wright 1998: 53). Although Americans assumed that toppling Saddam Hussein would “discredit radicalism, strengthen moderates and enhance regional stability” (Rodman 2004: 1), the conclusion of the war did not overthrow his regime and the dictator continued to incite political tension with Iraq’s neighbors, Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia (Wright 1998: 53-54). Despite shared goal of regime change in Iraq, the US and its allies did not seek the United Nations’ approval to achieve this objective and the international community questioned the decision to withdraw while Saddam Hussein remained in power (Khlaifat and Bashayreh 2010: 335).

The subsequent US policy of containment consisted of efforts to maintain a southern no-fly zone, UN economic sanctions and arms embargo, UN weapons of mass destruction inspections and support for Iraqi opposition groups (Wright 1998: 57). This policy was largely unsuccessful, as Saddam Hussein repeatedly stalled UNSCOM inspections (Wright 1998: 57) and the sanctions prevented an Iraqi recovery (Terry 2008: 341). Saddam Hussein exploited international criticism of American policies to “isolate the United States and limit the open-
ended disarmament process” as he continued to defy no-fly zones and block inspectors (Wright 1998: 63). Yet “even as the US position grew tougher, other countries were taking steps to bring Saddam’s regime back into the international fold” (Wright 1998: 62). Many previous partners during the Gulf War resumed diplomatic and commercial relations with Iraq and urged the United Nations to ease sanctions to return Iraqi oil revenue to the global economy, dividing the US and its allies (Wright 1998: 63). American troop presence in the Gulf further irritated Arab countries and contributed to the international disapproval of US foreign policy in the region (Wright 1998: 58).

In addition to the Gulf War, the US confronted issues of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Jentleson 2004: 303). Although counterterrorism measures had been implemented since the 1970s, pre-9/11 policies were “limited in scope and duration” and primarily focused on ineffective economic sanctions with little military action (Jentleson 2004: 303). Many Islamic terrorist groups, including Al Qaeda, Hamas and Hezbollah, “employ terrorist tactics against American interests to achieve their ends” and threaten regional stability and Israeli security (David 2006: 627). Though the goals of these distinct terrorist groups vary, they share a willingness to target civilians in order to convey their radical political message through violent means (David 2006: 627).

Due to the difficulty in deterring extremist groups and the complicity of Middle Eastern governments in supporting terrorist movements, terrorism is an especially challenging threat to mediate (David 2006: 628). The US cannot easily deter terrorist attacks and many Arab leaders covertly support terrorist groups with political and monetary resources (David 2006: 628). Many scholars also attribute the rise of terrorist groups with the corruption and repression of Middle Eastern governments and their inability to provide public goods (David 2006: 628). The risk of
nuclear proliferation in the Middle East heightens the threat of terrorism, as terrorist groups could potentially employ weapons of mass destruction against the US if they acquired nuclear material (David 2006: 629).

The US sought to encourage democracy in the Middle East in the 1990s, primarily to improve economic conditions, but did not significantly pressure Arab states to engage in democratic reform as part of its counterterrorism strategy prior to 2001 (David 2006: 628). The Clinton Administration “focused on international trade as the engine of growth and economic reform” and the Bush Administration continued this policy prior to 9/11 (Dunne 2005: 210). Even though the US gained credibility to promote democracy due to the ideological victory of the Cold War, political officials worried that aggressive democracy promotion efforts would jeopardize American involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Dunne 2005: 211). Although there were many ideological differences between the US and Middle Eastern regimes, American officials avoided discussing domestic governance with autocratic rulers in order to preserve important regional alliances (Dunne 2005: 211). Politicians also believed that engaging directly with friendly, authoritarian rulers would be more beneficial to US interests than negotiating with future democratic governments that may not support American foreign policies in the region (Dunne 2005: 211). This prioritization of strategic interests over ideological concerns in US alliance management reflects the extent to which US foreign policy was entrenched in realism rather than liberalism prior to 9/11.

Part II: The Bush Doctrine

George W. Bush was elected president in this post-Cold War world and articulated his vision for US foreign policy during his campaign in 2000 (Owens 2009: 24). President Bush supported similar realist foreign policy strategies that his father had pursued from 1989-1993
He believed that the US must actively engage in international affairs and that US foreign policies should promote American interests abroad (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 39). Although President Bush was not entirely opposed to American intervention, he criticized the Clinton Administration’s failure to prioritize and the indiscriminate deployment of military forces to various regional conflicts (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 37). Bush Administration officials were initially “assertive nationalists” and were averse to nation building, especially when this process involved sending American troops abroad (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 46). President Bush promised the American public “a clear set of priorities based on a hard-nosed assessment of America’s national interests” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 38). Dueck explains that President Bush initially hoped to limit international engagement and lessen the American influence in the multilateral institutions that President Clinton favored, indicating an emphasis on strategic rather than ideological interests (Dueck 2006: 147).

But the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, constituted a national trauma for the US (History 2013). 19 militants “hijacked four airliners and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States” (History 2013). The hijackers crashed two planes into the north and south towers of the World Trade Center in New York City (History 2013). In addition to the 3,000 people killed in New York, 343 firefighters and paramedics, 23 NYPD officers and 37 Port Authority officers also lost their lives (History 2013). When the third plane crashed into the west side of the Pentagon military headquarters, killing 125 military personnel and civilians, passengers on the fourth plane were able to intercept the final attack and crashed the plane into a rural Pennsylvania field (History 2013). The terrorists were financed by Al-Qaeda, a terrorist organization led by Osama bin Laden, and were “allegedly acting in retaliation for America’s
support of Israel, its involvement in the Persian Gulf War, and its continued military presence in the Middle East” (History 2013).

The Bush Doctrine developed in the aftermath of these attacks, which shocked American citizens and foreign policymakers alike. This grand strategy was communicated to the American public through President Bush’s public statements and the 2002 National Security Strategy.

Robert Jervis outlines the four main pillars of the Bush Doctrine:

1. Democracy and Liberalism;
2. Threat and Preventive War;
3. Unilateralism; and

Foreign policy scholars largely agree that these four principles were essential to the Bush Doctrine. The debate emerges when discussing the extent to which these principles dictated US foreign policy and whether they represent a continuation with or a departure from foreign policy trends.

**Pillar One: Democracy and Liberalism**

Jervis identifies “Democracy and Liberalism” as the first tenet of the Bush Doctrine, a policy component that has challenged scholars in their attempts to classify the Bush Administration’s grand strategy as realist, liberal or neoconservative (Jervis 2003: 366). The Bush Doctrine has an unmistakably ideological component (Jervis 2003: 366). The Bush Administration assumed that because domestic regimes play an essential role in formulating foreign policies, the spread of democratic and liberal values throughout the international community would encourage government reform, thereby enhancing global security with the expansion of liberal democracies (Jervis 2003: 366). The Bush Administration also believed that
by promoting values of “freedom, democracy, and free enterprise,” the US would play a transformative role in “making the world not just safer, but better” (Jervis 2003: 366).

Democracy promotion was intended to minimize terrorism, enhance international stability and cement alliances, thus advancing American interests (Jervis 2003: 366). However, this element of the Bush Doctrine was primarily emphasized after the US did not discover weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and the Bush Administration was forced to shift its justification for war (Jervis 2003: 366). It was only in late 2003 that administration officials argued that a democratized Iraq would serve as a catalyst for a wave of democratization throughout the Middle East and inherently benefit the US (Jervis 2003: 366).

Although Jervis asserts that this element of the Bush Doctrine is liberal in nature due to its optimism regarding the potential for democracy to augment global peace and security, other scholars contest this assertion and the extent to which ideology influenced the Bush Doctrine (Jervis 2003: 367). In “The Roots of the Bush Doctrine,” Jonathen Monten elaborates on two contrasting strategies of democracy promotion: exemplarism and vindicationism (Monten 2005: 113). While exemplarism asserts that global influence and prestige are derived from the American force of example, vindicationism relies on proactive policies to promote universal liberal values and institutions (Monten 2005: 113). Monten situates neoconservatism in the vindicationist strategy of exceptionalism and argues that the shift in the Bush Doctrine is apparent in “the particular vehemence with which it adheres to a vindicationist framework for democracy promotion” rather than the presence of ideological interests in US foreign policy (Monten 2005: 141). After the declaration of the War on Terror and War on Iraq, the Bush Administration increasingly attempted to shape domestic governance abroad and elevated vindicationism to a central role in US foreign policy, according to Monten (Monten 2005: 140).
Although Daalder and Lindsay agree with Monten’s assertion that the Bush Doctrine represents a shift in US foreign policy, they reject the notion that this grand strategy was neoconservative (Daalder and Lindsay 2005). In *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy*, Daalder and Lindsay argue, “this conventional wisdom…fundamentally misunderstood the intellectual currents within the Bush Administration and the Republican Party more generally” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 14). According to Daalder and Lindsay, Bush and his advisers should be classified as “assertive nationalists” who sought to preserve American security rather than promote ideologies abroad (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 14). These scholars highlight the shift in the tone of President Bush’s public statements when it was evident that Saddam Hussein never possessed weapons of mass destruction in late 2003 (Daalder and Lindsay 2008: 14). They acknowledge that although his rhetoric evolved over time to rationalize the invasion after shocking miscalculations, President Bush’s early foreign policy decisions were implemented with realist intentions (Daalder and Lindsay 2008: 14).

Daalder and Lindsay also discuss the ideological and religious rhetoric that permeated Bush’s foreign policy statements and believe that the War on Terror became a personal mission for President Bush (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 86). His investment extended beyond national security interests and reflected the fundamental “struggle between good and evil that touched all the world’s peoples” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 86). Daalder and Lindsay explain that his frequent religious invocations and explanations of the American mission “encouraged the speculation that he believed himself the instrument of Providence,” fueling critics who attacked the ideological components of the Bush Doctrine (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 87). Regardless of President Bush’s ideological rhetoric, Daalder and Lindsay conclude that the Bush Doctrine prioritized realist national security goals rather than liberal ideals (Daalder and Lindsay 2005).
The shift in US foreign policy was therefore not in the emphasis on American ideology, but rather in the means to promote these ideals (Daalder and Lindsay 2005).

Yet many scholars disagree with the assertion that the Bush Doctrine represents a shift in US foreign policy. In his essay, “Political and Moral Myths in American Foreign Policy: The Neoconservative Question,” Chris Langille agrees that the Bush Doctrine is neoconservative, but argues that this grand strategy stems from a tradition that emphasizes “war as a moral crusade,” proclaims the US the “custodian of the international system” and prioritizes ideological foreign policy goals (Langille 2008: 321). Langille traces the history of neoconservative ideals, beginning with the inception of neoconservatism during the Vietnam War, to demonstrate that these values have been consistently present in US foreign policies and to support his argument for continuity (Langille 2008: 323). The original neoconservatives emerged as fierce opponents of communism in the 1970s who believed that “liberal democracy was forever imperiled and under siege by successive ‘existential threats’” (Langille 2008: 324). This fear led neoconservatives to reject liberal internationalism and multilateralism in the global community and assert that the US should serve as a moral exemplar for democratic values (Langille 2008: 324).

According to Langille, the Bush Administration viewed the 9/11 terrorist attacks as a “vindication” of their fears and “a confirmation of the successive existential threats to America and the liberal order,” which justified aggressive democracy promotion efforts (Langille 2008: 328). Langille concludes that a shift occurred in the existential threat that American foreign policymakers addressed with the defeat of communism and rise of terrorism (Langille 2008: 329). The “recurring themes of US foreign policy,” such as moral principles, democracy and
threat perception, are crucial elements of the Bush Doctrine according to Langille and have endured throughout American history (Langille 2008: 321).

Brian Schmidt and Michael Williams agree with Langille and Monten and classify the Bush Doctrine as a neoconservative grand strategy in their 2008 article, “The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists” (Schmidt and Williams 2008: 191). Schmidt and Williams assess the realist opposition to the War in Iraq to highlight the divergences between neoconservative and realist thought and to bolster their claim that the Bush Doctrine stems from recurring neoconservative ideals (Schmidt & Williams 2008: 201). Realism rejects the notion that the US should “engage in moralist foreign policy crusades to remake the world in its own image” and disavows the democratic peace theory (Schmidt and Williams 2008: 202-203). Therefore, realist scholars fervently opposed the American-initiated regime change in Iraq (Schmidt and Williams 2008: 202-203). Because realism emphasizes balance-of-power politics, realist scholars assume that other states would never concede power to another state by adopting political values or beliefs; therefore Iraq could never truly serve as a democratic catalyst in the Middle East, as neoconservatives suggested (Schmidt and Williams 2008: 204). Realists argued, “a change in the character of the units (states) is unlikely to change the nature of international politics” and agreed that conventional tactics of deterrence would effectively contain Saddam Hussein (Schmidt and Williams 2008: 204). This perspective would render preventive warfare, a core principle of the Bush Doctrine, unnecessary (Schmidt and Williams 2008: 204). Schmidt and Williams conclude that although the realists failed to influence the Bush Doctrine, neoconservative inclinations have been present throughout American history and therefore this grand strategy does not represent a departure from foreign policy tradition.
In *After Bush: The Case for Continuity in American Foreign Policy*, Lynch and Singh echo Daalder and Lindsay’s skepticism that the Bush Doctrine was based in neoconservative theory, yet argue that this grand strategy was rooted in US foreign policy tradition (Lynch and Singh 2008). Like Daalder and Lindsay, these scholars assert that leading policymakers in the Bush Administration should be classified as traditional realists or “national interest conservatives,” rather than neocons (Lynch and Singh 2008: 155). This argument is based on the premise that “regime change in Iraq was justified in the American national interest” and was guided by strategic, rather than ideological motivations, consistent with the realist tradition in US foreign policy (Lynch and Singh 2008: 155). The War in Iraq was declared to address threats to American security, rather than regime change (Lynch and Singh 2008: 155).

