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Abstract
This study examines the factors that contribute to presidential success in Congress. Results show that, overall, presidential popularity, the president's party's control of Congress and the misery index positively and significantly affect presidential success in Congress, whereas party is not a significant factor. The study also demonstrates that the honeymoon period does not increase a president's success rate. The results indicate that these variables interact differently within foreign policy compared to domestic policy and in the Senate compared to the House.

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PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESS IN CONGRESS: FACTORS THAT DETERMINE THE PRESIDENT'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE CONGRESSIONAL VOTING

Christine Gibbs

Abstract *This study examines the factors that contribute to presidential success in Congress. Results show that, overall, presidential popularity, the president's party's control of Congress and the misery index positively and significantly affect presidential success in Congress, whereas party is not a significant factor. The study also demonstrates that the honeymoon period does not increase a president's success rate. The results indicate that these variables interact differently within foreign policy compared to domestic policy and in the Senate compared to the House.*

Introduction: The President's Unique Responsibilities and Powers

The President is the only elected official in the United States that has the mandate of the entire nation; he is the only figure that is elected by and represents the whole nation. As the burden falls on the president to serve the interests of those that elected him "it is the president's job to seek out public opinion and be responsive to it" (Crockett 2003, 470). John Kennedy stated in 1962 that "'it is a responsibility of the President of the United States to have a program and to fight for it'" (Mayhew 2005, 2). It has become expected that the President initiate an agenda for each Congress. The president's attempt to pass legislation that is the by-product of his agenda, or that is concurrent with his policy preferences, has been at the heart of the responsibilities and the difficulties of the president. Following the "tidal wave of New Deal bills, the president was dubbed 'chief legislator' and the Congress deemed a very junior partner in the ignition of public policy" (Mayhew 2005, 42).

Understanding how Congress responds to the President's demands and preferences is essential to understanding how the government is responsive to popular demand. As Stephen Skowronek explains, "the president becomes the lightening rod of national politics, attracting and objectifying contending interpretations of the existing state of affairs" (Skowronek 1994, 20). The President, as the central figure of representation for the American people, has the sole ability to focus attention to work to respond to the needs, expectations and demands of the American electorate.

In addition to the mandate from the people, the president is also armed with several other powers. The annual State of the Union address, budget message and economic report all enable the president to set "a comprehensive legislative program" (Pika, Thomas and Watson 1994, 202). Equipped with the ability to initiate action on legislative issues, the president is able to frame debate, which gives him the "power to shape the substance of these initiatives" (Barrett and Eshaugh-Soha 2007, 103). In other words, if the president is the initiator of policy, it is the president that is able to set the initial framing and objective of such policy, making the legislation more likely to reflect the president's policy preferences.

Richard Neustadt's *Presidential Power*, published in 1962, set the basis for continued studies on the president, the president's authority and the factors limiting his authority. Although he claimed that the presidency "amounted to little more than a clerkship," it appears that scholarly thought has moved away from that idea towards the thought that the president has significant legislative powers, but that those powers are often very limited by Congress (Pika, Thomas and Watson 1994, 207). By clerkship, Neustadt meant that the president was expected to be at the

service of the rest of the government. He wrote that the president's "authority and status" were his means to getting his legislation passed through Congress by way of negotiation and persuasion (Neustadt 1962, 35).

As time has progressed and new studies have been done on the presidency and presidential powers, scholars have come to believe that the president is much stronger than Neustadt gave the position credit for. Stephen Skowronek describes the president as having the ability to "seize control of the powers of his office to try… to establish order anew on his own terms" (Skowronek 1994, 20). Baumgartner and Jones have found that the "president is the dominant leader if he wants to be" indicating that the president is able to be a powerful legislator if he possesses the will and creates the environment to be successful (Thurber 1996, 113). Rudalevige claims that the president has more influence in legislative agenda setting than any other political actor. He has written that "the president's legislative initiatives almost invariably receive congressional attention and agenda space – and that the scope and content of the president's program will frequently form the backbone of national policy debate" (Rudalevige 2002, 3). If this is true, it puts significant power in the hands of the president, not only in forming policy but also in capturing the demands of electorate.

