# God, guns, and . . . China?

## How ideology impacts American attitudes and policy preferences toward China

Peter H. Gries*, H. Michael Crowson and Huajian Cai

*Institute for US–China Issues, Norman, OK, USA*
*\*E-mail: gries@ou.edu*

## Abstract

What impact does ideology have on American attitudes and policy preferences toward China? Based on two large *N* surveys, we first utilize exploratory factor analysis to uncover six distinct American ideological dimensions and two distinct dimensions of attitudes toward China that distinguish between its government and its people. We then utilize structural equation modeling to explore how attitudes toward the Chinese people (i.e. prejudice) and attitudes toward the Chinese government differentially mediate relationships between ideological beliefs, on the one hand, and Americans' China policy preferences, on the other. Results suggest both direct and indirect effects of ideology on policy preferences, with the latter effects being differentially mediated by prejudice and attitudes toward the Chinese government.

> The plight of the people of Tibet is a challenge to the conscience of the world. The United States must be prepared to confront the Chinese government when they violate the human rights of their people. - Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), 12 March 2008

> China's continued repression of religion is among the most despotic in the world . . . priests and bishops and . . . pastors languish in the infamous concentration camps of China for simply proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. - Christopher Smith (R-NJ), 2006

Both the Democratic and Republican parties are internally divided on China, making for some strange bedfellows in Washington, DC. As the quotes above suggest, liberal human rights advocates like Nancy Pelosi and Christian conservatives like Christopher Cox often join together in advocating tougher China policies. Indeed, the Senate and House Taiwan caucuses, which are not just pro-Taiwan but also generally anti-China, are genuinely bipartisan, with comparable numbers of Democratic and Republican members. However, on the pro-China side, business conservatives often join liberal internationalists in advocating more friendly China policies. For instance, the US–China Business Council, which lobbies on behalf of US companies doing business with China, works closely not just with Republicans but also with Democrats on Capitol Hill to promote pro-China and block anti-China legislation.

While special interest groups like the US–China Business Council clearly play a role in China policy making, ideology appears to play a significant role in American China policy as well. This impact can be conceptualized at two levels. First, elite US foreign policy decision-makers, whether in the executive or legislative branches, do not simply respond to policy inputs; their own ideologies directly impact the ways that they understand China, framing and constraining their decision-making processes. Second, those same elites in both our executive and legislative branches must always be concerned about being re-elected, so are highly attentive to public opinion (Jacobs and Page, 2005). Some elites, furthermore, may also have a genuine interest in conveying the desires of their constituencies. They may also be swayed to vote in particular ways because of commonalities they perceive between themselves and their constituents. Indeed, Holsti (2004) has argued that the indirect

impact of public opinion on foreign policy making is only likely to increase in the future.

Scholarship on the impact of ideology on the American public's broader foreign policy attitudes remains divided, however. In the early postwar period, Almond (1950) and Converse (1964) disparaged the lack of structured or stable foreign policy attitudes among what they viewed as a largely uninterested and uninformed American public. This 'Almond-Converse consensus' (Holsti, 1992) on the public's 'non-attitudes' was first empirically challenged in the 1970s (Caspary, 1970; Pierce and Rose, 1974). By the 1980s, scholars were arguing that the American public does indeed have structured and stable attitudes toward foreign policy (e.g. Peffley and Hurwitz, 1985; Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987). Utilizing Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (CCFR) survey data, Eugene Wittkopf (1986, 1990) argued that the public's foreign policy beliefs were not only stable, but structured around the two dimensions of cooperative internationalism and militant internationalism. Gathering their own surveys in their Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP), Ole Holsti and James Rosenau (1988) argued that the same two dimensions structured elite foreign policy beliefs as well. They also argued that 'conservatives [and] Republicans . . . are significantly more likely to be hardliners . . . [than] liberals [and] Democrats' (Holsti and Rosenau, 1990, p. 116). Shapiro and Bloch-Elkon (2006) have more recently concurred, arguing that partisan cleavages have grown over the years, not just on social and economic issues, but on foreign policy issues as well. Even so, Page and Bouton (2006, pp. 95–96) have argued, based on CCFR data, that party affiliation and liberalism/conservatism have only a 'limited effect' on foreign policy attitudes. Even more recently, Page and Xie (2010, pp. 37, 57, 66, and 103) have argued that ideology has little impact on China attitudes.

One reason that scholars appear to be divided about the impact of ideology on foreign policy attitudes is that the polling data utilized in the extant scholarship produce correlations that have tended to be either small or insignificant. For instance, two recent polls that included questions about China, the Chicago Council's Global Views survey (2006) and the 2007 Zogby survey commissioned by the Committee of 100 (C-100), a national organization of prominent Chinese-Americans, produced contradictory results. The former suggested some impact of ideology on China attitudes, while the latter revealed no impact.

We believe that one reason for this inconsistency may be related to both how ideology is conceptualized and measured. National opinion polls are designed to uncover changes in substantive opinions about discrete policy issues at different points in time, and these often rely on single-item questions addressing particular attitudes or ideologies. Given Jost's (2006, p. 652) definition of ideology 'as an interrelated set of moral and political attitudes that possesses cognitive, affective, and motivational components', we believe that too much reliance on these kinds of single-item measures that tap narrow aspects of ideology threatens the validity of previous findings. How reasonable is it to assume that single-item measures effectively capture the complexities of people's social attitudes and ideologies? For instance, in many national opinion polls, a single conservative to liberal self-placement item is relied upon to measure ideology. Jost (2006, p. 659) finds it 'difficult to think of another survey question in the entire social and behavioral sciences that is as useful and parsimonious as the liberalism-conservatism self-placement item'. However, others (e.g. Duckitt, 2001; Crowson, 2009; Feldman and Johnson, 2009) have argued that there are diverse facets (e.g. social/cultural versus economic) of conservative ideology that may exhibit different patterns of association with different personality and behavioral correlates. Indeed, Duckitt's (e.g. Duckitt, 2001, 2006) Dual Process Motivational Model assumes that the people adopt distinct ideological positions, in part, as a function of underlying worldview beliefs and motivational goals.

We agree with these latter authors and believe that further exploration of the diverse dimensions of ideology is needed to fully capture any relationship between ideology and China attitudes. In short, knowledge about the relationship between ideology and socio-political attitudes gleaned from many national opinion surveys may insufficiently capture the depth or breadth of the ideological domains they purport to measure, which in turn may attenuate relationships with foreign policy attitudes. With this in mind, we believe that the major strength of the current research comes from our effort to more fully 'flesh out' the cognitive and affective contents associated with those ideologies that may impact Americans' attitudes toward China.

Second, the tendency to rely upon single-item indexes raises additional concerns about measurement error and its effects on the statistical association between concepts of interest. Measuring a construct

with more (as opposed to fewer) items results in scales that incorporate greater overall response consistency – i.e. reliability (see, e.g., Osterlind, 2006). Greater reliability, in turn, tends to produce stronger (i.e. 'truer') associations among measured variables, since more 'true score' variation, as opposed to error variation, is being captured and correlated (Thorndike and Thorndike-Christ, 2010). In short, the inconsistent results found in previous studies of the relationship between ideology and China attitudes could very well be an artifact of measurement error and not the absence of a real association between factors within the population. The current research sought to remedy this potential problem through its reliance on multi-item measures of ideological and attitudinal functioning.

A final measurement-related concern has to do with the restricted response formats that often accompany single-item measures in national polls. Measurement precision generally increases with the inclusion of more response options, and correlations between measures depend upon the variation that more response options afford. However, national polls frequently force participants to choose between binary response categories, such as 'engaging' versus 'containing' China, or depicting China as an American 'rival' or 'partner'. Such limited response categories fail to capture the nuances of respondent's actual views and limit the variation needed to ensure that the correlations among measures became apparent. Furthermore, complications arise when response categories are not actually mutually exclusive. For instance, when the 2007 Zogby C-100 survey asked about perceived Chinese military threat, their four response options were 'serious threat', 'potential threat', 'no threat', and 'ally', which are not mutually exclusive categories (C-100, 2008). For instance, a respondent might view China as a current 'ally' but also as a 'potential threat', calling into question the meaning behind whichever response they choose. We sought to address this issue in the current research by providing respondents with scales that allow for a fuller range of mutually exclusive responses.

