

# Interest Groups, the Media, & the Public

# Public and National Security Policy

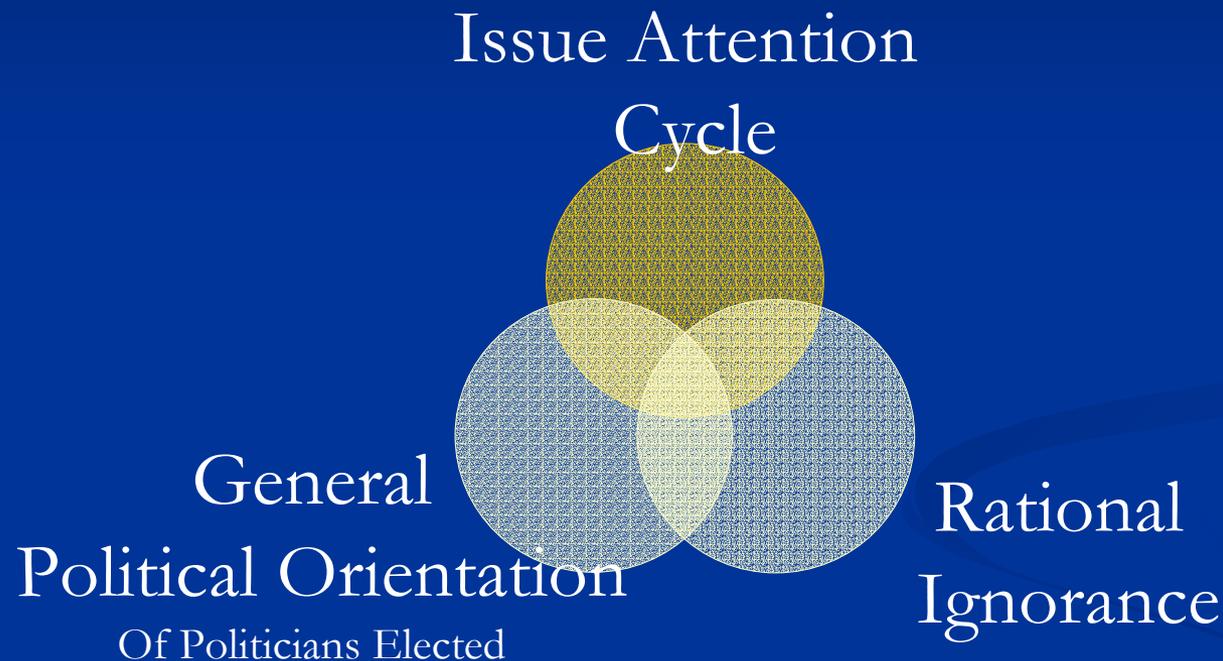
## ■ *Argument:*

- Among all policy areas, national security is the one facing the greatest danger of manipulation of public opinion.

# National Security & the Public

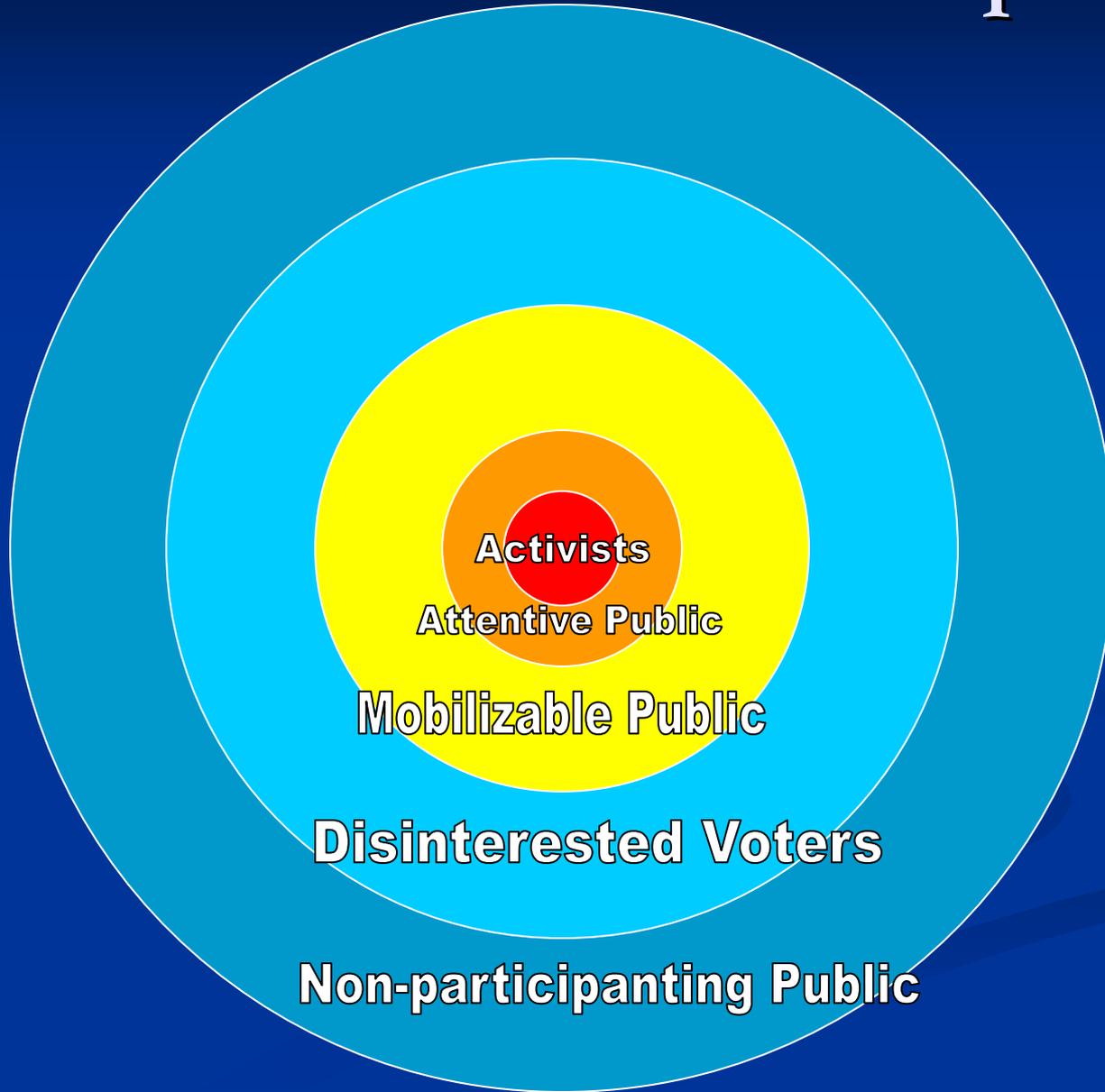
- National Security Policy is remote
  - not experienced directly by the public except under extraordinary circumstances
    - Different from other policy areas: economy, environment, transportation, health
  - Public “knows” what it is told, not what it observes
- Secrecy obscures public view
- Media is the public window into national security policy
  - Matters more than in other policy areas