In this study, I look to explain what specific factors are able to determine a president's ability to get Congress to vote in accordance with their preferences. I focus the study by examining how presidential popularity, party control of Congress, party unity and economic conditions affect presidential success in Congress, as my independent variables. I also examine how the honeymoon period, which house in Congress the vote is in, and whether the vote is on a foreign or domestic issue affects success and the independent variable's affect on success.

Literature Review

The ability of the president to have any degree of success in Congress has been explained in numerous ways. Many scholars on the topic tend to explain presidential success by factoring in many variables that may predict presidential success, such as Bond and Fleisher. Other scholars look to explain presidential success looking more narrowly at a variable that they believe looks to explain most of the variance in presidential success, such as David Mayhew's explanation of presidential success based on the premise of a unified government.

President-Centered:

Popularity

Out of Neustadt's theory of president-centered power of persuasion emerged the widely upheld theory of presidential success in Congress being attributed to president-centered reasons. This theory claims that "the president's public approval provides leverage with Congress" (Bond, Fleisher and Wood 2003, 92). Neustadt states that good popularity among the electorate does not necessarily guarantee victory for the president, but that it would provide a "leeway" (Neustadt 1962). Although leeway does not guarantee government action, it does encourage it.

Other times, a president's high popularity is seen as a confirmation of his mandate. Members of Congress that take their representative role very literally may see his popularity as validation of the policies that he is trying to pursue. Along with this idea, scholars propose that members of Congress "fear electoral retribution if they oppose a popular president or support an unpopular one" (Bond, Fleisher and Wood 2003, 95).

A bad popularity rating, on the other hand, could have more widespread consequences, according to Neustadt and his followers. According to Neustadt, public disapproval increases resistance from members of Congress and leaves the president with "his opportunities diminished [and] his freedom for maneuver checked" (Neustadt 1962, 90).

The theory that popularity influences presidential success, while debated by some, has gained wide support. Past research designs have analyzed the "extent to which the president's leadership skills and popularity with the public *influence* Congress to do something it otherwise would not have done" (Bond, Fleisher and Wood 2003, 105).

It has been found by some that popularity has no significant impact on legislative success but that it may influence other factors, which may in turn influence success in Congress (Marshall and Prins 2007). For example, some scholars have found that greater popularity may encourage a president to pursue complex and salient legislation as well as increase their willingness to take positions on more difficult issues (Marshall and Prins 2007). Less popular presidents, on the other hand, may attempt to champion only the more popular bills. Others, such as Bond, Fleisher, and Wood, have acknowledged that popularity is an accepted influence on presidential success, although they believe that it "has only a marginal effect" (Bond, Fleisher and Wood 2003, 95).

Presidential Skill

Bond and Fleisher's theory of the president-centered explanation for variance in success expanded the definition of president-centered to include that it is a "function of his leadership and persuasive skills" in addition to popularity (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 221). Although researchers have acknowledged that the leadership skills of the president may affect his ability to get his legislation through Congress, they have tended to leave testing of skill out of their designs due to the topic's subjectivity. Rudalevige, Bond and Fleisher have all stated that testing for leadership skill becomes difficult and almost unreliable because defining skill elicits controversy. It is unclear what defines skill and how those traits would be comparable across presidencies. As Bond and Fleisher state "the evidence that variation in presidential leadership skill systematically affects legislative success is limited and ambiguous" (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 39). In addition, Bond and Fleisher's testing of skill did not indicate that, what they defined as, skilled presidents win more often than unskilled presidents.

Congress-Centered

The Congress-centered argument takes the view that "whether the president succeeds or fails is mainly a function of the partisan and ideological make-up of Congress" (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 221). Most modern scholars have recognized the president-centered theories but have also added another layer to the already present ideas. Bond and Fleisher proposed the idea of Congress-centered explanations for variance in the president's success rate in getting "their way" in Congress.