Lynch and Singh acknowledge that neoconservative elements were present in the Bush Doctrine, but they claim that this inclination towards neoconservatism was evident when weapons of mass destruction were not found and was not the primary justification for the invasion (Lynch and Singh 2008: 155). The Bush Administration applied the democratic peace theory to its foreign policy in hindsight as a strategy to minimize regional threats by spreading American values abroad (Lynch and Singh 2008: 155). Thus Lynch and Singh argue that motivations for regime change were strategic, rather than ideological, and the Bush Doctrine should be considered realist rather than neoconservative (Lynch and Singh 2008: 155).

Yet Lynch and Singh disagree with Daalder and Lindsay’s discussion of the “Bush revolution” and argue that the War on Terror should be “understood as a revision rather than a rejection of the dominant American foreign policy tradition” by highlighting the continuities in foreign policy (Lynch and Singh 2008: 17). Lynch and Singh discuss the “fierce ideological wars that have preserved, enhanced and spread fundamental freedoms” in American history (Lynch
and Singh 2008: 45). The US fought for independence from Great Britain in the War of Independence and abolished the injustice of slavery during the Civil War (Lynch and Singh 2008: 45). Americans defeated Nazism in the Second Cold War and diminished the influence of communism during the Cold War (Lynch and Singh 2008: 45). Lynch and Singh also emphasize that American presidents have often led wars to defeat “ideological opponents” and have been successful largely due to the success of “moral” foreign policy campaigns in US foreign policy (Lynch and Singh 2008: 45). This discussion echoes Langille’s emphasis on the change in the existential threat from communism to terrorism rather than a shift in the foreign policy strategies implemented to confront these threats (Lynch and Singh 2008: 45).

In “The Bush Doctrine: The Foreign Policy of Republican Empire,” Thomas Owens provides additional evidence to reject the dominant narrative of the Bush Doctrine as a neoconservative policy and argue for continuity in US foreign policy (Owens 2009: 25). He states, “the Bush Doctrine is only the latest manifestation of the fact that US national interest has always been concerned with more than simple security - it has always had both a commercial and an ideological component” (Owens 2009: 25). Owens claims that US foreign policy cannot be classified as strictly realist or liberal; while realism emphasizes national security to the detriment of economic and ideological goals and liberalism prioritizes global “peace and prosperity” over “power and security,” “American principles have been at least as important in shaping US foreign policy as the raw pursuit of power beloved by realists” (Owens 2009: 30). American foreign policy consists of a commitment to protecting and promoting the moral principles outlined in the United States’ founding documents as well as aspirations of economic prosperity and global power (Owens 2009: 39). Because American interests have always included economic issues and moral principles, Owens asserts that democracy promotion cannot be
separated from national interests and therefore the Bush Doctrine does not signify a departure from US foreign policy (Owens 2009: 30).

Although scholars differ in their arguments regarding the extent to which ideology influenced the Bush Doctrine and their classification of this grand strategy as realist, liberal or neoconservative, they agree that the ideological tenets have been consistent throughout American foreign policy tradition. American exceptionalism and democracy promotion is not a new, but rather a continuous trend in US foreign policy, and thus the debate centers on whether the strategies utilized by the Bush Administration to spread these values constitute change or continuity in US foreign policy tradition. Pillar two of the Bush Doctrine addresses the preventive war strategy that the Bush Administration employed to achieve its foreign policy goals.

**Pillar Two: Threat and Preventive War**

Threat and preventive war, the second pillar of the Bush Doctrine, encompasses the “heightened sense of vulnerability” (Jervis 2003: 369) as well as the high “security risks and costs of inaction” that American citizens and officials perceived after 9/11 (Jervis 2003: 371). This change in threat perception and fear of another attack on American soil led the Bush Administration to emphasize the urgency of new global challenges (Jervis 2003: 369). In several public addresses, President Bush insisted that the conventional deterrence measures that succeeded during the Cold War would be ineffective in protecting American citizens from terrorism (Jervis 2003: 369). He concluded that without deterrence as a viable option, the US must either utilize prevention, with potentially faulty intelligence data, or defense, which is impossible given the sheer size of American territory (David 2006: 628). During his Commencement Address to the West Point Military Academy on June 1, 2002, President Bush
explicitly articulated the potential for preventive warfare in order to address threats that cannot be contained by deterrence (McCartney 2005: 415). This controversial element of the Bush Doctrine “laid the groundwork for Bush’s Iraq policy” (McCartney 2005: 414) and was criticized by American citizens and the global community (Jervis 2003: 369).

Daalder and Lindsay discuss the “conceptual confusion” of the rhetoric employed by President Bush during his Commencement Address to explain this new security strategy to the American public (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 125). They claim that President Bush “conflated the notion of preemptive and preventive war,” which created misperceptions and resulted in the incorrect identification of military strategy by the media and foreign policy scholars (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 125). Although President Bush specifically referred to preemptive action in his public speeches, his description of military strategy indicated his intention to employ preventive, rather preemptive, warfare (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 125). This distinction is crucial in understanding the Bush Doctrine and the resulting condemnation from the international community, as preemptive wars “have a long-recognized standing in international law as a legitimate form of self-defense, [while] preventive wars did not” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 125). Owens further clarifies this point and states, “while international law and norms have always acknowledged the right of a state to launch a preemptive strike against another when an attack by the latter is imminent, it has rejected any right of preventive war” (Owens 2009: 26).

Although the goals of promoting liberal ideals and ensuring American security were consistent with US foreign policy tradition, Daalder and Lindsay argue that rejecting Cold War deterrence tactics was unprecedented (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 124). Many foreign policy experts questioned why President Bush made such an explicit statement advocating for preventive warfare during the West Point Commencement Address and worried that other
countries would also adopt this military tactic in order to justify other interventions (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 125). When it became clear that Iraq was the primary objective behind this military strategy, policymakers also feared that preventively attacking Saddam Hussein might provoke him to use the weapons of mass destructions he was presumed to possess (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 126). Scholars believed that President Bush emphasized the potential for this new military strategy soon after 9/11 in order to prepare the American public for the likelihood of a second war (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 125).

Leffler disagrees with Daalder and Lindsay in “9/11 and American Foreign Policy,” claiming that the preventive war pillar of the Bush Doctrine was neither revolutionary nor transformative (Leffler 2005: 397). He discusses the historical instances when preemptive military action was utilized and preventive warfare was considered (Leffler 2005: 397). Leffler cites Theodore Roosevelt’s preemptive intervention justification for US involvement in the Caribbean and Central America as well as Franklin Roosevelt’s declaration, “This is the time for prevention of attack” when the US Greer was attacked by Nazi submarines (Leffler 2005: 398). Leffler also states that although the Kennedy Administration decided not to utilize preventive warfare in response to the Soviet Union’s rapid military buildup, both preemptive and preventive strategies were deliberated (Leffler 2005: 400). The Kennedy Administration additionally evaluated potential benefits of utilizing preventive military action against China as its nuclear stockpiles increased (Leffler 2005: 400). Leffler concludes that the Bush Administration’s preventive war strategy can be traced in American foreign policy history and does not represent a significant shift (Leffler 2005: 404).

Lynch and Singh agree that preventive warfare was not revolutionary and that security interests have historically influenced American foreign policy decisions (Lynch and Singh 2008:
These scholars discuss the recurrence of external threats in American history and argue that threat perception has continuously influenced the development of US foreign policy in response to new challenges to American security (Lynch and Singh 2008: 29). They acknowledge that although the preventive War in Iraq was “illegal under international law and the UN charter,” the war was legitimate “on the grounds of national and collective security” (Lynch and Singh 2008: 167). Because President Bush was clear about his intentions to preventively address potential threats and the UN concept of the ‘responsibility to protect’ justifies war waged for security interests, these scholars assert, “it was more international law that was the problem than the appropriateness of the war” (Lynch and Singh 2008: 165). Lynch and Singh additionally highlight the challenges that policymakers face when attempting to correctly detect threats and develop appropriate strategies to respond to them in “effective anticipatory defense” to justify the Bush Doctrine’s reliance on preventive war (Lynch and Singh 2008: 166).

Preventive war is the most defining, and most controversial, pillar of the Bush Doctrine. This element of the Bush Administration’s grand strategy provides the most compelling evidence for the argument that the Bush Doctrine represented an aberration from foreign policy trends due to the aggressive means utilized to preserve American security. Yet many scholars still dismiss claims of a revolutionary foreign policy strategy by citing historical examples of preemptive military tactics to demonstrate continuity in US foreign policy.

**Pillar Three: Unilateralism**

Jervis demonstrates a connection between pillar two and pillar three, unilateralism, and argues that preventive war is typically declared unilaterally because it is difficult to garner international support for such an aggressive military strategy (Jervis 2003: 374). Although the US accepted some assistance from the global community for military engagements in
Afghanistan and Iraq, the US emphasized building coalitions, rather than alliances, explicitly rejecting multilateralism (Jervis 2003: 374). Jervis explains that Bush Administration leaders “made it clear that they would forego the participation of any particular country rather than compromise” US foreign policy goals (Jervis 2003: 374).

Daalder and Lindsay echo these claims and state that although there was significant inclination among the international community to support American military actions in Afghanistan, Washington largely ignored alliance assistance with the exceptions of Great Britain and Australia (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 115). President Bush’s “decided preference for unilateral action” was deemed easier and more efficient than multilateral efforts in the global community (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 13). He believed that the world was dangerous and presented threats to American security that could not be thwarted with international cooperation, but must be prevented by employing American military power (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 13). Although many American allies fervently opposed the invasion of Iraq and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, the Bush Administration ignored international objections and declared war on Iraq in March 2003, demonstrating that American goals took precedence over global consensus (Jervis 2003: 375). Though multilateralists condemned the unilateral move, Jervis asserts that these decisions ultimately strengthened the Bush Doctrine, as President Bush established that global criticism would not hinder American security objectives (Jervis 2003: 375).

Although multilateralism would have appeased the international community, it would not ensure an American military victory, and President Bush’s priority in declaring war on Iraq was to enhance US security rather than strengthen alliances (Lynch and Singh 2008: 39). Those who opposed the War in Iraq believed that without an “explicit UN resolution,” Saddam’s removal was illegal, despite his consistent violation of UN resolutions (Lynch and Singh 2008: 39). But
Lynch and Singh highlight that President Bush and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld sought to build a coalition of nations; when support was not received from American alliances who disagreed with military action or feared terrorist retaliation, the Bush Administration continued with war plans to enhance American security (Lynch and Singh 2008: 39). Though President Bush sought support for the War in Iraq, he “had no intention of letting others dictate what the United States could do” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 13).

Scholars generally agree that American unilateralism represents continuity rather than change in US foreign policy. Jervis notes that unilateralist action was apparent in the Bush Administration’s foreign policy decisions prior to 9/11, as the US rejected several international agreements and institutions in early 2001, including the Kyoto Protocol, the International Criminal Court and the ban on biological weapons (Jervis 2003: 374). Although Daalder and Lindsay argue that much of the Bush Doctrine is revolutionary, they believe that unilateral action is consistent with US foreign policy trends (Daalder and Lindsay 2005). Lynch and Singh also argue that the Bush Administration’s reliance on unilateralism is consistent with US foreign policy tradition (Lynch and Singh 2008). The US has employed multilateralism in foreign policy when it is convenient and efficient, but American policymakers have continuously demonstrated their willingness to abandon alliances when necessary to achieve US foreign policy goals (Lynch and Singh 2008: 43). President Bush “demanded a right to act in isolation, if necessary, to realize US security by securing the universal rights of foreigners” during the War in Iraq (Lynch and Singh 2008: 27).

Isolationism, or “the concept that America’s security is proportional to the absence of its formal ties with foreign nations” is an enduring trend in US foreign policy (Lynch and Singh 2008: 21). Lynch and Singh attribute American isolationism to the unique geography that the US
enjoys (Lynch and Singh 2008: 21). Because the US was geographically removed from Old World wars and modern-day regional tensions, American security has consistently been “only tangentially linked” to the outcome of global conflicts (Lynch and Singh 2008: 21).

Unilateralism is consistent with the American tradition of pragmatic foreign policy and dates back to President Washington’s Farewell Address, which advised the new nation to avoid foreign entanglements in order to protect American security interests (Lynch and Singh 2008: 36). Lynch and Singh also cite Woodrow Wilson, champion of multilateral cooperation and the League of Nations, and his acknowledgement of the “limitations of filial obligations in international politics” (Lynch and Singh 2008: 36). The US utilized multilateral alliances during World War II and the Cold War, but forged questionable partnerships with regimes of starkly contrasting ideologies, as “American foreign policymakers have tended to value foreign alliances for their utility rather than their ideological purity” (Lynch and Singh 2008: 36). This willingness to ally with illiberal regimes demonstrates the American prioritization of strategic, rather than ideological, interests in foreign policy, indicating a tendency towards realism in grand strategy.

Leffler boldly claims, “unilateralism is quintessentially American” (Leffler 2005: 405). He asserts that neither ambitions for military dominance nor a reliance on unilateral action are unfounded in US foreign policy tradition and that the accumulation of threats in the aftermath of 9/11 led policymakers to acknowledge the American need to act alone (Leffler 2005: 405). Although the US formed many strategic alliances in order to augment the American position during the Cold War, officials “never foreclosed the right to act unilaterally and often did so” (Leffler 2005: 405). The US also ignored French and British caution during the Vietnam War and received little international support for containing the spread of communism (Leffler 2005: 401). Although the US typically accepts assistance from alliances, the US has never hesitated to
employ unilateral action in the international community when it was beneficial to do so, indicating that the Bush Doctrine reliance on unilateralism is anything but revolutionary (Leffler 2005).