# How closely does the public follow a policy issue?



- **Argument:** The more remote the issue from immediate public experience the more these factors influence public opinion

# “Onion Model” of Public Opinion



# Mobilizing Public Opinion

- Special Interests
- President & other politicians
  - focusing latent opinion
- Events
- Media Coverage

# Defense Industries

- Defense Industry = Arsenal of Democracy
- **Argument:** Defense industry warps national security by making the “means” of policy the determining factor of the “ends”
  - Organizational interests dominate interest group behavior
  - Eisenhower warns of **Military-Industrial Complex**
  - defense contracts by state
  - Top defense contractors

# How Defense Industry Influences Policy

- Provides personnel to fill government positions
- Networks in agencies, services, Congress
  - Defense contractors, agencies, legislative staffs
  - Networks of convergent interests
    - Iron Triangles & Issue Networks
- Lobbying: Agenda setting & Option Analysis
  - Control issue framing and discussion
    - Information
  - Challenging alternative views
    - Assailing the credibility of opponents
      - E.g., Patriot Missile v. Prof. Postol
- Political contributions
- Employment

# Non-Governmental Organizations (Think Tanks)

- NGOs
  - Focus on influencing government
    - Studies & reports
    - Personnel for political appointments
  - Focus on influencing public opinion
    - Media programs
- NGOs have a definite Political Orientation
  - To the Right
    - [Heritage Foundation](#)
  - In the Middle
    - [Center for Defense Information](#)
  - To the Left
    - [Federation of American Scientists](#)

# Presidency

- **Argument:** Administration can sculpt public opinion on national security
  - To support policy
    - Focusing latent public concerns
    - Putting issues on the public agenda through the news
      - Trial balloons, leaks, and “background” information
    - Selective release of classified information
  - To divert attention from domestic/political problems: creating national security problems
    - Nixon & 1973 Mideast War
    - Clinton & Kosovo

# Media

- Argument: Media is more importantly player in national security affairs than in any other policy arena
  - Public directly experiences health, education, environmental policy
  - National Security policy is remote
  - Public only “knows” what it gets through the media
    - Media is plural
    - The WEB

# Media is Susceptible to Manipulation

- Competition for inside sources
  - Trial balloons, leaks and “background” information
  - Disgruntled policy “losers”

# Where does the Public get its News?

- 50% of Americans read a daily newspaper
  - 65% of Americans over 60 years of age
  - 25% of Americans under 40 years of age
- 38% of Americans watch nightly TV news
  - Average age of prime time TV viewers = 42
  - Average age of nightly news viewers = 57

# Public Opinion

## What Should Congress Authorize on Iraq?

Congress should not, at this time, give the President authority to use force against Iraq.



Congress should give the President authority to use military force against Iraq if the UN Security Council votes to authorize such action.



Congress should give the President authority to use military force in all ways he determines appropriate, including for the US to invade Iraq on its own.



## Importance of Multilateral Support

The US should only invade Iraq with UN approval and the support of its allies.