Control of Congress

How divided or unified a government is has been shown through numerous studies to impact presidential success in Congress. Scholars have theorized that presidents in a unified government, meaning that the executive and the majority-party in Congress are the same, will be able to pass more legislation than a president with a divided government, meaning that the executive is not the same party as both houses of Congress.

Party control of Congress has been "found to be the single most important determinant of a president's sway in the House" (Prins and Shull 2006, 25). The issue to Congressional unity seems to be the one issue that researchers can agree upon being very significant to a president's success in Congress. While controlling both houses of Congress during his first two years in office, President Clinton had a high success rate of 85% in the House (Prins and Shull 2006, 31). After Republicans took control of the House, his success "plummeted" to the "lowest success rating of any post-World War II chief executive" (Prins and Shull 2006, 31).

In addition to simply being able to get more of his bills through Congress, the president may also be able to "pursue their sincere preferences with a good change of success," having to sacrifice less content of the bills (Steger 2005, 322). Barrett and Eshbaugh-Soha found that for "each house of Congress controlled by his party, the president's success on substance of legislation increases about one-fifth" (Barrett and Eshaugh-Soha 2007, 107)

Unity

Scholars have tried to explain variance in success rates with the idea that "the president's legislative success results from the extent to which the president and members of Congress share policy preferences" (Thurber 1996, 105). Although one would assume that a member of Congress is likely to vote along the lines of his or her party, Rudalevige points out that "party and preference cannot be assumed to be equivalent" (Rudalevige 2002, 94). As seen in several 1994 Congressional races same party candidates have explicitly run against the record of a president's record or asked him not to campaign on their behalf.

Increasingly, "voters are calling themselves independents and a shrinking number are calling themselves 'strong' partisans"' (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 17). In addition, candidates running for Congress "have become less dependent on their parties for campaign organization and finance" (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 17). As the effectiveness of coattails has decreased, members of Congress from the president's party feel less that they owe the president for their successful campaign, which affect "presidential leverage with Congress" (Pika, Thomas and Watson 1994, 217). This means that as members feel that they have gained less by a candidate from their party successfully running for president they will be less loyal to and less likely to vote in accordance with that president.

Bond, Fleisher, Thurber and Wood have also advanced the idea of cross-pressured members of Congress, who often represent a local constituency with policy preferences that are different from their party's mainstream. Cross-pressured members are members of Congress that are influenced heavily by local issues that are not necessarily in agreement with their party's national issues. This in turn, causes members to take cues from other influences than their party, mainly from constituency-related issues.

However, even though there was been a marked decline in party voting, there remains "unambiguous evidence that party exerts a crucial influence on presidential-congressional relations" (Thurber 1996, 124).

Economic Conditions

It has long been hypothesized that economic conditions factor into presidential success in Congress. The common thought regarding economic conditions was that as the economy strengthened, Congress would be "more content and more likely to defer to presidents" (Prins and Shull 2006, 28).

The results of past studies regarding economic conditions have surprised scholars. They have shown that poorer economic conditions have actually increased presidential success. One study showed that as the misery rate increased from 3% to 11%, presidential success actually increased by 39% (Prins and Shull 2006, 34). This may indicate that Congress is more willing to give up responsibility, and thus, fault, when they view the economy as declining.

Honeymoon

Other scholars have focused on the effects of a president's honeymoon period on success in Congress. Rottinghaus found that presidents tend to "use the momentum of their reelection (and higher popularity) to… involve the public in their policies" (Rottinghaus 2005, 730). Other scholars have found, however, that presidents who are most successful in an election by achieving a landslide victory, are not more successful in Congress (Byrne and Dominguez 2005).