Scholars resoundingly agree that unilateralism was an essential element of the Bush Doctrine and that this tradition is deeply engrained in the history of US foreign policy. This concept guided the US decision to declare war on Iraq without support from the United Nations Security Council or Cold War alliances. Many critics point to American unilateralism as the central mistake of the Bush Administration and believe that the US should not have invaded Iraq without support from the United Nations. In reality, this tendency toward unilateral action is a more consistent trend in US foreign policy than multilateralism.

**Pillar Four: American Hegemony**

Jervis concludes his discussion with an analysis of American hegemony, the fourth pillar of the Bush Doctrine, which unites the prior three pillars of the Bush Administration’s grand strategy (Jervis 2003: 376). Overall, the Bush Doctrine sought to assert American hegemony, or primacy, in the international community through ideological and strategic means (Jervis 2003: 376). Jervis explains that this grand strategy rejected the universal norms and institutions applicable to the global community (Jervis 2003: 376). The US assumes that it must operate differently than other states in order to ensure global order, stability and the preservation of liberal values (Jervis 2003: 376). Jervis alludes to President Bush’s West Point Commencement Speech, which emphasized the necessity for US military strength and high defense spending (Jervis 2003: 376). He classifies this military logic as “an implicit endorsement of the hegemonic stability theory,” as overwhelming American military power would prevent potential threats from other countries and ensure that other nation states did not need to enhance their own
militaries, ensuring American hegemony (Jervis 2003: 376). The Bush Administration believed that “the world cannot afford to return to traditional multipolar balance of power politics,” which would inevitably become dangerous, an assumption that validated the US role as the hegemonic power in the international community (Jervis 2003: 376-377).

Jervis argues that the American hegemony pillar of the Bush Doctrine was “consistent with standard patterns of international politics” and a natural, expected development after the Cold War (Jervis 2003: 377). This hegemony continued until 9/11, which furthered President Bush’s unilateral perspective (Jervis 2003: 379). Because the US was unchallenged by another powerful nation state with competing ideology, as it was during the Cold War, American goals of promoting liberal values abroad became more realistic (Jervis 2003: 381). Jervis argues that “the combination of power, fear, and perceived opportunity” provided the US with an incentive to “reshape world politics” and universally apply American ideals abroad (Jervis 2003: 383). He additionally alludes to the security dilemma, which explains that the US is compelled to protect its national security by engaging in conflict with other states that potentially challenge or threaten American interests (Jervis 2003: 383).

Daalder and Lindsay expand upon the hegemonist argument, which assumes that projecting American power within the global community will secure US interests domestically and internationally (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 40). Daalder and Lindsay also assess the importance of American power, leadership and the assumption that “given the same chance, people everywhere would make the same choice Americans had made since gaining independence more than two hundred years ago: they would embrace freedom, democracy, and free enterprise” (Daalder and Lindsay 2005: 124). This notion justified American primacy in the international community, as Bush Administration officials and American citizens assumed that
US ideals were both universally applicable and universally sought. Yet this assumption was also apparent immediately after the Cold War and was not unique to the Bush Doctrine.

Owens additionally classifies the American hegemony pillar of the Bush Doctrine as “a species of primacy, based on the intersection of hegemonic stability theory and the theory of the democratic peace” (Owens 2009: 26). He concedes that the Bush Doctrine is a form of “benevolent” primacy that preserves liberal values but assumes that only American strength can ensure global peace, allowing the US to ignore institutional restraints and international criticism in its foreign policy (Owens 2009: 27). Scholars agree that American hegemony, along with unilateralism, is central to the Bush Doctrine and that these principles represent continuity in US foreign policy.
HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: Ideology influenced the development of the Bush Doctrine and the data should demonstrate an increase in ideological rhetoric over time. The speeches delivered in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks will be primarily strategic in nature as the Bush Administration immediately responded to the terrorist attacks. Ideological rhetoric will increase after President Bush’s June 1, 2002 Commencement Address at West Point, when he began to discuss the possibility of war in Iraq, and the Bush Doctrine will become increasingly neoconservative.

Hypothesis 2: President Bush’s rhetorical emphasis on ideology will resonate with the American public and public opinion polls will demonstrate high domestic approval ratings regarding US foreign policy decisions.

Hypothesis 3: The distribution of strategic and ideological word indicators will be fairly consistent throughout the National Security Strategies of the three presidential administrations, as these documents tend to be very similar rhetorically, regardless of differences in foreign policy objectives. The documents will have a larger percentage of strategic rather than ideological rhetoric due to the focus on national security. Despite similarities in the National Security Strategies, the Bush Doctrine will represent a shift in foreign policy due to its emphasis on ideological interests and utilization of preventive warfare.
METHODOLOGY

In order to address the three primary debates that are outlined in the hypotheses, a quantitative methodology must be utilized to determine the prevalence of strategic and ideological objectives in President Bush’s foreign policy statements and classify the Bush Doctrine as realist, liberal or neoconservative. This research quantifies the distribution of strategic and ideological word indicators in President Bush’s foreign policy statements and investigates the rhetorical strategies that President Bush utilized to communicate foreign policy goals. Rhetorical data collected from National Security Strategies published by the Clinton, Bush and Obama Administrations will contribute to the discussion regarding whether the Bush Doctrine collectively represents change or continuity in US foreign policy.

President Bush’s public statements are central to this analysis due to the importance of presidential rhetoric in framing foreign policy decisions to the American public. McCartney emphasizes the significance of presidential rhetoric in contextualizing events such as 9/11 in “American Nationalism and US Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War” (McCartney 2004). He asserts that this role falls directly to the president, because “as the figurehead of the nation, the president is understood both to embody and express its values, character and purpose” (McCartney 2005: 407). President Bush assumed this role and utilized his public statements in order to explain the implications of the attacks, assert a foreign policy agenda and generate support for the Bush Doctrine; therefore his statements are most pertinent in evaluating the content and objectives of the Bush Administration’s grand strategy.

This research collected rhetorical data using basic content analysis techniques on a selection of President Bush’s foreign policy speeches from September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003, to classify these statements as primarily strategic or ideological in nature. This time period
is crucial because it represents the foreign policy era from immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks until the US declaration of war on Iraq. In the selection of 59 speeches (15 from 2001, 31 from 2002, and 13 from 2003) President Bush discusses the American foreign policy response to 9/11, the association of the 9/11 with Saddam Hussein and the assumed weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The speeches delivered during this time frame are especially important in understanding the Bush Doctrine, as the rhetoric was utilized to justify two wars in the Middle East and explain the Administration’s broader foreign policy goals in the region.

After reading these speeches with careful attention to word choice and recurring phrases, 15 strategic word indicators and 15 ideological word indicators were selected as coding words for content analysis. These words were identified based on their repetition throughout the speeches and their foreign policy implications, specifically related to strategic or ideological interests and the four pillars of the Bush Doctrine.

**Table 1. Strategic and Ideological Word Indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Word Indicators</th>
<th>Ideological Word Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coalition</td>
<td>Civilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disarm</td>
<td>Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Dictator</td>
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<td>Military</td>
<td>Dignity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War</td>
<td>Tyranny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons</td>
<td>Values</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
After word indicators were selected, the speeches were opened with the Mac application “WordDump,” which complied a word count for each speech. Strategic and ideological word indicators were counted and recorded in an Excel spreadsheet for each of the speeches selected. Plurals and slight variations of the words (e.g. freedoms, liberation, etc.) were also included in these word counts. The sums of the strategic word indicators and the ideological word indicators were calculated to classify each speech as primarily strategic or ideological in content. The ratios between ideological word indicators and total word indicators were also calculated in each speech to assess underlying rhetorical trends.

This analysis was also applied to National Security Strategies published by three different presidential Administrations: The Clinton Administration’s National Security Strategy published in February 1995, the Bush Administration’s National Security Strategy published in September 2002 and the Obama Administration’s National Security Strategy published in May 2010. This data will determine rhetorical trends across presidential administrations and assess the balance of strategic or ideological interests within these documents, yielding insight into the foreign policy context of the Bush Doctrine and the trends of change and continuity among grand strategies.

**Limitations of Data**

Although this data contributes to the discussion regarding the foreign policy context of the Bush Doctrine and trends of change and continuity in US grand strategy, there are undoubtedly limitations to this evidence. The content analysis employed relies solely on word count and does not take overall tone or context into consideration. Despite attempts to ensure that the data was calculated accurately, these figures are subject to human error. Although these speeches were selected carefully for their primary emphasis on foreign policy, the collection of foreign policy statements is merely a sample of many presidential speeches. Additional speeches
may have enhanced the data pool and revealed a more nuanced interpretation of strategic and ideological trends. The limited time frame (September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003) also constricts the sample size of the speeches collected. Many scholars believe that President Bush began to emphasize ideological interests in 2004, when it became clear that Iraq was not concealing weapons of mass destruction. Future studies may apply the same methodology to include additional speeches beyond this limited time frame to yield more conclusive data and a more comprehensive view of the evolution of the Bush Doctrine and President Bush’s foreign policy rhetoric.
DATA AND RESULTS

Figures 1 and 2 display overall trends in strategic and ideological word indicators in the collection of foreign policy speeches delivered September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003. The following figures in the data section present a smaller breakdown of the word indicators within each speech as well as the ratios of ideological to total word indicators to detect more subtle ideological trends. This data is presented in two time frames: September 11, 2001, to April 28, 2002, and June 1, 2002, to March 19, 2003. The first time frame consists of speeches delivered in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, which primarily focused on national security, counterterrorism efforts and the War in Afghanistan. This second time frame represents a shift in the focus of US foreign policy from the post-9/11 era to the pre-Iraq War era, which emphasized Saddam Hussein’s regime and the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. These time frames were divided based on President Bush’s landmark Commencement Address on June 1, 2002, which was the first instance in which the Bush Administration began to prepare the American public for the possibility of war with Iraq.

Although Hypothesis 1 predicted that ideological rhetoric would increase over time, specifically after the June 1, 2002, West Point Commencement Address, President Bush’s foreign policy statements from September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003, were overwhelmingly strategic in content. Figure 1 demonstrates that strategic word indicators significantly outnumbered ideological word indicators throughout the time period. Although President Bush consistently referred to American values throughout his public statements, strategic word indicators appeared more frequently. The peaks in the line graph in Figure 1 indicate lengthy speeches with more total words and thus more strategic and ideological word indicators, while the space between the blue and red lines displays the difference between strategic and ideological
word indicators utilized in a particular speech. Figure 2 additionally demonstrates that the 1206 ideological word indicators used throughout the time period constitute approximately 23% of the total word indicators, while the 4042 strategic word indicators used constitute approximately 77% of the total word indicators.

Figure 1. Trends in Strategic and Ideological Word Indicators from September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003.

Figure 2. Total Frequencies and Percentages of Strategic and Ideological Word Indicators from September 11, 2001, to March 19, 2003.
In the selection of the 59 selected speeches, only three were classified as primarily ideological after employing the data techniques outlined in the methodology section above. These speeches included President Bush’s remarks at a September 11 remembrance ceremony on December 11, 2001, his address to the nation on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2002, and remarks on humanitarian aid to Afghanistan on October 11, 2002. Although most speeches were primarily strategic in nature, ratios of ideological word indicators to the total word indicators reveals that ideology was especially prominent in certain speeches. If more than 30% of total word indicators in a given speech were ideological, the speech was assessed to determine ideological sub-trends within President Bush’s foreign policy statements.

Figure 3 and Table 2 display rhetorical data from September 11, 2001, to April 28, 2002: Figure 3 displays the difference between strategic and ideological word indicators utilized in each speech and Table 2 displays the ratios of ideological word indicators to total word indicators in the speeches delivered during this first time period. Figure 4 and Table 3 display rhetorical data from June 1, 2002, to March 19, 2003: Figure 4 shows the difference between strategic and ideological word indicators utilized in each speech and Table 3 shows the ratios of ideological word indicators to total word indicators in the speeches delivered during the second time period. Collectively, these figures and tables provide a comprehensive analysis of the strategic and ideological trends within President Bush’s foreign policy statements in two distinct time frames to determine the rhetorical trends from the 9/11 attacks to the declaration of war on Iraq.
Figure 3. Frequencies of Strategic and Ideological Word Indicators from September 11, 2001, to April 28, 2002.
Table 2. Ratio of Ideological Word Indicators to Total Words Used in Speeches Delivered from September 11, 2001, to April 28, 2002.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Speech</th>
<th>Ideological Word Indicators</th>
<th>Total Words</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
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<tr>
<td>09.14.01</td>
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<tr>
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<td>30</td>
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</table>

Although the speeches delivered from September 11, 2001, to April 28, 2002, were primarily strategic, ideological rhetoric was consistently employed in order to unite the country in the aftermath of 9/11. President Bush immediately declared a global war against terrorism during his “Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks” on September 11, 2001, and proclaimed, “We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them” (Bush [2001] 2013). This was the beginning of the “with us or against us” rhetoric that President Bush utilized throughout his speeches to identify enemies and gain
support for the War on Terror (Bush [2001] 2013). He additionally emphasized that the US was attacked by terrorists due to the ideals and opportunities enjoyed by American citizens, disregarding Al-Qaeda claims that 9/11 was orchestrated in response to American foreign policies in the Middle East (Bush [2001] 2013). This allowed President Bush to frame the War on Terror as a mission to preserve and defend American values and avoid taking responsibility for possible foreign policy mistakes (Bush [2001] 2013).