In sum, we believe that previous measures of low reliability and dubious validity, and that have low potential for allowing for adequate variation in responses, may have contributed to low or inconsistent associations among ideological and attitudinal variables in many public opinion polls that address relations between ideology and attitudes toward China. Moreover, the tendency to treat ideology as

unidimensional rather than multidimensional may have clouded the picture with respect to the relationships between ideological functioning and anti-China attitudes.

One recent paper (Gries and Crowson, 2010) has attempted to address some of the above-mentioned measurement-related problems by constructing new measures of China attitudes and policy preferences and deploying them in new surveys. The authors concluded that, on average, 'conservatives' are considerably more likely than 'liberals' to maintain negative views of the Chinese government, perceive China as a threat, and to advocate a tougher US policy of containment. While the China measures used in their surveys were more robust than those used in previous studies, their measures of ideology remained limited, still relying heavily on the same single-item seven-point 'strongly liberal'-to-'strongly conservative' ideological self-placement scale used in many public opinion surveys. Multidimensional measures of ideology are still needed.

This paper seeks to build on this work to provide a more nuanced look at the relationships between a more nuanced multidimensional examination of Americans' ideological beliefs, on the one hand, and China attitudes and policy preferences, on the other. In the following two studies, we begin by exploring the dimensionality of Americans' ideological beliefs as reflected in various measures of ideology as well as the dimensionality of their attitudes toward China and its people. Next, we examine relationships between ideological beliefs and Americans' policy preferences toward China and explore the possible meditational role that attitudes toward China's people and government may play in that association. This is accomplished through the use of structural equation modeling (SEM). Broadly speaking, we hypothesize that (i) Americans' attitudes toward China and its people are multidimensional, as are their ideological orientations, and (ii) that the effects of Americans' ideologies on support for tougher containment policies toward China will be differentially mediated through attitudes toward China's people (i.e. prejudice) and government.

Why study the ideological determinants of American attitudes toward China? First, while ideology is certainly not the only factor influencing American foreign policy, it does appear to have a substantial impact. We hope that this paper will contribute to theoretic debates within the political science literature on public opinion and foreign policy. We also hope

it will contribute to the emerging literature on ideology in personality and social psychology.

Second and more fundamentally, US–China relations are the most important bilateral relationship of the twenty-first century. A better understanding of how ideology impacts American attitudes toward China could help us avoid another US–China conflict. For normative reasons, therefore, this paper's primary commitment is not to theory but to the empirical understanding of the sources of American China policy. Our research question, 'How does ideology impact American attitudes towards China?', is not a theoretic question. It is an empirical question. We aim to use the methods of applied social psychology to answer it, seeking to maximize the amount of unique variance in China attitudes which can be explained by different dimensions of American ideology. This requires that we inductively explore the messy and complicated reality of lived American ideologies.

# 1 Study One: Methods

## 1.1 Participants and procedures

During the week of 3–11 March 2009, 389 Americans from around the country were recruited to take an Internet survey. Using the Internet had two advantages. First, it allowed us to reach a broader national sample than if we implemented the surveys in person. Second, the privacy afforded by completing a survey online is preferable to in-person and telephone surveys when it comes to sensitive issues like prejudice that we were interested in studying. This is because of the problem of self-presentation effects whereby people may selectively disclose their true feelings on sensitive issues depending upon who is interviewing them. For instance, if the subject is a middle aged man, if the question is about abortion attitudes, their responses may vary depending upon whether the interviewer is a young woman or an older man, etc. The survey began with a consent form that explained to participants the purpose of the study, its voluntary nature, and the anonymity of the data collected. The ethical standards of the American Political Science and American Psychological Associations were strictly followed during data collection and analysis.

Because our interest is in the impact of American ideologies on American attitudes and policy preferences toward China, non-citizens and those who self-identify as Chinese-Americans (who may have only recently moved from China and just gained citizenship[1]) were removed from the sample, as were several participants who did not complete the entire survey. The final sample ($N = 351$) was very well balanced, with slightly more men ($n = 177$) than women ($n = 174$), and more Democrats ($n = 130$) than Republicans ($n = 121$) and Independents ($n = 100$). Ages ranged from 18 to 69, with a mean age of 33.54 [standard deviation (SD) = 14.20]. In terms of ethnicity, the sample was 81.2% white, 3.7% African-American, 2.3% non-Chinese Asian-American, 2.3% Latino/a, and 4.3% Native American.

## 1.2 Measures

Unless otherwise noted, the questions that composed the following scales were on seven-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 7 ('strongly agree'). Questions were largely balanced in terms of positively and negatively worded items, and question order was randomized on each of the survey's 10 pages. The questions clustered around American ideology, China attitudes, and China policy preferences.

*Ideologies.* Various facets of American ideology were measured with a diverse battery of 21 items, including the straightforward one to seven 'extremely liberal'-to-'extremely conservative' political orientation scale. All scales were coded such that higher scores indicated greater conservatism.

*Right-wing authoritarianism.* The right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) scale (see Altemeyer, 1998) is designed to measure three facets (i.e. attitudinal systems) of RWA: authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism. Three items were used: 'The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas'; 'Our country will be destroyed someday if we do

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1   We did not measure length of residence in the United States, so have no way of distinguishing between Chinese-Americans who are recent arrivals from those who have lived here a long time. We therefore err on the side of caution by excluding all four Chinese-Americans from our sample.

not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs'; and 'Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us'. Although this scale was originally thought to measure a personality dimension, many scholars consider it to more accurately measure cultural conservatism (see, e.g., Duckitt, 2001; Kossowska and Van Hiel, 2007; Crowson, 2009).

*Social dominance orientation.* The social dominance orientation (SDO) is scale is designed to measure an individual's preference for 'non-egalitarian social systems' (Crowson *et al.*, 2005, p. 1275) and the desire to dominate others (Sidanius and Pratto, 1999). Participants responded to a shortened five-item version: 'Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups'; 'Inferior groups should stay in their place'; 'It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom'; 'If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems'; and 'We would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally' (reverse coded). At present a number of researchers consider the SDO Scale to be a prototypical indicator of a socioeconomic-hierarchical dimension of social attitudes (Duckitt, 2001; Kossowska and Van Hiel, 2007).

*Culture wars.* Four items were created, tapping positions on *abortion* ('extreme pro-choice to extreme pro-life'), *school prayer* in public schools ('strong opposition to strong support'), *gun control* ('strong support of gun control regulations to strong opposition to any regulation of gun ownership'), and the *death penalty* ('strong opposition to strong support').

*Individual rights.* Four items were created to capture the continuum from libertarianism to communitarianism, or the balance between individual rights and those of the government or community: 'Individuals should be free to follow their own dreams in their own ways, without interference from government'; 'Individual rights are more important than the good of the group'; 'Government must limit our individual freedoms so as to prevent unchecked selfishness, greed, and immorality' (reverse coded); and 'Contemporary American society has swung too far in the direction of individual rights at the expense of social responsibilities' (reverse coded).

*Nativism.* Four items were created to tap anti-immigrant sentiment: 'Immigrants use too many of our limited social welfare services'; 'Immigrants contribute to the flourishing of American culture' (reverse coded); 'Immigrants take jobs that should go to Americans'; and

'Immigrants should not be required to learn how to speak English' (reverse coded).

*Attitudes toward China.* Previous research (Gries and Crowson, 2010) has demonstrated that American attitudes toward the Chinese people are much more positive than attitudes toward the Chinese government. That research, however, has been limited to cognitive measures involving assessing positive and negative adjectives. For this study, 14 items were utilized to create an informal $2 \times 2$ matrix representing the type of measure and its object, tapping cognitive and affective measures of both attitudes toward the Chinese people and their government. All scales were coded such that higher values indicate more negative or prejudicial attitudes.

*Stereotyping* (STER) *scale.* A cognitive scale composed of four '*The Chinese people are . . .*' statements. Two were positive ('*friendly*' and '*trustworthy*') and reverse coded, and two were negative ('*devious*' and '*dishonest*').

*Negative attitudes toward the Chinese government* (NEGGOV) *scale.* A cognitive scale composed of four 'The Chinese government is . . .' items, using the same four adjectives used in the stereotyping scale.