Extensive research has shown that presidents are more successful during the first 100 days in office than during the second or third hundred day periods in office (Byrne and Dominguez 2005). This confirms that a honeymoon period is strongest in the first 100 days, although inaugural years of a presidency are also more successful than non-inaugural years. During inaugural years, the average success rate is 87%, while it is only 65% for noninaugural years (Byrne and Dominguez 2005, 69).

One particular study that was done by Prins and Marshall, which controlled for strategic-position-taking by presidents, indicated that the honeymoon period was not a significant factor in determining success. This could indicate that although the honeymoon period does give a president more success in Congress, it is due to the president's discriminatory selection of bills that they chose to support.

The reasons for this effect also vary. There are theories that suggest that the honeymoon effect is due to risk-averse position-taking by the president, during which time he supports less salient issues. Another reason for increased success during this period may also be that they have not drained as many resources yet. As Thurber states "Presidents have the most potential to influence the agenda early in their terms, because that is when they have the most 'capital'; if they do not act quickly before their capital runs out, Congress will dominate" (Thurber 1996, 117). This idea was confirmed by President Johnson as he said: "'I keep hitting hard because I know that this honeymoon won't last. Every day I lose a little more political capital'" (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 23).

Many believe however, that the presidents' days of a honeymoon period are over or have been masked by other affects. Neustadt says that "The Hundred Days of 1933 remain as exceptional as they were memorable" (Neustadt 1962, 87). As quoted by Barrett and Eshbaugh-Soha "presidents and their staffs will be less skilled in bargaining with congressional leaders than they will be later in their tenure," attributing the appearance of a honeymoon period to the possibility that the president is "more willing to bargain away legislative content" (Barrett and Eshbaugh-Soha 2007, 102, 108).

Strategic

Another competing theory, supported by Mayhew, Steger and Rottinghaus, is that rather than supporting legislation for ideology or policy preferences, the president and Congress will often "strategically" select legislation to boost their overall success rate. David Mayhew suggests that members of Congress need to engage in "credit claiming," or the purposeful selection of bills to increase their success rate (Mayhew 2005, 103). But as Steger suggests, it is not just members of Congress, "presidents need to protect and maintain their reputations because their reputation can either enhance or hinder their ability to persuade others in government" (Steger 2005, 315). By

increasing their success rate, presidents are enhancing their reputations, which will contribute to their ability to succeed on other policy preferences. So although the president may have the tendency to support a particular bill, they may be acting strategically by moderating policy preferences to reduce their chances of being opposed.

Foreign versus Domestic

Bond and Fleisher have championed the idea that the "'United States has one president, but it has two presidencies; one presidency is for domestic affairs, and the other one is concerned with defense and foreign policy'" (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 50). The past has demonstrated that Congress is more likely to defer to the president in matters of foreign and defense policy whereas Congress is less inclined to give in to the president's preferences in matters of domestic policy. Pika, Thomas and Watson declared in their findings that "throughout most of U.S. history the president has been and is today the 'most important single factor in the determination of American foreign policy'" (Pika, Thomas and Watson 1994, 407).

The president's influence on foreign policy is most likely due to their increased responsibilities in the domain. The president's specific constitutional provisions include "the power to receive ambassadors and ministers, the power to negotiate treaties, the clause designating him as commander in chief of the armed forces, the general grant of executive power, and the clause enjoining him to 'take care that the laws be faithfully executed'" (Pika, Thomas and Watson 1994, 407).

As limitations have increased on the president's ability to practice foreign policy independently from Congress, so too has his success on foreign policy decreased. Pika, Thomas and Watson claim that the failure of the Vietnam War, which is often considered a presidential war, brought the end to "Congress' deference to White House domination of national security policy" (Pika, Thomas and Watson 1994, 218).

Senate versus the House

There has been some debate as to whether the Senate or the House gives more deference to the President and how each house affects presidential success differently. As is theorized by Thurber, the Senate tends to be somewhat less ideological than the House (Thurber 1990). Bond and Fleisher found however, the president's political base tends to unify more often in the Senate than in the House (Bond and Fleisher 1990).