The data in Table 2 shows that 37.5% of total word indicators were ideological during President Bush’s speech on September 14, 2001, “Remarks at the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Service” (Bush [2001] 2013). Because this speech commemorated the victims and invoked religious references, it contained a greater amount of ideological rhetoric. President Bush continued to frame the terrorist attacks as a direct affront to American ideals, and stated that these enemies “have attacked America because we are freedom’s home and defender” (Bush [2001] 2013). 42.9% of total word indicators were ideological during his speech on September 17, 2001, “Remarks at the Islamic Center of Washington,” as President Bush praised the peaceful tenets of Islam and condemned terrorists who manipulate Islamic values to incite violence (Bush [2001] 2013). This speech emphasized religious tolerance in the US, an inherently ideological topic, which explains the recurrence of ideological word indicators (Bush [2001] 2013). Though he clarified that the US sought to fight terrorists rather than Muslims, he alluded to the superiority of American values and freedoms and distinguished between “good” and “evil” (Bush [2001] 2013).

During an “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the US Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11” on September 20, 2001, President Bush demanded that the Taliban deliver Al-Qaeda leaders residing in Afghanistan (Bush [2001] 2013). This speech had
important implications for the declaration of war on Afghanistan after the Taliban did not acquiesce to American requests and refused to cooperate with US counterterrorism efforts (Bush [2001] 2013). When he spoke to the FBI on September 25, 2001, President Bush stated that the terrorists:

“… strengthened the spirit of America. They have united the country. They have awoken a mighty nation that understands that freedom is under assualt, a mighty nation that will not rest until those who think they can take freedom away from any citizen in the world are brought to justice” (Bush [2001] 2013).

31.7% of the word indicators during this speech were ideological (Table 2) due to President Bush’s emphasis on responding to an attack on American ideals (Bush [2001] 2013).

President Bush’s speech on September 26, 2001, “Remarks to Central Intelligence Agency Employees in Langley, Virginia” also discussed religious freedom in the US, as 34.9% of the word indicators were ideological (Table 2). President Bush’s “Remarks at a September 11 Remembrance Ceremony,” delivered on December 11, 2001, was the only primarily ideological speech delivered during this time period, as 70% of total word indicators were ideological (Table 2). He focused on paying tribute to 9/11 victims rather than on war and terrorism during this address. The persistence of ideological rhetoric during this time period demonstrates President Bush’s consistent references to American ideals in order to unite the nation after 9/11.

In President Bush’s “State of the Union Address on January 29, 2002, he described the US as “liberating” Afghanistan as he praised the interim president, Chairman Hamid Karzai, and declared that the US and Afghanistan had become “allies against terror” (Bush [2002] 2013). President Bush also asserted that the nations of North Korea, Iran and Iraq constituted an “axis of evil” due to their alliances with terrorists and their potential to “threaten the peace of the world”
(Bush [2002] 2013). This antagonistic statement extended the War on Terror beyond American retaliation for the 9/11 attacks to a more comprehensive strategy to address all potential threats to American security. President Bush additionally addressed the enormous increase in defense spending and declared, “while the price of freedom of security is high, it is never too high” (Bush [2002] 2013). He explained the implementation of enhanced security measures and economic reform measures, all while celebrating American values and the American leadership role in the global community (Bush [2002] 2013).

In his “Remarks to the Troops at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska” on February 16, 2002, President Bush continued to describe 9/11 as a direct attack on American values: “And I look forward to sharing... my passionate belief in the values that we hold dear here in America: Freedom, freedom to worship, freedom to speak, freedom to achieve your dreams. And it’s those very values that came under attack on September the 11th” (Bush [2002] 2013). Table 2 demonstrates that 31.3% of word indicators used during this speech were ideological due to President Bush’s patriotic rhetoric. Many other speeches discussed defending American security and freedom as well as promoting peace in the region, specifically referring to escalation of regional violence in Israel/Palestine in early 2002.

Overall, the speeches from September 11, 2001, to April 28, 2002, were strategic in rhetoric and content. President Bush commemorates the victims and emphasizes American ideals to enhance unity domestically and internationally, but his primary foreign policy objectives were centered on bringing the terrorists to justice and ensuring American security, which is reflected in the data.
Figure 4. Frequencies of Strategic and Ideological Word Indicators from June 1, 2002, to March 19, 2003.
Table 3. Ratio of Ideological Word Indicators to Total Words Used in Speeches Delivered from June 1, 2002, to March 19, 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Speech</th>
<th>Ideological Word Indicators</th>
<th>Total Words</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
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<tr>
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<td>46</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>0.323943662</td>
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<tr>
<td>06.24.02</td>
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<td>0.416666667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.10.02</td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>0.230769231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.16.02</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>0.12</td>
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<td>07.18.02</td>
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President Bush’s “Commencement Address at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York” on June 1, 2002, was one of the most notable foreign policy speeches of his presidency. This address marked the inception of a defining and controversial element of the Bush Doctrine; it not only celebrated US military power and the uniquely American responsibility to promote peace and confront terrorism, but also expressed the Bush Administration’s willingness to wage preemptive, or more accurately, preventive, warfare to ensure American security (Bush [2002] 2013). This new military doctrine was an essential component of the Bush Administration’s grand strategy and is explained as follows:

“For much of the last century, America’s defense relied on the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment. In some cases, those strategies still apply, but new threats also require new thinking. Deterrence… means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons or missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies… If we wait for threats to materialize, we will have waited too long… We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge… Our security will require all Americans to be forward-looking and resolute, to be ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives” (Bush [2002] 2013).

This pronouncement rejected traditional military tactics of deterrence and containment and advocated for preventive war to proactively address potential security threats. These statements were intended to prepare the military and the country for the future War in Iraq. Yet despite the strategic intent of this speech, 32.4% of the word indicator rhetoric was ideological (Table 3). President Bush reiterated the dichotomy between good and evil as well as the values that unite
Americans and the international coalition against terrorism. He highlighted American efforts to “promote moderation and tolerance and human rights,” in addition to strategic interests and military policy in his address (Bush [2002] 2013).

President Bush’s “Remarks at a ‘Saluting Our Veterans’ Celebration in Ripley, West Virginia” on July 4, 2002, was significantly motivated by ideological interests, as 41.7% of total word indicators were ideological (Table 3). During this Fourth of July celebration, President Bush promoted the unity of the country and the bravery of American soldiers (Bush [2002] 2013). Ideology was additionally important during his “Remarks at the Argonne National Laboratory” on July 22, 2002, as 47% of total word indicators were ideological (Table 3). President Bush commended the innovation of American scientists and emphasized their contributions to confronting new chemical and biological threats and enhancing counterterrorist tactics (Bush [2002] 2013). Towards the conclusion of his speech, President Bush discussed the importance of freedom, respect and tolerance in the US (Bush [2002] 2013).

President Bush delivered two primarily ideologically speeches during this time period. His speech on September 11, 2002, “Address to the Nation on the Anniversary of the Terrorist Attacks,” was 59% ideological (Table 3) as President Bush commemorated the tragedy of 9/11 and reiterated American values (Bush [2002] 2013). The second ideological speech was delivered on October 11, 2002, “Remarks on Humanitarian Aid to Afghanistan” (Bush [2002] 2013). 55% of word indicators in this speech were ideological due to President Bush’s rhetorical focus on the liberation of Afghani people and success of political reform in Afghanistan (Bush [2002] 2013).

President Bush’s “Address to the United Nations General Assembly” on September 12, 2002, was a crucial speech in presenting the Bush Doctrine to the international community (Bush
He began by discussing Iraqi aggression during the Gulf War as well as the repression and human rights violations perpetrated by the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein (Bush [2002] 2013). President Bush then detailed the history of Iraqi defiance of UN resolutions (Bush [2002] 2013). He demanded greater transparency and compliance with weapons inspections and implored Iraq to renounce terrorist involvement, cease nuclear weapons programs and cooperate with UN weapons inspectors (Bush [2002] 2013). President Bush declared Iraq’s failure to comply, despite stringent economic sanctions that have induced Iraqi suffering, as a violation of international law and a grave threat to the global community (Bush [2002] 2013). In the following segment from this speech, President Bush argued that the Iraqi regime was enhancing its nuclear weapon capabilities and withholding information from the UN:

“Iraq employs capable nuclear scientists and technicians. It retains physical infrastructure needed to build a nuclear weapon. Iraq has made several attempts to buy high-strength aluminunm tubes used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should Iraq acquire fissible material, it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year… Iraq also possesses a force of Scud-type missiles with ranges beyond the 150 kilometers permitted by the UN. Work at testing and production facilities shows that Iraq is building more long-range missiles, so that it can inflict mass death throughout the region” (Bush [2002] 2013).

Although President Bush had previously mentioned Iraq as part of the axis of evil, this speech was the first instance when President Bush made specific claims regarding the Iraqi weapons program. President Bush described Iraqi violations of international law in an attempt gain domestic and international support for the preventive war with Iraq. He additionally discussed the lack religious freedom, human dignity and liberty in Iraq to support his claims and justify
American willingness to wage preventive war (Bush [2002] 2013). 37.2% of total word indicators were ideological due to this emphasis on values (Bush [2002] 2013).

On October 7, 2002, President Bush delivered an “Address to the Nation on Iraq,” in which he continued to rationalize the possibility of preventive war (Bush [2002] 2013). In addition to underscoring current chemical and biological weapons stockpiles in Iraq as well as the regime’s capability to produce nuclear weapons, President Bush referred to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, conflating the Iraqi threat of weapons of mass destruction with Al-Qaeda terrorist attacks (Bush [2002] 2013). After describing Iraq’s threat to global peace and American security, President Bush immediately stated:

“We must also never forget the most vivid events of recent history. On September 11th, 2001, America felt its vulnerability, even to threats that gather on the other side of the Earth. We resolved them and we are resolved today to confront every threat, from any source, that could bring sudden terror and suffering to America” (Bush [2002] 2013).

This statement encouraged Americans to channel post-9/11 fears of terrorist attacks towards Iraq and Saddam Hussein, though these threats were unrelated. He further associated Saddam Hussein with the 9/11 attacks when he claimed, “Iraq has provided safe haven to terrorists” and “Iraq and the Al-Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy – the United States of America” (Bush [2002] 2013). President Bush mentioned personal exchanges between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda leaders, Iraqi training sites for Al-Qaeda members and the public celebrations in Iraq after the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Bush [2002] 2013). He then applied his earlier assertion that the US would not distinguish between those who harbor terrorists and those who commit acts of terrorism to Saddam Hussein’s Iraqi regime, accusing the country of providing a safe haven to Al-Qaeda militants (Bush [2002] 2013).
President Bush provided additional evidence for the presence of weapons of mass destruction, information which was rendered false after the invasion:

“The evidence indicates that Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program… Satellite photographs reveal that Iraq is rebuilding facilities at sites that have been part of its nuclear program in the past… If the Iraqi regime is able to produce, buy or steal an amount of highly enriched uranium a little larger than a single softball, it could have a nuclear weapon in less than a year” (Bush [2002] 2013).

He presented this unverified information as fact and instilled urgency in the threat posed by potential Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (Bush [2002] 2013). The reference to satellite photographs was especially compelling. Although President Bush’s rhetoric was predominantly strategic when discussing Iraq, he also alluded to underlying ideological goals related to Iraqi regime change when he declared, “If military action is necessary, the United States and our allies will help the Iraqi people rebuild their economy and create the institutions of liberty in a unified Iraq at peace with its neighbors” (Bush [2002] 2013). This statement primarily seeks to emphasize the benevolent intentions of an American war.

President Bush delivered “Remarks at the Embassy of Afghanistan” on October 10, 2002. This speech was 36% ideological based on word indicator values as President Bush celebrated political reform and emphasized religious tolerance in addition to values of freedom and liberty (Bush [2002] 2013). On October 16, 2002, President Bush delivered “Remarks on Signing the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002,” which announced that Congress had explicitly authorized the president to employ military force against Iraq (Bush [2002] 2013). By October 2002, the US was prepared to declare war on Iraq, regardless of international consensus (Bush [2002] 2013). President Bush again outlined demands of Iraq,
including full disclosure of weapons of mass destruction, compliance with previous UN resolutions and an end to terrorist support, civilian persecution and illicit trade (Bush [2002] 2013). This speech was 35.1% ideological (Table 4) and the President emphasized the need to liberate the Iraqi people from the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein (Bush [2002] 2013).

On January 1, 2003, President Bush addressed the troops at Ford Hood Texas, describing the military successes in Afghanistan and the American resilience in “fight[ing] this war on many fronts” (Bush [2003] 2013). He reiterated American demands of Saddam Hussein and reemphasized the threat posed by the Iraqi pursuit of weapons of mass destruction in order to support the Bush Administration’s willingness to wage preventive war in the following excerpt:

“The use of military force is this Nation’s last option, its last choice. Yet, if force becomes necessary to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction and enforce the will of the United Nations, if force becomes necessary to secure our country and to keep the peace, American will act deliberately, America will act decisively, and America will prevail because we’ve got the finest military in the world” (Bush [2003] 2013).

During his “State of the Union Address” on January 28, 2003, President Bush again referred to Americans as “liberators” in Afghanistan and celebrated American achievements in the War on Terror, praising intelligence and law enforcement agencies as well as Congress for implementing new strategies and legislation to augment national security (Bush [2003] 2013). He concluded his speech with another lengthy discussion about Saddam Hussein and Iraq:

“Year after year, Saddam Hussein has gone to elaborate lengths, spent enormous sums, taken great risks to build and keep weapons of mass destruction… the only possible use he could have for those weapons is to dominate, intimidate, or attack… Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody
reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of Al Qaeda. Secretly and without fingerprints, he could provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists or help them develop their own” (Bush [2003] 2013).