Agree



Disagree



# Public Opinion

## Can Iraq Strike US with WMDs?

Does have capability



79%

Does not have capability



19%

## Relative Priority of Iraq

Five foreign policy problems  
rank-ordered by priority

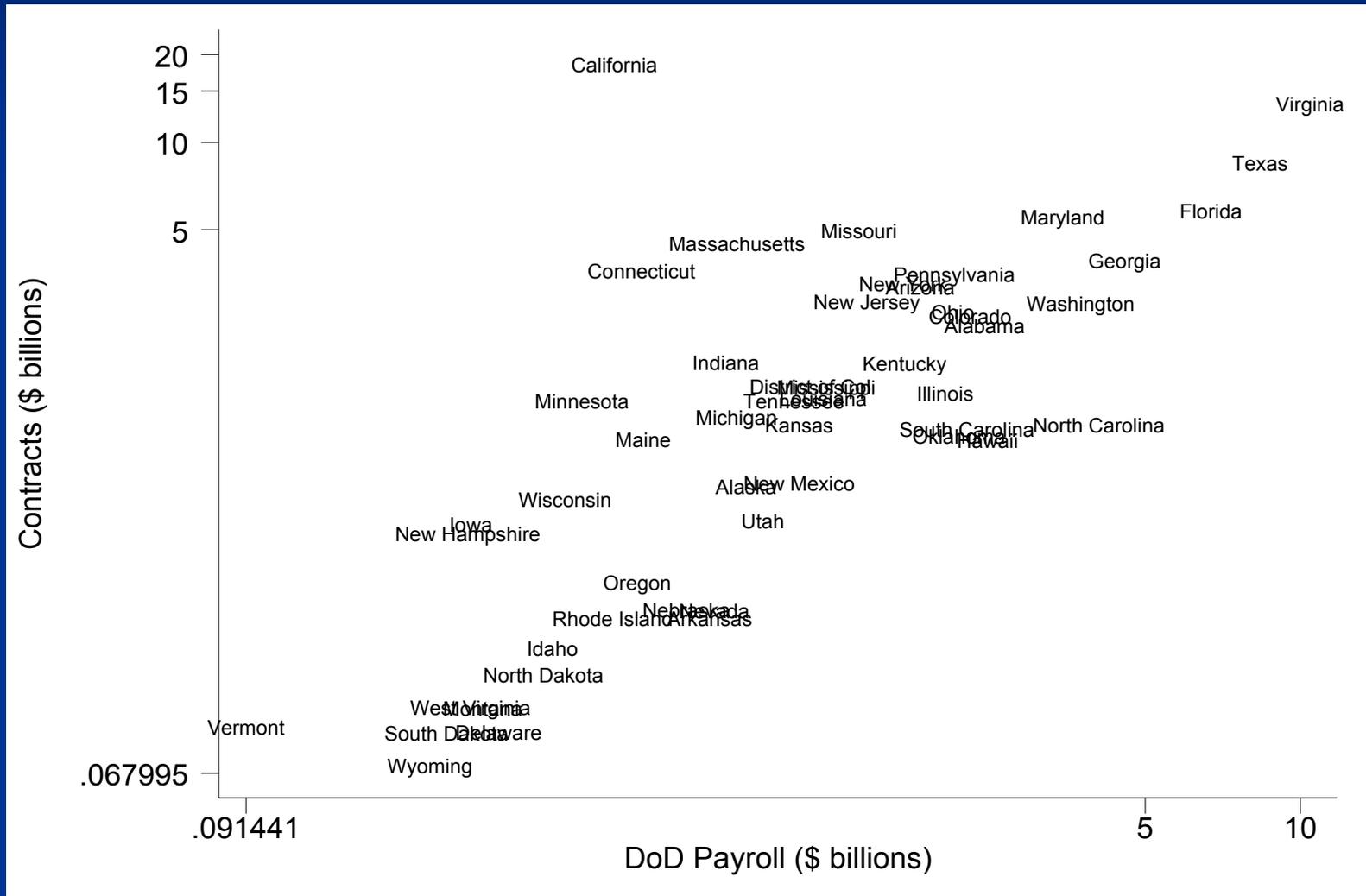
(% giving top priority)	Median Response (1=most important, 5=least important)
Osama bin Laden's terrorist group al-Qaeda 43%	2.11
The situation in Iraq 34%	2.29
The Israeli-Palestinian conflict 17%	2.85
The situation in Afghanistan 4%	3.67
The India-Pakistan conflict 2%	4.18

END

# Total Defense Spending by State



# DoD Payroll and Defense Contracts by State



# Classified Information

- Hierarchical Classification Systems
  - Confidential, Secret, Top secret, Code Word
  - NoForn, Nocontract, or consultant
- Parallel Classification Systems
  - Ordinary classified information: defense data, state dept data
  - Nuclear Weapons information: Q clearances
  - Intelligence information
  - Compartmented data – Code word
  - Analysis, raw data (imagery & intercepts), source data

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