*Social distance scale.* Four affective items were designed to indirectly tap emotional responses to Chinese people in various situations: 'On a scale where one is extremely unhappy and seven is extremely happy, how would you feel if you learned that . . . your new boss at work turned out to be Chinese?/a family member was planning to marry a Chinese person?/a Chinese family was moving into the house next door/you had won a free trip to China?'

*Feeling thermometers.* Two additional items, 'I feel good about the Chinese people' and 'I feel good about the Chinese government', were designed to tap the affective dimension of attitudes toward the Chinese people and government, respectively.

*China policy preferences.* CONTAIN *scale.* This four-item scale taped respondents' preferred US China policy. It included 'The best way to deal with China is to build up our military'; 'The U.S. government should strengthen our military alliances with Japan, South Korea, and India to contain Chinese power'; 'Our government should adopt a more accommodating foreign policy towards China' (reverse coded); and 'The U.S. government should implement tougher foreign policies to contain

Chinese power'. Higher values indicate a greater desire for tougher US policies of containment toward China.

# 2 Study One: Results

## 2.1 American ideologies

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to test the hypothesis that our 21 diverse ideology items would reveal no single American ideological continuum, but rather a structure representing a set of distinct and interpretable ideologies. Moreover, we were interested to see how many coherent dimensions would emerge in our data. EFA is a statistical technique that is used to uncover the latent dimensions or unobserved variables called factors that explain variation in a larger number of observed variables such as individual survey items. Principal axis factoring (PAF) was conducted on the full data set, followed by Promax rotation with Kaiser normalization to aid in the interpretation of the factors (see Russell, 2002, on the choice of PAF for EFA). It produced five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, but the fifth factor's eigenvalue was just 1.01, and the scree plot revealed a clear break after the fourth factor. (Eigenvalues represent the amount of variance in the original set of variables accounted for by a factor.) PAF was therefore run again with four factors, and all were clearly interpretable. Table 1 displays the results and includes all loadings greater than 0.35.

The first factor included eight items: the liberal-conservative political orientation item, all three RWA items stressing moral and traditional values, and all four culture war items (school prayer, abortion, gun control, and death penalty). We named the first factor 'cultural conservatism' because of the predominance of the culture war and traditional values items. It is noteworthy that the general 'liberal-conservative' self-placement item loaded the highest on this factor, revealing how the culture wars have come to dominate American thinking about ideology. In other words, when Americans are asked to think of the terms 'liberal' and 'conservative', they appear to think of them predominantly in cultural terms. To be 'conservative' or 'liberal', in short largely means to be *culturally* conservative or liberal.

The second factor included four of the five SDO items and was labeled 'social dominance'. (The one reverse-coded SDO item did not load at greater than 0.35 on any factor.) This factor represented a

**Table 1** Factor analysis of 21 American ideology items, spring 2009 sample ($n = 351$)

| American ideology items | Factor 1: Cultural Conserv. | Factor 2: Social Domin. | Factor 3: Nativism | Factor 4: Indiv. Rights |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conservatism ('*extremely liberal*' to '*extremely conservative*') | 0.847 | | | |
| rwa2 ('*Our country will be destroyed someday if we do not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs*') | 0.760 | | | |
| Abortion ('*extreme pro-choice to extreme pro-life*') | 0.690 | | | |
| School prayer (in public schools) ('*strong opposition to strong support*') | 0.671 | | | |
| rwa3 ('*Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us*') | 0.622 | | | |
| rwa1 ('*The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas*') | 0.555 | | | |
| Gun control ('*strong support to strong opposition*') | 0.520 | | | |
| Death penalty ('*strong opposition to strong support*') | 0.447 | | | |
| sdo2 ('*Inferior groups should stay in their place*') | | 0.862 | | |
| sdo1 ('*Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups*') | | 0.788 | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| sdo4 ('*It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom*') | 0.764 | | | |
| sdo5 ('*If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems*') | 0.767 | | | |
| Sdo3r ('*We would have fewer problems if we treated people more equally*') | – | | | |
| Nativism4 ('*Immigrants take jobs that should go to Americans*') | | 0.798 | | |
| Nativism2 ('*Immigrants use too many of our limited social welfare services*') | | 0.781 | | |
| Nativism3r ('*Immigrants contribute to the flourishing of American culture*') | | 0.521 | | |
| Nativism1 ('*Immigrants should not be required to learn how to speak English*') | | – | | |
| Indiv1 ('*Individuals should be free to follow their own dreams in their own ways, without interference from government*') | | | | 0.593 |
| Indiv2 ('*Individual rights are more important than the good of the group*') | | | | 0.557 |
| Indiv3r ('*Government must limit our individual freedoms so as to prevent unchecked selfishness, greed, and immorality*') | | | | 0.519 |
| Indiv4r ('*American society has swung too far in the direction of individual rights at the expense of social responsibilities*') | | | | 0.542 |
| Eigenvalues | 6.38 | 2.02 | 1.86 | 1.28 |
| Scale $\alpha$ (n) | 0.86(8) | 0.84(4) | 0.77(3) | 0.62(4) |

*Note*: Numbers are pattern matrix coefficients for PAF analysis with Promax rotation. Factor coefficients are shown only if >0.35.

preference for hierarchy rather than equality among social groups. The third factor, labeled 'nativism', included three of the four nativism items we created to capture anti-immigrant populist sentiment. The fourth nativism item, 'Immigrants should not be required to learn how to speak English', actually loaded stronger on Factor 1, 'cultural conservatism', but did not reach our 0.35 threshold and so was discarded. The topic of language clearly made this item more of a cultural than a nativist issue. The fourth factor included all four of the libertarian–communitarian items and was labeled 'individual rights'. It captured a very American and Liberal suspicion of the government, and a jealousy of the individual's rights against the good of the community.

Overall, the four factors that emerged from our PAF were all clearly interpretable, had no cross-loadings greater than 0.35, and explained 55% of the variance in the 21 indicator variables. Furthermore, they covered substantively distinct dimensions of American ideology.

## 2.2 Structures of China attitudes

EFA was then conducted on our 14 China attitudes items. Three factors emerged with eigenvalues greater than 1. However, the scree plot revealed a clear break after the second eigenvalue, with the plot relatively level thereafter. Testing a two-factor solution then yielded a clearly interpretable structure, with eigenvalues of 4.57 and 3.10. The two factors accounted for 55% of the variation in the indicator variables, and only intercorrelated at $r = 0.16$. The results are displayed in Table 2.

Factor 1 included all nine items that referred to the Chinese people, while Factor 2 included all five items that referred to the Chinese government. These factors were very clean, with no cross-loadings greater than 0.35. It thus seems clear that in our $2 \times 2$ matrix of cognitive and affective measures of attitudes toward the Chinese people and their government, it was the referent (i.e. people versus government) and not the type of measure (cognitive versus affective) that was more salient in capturing the structure of American attitudes toward China.

## 2.3 Internal reliabilities, means, and intercorrelations

The four ideology and two attitudes factors were computed into six separate scales by averaging all of the factored items together. As listed in Table 3, the resulting scales had modest ($\alpha = 0.62$) to very

**Table 2** Factor analysis of 14 China attitude items, spring 2009 sample ($n = 351$)

| China attitudes items | Factor 1: People | Factor 2: Govern. |
|---|---|---|
| Ster1r ('*The Chinese people are trustworthy*') | 0.717 | |
| Ster2 ('*The Chinese people are devious*') | 0.680 | |
| SocDist4r ('*How happy would you feel if you learned that . . . a Chinese family was moving into the house next door?*') | 0.676 | |
| Ster4 ('*The Chinese people are dishonest*') | 0.676 | |
| SocDist2r ('*How happy would you feel if you learned that . . . your new boss at work turned out to be Chinese?*') | 0.666 | |
| Ster3r ('*The Chinese people are friendly*') | 0.663 | |
| SocDist3r ('*How happy would you feel if you learned that . . . a family member was planning to marry a Chinese person?*') | 0.640 | |
| Prej_r ('*I feel good about the Chinese people*') | 0.615 | |
| SocDist1r ('*How happy would you feel if you learned that . . . you had won a free trip to China?*') | 0.393 | |
| NegGov4 ('*The Chinese government is trustworthy*') | | 0.819 |
| NegGov1r ('*The Chinese government is friendly*') | | 0.773 |
| NegGov2 ('*The Chinese government is dishonest*') | | 0.758 |
| NegGov3r ('*The Chinese government is devious*') | | 0.709 |
| PrejGov_r ('*I feel good about the Chinese government*') | | 0.701 |
| Eigenvalues | 4.57 | 3.10 |
| Scale $\alpha$ ($n$) | 0.88(9) | 0.87(5) |

*Note*: Numbers are pattern matrix coefficients for PAF analysis with Promax rotation. Factor coefficients are shown only if $>0.35$.