Although it may not be clear what effect the difference being a member of the House versus the Senate has, we do have some indication as to why they are different. As Senators serve a six-year term, only one-third of Senators must face the voters in any given election whereas the entire House faces election every two years. This factor would make Senators less likely to be influenced by factors of the national environment, such as popularity and economic fluctuation.

Research Design/Hypotheses

This study looks to explain what factors influence presidential success in Congress and how strongly. The study examines the effects of four independent variables – presidential popularity, the national misery index, the president's party's control of Congress and party unity – on the dependent variable of presidential success in Congress. Overall, the study looks to explain what factors have

continued to be significant since other studies were conducted and which ones appear to have dropped off in importance.

Bills from each year of the presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush are examined in this study. The year 2008 was left out of the model due to incomplete data from the year. These two presidents are examined for several reasons, among them the facts that they both served with a divided and unified government, as well as during periods of high and low popularity.

The dependent variable is the president's success rate. Success is measured dichotomously as either a success or a failure. If the bill was voted according to the president's preference, it was labeled with a 1. If the bill was not according to the president's preference, it was labeled with a 0. These statistics are found in the annual editions of the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*.

The first independent variable, the president's party's control of Congress is defined by assigning each Congress a number from 0 to 2 based on how many houses of Congress the president's party controls. If the president's party controls neither house of Congress, that Congress will be assigned a 0. If the president's party controls one house of Congress, that Congress will be assigned a 1. If the president's party controls both houses of Congress, that Congress will be assigned a 2. When measuring the control of Congress of the president's party, the control of the Congress during the vote of each bill will be used. Scholars have theorized that presidents in a unified government, meaning the executive and the majority-party in Congress are the same, will be able to pass more legislation than a president with a divided government.

The second independent variable, presidential popularity, is measured as the percentage of those that responded that they approved when asked the question "Do you approve or disapprove of the way [first & last name] is handling his job as President?" These ratings are taken from The American Presidency Project, which have been adapted from the Gallup Poll.[22] The polls were taken every 3 to 15 days. When measuring a president's popularity, the poll that ended most previously to the vote on the legislation will be used. It is expected that as a president's popularity increases, so too will his success rate.

The third independent variable is economic conditions, measured using a misery index. A misery index is the unemployment rate added to the inflation rate. The unemployment rates are obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor.[23] The inflation rates are obtained from Financial Trend Forecaster. It is expected that as the misery index rises, so too will the president's success rate.

The fourth variable is the party unity rate defined as "how frequently during roll call votes a majority of Democrats aligned against a majority of Republicans" (CQ Almanac 2006). Party unity rates are obtained from the annual CQ Almanacs. When members of Congress are inclined to vote with the party, it is expected that they would also vote with the president if he belonged to the same party. I predict that as party unity increases, so too will the president's success rate.

The president's honeymoon period is defined as the first 100 days that he is in office. Presidents typically receive more than a 10% higher success rate during the first 100 days than the later 2/3rds of the year (Byrne and Dominguez 2005). It is expected that the president's success in Congress will be positively influenced by the honeymoon period.

The variables' strengths will be compared for foreign and domestic bills. This datum is also found in the annual Congressional Quarterly Almanacs. It is expected that the president will have more success on foreign policy bills than domestic bills and that less of the variance will be explained for foreign policy bills than for domestic bills.

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[22] http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data/popularity.php. Accessed December 8, 2008.
[23] http://www.miseryindex.us/customindexbymonth.asp. Accessed December 8, 2008.

Differences between how the variables interact with presidential success will also be determined while separating cases on the basis of whether the bills were voted on in the House or the Senate.

Data Analysis and Results

To test the relationship between the dependent variable, presidential success in Congress, and the independent variables, presidential popularity, misery index, party control of Congress and party unity, bivariate correlations were run. The tests indicate the direction, strength and significance of the relationships, as well as how much of the variance is explained by each set of tests.