President Bush’s tone conveys certainty that Saddam Hussein was not only harboring terrorists in Iraq, but also intended to develop weapons of mass destruction and distribute such weapons to the same terrorist network that conducted the 9/11 attacks.

President Bush continued to assert the presence of Iraqi nuclear weapons on February 6, 2003, during his “Remarks on the Iraqi Regime’s Noncompliance with United Nations Resolutions.” Again, he accused Iraq of defying UN resolutions and revealed additional information about the nature of Iraqi weapons:

“The Iraqi regime has acquired and tested the means to deliver weapons of mass destruction. All the world has now seen the footage of an Iraqi Mirage aircraft with a fuel tank modified to spray biological agents over wide areas… And we have sources that tell us that Saddam Hussein recently authorized Iraqi field commanders to use chemical weapons, the very weapons the dictator tells the world he does not have” (Bush [2003] 2013).

President Bush refers to Saddam Hussein as a “dictator” to emphasize the brutality of the Iraqi regime and gain support to attack this illiberal country. The escalation of evidence regarding the Iraqi weapons program also served to instill fear and generate domestic support for war.

During a speech delivered at the American Enterprise Institute Dinner on February 26, 2003, President Bush commemorated the work of the think tank and its scholars and continued his portrayal of Saddam Hussein as a tyrant and a dictator (Bush [2003] 2013). President Bush stated that “success in Iraq could also beging a new stage for Middle Eastern peace and set in
motion progress towards a truly democratic state,” indicating an underlying goal to spread democracy throughout the region (Bush [2003] 2013). This rhetorical emphasis on democratic reform and freedom in the Middle East is apparent in the data, as 35% of total word indicators were ideological in this address (Table 5). On March 16, 2003, President Bush delivered a “Statement of the Atlantic Summit: A Vision for Iraq and the Iraqi People” (Bush [2003] 2013). This speech was also infused with ideological rhetoric, as 31.8% of the total word indicators were ideological (Table 5). President Bush pledged to prevent terrorists from finding a haven in Iraq and also expressed support for humanitarian relief and reconstruction efforts in Iraq, projecting ideals of democracy, freedom and human rights (Bush [2003] 2013). On March 17, 2003, President Bush repeated American grievances against Iraq and finally declared war on Iraq on March 19, 2003; both speeches included ideological motives for declaring war on Iraq, but primarily emphasized US strategic and military goals.

**Analysis**

Collectively, the rhetoric employed in President Bush’s addresses created a crescendo effect in intensifying the threat posed by Saddam Hussein and providing increasing evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. By capitalizing on America’s sense of vulnerability after 9/11 and associating Saddam Hussein with terrorists, President Bush instilled fear among American citizens and presented the War in Iraq as a natural extension of the War on Terror. This process was gradual, beginning in June 2002 during his Commencement Address at West Point, escalating in September 2002 after his Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations and culminating in the March 19, 2003, declaration of war on Iraq.

Despite the primarily strategic content of President Bush’s foreign policy statements during this narrow time period, subtle patterns and trends exist among the speeches with
significant ideological rhetoric. Ideological word indicators were especially prominent when President Bush was addressing a religious audience, such as Muslim community leaders, or leading a prayer service to commemorate 9/11. In these speeches, he frequently emphasized American values of religious tolerance and freedom to worship without prejudice, specifically in reference to Islam. Speeches that memorialized 9/11 or addressed the military also included a greater amount of ideological word indicators, such as President Bush’s West Point Commencement speech, his address to the troops at Elmendorf Air Force Base and the Fourth of July Celebration. Ideological rhetoric was also apparent when President Bush discussed Afghanistan, as he framed the US troops as liberators and praised Afghani political reform and development. President Bush frequently invoked themes of patriotism and civic duty throughout his speeches when addressing public servants in order to instill a sense of mission among federal employees. Many of his speeches related to Iraq emphasized ideological objectives, yet the primary motivations of declaring war were based on threat assessments and goals to enhance US security. President Bush emphasized the superiority of American ideals to generate domestic and international support for American involvement in the Middle East.

These results can be applied to the debate regarding whether the Bush Doctrine was influenced primarily by realism, liberalism or neoconservatism. The data support the scholars who classified the Bush Doctrine as realist due to the rhetorical prevalence of strategic interests in President Bush’s foreign policy addresses. President Bush expresses willingness to unilaterally pursue foreign policy goals and augment the US military in order to defend American security. These objectives focused on short-term security interests and are resoundingly realist in nature. Dueck, Daalder and Lindsay, and Lynch and Singh were correct in classifying this grand strategy as realist and challenging scholars who concluded that the Bush Doctrine stemmed from
neoconservative traditions. Langille, Monten, Schmidt and Williams classify the Bush Doctrine as neoconservative due to its vindicationist, crusading approach to promoting democracy abroad. Although they correctly emphasize the continued importance of democratic values in shaping US foreign policy, strategic rather than ideological interests influenced the early formation of the Bush Doctrine. Democracy promotion was an element of American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but the data demonstrates that security interests were at the forefront of the Bush Doctrine, especially in the developmental stages of this grand strategy.

Owens provides an especially compelling argument that is consistent with the data and results: democracy promotion cannot be separated from national interests, as values are an essential component of US foreign policy. The ideological goals that President Bush expressed were encompassed within broader, strategic objectives to enhance American security and inspire unity among Americans over shared values. Hypothesis 1 was incorrect, as ideological rhetoric did not increase over time as was predicted, although it was infused within strategic foreign policy objectives.
PUBLIC OPINION POLLS

In order to understand the significance of President Bush’s foreign policy rhetoric, specifically his use of ideological word imagery to justify strategic objectives, this research includes a selection of public opinion polls conducted in March 2003. These surveys demonstrate that President Bush’s rhetorical tactics were successful in garnering domestic support for the Bush Doctrine and yield insight into the impact of presidential rhetoric on the American public.

Figure 5. Thinking specifically about the War on Terrorism, which two of the following issues concerns you the most? Removing Saddam Hussein from power, fighting Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, stopping North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, fighting the long-term conditions that breed terrorism abroad, improving homeland security, improving relations with the Muslim world, disarming Iraq, improving America’s intelligence capabilities abroad.

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<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>35% Removing Saddam Hussein from power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29% Fighting Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda</td>
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<td>24% Stopping North Korea’s nuclear weapons program</td>
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<td>24% Fighting the long-term conditions that breed terrorism abroad</td>
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<td>20% Improving homeland security</td>
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<td>20% Improving relations with the Muslim world</td>
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<td>16% Disarming Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% Improving America’s intelligence capabilities abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% None of the above (vol.)</td>
</tr>
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<td>4% Don’t know/Refused</td>
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Subpopulation/Note: . Adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses
Figure 6. (As you may know, the United States decided today (March 17, 2003) that it would withdraw the latest UN (United Nations) resolution concerning disarmament of Iraq. In a speech to the nation tonight, President (George W.) Bush announced that the US will go to war with Iraq unless Saddam Hussein leaves Iraq in the next 48 hours.)…Do you think a war against Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power will make the US more or less safe from terrorism?

Gallup/CNN/USA Today Poll, Mar, 2003

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<td>No</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
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Survey by Cable News Network. USA Today. Methodology: Conducted by Gallup Organization on March 17, 2003 and based on 776 telephone interviews. Sample: National adult. [USGALLUP.03MAR17.R06] (View Citation)

Figure 7. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?

CBS News Poll, Mar, 2003

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<tr>
<td>Approve</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disapprove</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Don't know/No answer</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Methodology: Conducted by CBS News on March 17, 2003 and based on 483 telephone interviews. Sample: National adults re-interviewed. The poll was conducted after President George W. Bush's address to the nation March 17, 2003. Respondents were first interviewed March 15-16, 2003. [USCBS-031803.R05] (View Citation)
Figure 8. Do you think that the Bush Administration has or has not adequately prepared the American people and explained the risks involved in the United States going to war with Iraq?

**NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll, Mar, 2003**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ideology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has adequately prepared the American people</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has not adequately prepared the American people</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>3%</td>
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Survey by NBC News, Wall Street Journal. Methodology: Conducted by Hart and Teeter Research Companies on March 17, 2003 and based on 506 telephone interviews. Sample: National adults. [USNWSWJS].03MAR17.R06 (View Citation)

Figure 9. Do you think the Bush Administration has presented enough evidence to show that military action in Iraq is necessary right now, or haven’t they done that yet?

**CBS News Poll, Mar, 2003**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, enough</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not enough yet</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/No answer</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Methodology: Conducted by CBS News, March 15 - March 16, 2003 and based on 1,049 telephone interviews. Sample: National adults. [USCBS.200303C.Q09] (View Citation)
Figure 10. Do you think that getting support from the United Nations Security Council is necessary before the United States goes to war with Iraq, or is support from the United Nations Security Council desirable, but not necessary?

ABC News Poll, Mar, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Necessary</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desirable, not necessary</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not desirable (vol.)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

This selection of public opinion polls conducted in March 2003 demonstrate that the Bush Administration, and President Bush himself, commanded broad public support for the invasion of Iraq immediately prior to the declaration of war. These figures also suggest that the Bush Administration’s rhetoric resonated with American citizens and successfully convinced the public of the necessity of preventive military action to ensure American security.

Figure 5 shows that a greater percentage of Americans were concerned with removing Saddam Hussein from power (35%) than they were about fighting Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda (29%) (America on the Eve of War Survey 2003). These numbers indicate that the Bush Administration successfully channeled public attention away from the threat of terrorism and towards the threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, conflating these distinct threats.
whenever possible (America on the Eve of War Survey 2003). The wording of the survey question alone (“Thinking specifically about the war on terrorism, which two of the following issues concerns you the most?”) shows that Saddam Hussein had been effectively associated with the War on Terror rather than presented as a separate threat to American interests (America on the Eve of War Survey 2003). Figure 6 reiterates the Bush Administration’s successful connection between Saddam Hussein and the War on Terror, as 53% of Americans believed that removing Saddam Hussein from power would better protect Americans from terrorism (Gallup/CNN/USA Today Poll 2003). Figure 7 also demonstrates that a significant majority, 63% of Americans surveyed, approved of President Bush’s foreign policy approach to Iraq in March 2003, an implicit endorsement from the American public to preventively attack Iraq (CBS News Poll 2003).

59% of Americans surveyed in March 2003 believed that the Bush Administration had “adequately prepared the American people and explained the risks involved in the United States going to war with Iraq,” as demonstrated in Figure 8 (NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll 2003). These figures suggest that the escalating rhetoric regarding the War in Iraq and President Bush’s numerous descriptions of the Iraqi threat had satisfied the American public (NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll 2003). Figure 9 indicates that not only did a majority of Americans feel prepared for war, but also that 56% believed that the Bush Administration presented enough evidence to show that military action was immediately necessary in Iraq (CBS News Poll 2003).

Figure 10 additionally demonstrates that the majority of American’s supported the Bush Administration’s unilateral approach to the War in Iraq. Only 35% of Americans believed that support from the UN Security council was necessary before declaring war on Iraq, while 56% believed that it was only “desirable but not necessary” and 5% believed that it was “not
desirable” (ABC News Poll 2003). These results indicate a clear public endorsement of American unilateralism, pillar three of the Bush Doctrine.

Overall, these polls demonstrate the Bush Administration’s effectiveness in garnering public support for the War in Iraq. The majority of Americans associated dismantling Saddam Hussein’s regime with advancing the War on Terror. President Bush was rhetorically successful in framing the events leading to the declaration of war in Iraq and in persuading the public that the war would augment American security, indicating that Hypothesis 2 was correct.

Analysis

The public opinions polls demonstrate that President Bush’s foreign policy speeches in the aftermath of 9/11 successfully garnered significant domestic support for the War in Iraq. In order to understand the Bush Administration’s high approval ratings, two essential questions remain in analyzing the Bush Doctrine and its impact on the American public: Which rhetorical strategies were employed in order to gain public support for the Bush Administration’s foreign policy objectives, specifically the War in Iraq, and why were these strategies so successful?

Chaim Kauffman addresses these questions in his article, “Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War” (Kauffman 2004). He explores the assumption that “strong civic institutions and a robust marketplace of ideas” enable democracies to implement informed and effective foreign policies, yet counters this claim by arguing that the marketplace of ideas failed in the case of the Iraq War (Kauffman 2004: 5). Kauffman argues that the Bush Administration primarily relied on threat inflation and information suppression to justify the War in Iraq (Kauffman 2004: 5). The dissemination of unverified evidence to support foreign policy goals prevented the marketplace of ideas from challenging Bush Administration assumptions or presenting an alternative argument (Kauffman
The “administration officials persistently repeated only the most extreme threat claims and suppressed contrary evidence” to gain public support (Kaufmann 2004: 6).

Kauffman lists the four primary arguments employed to inflate the threat of Saddam Hussein, which were eventually proven false:

1. “he was an almost uniquely undeterrable aggressor who would seek any opportunity to kill Americans virtually regardless of risk to himself or his country; (2) he was cooperating with Al-Qaeda and had even assisted in the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States; (3) he was close to acquiring nuclear weapons; and (4) he possessed chemical and biological weapons that could be used to devastating effect against American civilians at home or US troops in the Middle East” (Kaufmann 2004: 6).

He argues that because the executive branch directly controls the dissemination of national intelligence information and enjoys authority in matters of foreign policy, the Bush Administration was able to both “shape public perceptions through selective release - or suppression - of analyses and information” (Kauffman 2004: 37) and control the agenda for the debate, giving critics “limited if any opportunity to present a coherent opposing narrative” (Kauffman 2004: 42).