**Table 3** Correlations, significance levels, means, SDs, and scale $\alpha$'s and $n$'s, spring 2009 sample ($n = 351$)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | M | SD | $\alpha$ | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Republican[a] | – | 0.72** | 0.36** | 0.41** | 0.00 | 0.26** | 0.29** | 0.30** | 1.48 | 0.50 | NA | 1 |
| 2. CULT. CONSERV. | | – | 0.48** | 0.52** | −0.02 | 0.33** | 0.18** | 0.43** | 3.57 | 1.30 | 0.86 | 8 |
| 3. SOCIAL DOMIN. | | | – | 0.38** | −0.03 | 0.38** | 0.03 | 0.22** | 2.16 | 1.23 | 0.84 | 4 |
| 4. NATIVISM | | | | – | −0.13* | 0.44** | 0.07 | 0.28** | 3.18 | 1.32 | 0.77 | 3 |
| 5. INDIV. RIGHTS | | | | | – | −0.02 | 0.19** | 0.02 | 4.61 | 1.03 | 0.62 | 4 |
| 6. CHIN. PEOPLE | | | | | | – | 0.16** | 0.44** | 2.81 | 0.83 | 0.88 | 9 |
| 7. CHINESE GOV. | | | | | | | – | 0.47** | 4.95 | 1.10 | 0.87 | 5 |
| 8. CONTAIN | | | | | | | | – | 3.79 | 1.04 | 0.72 | 4 |

*Note*: Throughout this paper, individual items are labeled in lower case, while scales are labeled in uppercase.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

[a]1 = Democrat, 2 = Republican; all other variables based on 1−7 Likert scales.

good ($\alpha = 0.86$, 0.84, 0.88, and 0.87) internal reliabilities. This gives us confidence that the individual items that compose each of the seven scales were, for the most part, capturing common underlying constructs.

The means listed in Table 3 reveal that while our sample was diverse ideologically, it was quite balanced, with the means for our four ideology variables (highlighted in the shaded rows) generally hovering just above or below the scale midpoint of 4. The sole exception was the mean for social dominance, which was quite low or liberal at just 2.16. It is also noteworthy that attitudes toward the Chinese people ($M = 2.81$) were much more positive than attitudes toward the Chinese government ($M = 4.95$). A paired samples *t*-test revealed that the difference between these two means was statistically significant and very large, $t(344) = -31.46$, $P < 0.001$. This is consistent with previous research (Gries and Crowson, 2010) using purely cognitive measures of prejudice, which similarly found that while Americans tend to hold largely positive attitudes toward the Chinese people, they are ambivalent to slightly negative about the Chinese government.

The zero-order correlations between our four American ideology and two China attitudes scales are also displayed in Table 3. Attitudes toward the Chinese people and government only correlated at 0.16, further highlighting the distinction drawn in American minds between the Chinese people and their government. For our purposes, however, the most important correlations reported in Table 3 are those between ideologies and China attitudes (see columns 6 and 7). Cultural and individual rights ideologies correlated with our China government variable, while cultural, social dominance, and nativist ideologies all correlated with our Chinese people variable. This suggests distinct pathways from different American ideologies to different China attitudes.

## 2.4 Predicting China attitudes and policy preferences from American ideologies

Given that different ideologies appear to differentially impact attitudes toward the Chinese people and their government, do these two types of attitudes also differentially impact China policy preferences? The zero-order correlations reported in Table 3 provide little information about either the total variance explained or the unique variance each

ideological factor adds to predicting the attitudes factors. To explore the impact of American ideologies on China policy preferences, we first created a CONTAIN variable ($\alpha = 0.72$, $M = 3.79$; SD $= 1.04$) out of our four policy items (see also Table 3) and then used SEM to find out. SEM has a number of advantages over multiple regression, such as the ability to model mediated relationships among variables, as well as the ability to evaluate the global fit of a model containing those mediated relationships. It has the further advantage of allowing us to model not just prediction but also measurement error at the level of individual indicator variables (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). This allows the interrelationships among the latent variables in an SEM to be more fully revealed than they would be in either regression or path analysis.

We used AMOS 17.0 with full-information maximum likelihood estimation to first test a measurement model in which all seven of our latent variables were allowed to co-vary. We created item parcels for those latent variables with many indicators. For instance, the eight cultural conservatism items were reduced to four parcels comprised of two averaged items each, and the nine prejudice items were reduced to three parcels comprised of three averaged items each. The benefit of parceling is that it allowed us to incorporate measurement error into our model while at the same time minimizing the number of parameters being estimated (Little *et al.*, 2002).

We examined the fit of all models in this study based on the $\chi^2$ test, the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), the normed fit index (NFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Conventional cutoffs for optimal fitting models are CFI, TLI, and NFI values around 0.95 and RMSEA values $\leq 0.06$ (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004; Kline, 2005).

The first line of Table 4 contains the fit statistics for our measurement model. The NFI was poor, but the other fit statistics hovered just above or below conventional levels for optimal fit, so the model was considered adequate.

We then tested a fully saturated structural model in which our four ideological latent variables predicted both China attitudes (i.e. toward the government and people) variables and the containment variable, and the two China attitudes variables predicted the contain variable. The fit statistics for this model, reported on the second line of Table 4, were very similar to those of the measurement model.

**Table 4** Fitness statistics

| Model | Sample, $n$ | $\chi^2$ | P-value | df | CFI | NFI | TLI | RMSEA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spring 2009 sample | | | | | | | | |
|   1. Measurement model | 351 | 415 | 0.000 | 209 | 0.942 | 0.891 | 0.923 | 0.053 |
|   2. Fully saturated SEM | 351 | 417 | 0.000 | 210 | 0.941 | 0.891 | 0.923 | 0.053 |
|   3. Final SEM | 351 | 426 | 0.000 | 220 | 0.942 | 0.888 | 0.927 | 0.052 |
| Summer 2009 development sample | | | | | | | | |
|   4. CFA: American national identity | 1,339 | 46 | 0.000 | 15 | 0.990 | 0.985 | 0.976 | 0.039 |
|   5. Measurement model: exogenous | 1,339 | 653 | 0.000 | 120 | 0.948 | 0.937 | 0.926 | 0.058 |
|   6. Measurement model: endogenous | 1,339 | 165 | 0.000 | 24 | 0.972 | 0.968 | 0.948 | 0.066 |
|   7. Final SEM | 1,339 | 1,272 | 0.000 | 302 | 0.940 | 0.923 | 0.925 | 0.049 |
| Summer 2009 validation sample | | | | | | | | |
|   8. Final SEM | 1,308 | 1386 | 0.000 | 302 | 0.932 | 0.915 | 0.915 | 0.052 |
|   'good fit' conventions | | | | | $\geq$0.95 | $\geq$0.95 | $\geq$0.95 | $\leq$0.06 |

*Note*: df = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; NFI = normed fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis Index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.

We then removed the statistically non-significant covariances and paths to determine if we could obtain a theoretically meaningful model with better fit. Figure 1 displays our final model, which includes all paths and covariances that were statistically significant at $P < 0.01$. The indicator variables and their corresponding error terms for each of the seven latent variables have been hidden to allow for the clear display of all covariance and path coefficients. The model exhibited a slightly better fit than the previous model. $R^2$ values for negative attitudes toward the Chinese people, government, and containment were 0.30, 0.07, and 0.54, respectively.

Finally, we tested the statistical significance of the indirect effects of social dominance and nativism on containment via negative attitudes toward the Chinese people, as well as the indirect effects of cultural and individual rights ideologies on support for containment via negative attitudes toward the Chinese government in our final model. The standardized indirect effects of social dominance and nativism on containment were 0.07 and 0.10, respectively. The standardized indirect effects of cultural and political ideology on containment were 0.07 and 0.07, respectively. Statistical significance of these effects was evaluated using
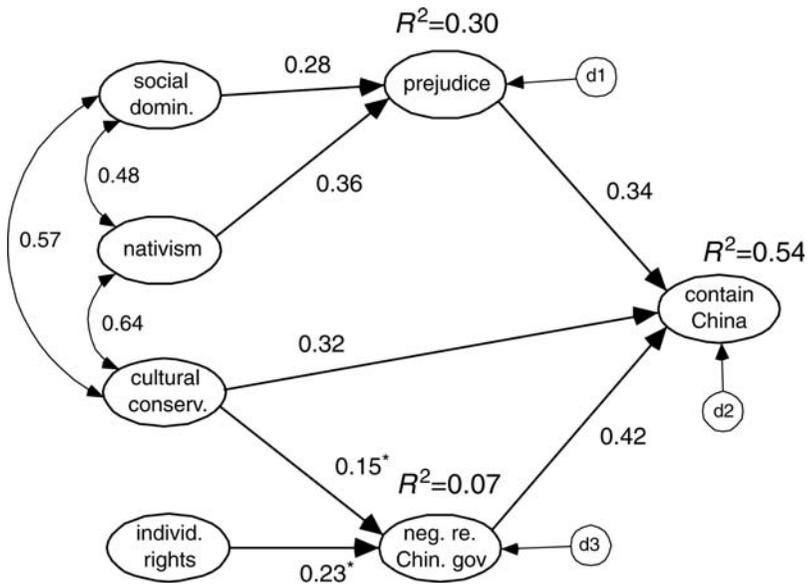


**Figure 1** Final SEM, spring 2009 sample ($n = 351$). *$p < 0.01$. All other $p$-values $< 0.001$.

Kristopher    Preacher's    online    calculator    (http://people.ku.edu/
~preacher/sobel/sobel.htm) for performing Sobel tests in our sample.
The indirect effects of social dominance, nativist, cultural and political
ideology on containment attitudes via their mediators were all statisti-
cally significant at $P \leq 0.001$.

# 3 Study One: Discussion

The most striking finding from Study 1 is the dual pathways that run
from American ideologies to China policy preferences, one path flowing
through attitudes toward the Chinese people or prejudice and the other
flowing through attitudes toward the Chinese government. Not surpris-
ingly, SDO, a variable that is strongly related to prejudice toward
American minorities, positively predicted prejudice toward the Chinese
people. It failed, however, to predict negative attitudes toward the
Chinese government. The nativism scale we created to tap anti-
immigrant sentiment also, unsurprisingly, predicted prejudice, yet also
failed to predict negative attitudes toward the Chinese government.
Cultural and individual rights ideologies, for their part, formed a second
path, positively predicting negative attitudes toward the Chinese govern-
ment but not prejudice toward the Chinese people. Given the centrality
of the state/government to the individual rights measure we created, it is
not surprising that it correlated with negative attitudes toward a Chinese
government seen as the enemy of individual liberty. For their part, cul-
tural conservatives may view the Communist Chinese government as
atheistic and immoral. It is also noteworthy that cultural conservatism
had a large direct impact on China policy preferences, perhaps
suggesting a greater belief in the appropriateness and efficacy of coercive
methods as a way of dealing with perceived international threats, irre-
spective of attitudes toward the Chinese government or people.

The impressive $R^2$ value associated with our containment measure
indicates that we were able to account for a substantial proportion (i.e.
54%) of variation in containment attitudes as a function of our predic-
tors. Nevertheless, we wondered whether or not our ideology scales
might have partially been capturing the effect of American national iden-
tity in the process. Do patriotism or nationalism have an independent
effect on China policy preferences, or are they already captured by our
four ideology variables?

A second question pertains to our individual rights scale. Table 3 reveals that this scale was the only one of our four ideology variables that did not correlate with political party identification. Moreover, Fig. 1 shows that it did not co-vary with the other three ideology variables. Perhaps our individual rights scale was capturing both a libertarian right and an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) left, two very different groups that do nonetheless share a common focus on individual rights.

To both replicate the findings from Study 1 and to address these two questions, we decided to conduct a follow-up survey.

## 4 Study Two: Methods

### 4.1 Procedures and sample

On 12–14 August 2009, 2,819 members of a mid-American state university community completed a 10-minute online Internet survey in exchange for the opportunity to enter a raffle for home game football tickets. Participants were informed about the topic of the study, its voluntary nature, and the protection of their privacy.

One hundred and twenty-six non-US citizens, 35 Chinese-Americans (who may have only recently emigrated from China), and 10 respondents who did not follow instructions were dropped from the sample. The final sample ($n = 2,647$) included 614 staff, 213 faculty, 441 graduate students, and 1,380 undergraduates. It included more women ($n = 1,426$) than men ($n = 1,222$), and more Democrats ($n = 1,059$) than Republicans ($n = 906$) and Independents ($n = 683$). However, the mean score on a seven-point liberal-conservative self-placement scale was very close to the scale midpoint of 4 ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.77$), suggesting ideological balance. The mean age of the sample was 29.49 ($SD = 13.03$). Eighty-three percent of the respondents were in-state, but the remaining 17% came from every state in the Union; 78.4% were Caucasian/white, 3.9% were African-American, 3.5% were Asian-American (non-Chinese), 3.6% were Latino/Latina, and 7.6% were Native American.

### 4.2 Measures

As in the first study, and unless otherwise noted, all questions were on 1–7 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' Likert scales. Questions were

again largely balanced and question order was randomized on each page.

*Ideologies.* Facets of American ideology were measured with a diverse battery of 22 items, including the 1 to 7 'extremely liberal' to 'extremely conservative' standard political orientation scale.

  *RWA.* The exact same three RWA items used in Study 1 were used.

  *SDO.* We dropped the reverse-coded item which did not load sufficiently in the first study, but used the same remaining four SDO items.

  *Culture wars.* We dropped the death penalty item, which loaded the weakest of our eight cultural conservatism items in the first study, but included the same three items on *abortion, school prayer,* and *gun control.*

  *Nativism.* We dropped the 'speak English' item because it failed to load sufficiently on any factor in the first study, but repeated the other three anti-immigration items.

  *Individual rights.* The same four items used in Study 1 were used.

  *Group rights.* Because our individual rights scale did not correlate at all with party identification or our other three ideology variables in the first study, we created a new scale comprised of four ACLU group rights items that are more closely associated with the political left: 'Government programs like Title 9 are needed to ensure that *women* are not discriminated against in areas from athletics to issues of equal pay for equal work'; 'The government should ensure that affirmative action and other social programs are properly implemented to prevent *racial discrimination*'; 'When poor people are accused of crimes, the government must ensure that they are represented by a *competent lawyer* to ensure that they receive fair treatment by the legal system'; and 'The government should ensure that even poor children can receive a decent *public education*'.

*Attitudes.* Given that Study 1 demonstrated the greater salience of the people versus government dimension over the cognitive versus affective dimension, we limited our scales in Study 2 to the four cognitive items used in Study 1.

  *Prejudice scale.* The same four items (*trustworthy, dishonest, friendly, devious*) used in Study 1 were used as indicators of prejudice toward the Chinese people.

*Negative attitudes toward the Chinese government scale.* The same four items used in Study One.

*National attachments.* Eight items were utilized to tap four distinct types of national attachment discussed in the literature. Higher values indicate greater patriotism, nationalism, or internationalism.

*Patriotism.* Two items, adapted from Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) collective self-esteem (CSE) scale, were used to measure love for and attachment to one's own country. They were 'I'm glad to be American'; and 'I often regret that I am American' (reverse coded).

*Blind patriotism.* Schatz *et al.* (1999) distinguished 'blind' from 'constructive' patriotism, arguing that the former represents an unquestioning allegiance and intolerance of criticism. We used two items from their measure of blind patriotism in the current study: 'American foreign policies are almost always morally correct'; 'I support my country whether its policies are right or wrong'.

*Nationalism.* Kosterman and Feshbach (1989) distinguished patriotism from nationalism, which they argue goes beyond a positive love of one's own country to a belief in the superiority of one's own country over others. We included two items from the nationalism subscale of their patriotism–nationalism scale: 'America is the best country in the world' and 'In view of America's history and democracy, it is only natural that the U.S. lead the world'.