Kauffman also cites many examples of intelligence assessments that contrasted Bush Administration claims that Iraq was developing a nuclear weapons program (Kauffman 2004: 19). Bush Administration officials asserted that Iraq was only six months away from building a nuclear weapon and argued that only preventive war would prevent Iraq from acquiring the fissile material necessary to develop a nuclear bomb (Kauffman 2004: 21). Kauffman states, “careful phrasing of official rhetoric can allow even claims with especially weak evidentiary
bases to be persuasive to the public” (Kaufmann 2004: 42-43). This was especially apparent in the Bush Administration’s purported connection between Saddam Hussein and 9/11, as officials repeatedly gave “the impression that there was a causal link without actually say so” (Kaufmann 2004: 43). By portraying Saddam Hussein as producer of weapons of mass destruction with terrorist network alliances, the Bush Administration instilled fear that an even more destructive terrorist attack with nuclear weapons was inevitable (Kaufmann 2004: 43). This allowed the Bush Administration to frame the Iraq case as preventing terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11, rather than containing a dictator (Kaufmann 2004: 46).

Kauffman’s analysis includes reports published by several intelligence agencies, which contradicted the purported association between Saddam Hussein and 9/11 terrorists but did not successfully discredit Bush Administration assertions (Kauffman 2004). A 2002 Special National Intelligence Estimate “concluded that Hussein was unlikely to initiative an unprovoked WMD attack against the United States” (Kaufmann 2004: 11), American and British intelligence agencies agreed that Iraq was at least four years away from producing fissile material and reports published by the British Foreign Ministry in 2002 stated that Iraq would be incapable of producing a nuclear weapon with current UN sanctions (Kauffman 2004: 24). Most convincingly, the IAEA conducted “unhindered” inspections from December 2002 to March 2003, which “eliminated virtually all remaining doubt” in concluding that Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction (Kaufmann 2004: 25).

Despite the overwhelming evidence against Bush Administration claims, officials continued to emphasize the imminence of a nuclear Iraq (Kauffman 2005: 25). Kaufmann explains that because very few political officials or media reporters challenged the Bush Administration or questioned American motives to invade Iraq, the democratic marketplace of
ideas failed to facilitate public debate (Kaufmann 2004: 30). He concludes that political opposition “cannot be counted on reliably in foreign policy debates,” as neither the press nor independent experts can control threat inflation (Kaufmann 2004: 43).

In the spring of 2005, Ronald Krebs critiqued Kaufmann’s article in *International Security* (Krebs 2005: 196). Although Krebs agrees that the Bush Administration exaggerated threats and manipulated intelligence information, he argues that the executive branch has less power in shaping the public foreign policy debate than Kaufmann assumes (Krebs 2005: 199). Krebs additionally criticizes Kaufmann for diminishing the impact of 9/11 on the marketplace of ideas and the American psyche (Krebs 2005: 200). He believes that 9/11 “reshaped the rhetorical space within which political disputes would be waged” and enabled the Bush Administration to engage in “rhetorical coercion” to garner support for the War in Iraq and silence opposition (Krebs 2005: 200). Terrorist attacks are rare, difficult to control, and are “unusually salient and thus lead to exaggerated risk perception” (Krebs 2005: 200). Because Americans were frightened after 9/11, they overestimated risk and focused on the possibility, rather than the unlikely probability, that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction (Krebs 2005: 201).

Krebs furthers his analysis of the Bush Administration’s “rhetorical coercion” in his article with Jennifer Lobasz, “Fixing the Meaning of 9/11: Hegemony, Coercion and the Road to War in Iraq” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007). These scholars analyze President Bush’s rhetorical devices and question why Democratic opponents in particular did not publicly criticize the Bush Administration’s foreign policy agenda (Krebs and Lobasz 2007). Krebs and Lobasz’s central argument is that “the effective fixing of the meaning of the September 11 attacks in terms of the ‘War on Terror’ substantially circumscribed the political debate,” which allowed the Bush
Administration’s discourse to dominate public discussion and prevent the emergence of opposing narratives (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 409).

In the aftermath of 9/11, the country turned to President Bush for leadership, and thus President Bush was required to utilize rhetoric that would “identify the perpetrators, explain what they wanted, reaffirm the nation’s ideals, and reassure the public that security would be restored” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 433). Krebs and Lobasz assert that this “rhetoric of crisis” contributed to the perpetration of the “rhetoric of identity,” which reaffirms national ideals but does not articulate policy responses (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 433). This “rhetoric of identity” was favored over a “pragmatic rhetoric,” which placed “Bush’s preferred interpretation in a particularly advantageous rhetorical position” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 425). Krebs and Lobasz classified this “rhetoric of identity” as “epideictic” due to its emphasis on shared values in order to unite and comfort Americans in terms that resonated with the general public (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 322).

This epideictic foreign policy rhetoric consisted of subtle linguistic devices that augmented public support for the Bush Doctrine (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 425). President Bush portrayed the US as a victim of a horrific terrorist attack and his Administration employed traditional political discourse that celebrated the exceptional nature of American values (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 425). President Bush additionally utilized language that indicated “‘we’ were attacked because of ‘who we are,’ not because of ‘what we have done’” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 422-423). This approach allowed the US to reject any potential blame for the terrorist attacks, ignoring a history of financing authoritarian regimes, unconditionally supporting Israel and promoting economic dependency in the Middle East, in addition to many other foreign policy decisions that drove terrorist networks to seek retaliation (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 424).
By ignoring these realities, President Bush portrayed the 9/11 attacks as a violent manifestation of anti-American sentiment and an Islamic backlash against globalization and dysfunctional domestic governments in the Middle East (Krebs and Lobasz 423). Although some critics presented the alternative narrative, which took responsibility for the negative impact of American involvement in the Middle East, the Bush Administration’s rhetorical approach became the “hegemonic interpretation” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 424).

President Bush additionally portrayed American adversaries, specifically the 9/11 terrorists and Saddam Hussein, as “evil” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007). The religious imagery associated with this depiction, specifically related to Satan’s influence, resonated strongly with the political Christian culture in American society (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 428). President Bush defined the terrorists “as figures of repression and intolerance,” conjuring memories of fascist and communist enemies from American history (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 428). This representation of terrorists as antithetical to American values encouraged citizens to support foreign policy strategies that would address sources of evil in the world and allowed the Bush Administration to connect the War on Terror with the “promotion of political freedom, democracy, and free markets” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 428). In his foreign policy statements, President Bush “suggested that the stake in the War on Terror was something even more fundamental than the lives of American citizens: the survival of democracy at home” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 429). These rhetorical devices allowed President Bush to gain public support for war against all US enemies and prepare citizens for potential costs that the US might incur for representing and defending freedom (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 429).

This analysis additionally addresses the association portrayed between the War on Terror and Saddam Hussein’s Iraqi regime (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 441). Krebs and Lobasz believe
that the Bush Administration encouraged an association between Iraq and terrorist networks by classifying Iraq as part of the axis of evil, accentuating common values between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda and emphasizing human rights violations in Iraq (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 441). The emphasis on Saddam Hussein as the leader of Iraq served as a powerful parallel to Osama bin Laden, the leader of the 9/11 attacks (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 441). Because terrorism defies traditional conceptions of the nation-state, Krebs and Lobasz explain that the Bush Administration insinuated links between Al-Qaeda and Iraq in order to explain the tragic attacks of 9/11 to the public (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 442). The Bush Administration was not the first to refer to the evil of Saddam Hussein and his regime, as President Bush Sr. referred to Saddam Hussein as “Hitler revisited” during the Gulf War and President Clinton later accused Saddam Hussein of harboring terrorists (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 443). Krebs and Lobasz assert, “Hussein’s credentials as a figure of imposing evil and as a Middle Eastern Hitler were thus well established by the time Bush included his regime in the axis of evil,” which undoubtedly assisted the Bush Administration in generating support for the War in Iraq (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 443).

This rhetoric, which criminalized Saddam Hussein’s Iraq and projected the dominant War on Terror narrative, prevented Democrats from articulating viable opposition arguments to the Bush Administration’s justification for war and led to “rhetorical coercion” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 445). Krebs and Lobasz claim that because the American public looks to the president to determine foreign policy in the wake of a national crisis, “to challenge that leader’s epideictic claims is to implicitly undermine that function and thus to challenge its very authority” (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 435). Democrats did not question the Bush Administration’s foreign policy in order to avoid destroying the very unity that the rhetoric sought to enhance, although many were unconvinced by the claims of weapons of mass destruction (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 434).
Bush Administration was able to command a majority of public support for unilateral action in declaring war against Iraq by 2003 (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 448). Krebs and Lobasz conclude by arguing that hegemonic discourses, though pervasive, must be challenged in order to thoroughly consider and potentially implement alternative policies (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 451).

This analysis reveals the importance of an active marketplace of ideas and the dissemination of verified information as well as the influence of presidential rhetoric on public support for foreign policy objectives. The Bush Administration withheld and manipulated information and emphasized ideological values to frame strategic goals, rhetorical strategies that contributed to the public support for the Bush Doctrine.
ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES

This research additionally analyzes National Security Strategies from the Clinton, Bush and Obama Administrations using content analysis to assess variation in presidential rhetoric and trends of change and continuity in US foreign policy. National Security Strategies yield insight into the distribution of the strategic and ideological interests that determine US foreign policy and national security goals. An assessment of these documents will contribute to a more conclusive interpretation of the Bush Doctrine within the context of the foreign policies pursued before and after this grand strategy.

The analysis uses the same word indicator methodology utilized with President Bush’s public statements. Figure 11 presents data from the Clinton Administration’s 1995 National Security Strategy; Figure 12 presents data from the Bush Administration’s 2002 National Security Strategy; and Figure 13 presents data from the Obama Administration’s 2010 National Security Strategy.

Figure 11. Total Frequencies and Percentages of Strategic and Ideological Word Indicators Used in the Clinton Administration’s February 1995 National Security Strategy.
The data presented in Figures 11, 12 and 13 indicate that strategic word indicators are predominant in National Security Strategies across presidential administrations. In each NSS, ideological word indicators were less than 25% of the total word indicators. The Clinton Administration had the lowest percentage of ideological word indicators, as only 13% of total
word indicators were ideological. The Bush Administration employed a greater percentage of ideological word indicators than the Obama Administration, as 24% of word indicators were ideological in the Bush NSS, while 22% of total word indicators were ideological in the 2010 Obama NSS. Despite policy shifts, administration changes and the increase in ideological word indicators from the Clinton Administration to the Bush Administration, US foreign policy rhetoric is consistently infused with varying amounts of ideological language to support strategic objectives.

**Clinton Administration 1995 National Security Strategy**

The data in Figure 7 show that out of the total 361 word indicators in the Clinton NSS, 47 (13%) were ideological and 314 (87%) were strategic. This distribution exemplifies the Clinton Administration’s focus on national security in the aftermath of the Cold War and emphasis on maintaining military supremacy to suppress aggressive states and defend against external threats (White House 1995). The NSS preface stated, “protecting our nation’s security – our people, our territory and our way of life – is my Administration’s foremost mission and constitutional duty” (White House 1995: i). The central goals were outlined as follows:

- “To sustain our security with military forces that are ready to fight.
- To bolster America’s economic revitalization.
- To promote democracy abroad” (White House 1995: i).

These goals emphasized the interconnectedness of domestic and foreign policies in ensuring American security as well as the Clinton Administration’s dedication to advancing economic interests to strengthen America’s influence abroad (White House 1995).

The Clinton NSS also underscored the importance of American leadership in the global community:
“If we assert our leadership abroad, we can make America safer and more prosperous – by deterring aggression, by fostering the peaceful resolution of dangerous conflicts, by opening foreign markets, by helping democratic regimes and tackling global problems. Without our active leadership and engagement abroad, threats will fester and our opportunities will narrow” (White House 1995: i).

This excerpt alluded to the Clinton grand strategy of selective engagement, which favored limited involvement in the global community and engagement only when it would serve American security goals (White House 1995). The US hoped to dedicate resources when issues were central to American interests, but the Clinton Administration struggled to determine which regional tensions compelled American involvement during the 1990s. Regardless of the difficulties in determining the appropriate use of American power, the Clinton Administration assumed that the US served as an “indispensable nation” in the global community and the 1995 NSS consistently emphasized the benefits of American leadership (White House 1995).

The Clinton Administration also expressed American willingness to operate both unilaterally and multilaterally in order to best serve US security interests: “When our national security is threatened, we will, as America always has, use diplomacy when we can, but force if we must. We will act with others when we can, but alone when we must” (White House 1995: ii). Although the Clinton Administration preferred to use alliances and diplomacy to achieve goals in the international arena, President Clinton explicitly reserved the right to act forcefully and unilaterally if the situation required such action (White House 1995).

Democracy promotion was depicted as a central goal in the preface of the Clinton NSS to enhance American security, but ideological interests are limited in the Clinton Administration’s grand strategy, as reflected by the few ideological word indicators used (White House 1995).
Although the Clinton Administration devoted a section of the NSS to democracy promotion, this strategy is embedded within overall goals to enhance American security (White House 1995). The Clinton Administration did not advocate for democracy promotion for the mere purpose of spreading American values abroad, but because foreign policy officials believed that a world with more liberal governments would best enhance American security (White House 1995). The NSS stated, “All of America’s strategic interests – from promoting prosperity at home to checking global threats abroad before they threaten our territory – are served by enlarging the community of democratic and free market nations” (White House 1995: 22). The Clinton Administration expressed goals to engage with other democracies to cooperate on issues of security and economy (White House 1995). The NSS also outlined objectives to expand democracy and free markets in regions of strategic importance of the US, specifically Russia and Central and Eastern Europe (White House 1995). Yet the Clinton Administration only briefly referred to American values in the NSS (White House 1995).