*Internationalism.* Kosterman and Feshbach (1989) further distinguished nationalism from internationalism. We included (with some modification) two items from their internationalism subscale in the present study: 'The alleviation of poverty in very poor countries like Haiti is their problem, not ours' (reverse coded); and 'Our children should be taught to support the welfare of all of humanity'.

*China policy preferences.* The same four items from the first study were used to measure support for containment policies.

## 5 Study Two: Results

Given our very large sample size of 2,647, we began by randomly dividing the sample into two parts. The first sample ($n = 1,339$) would be

used for model development, and the second sample ($n = 1,308$) to cross-validate our final model.

## 5.1 American ideologies revisited

PAF with Promax rotation was conducted on our new list of 22 ideology items to explore the underlying ideological structures. It produced five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and all were clearly interpretable. Table 5 displays all pattern matrix coefficients greater than 0.35, with primary loadings boldfaced. It replicates the basic pattern of loadings from our first sample (Table 1), with the addition of a new factor for the four new group rights items. This time the social dominance items loaded onto the first factor, labeled 'social dominance'. The culture wars items and RWA items largely clustered together onto the second factor, which was called 'cultural conservatism'. The gun control item did not load sufficiently strongly to be included as an indicator of cultural conservatism in this second study. Moreover, although two of the RWA items did cross-load onto the first factor, their primary loadings were on cultural conservatism. As such, they were maintained as indicators of the cultural conservatism factor. Our four new ACLU items loaded together on the third factor, called 'group rights', while the nativism and individual rights scales again loaded cleanly onto the last two factors.

## 5.2 Structures of American identity

To explore the structure of American national identity, PAF was conducted on our eight national attachment items. It produced two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and both were clearly interpretable with no significant cross-loadings. Table 6 displays the results and includes all pattern matrix coefficients greater than 0.35.

Factor 1 included all six of the patriotism, nationalism, and blind patriotism items while Factor 2 included the two internationalism items. The six items in Factor 1, furthermore, had a good internal reliability of $\alpha = 0.81$. This strongly suggests that despite the conceptual and normative distinction between patriotism as an internally oriented love of or loyalty to one's own country, and nationalism as an externally oriented belief in the superiority of one's country over other countries, empirically patriotism and nationalism appear to go together in the American

**Table 5** Factor analysis of 22 American ideology items, summer 2009 development sample ($n = 1{,}339$)

| American ideology items | Factor 1: Social Domin. | Factor 2: Cultural Conserv. | Factor 3: Group Rights | Factor 4: Nativism | Factor 5: Indiv. Rights |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| sdo1 ('*Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups*') | **0.860** | | | | |
| sdo2 ('*Inferior groups should stay in their place*') | **0.841** | | | | |
| Sdo4 ('*If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems*') | **0.707** | | | | |
| Sdo3 ('*It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom*') | **0.686** | | | | |
| Abortion ('*extreme pro-choice to extreme pro-life*') | | **0.769** | | | |
| Conservatism ('*extremely liberal*' to '*extremely conservative*') | | **0.737** | | | |
| School prayer (in public schools) ('*strong opp. to strong support*') | | **0.719** | | | |
| rwa1 ('*The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas*') | | **0.703** | | | |
| rwa2 ('*Our country will be destroyed someday if we do not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs*') | 0.415 | **0.578** | | | |
| rwa3 ('*Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us*') | 0.393 | **0.549** | | | |
| Gun control ('*strong support to strong opposition*') | | – | | | |
| Aclu3 ('*Government programs like Title 9 are needed to ensure that women are not discriminated against in areas from athletics to issues of equal pay for equal work*') | | | 0.725 | | |
| Aclu4 ('*The government should ensure that affirmative action and other social programs are properly implemented to prevent racial discrimination*') | | | 0.660 | | |
| Aclu2 ('*The government should ensure that even poor children can receive a decent public education*') | | | 0.635 | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aclu1 ('*When poor people are accused of crimes, the government must ensure that they are represented by a competent lawyer to ensure that they receive fair treatment by the legal system*') | **0.579** | | | | |
| Nativ1 ('*Immigrants take jobs that should go to Americans*') | | | **0.829** | | |
| Nativ2 ('*Immig. use too many of our limited social welfare services*') | | | **0.724** | | |
| Nativ3r ('*Immigrants contrib to the flourishing of Amer culture*') | | | **0.539** | | |
| Indiv1 ('*Individuals should be free to follow their own dreams in their own ways, without interference from government*') | | | | | **0.639** |
| Indiv3r ('*Government must limit our individual freedoms so as to prevent unchecked selfishness, greed, and immorality*') | | | | | **0.541** |
| Indiv2 ('*Individual rights are more important than the good of the group*') | | | | | **0.497** |
| Indiv4r ('*American society has swung too far in the direction of individual rights at the expense of social responsibilities*') | | | | | **0.483** |
| Eigenvalues | 6.57 | 2.37 | 1.91 | 1.59 | 1.14 |
| Scale $\alpha$ (*n*) | 0.86(4) | 0.86(6) | 0.74(4) | 0.77(3) | 0.61(4) |

*Note*: Numbers are pattern matrix coefficients for PAF analysis with Promax rotation. Factor coefficients are shown only if >0.35. Primary loadings are boldfaced.

**Table 6** Factor analysis of eight national attachment items, summer 2009 development sample ($n = 1,339$)

| National attachment items | Factor 1: Nationalism | Factor 2: Internat. |
|---|---|---|
| Pat1 ('*I'm glad to be American*') | 0.801 | |
| Nat1 ('*America is the best country in the world*') | 0.778 | |
| Pat2r ('*I often regret that I am American*') | 0.701 | |
| BldPat2 ('*I support my country whether its policies are right or wrong*') | 0.611 | |
| Nat2 ('*In view of America's history & democracy, it is only natural that the U.S. lead the world*') | 0.573 | |
| BldPat1 ('*American foreign policies are almost always morally correct*') | 0.466 | |
| Int2 ('*Our children should be taught to support the welfare of all of humanity*') | | 0.633 |
| Int1r ('*The alleviation of poverty in very poor countries like Haiti is their problem, not ours*') | | 0.625 |
| Eigenvalues | 3.32 | 1.34 |
| Scale $\alpha$ ($n$) | 0.81(6) | 0.59(2) |

*Note*: Numbers are pattern matrix coefficients for PAF analysis with Promax rotation. Factor coefficients are shown only if >0.35.

context (cf. Huddy and Khatib, 2007). In other words, Americans who are highly patriotic are likely to be highly nationalistic as well.

To further explore this striking finding, we used AMOS 17.0 with full information maximum likelihood estimation to run a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in which the national identity items were loaded onto two co-varying latent variables, patriotism/nationalism and internationalism, as suggested in our EFA findings. The fit statistics for the model, reported on line 4 of Table 4, were very good. The CFA thus gives us greater confidence that we can aggregate the pairs of nationalism, patriotism, and blind patriotism items into a single latent variable labeled 'nationalism'.

## 5.3 Internal reliabilities, means, and intercorrelations

The internal reliabilities and scale *n*'s for all nine latent variables in our second study are reported in Table 7. Although the items that composed each scale were not always identical with those used in the first study, the patterns among our variables were generally consistent. For instance, among our three endogenous variables, the internal reliabilities for the two China attitudes scales, prejudice and NegGov, are once again considerably higher than that of the contain China variable. The means and SD reported in Table 7 are also largely consistent with those from the first study, reported in Table 3. For instance, American attitudes toward the Chinese people were once again much more positive than those toward the Chinese government.