The NSS conclusion reiterated the necessity of American engagement in the international community:

“Our Administration is committed to explaining our security interests and objectives to the nation; to seeking the broadest possible public and congressional support for our security programs and investments; and to exerting our leadership in the world in a manner that reflects our best national values and protects the security of this great and good nation” (White House 1995: 33).

The data and rhetoric of this document were strategic in content and motivation, reflecting the realist principles that guided the Clinton Administration’s grand strategy (White House 1995).
Bush Administration 2002 National Security Strategy

Scholars point to the Bush 2002 National Security Strategy (Figure 8), which was published on September 20, 2002, as the most comprehensive and detailed enunciation of the Bush Doctrine. The data in Figure 7 shows that of the total 478 word indicators used in the Bush NSS, 24% of the total word indicators were ideological and 76% were strategic. The overview of the Bush NSS emphasized America’s unparalleled power and influence in the international community, which “must be used to promote a balance of power that favors freedom” (White House 2002: 1). The Bush Administration defined its central national security goals as “political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity” (White House 2002: 1). In order to achieve these goals, the NSS proposes forging alliances to address regional conflict and defend against global terrorism, specifically related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (White House 2002: 1).

Although the NSS expressed hope for a multilateral foreign policy, like the Clinton Administration, the Bush Administration reserved the right to act unilaterally if the US did not receive global support from the United Nations or traditional alliances:

“In exercising our leadership, we will respect the values, judgment and interests of our friends and partners. Still, we will be prepared to act apart when our interests and unique responsibilities require… We will not allow such disagreements to obscure our determination to secure together, with our allies and friends, our shared fundamental interests and values” (White House 2002: 31).

This willingness to pursue national security goals unilaterally refers to the third pillar of the Bush Doctrine, an essential element of the Bush Administration’s grand strategy.
The NSS additionally referred to new enemies and threats in the post-9/11 world, specifically terrorist networks equipped with modern technology and rogue states with the potential to acquire weapons of mass destruction (White House 2002: 14). The document defines and identifies rogue states, specifically Iraq, Iran and North Korea:

“Rogue states...brutalize their own people…display no regard for international law…and callously violate international treaties…they are determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction…sponsor terrorism around the global…and reject basic human values and hate the United States and everything for which it stands” (White House 2002: 14).

This definition depicted rogue states as antithetical to American values and enhanced Bush Administration claims that such states would provide weapons of mass destruction to terrorist networks (White House 2002: 14). The Bush NSS rejected the traditional American reliance on military strategies of containment and advocated for preventive warfare to prevent rogue states from compromising American security: “We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends” (White House 2002: 14).

The Bush Administration also highlighted national security objectives to “ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade” (White House 2002: 1) as well as “expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy” (White House 2002: 2). The Bush Administration vowed to “make freedom and the development of democratic institutions key themes in our bilateral relations” (White House 2002: 4). The NSS dedicated a section to developing democratic infrastructure abroad and outlined foreign aid goals to assist developing countries (White House 2002: 22). These efforts included improving the efficiency of the World Bank and enhancing public health and
agricultural development (White House 2002: 22). Although these objectives project ideological interests, they were embedded within overall strategic goals to enhance national security (White House 2002).

The Bush NSS additionally asserted the universality of American ideals and American hegemony in the global community, as described by the fourth pillar of the Bush Doctrine (White House 2002). The NSS declared, “The United States must defend liberty and justice because these principles are right and true for all people everywhere. No nation owns these aspirations, and no nation is exempt from them” (White House 2002: 3). This document additionally emphasized the US priority to “disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations of global reach and attack their leadership,” specifically by preventing funds from reaching terrorist networks (White House 2002: 5). The Bush Administration concluded the NSS by emphasizing that domestic strength would ensure national security, as “the foundation of American strength is at home” (White House 2002: 31).

The data indicate that while the NSS contained an ideological component, strategic goals were predominant throughout the NSS. These findings are consistent with the data from President Bush’s foreign policy speeches.

**Obama Administration 2010 National Security Strategy**

Figure 9 demonstrates that of the total 495 word indicators in the 2010 Obama National Security Strategy, 107 (22%) of these word indicators were ideological while 388 (78%) were strategic. The overview of the Obama NSS emphasized renewing American leadership to effectively confront 21st century challenges within the global community:

“Our national security strategy is, therefore, focused on renewing American leadership so that we can more effectively advance our interests in the 21st century. We will do so by
building upon the sources of our strength at home, while shaping an international order that can meet the challenges of our time. This strategy recognizes the fundamental connection between our national security, our national competitiveness, resilience, and moral example” (White House 2010: 1).

The Obama Administration highlighted the importance of domestic improvements in order to confront security threats from abroad. The NSS stated, “our national security begins at home” (White House 2010: 9) and argued that the US must enhance “soft power,” or “American military might, economic competitiveness, moral leadership, global engagement, and efforts to shape an international system that serves the mutual interests of nations and people” (White House 2010: 7). This document summarized strategies to advance education, innovation and technology and foster greater collaboration throughout the federal government to successfully implement the NSS proposals (White House 2010).

In addressing the US strategic approach to enhancing national security, the Obama Administration outlined central grand strategy objectives:

• “The security of the United States, its citizens, and US allies and partners;
• A strong, innovative, and growing US economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity;
• Respect for universal values at home and around the world; and
• An international order advanced by US leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges” (White House 2010: 7).

The Obama NSS focused on renewing a “stronger foundation for American leadership” that is both “strong and responsible” (White House 2010 2010: 7). This emphasis on renewal indicated
an implicit acknowledgement of the declining American reputation abroad after global criticism for US involvement in Iraq.

The Obama NSS advocated for American involvement in international institutions to effectively engage in the global community (White House 2010: 3). Foreign policy officials sought to cement alliances to ensure that shared global interests were met (White House 2010: 3). This document enunciated the multilateral grand strategy that the Obama Administration favored:

“The modernization of institutions, strengthening of international norms, and enforcement of international law is not a task for the United States alone – but together with like-minded nations, it is a task we can lead. A key source of American leadership throughout history has been enlightened self-interest… The belief that our own interests are bound to the interests of those beyond our borders will continue to guide our engagement with nations and peoples” (White House 2010: 3).

Although the Obama Administration hoped to maintain a global leadership role, the NSS advocated for enhanced integration and collaboration within the global community to address goals and challenges, seeking to engage other nations “on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect” (White House 2010: 11). The Obama NSS additionally commended the American multilateral approach in the post-World War II era and addressed the Bush Administration’s tendency to reject United Nations involvement:

“In recent years America’s frustration with international institutions has led us at times to engage the United Nations (UN) on an ad hoc basis. But in a world of transnational challenges, the United States will need to invest in strengthening the international system,
working from inside international institutions and frameworks to face their imperfections head on and to mobilize transnational cooperation” (White House 2010: 13). This statement is another reference to the War in Iraq and an acknowledgment that the Obama Administration intended to adhere to international law and work within the global community, despite the imperfection of multilateral institutions (White House 2010: 13). The Obama NSS demonstrates a realist foreign policy strategy centered on multilateral involvement in the global community and domestic advancements to strengthen American influence.

**Analysis**

The predominance of strategic rhetoric throughout the Clinton, Bush and Obama National Security Strategies indicates that Hypothesis 3 was correct in predicting that rhetoric would be consistent across administrations. Each NSS rhetorically prioritized strategic interests, framed democracy promotion as a tactic to achieve broader security goals and emphasized the benefits of American leadership in the global community. The Bush NSS most aggressively asserted the universality of American values and argued that the global community should seek the same democratic freedoms that Americans enjoy. Assertions of universal applicability of American values are notably absent in the Clinton and Obama grand strategies, although each National Security Strategies praised American ideals.

Overall, the Clinton and Bush Administration’s National Security Strategies were very similar and the Obama Administration NSS demonstrated the greatest departure from trends in US foreign policy and rhetoric. Although the Clinton and Bush Administrations addressed the connection between domestic strength and international influence, the Obama Administration placed a particular emphasis on ensuring national prosperity in order to maintain the “soft power” necessary to enhance US influence in the international community and restore the
tarnished American reputation abroad. Both the Clinton and Bush Administrations expressed the hope for multilateral support in pursuing American interests and the importance of American leadership in the global community, but emphasized American willingness to pursue goals unilaterally. But the Obama Administration rejected unilateral action and prioritized American engagement in the global community within the confines of international institutions, representing a shift in foreign policy goals and rhetoric. The Obama Administration’s emphasis on multilateralism and apologies for prior American digressions from global norms represents the most significant shift in US foreign policy.
This research demonstrates that the Bush Doctrine represented continuity in US foreign policy objectives but a shift in the strategies employed to achieve these goals. Dueck classifies “strategic adjustment” as the realignment of strategic and ideological priorities that occur after external shocks threaten American security (Dueck 2006: 37). A shift in grand strategy may encompass modifications to “military spending, alliance commitments, foreign aid, diplomatic activism, and/or foreign policy stands toward potential adversaries” (Dueck 2006: 13). Strategic adjustments may be “first order,” indicating a significant change in foreign policy implementation, or “second order,” signaling a less drastic change (Dueck 2006: 37). The Bush Administration’s grand strategy would constitute a second order strategic adjustment due to the change in military strategies implemented to ensure American security against potential adversaries but the continuity of realist foreign policy goals across presidential administrations.

The Bush Administration’s focus on strategic interests, rhetorical emphasis on American ideals, willingness to pursue strategic goals unilaterally and the importance of American hegemony represent trends of continuity within the Bush Doctrine. The grand strategies of the Clinton, Bush and Obama Administrations consistently prioritized strategic interests, as demonstrated by the prevalence of strategic word indicators throughout the data. Yet each administration included ideological word indicators to explain strategic objectives, indicating a consistent influence of liberal ideals on US foreign policy. President Bush emphasized democratic values in his public statements to gain support for the Bush Doctrine, but his projection of American ideals to gain support for policy objectives does not represent a shift in presidential rhetoric.
Scholars resoundingly agree that unilateralism, the third pillar of the Bush Doctrine, was consistent with US foreign policy tradition. Leffler, Lynch and Singh provide compelling historical cases to bolster their assertions of continuity. The Bush Administration’s willingness to declare war without support from the United Nations appears drastic, but the decision to take action independently is consistent with US foreign policy tradition rather than an aberration from multilateral trends. The US has frequently executed foreign policies without support from the international community and disregarded global consensus. Although President Bush sought support from the United Nations for the War in Iraq, he was clear throughout his public statements that his primary intent was to defend American security, regardless of international consensus. He referred to the coalition of nations that were assisting US counterterrorism efforts, but mention of alliances was infrequent in his public statements and largely absent when discussing Iraq. The majority of Americans surveyed believed that United Nations support for the war was unnecessary, further indicating that unilateral action was supported by the public and not unprecedented in US foreign policy.

Continuity is also apparent in President Bush’s emphasis on American hegemony, the fourth pillar of the Bush Doctrine. Many presidential administrations, notably the Clinton Administration, emphasized the importance of the US as an international leader and America’s “indispensable” role in the global community. President Bush’s rhetoric aggressively asserted these values, as he consistently portrayed American ideals as superior and refers to the US as “the greatest country in the world.” His dichotomous rhetoric emphasizes “good versus evil” and “with us or against us” and presents American foreign policies as universally beneficial.

President Bush’s language in foreign policy speeches and in the 2002 NSS most aggressively depicts American values as universally applicable. Yet American exceptionalism has endured
throughout US foreign policy and many presidential administrations have assumed that American leadership and values will benefit the global community. Although President Bush’s rhetoric to express this universality was more assertive than previous administrations, his overall tone does not signify change in US foreign policy goals.

The War in Iraq also indicates consistency in US foreign policy. During the First Gulf War, the US received significant criticism regarding the goals of the invasion and the international community questioned why Saddam Hussein was not removed from power. Iraq represented an unfinished foreign policy objective in the Middle East. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait provided the justification for American intervention during the First Gulf War, while assumed presence of weapons of mass destruction served as an impetus for action during the 2003 War in Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein, who had been continuously depicted as a ruthless dictator. The Bush Jr. Administration foreign policy strategy towards Iraq thus constitutes a continuation of the Bush Sr. Administration’s foreign policy.

Yet the preventive declaration of war on Iraq embodies a change in the military strategies employed to defend American security. Although the Clinton, Bush and Obama Administrations prioritized strategic interests over ideological goals and implemented realist-based grand strategies, the Bush Doctrine represents a shift in the policies implemented to achieve American interests abroad; therefore the preventive war pillar of the Bush Doctrine represents a departure from US foreign policy tradition. Daalder and Lindsay were correct in asserting that the War in Iraq represents a key exception to the overall continuity of foreign policy in the Bush Doctrine, as this preventive war represented an overhaul of decades of US military and foreign policy strategies that relied on deterrence and containment. Some scholars, such as Leffler, Lynch and Singh, argue that the Bush Administration’s declaration of preventive war in Iraq did not
constitute a change in US foreign policy. Yet these analyses are superficial and fail to acknowledge the crucial difference between considering and waging preventive war.

The 2002 Commencement Speech at West Point additionally represents a departure from traditional presidential rhetoric, despite the continued emphasis on strategic goals. Daalder and Lindsay note that President Bush was the first president to explicitly state the American willingness to wage preemptive and preventive war. Previously, this possibility was always assumed and preemptive war has been frequently declared in US history. But the introduction of preventive war to US military strategy and President Bush’s continued references to the possibility of preventive war with Iraq in subsequent speeches constitutes change in presidential rhetoric.