Table 8 reports the zero-order correlations and significance levels for both the development (above the diagonal) and cross-validation samples (below the diagonal). The pattern of correlations displayed is generally consistent with those from Study 1, reported in Table 3. The two completely new variables in the table are American nationalism and group rights ideology. In both the development and cross-validation samples, nationalism correlates weakly if at all with the two China attitudes variables, but very strongly with China policy preferences ($r = 0.36$ and 0.37). Our new ACLU group rights variable, for its part, correlated negatively and substantially with Republican party identification ($r = -0.27$ and $-0.22$), suggesting that it is indeed capturing an orientation toward liberalism, as opposed to the more libertarian orientation likely captured by our individual rights variable. In both samples, furthermore, our new

**Table 7** Descriptive statistics: means, SDs, and scale $\alpha$'s and $n$'s for development and cross-validation samples, summer 2009

| Variables | M | SD | $\alpha$ | n |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Republican[a] | 1.46/1.47 | 0.50/0.50 | NA | 1 |
| 2. NATIONALISM | 4.73/4.70 | 1.10/1.09 | 0.81/0.81 | 6 |
| 3. CULTURAL CONSERV. | 3.39/3.39 | 1.49/1.51 | 0.86/0.87 | 6 |
| 4. SOCIAL DOMINANCE | 2.34/2.31 | 1.28/1.28 | 0.86/0.87 | 4 |
| 5. NATIVISM | 3.35/3.34 | 1.33/1.33 | 0.77/0.76 | 3 |
| 6. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS | 4.65/4.60 | 0.99/0.99 | 0.61/0.60 | 4 |
| 7. GROUP RIGHTS | 4.94/4.94 | 0.78/0.75 | 0.74/0.74 | 4 |
| 8. PREJUDICE: CHINESE | 2.67/2.68 | 0.99/0.97 | 0.88/0.86 | 4 |
| 9. NEG RE CHIN. GOV. | 4.72/4.69 | 1.05/1.00 | 0.87/0.85 | 4 |
| 10. CONTAIN CHINA | 3.19/3.14 | 0.89/0.85 | 0.68/0.65 | 4 |

[a]1 = Democrat, 2 = Republican; all other variables based on 1–7 Likert scales.

group rights variable correlated negatively with our three China attitudes and policy variables.

## 5.4 Ideology, attitudes, and China policy preferences

As in Study 1, we utilized SEM to explore the direct and indirect relationships among our American ideology, China attitudes, and China policy preferences variables. Once again, item parcels were created to serve as indicators of latent factors originally indicated by more than three survey items. For example, the three nativism items that loaded onto the nativism factor during our EFA served as indicators of this construct. In the case of our four item measures of prejudice toward the Chinese people, negative attitudes toward the Chinese government, and support for containment variables, we averaged the two reversed-coded items in each variable to create a single reverse-coded parcel, which, when combined with the two positively worded items, created the three measured variables we utilized as indicators of our latent variables. In the case of nationalism and cultural conservatism, the six indicator variables (for each) suggested during our EFAs were combined into three parcels of two items each.

We then first tested measurement models before examining the structural model. As suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), we tested

**Table 8** Descriptive statistics: zero-order correlations and significance levels for development and cross-validation samples, summer 2009
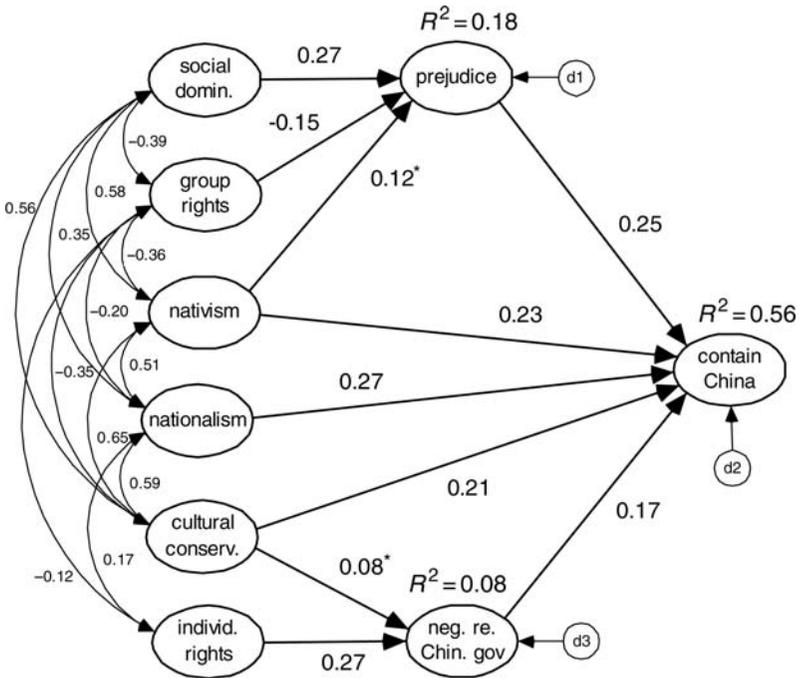
| Variables | Development sample (n = 1,339) | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Republican[a] | – | 0.40 | 0.63 | 0.28 | 0.39 | 0.13 | −0.22 | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.34 |
| 2. PAT/NATIONALISM | 0.36 | – | 0.51 | 0.30 | 0.41 | 0.12 | −0.02** | 0.06* | 0.08 | 0.37 |
| 3. CULTURAL CONSERV. | 0.63 | 0.49 | – | 0.48 | 0.54 | 0.00** | −0.08 | 0.18 | 0.06* | 0.42 |
| 4. SOCIAL DOMINANCE | 0.35 | 0.25 | 0.47 | – | 0.49 | −0.01** | 0.10 | 0.32 | −0.01** | 0.33 |
| 5. NATIVISM | 0.41 | 0.37 | 0.51 | 0.49 | – | −0.01** | −0.13 | 0.27 | 0.06* | 0.42 |
| 6. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS | 0.04** | 0.05** | −0.06* | −0.06* | −0.03** | – | −0.14 | −0.02** | 0.18 | 0.09 |
| 7. GROUP RIGHTS | −0.27 | −0.01** | −0.14 | 0.10 | −0.13 | −0.13 | – | −0.13 | −0.12 | −0.17 |
| 8. PREJUDICE: CHINESE | 0.15 | 0.04** | 0.15 | 0.29 | 0.27 | −0.02** | −0.12 | – | 0.08 | 0.35 |
| 9. NEG RE CHIN. GOV. | 0.11 | 0.01** | 0.01** | −0.01** | 0.04 | 0.12 | −0.08 | 0.06* | – | 0.21 |
| 10. CONTAIN CHINA | 0.34 | 0.36 | 0.46 | 0.36 | 0.41 | 0.03** | −0.18 | 0.34 | 0.20 | – |
| Cross-validation sample (n = 1,308) | | | | | | | | | | |

*Note*: Unless otherwise noted, all correlations are significant at $P < 0.001$ (two-tailed). Development sample is above and right of the diagonal; the cross-validation sample is left and below the diagonal.

[a]1 = Democrat, 2 = Republican; all other variables based on 1–7 Likert scales.

**Correlation is not significant.

*Correlation is significant at $p < 0.05$.

**Figure 2** Final SEM, summer 2009 development sample ($N = 1{,}308$) *$P < 0.01$. All other $p$-values $< 0.001$.

the measurement models for the six exogenous variables (nationalism plus the five ideologies) and the three endogenous variables separately. This was necessary in Study 2 but not in Study 1 because of the larger number of variables and parameters in Study 2. The fifth and sixth lines of Table 4 display the fit statistics for the exogenous and endogenous measurement models, which were adequate.

Turning to the structural model, we first tested a fully saturated model and then trimmed the statistically non-significant paths to arrive at our final model. Figure 2 displays the final SEM using the development sample. The three indicator variables and their corresponding measurement error terms for each of the nine latent variables have again been hidden to allow for the clear display of all covariance and path coefficients. The seventh line in Table 4 displays the fit statistics for the final model in the development sample, which were good.

Replication is a fundamental principle of the scientific method. We therefore tested our final model on the independent cross-validation sample. The

fit statistics, displayed on the eighth line of Table 4, were actually slightly better overall than those from the development sample, giving us greater confidence in our final model. In terms of $R^2$, covariances, and the partial coefficients for the paths, the replication model was largely similar to the original development model. Differences were minor. Overall variance explained for the China policy variable actually increased to 60%, although negative attitudes toward the Chinese government decreased to 2%. This was largely because while the direct impact of cultural conservatism on China policy preferences increased to $\beta = 0.34$, the path from cultural conservatism to NegGov fell to statistical insignificance with $\beta = 0.02$.

## 6 Study Two: Discussion

Our final SEM from Study 2 reveals the disparate impacts of our two new variables, ACLU style group rights ideology and American nationalism. The zero-order correlations between group rights, on the one hand, and negative attitudes toward China's government and support for containment, on the other, dropped to non-significance when controlling for the other exogenous variables, leaving only a small negative relationship between group rights and prejudice ($\beta = -0.15$). In other words, left-leaning supporters of the rights of women, minorities, and other disadvantaged groups were less likely to experience prejudicial attitudes toward the Chinese people, which would then contribute to desires for more friendly China policies.