Although it is clear from this data that early motivations for the War in Iraq were centered on security interests, many scholars noted that the Bush Administration intensified democracy promotion efforts once weapons of mass destruction were not found in Iraq. A further analysis of additional foreign policy speeches in later years of the Bush presidency, specifically in 2004, may indicate a more apparent shift in foreign policy from strategic to ideological interests. Yet it is abundantly clear that strategic interests dictated preliminary foreign policy objectives and therefore the Bush Doctrine constitutes a realist grand strategy, which is consistent with US foreign policy trends.
THE OBAMA GRAND STRATEGY

An evaluation of President Obama’s foreign policy decisions will better contextualize the Bush Doctrine and determine whether the Obama Administration’s foreign policy goals represent change or continuity from the Bush Administration’s grand strategy. This analysis will additionally yield insight into the direction of US foreign policy under President Obama.

In “The Emerging Obama Doctrine,” Masoud Kazemzadeh identifies six key elements of the President Obama’s grand strategy: preventing the global proliferation of nuclear weapons; implementing counterterrorist efforts to defeat extremist groups; engaging multilaterally in the international community to achieve foreign policy goals; utilizing effective incentives and stringent punishments in negotiations to ensure that states adhere to global norms; augmenting “soft power,” to “entice others to follow American leadership voluntarily”; and prioritizing democratic ideals in executing US foreign policy (Kazemzadeh 2010: 194-195). According to Kazemzadeh, the key difference between the Bush and Obama Doctrines is the method of engagement in the global community (Kazemzadeh 2010: 195). While Obama values multilateral institutions and believes the US should cooperate with other nations in order to resolve global challenges, President Bush disregarded global consensus in his decision to unilaterally declare war on Iraq (Kazemzadeh 2010: 194). Yet Kazemzadeh argues that both presidents understood the importance of American power in improving the global community, despite contrasting opinions regarding the best policies to enhance American influence abroad (Kazemzadeh 2010: 195).

Leslie Gelb contributes to this analysis in “The Elusive Obama Doctrine” (Gelb 2012: 18). He praises President Obama’s ability to remain politically centrist regarding foreign policy and attributes this success to the Obama Administration’s use of realist rhetoric and action,
specifically the words “interests” and “power,” which resonate with foreign policy scholars and the American public (Gelb 2012: 19). This rhetoric is a definitive shift from President Bush’s epideictic rhetoric, which emphasized American identity and shared values to enhance unity (Krebs and Lobasz 2007). Gelb additionally applauds President Obama’s efforts to restore America’s reputation and moderate US power abroad (Gelb 2012: 19-20). President Obama and his advisers recognize the success of American military might in conventional warfare, but Gelb asserts that they also acknowledge, “conventional military superiority cannot pacify countries or resolve civil wars and vast internal conflicts” (Gelb 2012: 20).

Yet Gelb furthers this argument by claiming that while President Obama recognizes the shortcomings of American power, he does not fully appreciate the benefits, specifically when military strength is accompanied by effective foreign policy strategies (Gelb 2012: 18). Although President Obama successfully led the mission that killed Osama bin Laden, implemented drone strikes to target terrorist networks and withdrew of American troops from Iraq by the end of 2011, Gelb criticizes President Obama as being unable to think strategically, leading international policymakers to question his intentions in the global arena (Gelb 2012: 21). Gelb categorizes Obama’s approach to “humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion” as “inconsistent” (Gelb 2012: 24). Although President Obama supported intervention in Libya after receiving encouragement from the Arab League and the United Nations, as discussed by Feith and Cropsey, the Administration has been hesitant to follow suit in Syria and no military action has been taken (Gelb 2012: 24-25). President Obama has additionally struggled in managing Egyptian democratic reform due to concern that democratic elections would yield an extremist government that does not support American interests (Gelb 2012: 25). Gelb is also critical of President Obama’s failure to prioritize economic development in the US within his national
security strategy, claiming that he must demonstrate that “declining economic vitality destroys American power and undermines US interests” (Gelb 2012: 28). Although the Obama Administration’s National Security Strategy emphasizes restoring domestic vitality, Gelb hopes that President Obama will focus on improving the domestic economy to ensure that the US maintains a global lead in military power and technological innovation (Gelb 2012: 28).

Many scholars identify President Obama’s remarks to the Muslim world in Cairo on June 4, 2009 as an embodiment of many key concepts of the Obama Administration’s grand strategy and a representation of his foreign policy rhetoric. In this speech, President Obama states his goal in addressing this particular audience:

“I have come here to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world; one based upon mutual interest and mutual respect; and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive, and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles – principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings” (Obama [2009] 2013).

President Obama acknowledges the historical tensions between the US and Muslim communities, specifically referencing colonialism, the Cold War and most importantly, recent conflict in the aftermath of globalization, which many Muslims perceive as threatening to Islamic traditions (Obama [2009] 2013). President Obama projected the “alternative narrative” that Krebs and Lobasz discuss in their analysis of President Bush’s epideictic rhetoric by taking responsibility for US foreign policy mistakes in the Middle East (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 425). Yet President Obama frames these tensions as an impetus for cooperation between the US and the Muslim world, rather than cause for violence, as he seeks to promote unity to collectively confront the terrorist threat and enhance global security (Obama [2009] 2013).
President Obama expressed efforts to prevent the permeation of negative stereotypes towards Muslims in the US and clarified that despite American wars with Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, “America is not – and never will be – at war with Islam” (Obama [2009] 2013). This echoed many of President Bush’s early statements, but President Obama more assertively enunciated this distinction and sympathized with Muslims who unfairly experienced discrimination after 9/11 (Obama [2009] 2013).

In the Cairo speech, President Obama directly challenged President Bush’s unilateral approach with regards to Iraq when he asserted:

“Unlike Afghanistan, Iraq was a war of choice that provoked strong differences in my country and around the world. Although I believe that the Iraqi people are ultimately better off without the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, I also believe that events in Iraq have reminded America of the need to use diplomacy and build international consensus to resolve our problems whenever possible” (Obama [2009] 2013).

President Obama prioritized multilateralism in US foreign policy and acknowledged the contentious domestic and global debate surrounding American involvement in Iraq (Obama [2009] 2013). He also explicitly rejected an American claim to Iraqi territory or intent to establish military bases, emphasizing his resolve to withdraw troops after providing assistance to rebuild infrastructure, a promise that was upheld when troops were withdrawn in late 2011 (Obama [2009] 2013). President Obama stated, “no system of government can or should be imposed upon one nation by any other” and countered assumptions about American nation-building ambitions in Iraq and the Middle East (Obama [2009] 2013). Towards the conclusion of his speech, President Obama declared:
“All of us share this world but for a brief moment in time. The question is whether we spend that time focused on what pushes us apart, or whether we commit ourselves to an effort – a sustained effort – to find common ground, to focus on the future we seek for our children, and to respect the dignity of all human beings” (Obama [2009] 2013).

The address at Cairo was a landmark speech, praised by Americans and Muslims alike. His message of tolerance and cooperation was poignant, as was his focus on building trust rather than sparking conflict (Obama [2009] 2013). Although President Bush occasionally referenced religious tolerance and respect for Islam, President Obama’s multilateral message resonated much more strongly within the Muslim world (Obama [2009] 2013).

In “Constrainment: The Obama Doctrine Defined,” Feith and Cropsey classify this speech as “remorseful” in tone, as President Obama apologized for US foreign policy mistakes and advocated for the US to “act with less power in the world” (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 13). Feith and Cropsey draw direct comparisons between the Bush and Obama Administrations, claiming, “the US under Barack Obama is less assertive, less dominant, less power-minded, less focused on the American people’s particular interests, and less concerned about preserving US freedom of action” (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). The Obama Doctrine stipulates that the US should not continue the foreign policy trend of dominance and independence in the global community, a pattern that has been evident in US engagements abroad since the end of World War II (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). Feith and Cropsey also argue that President Obama has responded to accusations of American aggression and hypocrisy by prioritizing international institutions over national interests in order to restrict American power and augment American legitimacy in the global community. The Obama Administration’s disavowal of American
unilateralism and hegemony represents a stark contrast to the Bush Doctrine and indicates a shift in US foreign policy goals and rhetoric.

Feith and Cropsey attribute the development of the Obama Doctrine to scholars of progressive national security literature who criticize US foreign policy (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14). This critique is not only directed towards the Bush Administration, but towards years of aggressive American power that has fostered anti-American sentiment (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14). Feith and Cropsey discuss the theoretical contributions of Samantha Power and Anne-Marie Slaughter, key scholars who have shaped President Obama’s foreign policy perspective (Feith and Cropsey 2011). Samantha Power, one of President Obama’s most trusted advisers, claims that international institutions alone are not enough to temper American power (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14). Yet Power claims that unilateral action was not unique to the Bush Administration and points to the Clinton Administration’s opposition towards several international agreements (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14). Power encouraged President Obama to pursue an apologetic approach to foreign policy and to clarify that he does not personally endorse the foreign policy strategies of past administrations (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14). She argues, “the US could remedy the problem only through profound self-criticism and the wholesale adoption of new policies” and believed that Obama should “seek pardon for the sins of US foreign policy” (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14).

Anne-Marie Slaughter, previous head of policy planning at the State Department, seconded this approach and encouraged presidential humility, specifically in regards to actions after 9/11 (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 14). Slaughter additionally asserted, “the more that America is respected and admired in the world, the greater will our diplomatic powers be” and that “it is selfish and unproductive for the United States to protect its right and ability to act unilaterally to
advance its national interests” (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 15). She highlights the essential paradox in American foreign policy: limiting American power and independence will best encourage other countries to cooperate with the US and restore respect for Americans (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 15). These ideas have shaped President Obama’s approach to foreign policy and guided his “determination to set precedents and create institutional and legal constraints on the ability of the United States to take international action assertively, independently, and in its own particular interests” (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 15).

Feith and Cropsey use US involvement in the UN-mission in Libya as an example of the Obama grand strategy (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). President Obama demonstrated his intent to adhere to UN Security Council recommendations during the Libyan revolution (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). The President did not volunteer American assistance until both the Arab League and the Security Council expressed support for the operation and rejected requests for a US-led invasion, ensuring that leadership was immediately passed to NATO (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). The mission additionally had narrow goals and strict limitations (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). President Obama ensured that the UN resolution only aimed to protect Libyan citizens and quell violence rather than overthrow Muammar Qaddafi (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 12). This mission represents a departure from the foreign policy goals that guided the US mission in Iraq: President Obama prioritized international cooperation, exercised restraint in American power and adhered to his promise to refrain from active democracy building, whereas President Bush disregarded global opinion, asserted American power to preserve US interests and ultimately sought to install an American-style democracy in Iraq.

Overall, Feith and Cropsey argue that the Obama Doctrine represents a shift in US foreign policy tradition (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 18). Despite previous debates between realists
and liberalists regarding US foreign policy, both parties fundamentally agreed on the importance of American interests, leadership, and power (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 18). The Bush and Clinton Administrations reserved the right for independent US action when necessary in order to protect American citizens, values and interests (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 18). Yet President Obama rejects this historic reliance on unilateral action and focuses on collaboration within multilateral institutions and deference to the global community (Feith and Cropsey 2011: 18). The Obama Administration’s grand strategy represents a much more significant strategic shift in US foreign policy than the Bush Doctrine. President Obama’s foreign policy rhetoric reflects the change in grand strategy, as he discards the “rhetoric of identity” as explained by Krebs and Lobasz (Krebs and Lobasz 2007: 425). Yet his rhetoric may resonate less with the American public, as many of President Obama’s foreign policy critics are uncomfortable with relinquishing US power in the global community and atoning for previous foreign policy mistakes (Feith and Cropsey 2011). Although President Bush’s impassioned rhetoric, embedded in American exceptionalism, ultimately led to imprudent foreign policy decisions, many Americans prefer these speeches to President Obama’s more reserved, pragmatic style (Feith and Cropsey 2011). Many scholars believed that the Bush Doctrine represented a drastic change, but it is clear from this analysis that a shift in US grand strategy has occurred under President Obama rather than his predecessor.
CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates the continuity of realist grand strategies based on strategic interests in US foreign policy. The Bush Administration endured criticism after the US did not find weapons of mass destruction and later emphasized democracy promotion to justify American involvement in Iraq, but initial objectives for preventive war were strategic, rather than ideological. The consistency is also evident in the content analysis data conducted on President Bush’s foreign policy statements as well as the Clinton, Bush and Obama National Security Strategies. In the aftermath of the Cold War, the US asserted unilateral ambitions and American hegemony in the international arena in order to advance national security interests. These trends are consistent throughout the Clinton and Bush Administrations; the Bush Doctrine thus did not represent a shift in US foreign policy goals, but in the preventive war measures implemented to achieve these objectives. Presidential rhetoric, as embodied in the National Security Strategies, has been notably consistent, as ideological values are frequently invoked to gain public support for foreign policies. President Bush’s epideictic rhetoric was especially compelling, as many Americans supported early foreign policy objectives and perceived the War in Iraq as an extension of the War on Terrorism and a response to an attack on American values.

The Obama Administration’s grand strategy represents a much more significant shift in US foreign policy due to President Obama’s devotion to multilateral institutions and critical approach to previous US foreign policy decisions. Although the 2010 National Security Strategy includes goals of spreading democratic values abroad, President Obama’s speeches are more reserved and less bombastic in asserting the universality of American values. Yet this tempered rhetoric does not necessarily garner significant public support, as President Obama is often criticized for his lack of passion and his undefined foreign policy doctrine. Ideological rhetoric
strongly resonates with the American public, regardless of the pragmatism of the foreign policy goals described. Future presidential administrations must combine President Bush’s rhetorical ability to unite the country with President Obama’s pragmatic foreign policy approach in order to implement more successful, and more supported, US grand strategies.
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