As the zero-order correlations in Table 8 suggest, nationalism had no impact on China attitudes but had a moderate direct impact on China policy preferences in the expected direction, $\beta = 0.27$ and $0.20$ for the development and replication samples, respectively. Not surprisingly, the more nationalistic an American is, the tougher the China policy they prefer.

It is also noteworthy that despite the inclusion of nationalism, the direct impact of cultural conservatism on support for containment remained substantial ($\beta = 0.21$), revealing that while nationalism and cultural conservatism co-vary substantially ($r = 0.59$), they each have a unique impact on China policy preferences.

## 7 Conclusions

Because human behavior is complex and multiply determined, effect sizes in most social science research tend to be quite small compared to

those in the natural sciences. This may be one reason why quantitative researchers in the social sciences tend to focus on statistical significance testing rather than reporting effect sizes: with a large enough sample, most research will produce statistically significant results. Practically meaningful results, by contrast, are more difficult to obtain.

The most striking finding of this study may therefore be that in all three of our samples we were able to account for over 50% of the variance in China policy preferences. Given how conceptually distant domestic ideologies like libertarianism and cultural conservatism are from foreign policy preferences, this is a very large $R^2$. It thus suggests that our findings are more than just statistically significant: they likely have real world significance as well. Specifically, American ideologies have a substantial impact on both American attitudes and policy preferences toward China. While most Americans do not appear to know very much about China, it appears that ideology plays a major role in filling in the blanks, allowing Americans to form consistent attitudes toward China anyways. Indeed, removing the two China attitudes and one American nationalism variable from Fig. 2 only reduced the $R^2$ for containment from 0.56 to 0.46. In other words, our five American ideology variables alone still accounted for close to 50% of the variance in preferred China policies. And of those five ideology variables, most of the explanatory power came from cultural conservatism and nativism, which by themselves accounted for 43% of the variance in preferred China policies.

Because cultural ideology focuses on domestic political issues like abortion and school prayer in public schools, it is perhaps most remarkable that it has such a strong impact on foreign policy preferences. The indirect path to support for containment via negative attitudes toward the Chinese government suggests that there is something about 'communist' China that may strike a chord with cultural conservatives. It may be an association between communism and atheism, which may in turn be associated with immorality. Or it may be the Communist government's repression of religion. Indeed, this is what religious conservatives like New Jersey's Christopher Cox (cited at the beginning of this paper) appear to focus on when they talk about China.

The much stronger direct path from cultural conservatism to preferences for tougher China policies may also reflect a fear-driven response to a China seen as different and dangerous. Duckitt and colleagues' (see, e.g., Sibley and Duckitt, 2008) model asserts that cultural conservatives

(i.e. those high on RWA) respond to the social world out of a concern for collective security and social cohesion. When these motivational goals are threatened, as in the case where one feels threatened by individuals and groups who believe and behave in ways that are counternormative (at least in relation to one's in-group), cultural conservatives respond in an authoritarian manner (Duckitt and Sibley, 2007). Jost's (2006; see also Jost *et al.*, 2009) model assumes that resistance to change is one of two key facets of conservatism (the other being opposition to equality). In his model, Jost (2006) assumes that threat perceptions drive more 'conservative' responses. To the extent that China is perceived as different in cultural beliefs, values, and norms, both Duckitt's and Jost's models would seemingly predict greater support for containing China on the international stage. Further research is needed to explore just what it is about China that resonates so much with America's culture wars.

Given that our nativism items focused specifically on foreigners, it may be less surprising that nativism had a substantial impact on China policy preferences. However, it is likely that most Americans think of Mexicans when they think about the immigration issue, and yet nativism was positively associated with both prejudice toward the Chinese people and desires to contain China. This finding suggests that international relations (IR) theorists would be wise to devote greater attention to the role of race in international politics.

A second major finding of this study is that American attitudes toward China can be clearly separated into attitudes toward the Chinese people (prejudice) and attitudes toward the Chinese government, and that these two types of attitudes create dual pathways from distinct American ideologies to China policy preferences.

The pathway from ideology to policy via prejudice is relatively straightforward but generally ignored in mainstream IR theory. That both nativism and SDO would be positively associated with prejudice is not surprising. Indeed, SDO was developed specifically to study prejudice in domestic contexts, such as the relationship between blacks and whites in the United States (e.g. Sidanius and Pratto, 1999). It is also not particularly surprising that the ACLU style group rights items we created were negatively associated with prejudice: those who support minority rights and programs such as affirmative action in the United States are more likely to have positive attitudes toward the Chinese people. What is more surprising, given the lack of attention paid to it in the IR literature,

is the substantial impact of prejudice on foreign policy preferences. Indeed, if the five ideology variables and one nationalism variable are removed from Fig. 2, the two remaining attitudes items still account for 24% of the variance in contain scores, and the path coefficient from prejudice to contain ($\beta = 0.41$) is over twice that from negative attitudes toward China's government to contain ($\beta = 0.24$), suggesting that prejudice accounts for a substantial part of the variance in foreign policy preferences. Thus while overall levels of anti-Chinese prejudice are quite low, variations among individual Americans in their levels of prejudice clearly impact their China policy preferences. It is also noteworthy that the impact of prejudice on policy preferences held whether it was measured in cold cognitive terms (Study 2) or whether it also included hot affective items (Study 1).

The second pathway from ideology to policy runs through attitudes toward the Chinese government. Both cultural conservatism and especially individual rights ideology (i.e. libertarianism) positively predicted negative attitudes. As discussed above, it may be that the atheism of China's communist government is what rubs cultural conservatives the wrong way. By contrast, it is likely the authoritarianism of China's communist state that likely drives negative attitudes among those high in individual rights ideology. Libertarians do not like democratic states, let alone one party dictatorships.

In sum, these dual pathways from ideology to China policy preferences point both to the importance of distinguishing both the disparate effects of different types of ideologies, and the disparate mediating roles of different types of attitudes in impacting policy preferences.

A third finding of this study is that patriotism/nationalism as an American, though co-varying substantially with cultural conservatism, social dominance, and nativism, had a substantial ($\beta = 0.27$) direct and independent impact on China policy preferences. 'I want to express my strong support for Taiwan', Congressman Michael McCaul (R-TX) said in September 2009. 'We like our independence in Texas and I think that's what we have in common. America stands for freedom and democracy and the fight against oppression and dictatorships. And so we stand with you' (Lowther, 2009). Love of America and belief in American superiority were strongly associated in our summer 2009 survey, and suggest how, for many Americans, the Taiwan issue becomes one that is not primarily about Taiwan itself, but rather about affirming one's patriotism as an

American committed to group ideals such as democracy, and about affirming one's nationalism as an American committed to American superiority over dictatorships like China's.

Replication is a fundamental principle of the scientific method, and the findings presented here need to be further replicated and refined in future studies. In particular, replication takes on added importance given that none of our samples was randomly generated from the US population. Nevertheless, by cross-validating with three diverse and different samples – one national and two local – we believe that we have achieved greater external validity than most student-based samples.

The magnitude of the impact of ideology on foreign policy preferences demonstrated here across three separate samples does raise one important methodological point, however. Students of American foreign policy attitudes and preferences, following their colleagues studying voting behavior, have often sacrificed internal validity for external validity. As a result, the impact of ideology on attitudes has been attenuated. We hope that this study will inspire future researchers to pay greater attention to the internal reliability of the constructs under examination to uncover the full extent of the interrelationships among ideologies, attitudes, and foreign policy preferences.

To further increase the variance in China policy preferences explained, we also hope that future scholarship will explore the contents of the error terms in our models. For instance, ideology is a dispositional variable. What situational variables might help further explain American attitudes toward the Chinese people and their government, and preferred US China policies? Over five decades of scholarship in psychology on Gordon Allport's 'contact hypothesis' suggests that interpersonal contact has an impact on prejudice (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). Communications researchers have also shown that media exposure impacts attitudes. How do interpersonal contact and media exposure impact American attitudes toward China? And how might such situational variables interact with dispositional variables like the ideologies examined in this paper? For example, would increased interpersonal contact with Chinese have a greater impact on the China attitudes of cultural liberals or conservatives? Research on such questions is needed to better understand the determinants of mutual mis/perception in US–China relations.

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