As Table 1 indicates, 46.2% of the bills that Presidents Clinton and Bush took a position on were voted in opposition with the President and 53.8% of the bills were voted in support with the President.

Table 1: Support of the Presidents' Positions

	Frequency	Percent
Oppose the President	646	46.2
Support the President	752	53.8

Given the Presidents' overall success rate in Congress, the independent variables were examined to determine how strongly and in what direction each affected the dependent variable. The results were as expected, with the direction of correlation as predicted, with a few exceptions that will be discussed in further detail.

Overall Model

The overall model suggests that although only 22% of the variance can be explained using the independent variables, three out of four are in fact significant in explaining variance. Before running the binary logistic regression, only 54% of the results could be predicted. The overall model was able to improve this prediction rate to 68%, a significant jump. The increased rate of predictability indicates that the model used is a good indication of how presidential popularity, the misery index, party control of Congress and party unity affect the president's success rate in Congress.

As Table 2 indicates, each of the variables affects presidential success positively. This means that as presidential popularity, the misery index and president's party's control of Congress increases, so too will his success rate in Congress. Party unity is not significant in predicting presidential success, so it will not be considered useful in determining success.

Table 2: Overall Model	
	Dependent Variable
	Presidential Success
Independent Variables	B
Popularity	.032 (.006 standard error) ***
Economy	.263 (.080 S.E.) **
Control	.793 (.103 S.E.) ***
Party Unity	.000 (.023 S.E.)
Sample Size	1398
Nagelkerke R^2	.218
* indicates significance <.05	
** indicates significance <.01	
*** indicates significance <.001	

These results were as expected and are not surprising. More interestingly, however, is the strength of the variables in predicting the president's success rate, in comparison with each other. Control of Congress by the president's party was the strongest indicator of presidential success, with a Wald score of 59, followed by presidential popularity, with a Wald score of 26 and then by the misery index, with a Wald score of 11. This indicates that in determining which factors, of these three, are most useful in predicting presidential success, control of Congress is the most useful, followed by popularity and then the misery index.

Domestic v. Foreign Policy

To examine the extent to which a bill being a domestic or foreign policy bill affects presidential success, a binary logistic regression analysis was done. Also, to examine the effects of each independent variable on domestic and foreign bills a separate regression was done for each. This allows us to see how the independent variables of presidential popularity, the misery index, party control of Congress and party unity affect domestic and foreign policy bills differently.

Table 3: Foreign v. Domestic and Overall		
	Dependent Variables	
	Presidential Success	
	Foreign, Domestic	Overall
Independent Variables	B	B
Popularity	.032 (.006 S.E.) ***	.032 (.006 S.E.) ***
Economy	.272 (.080 S.E.) **	.263 (.080 S.E.) **
Control	.787 (.103 S.E.) ***	.793 (.103 S.E.) ***
Party Unity	.000 (.023 S.E.)	.000 (.023 S.E.)
Issue	.289 (.131 S.E.) *	
Sample Size	1398	1398
Nagelkerke R^2	.222	.218
* indicates significance <.05		
** indicates significance <.01		
*** indicates significance <.001		

After controlling for domestic and foreign policy bills, as seen in table 3, not much more of the variance in success is explained; the Nagelkerke score barely rises at all. The percentage of prediction did rise significantly however, from 54 percent before the model was run to 68 percent after the model was run. In addition, separating the issues, foreign and domestic, proved to be significant in explaining variance at the .05 level. This result is in concurrence with what was expected. Issue is the weakest indicator of success, among the variables that were significant, with the smallest Wald score.

Foreign and Domestic Bills

Table 4: Foreign and Domestic Policy		
	Dependent Variables	
	Presidential Success	
	Foreign Policy Bills	Domestic Bills
Independent Variables	B	B
Popularity	.001 (.011 S.E.)	.049 (.008 S.E.) ***
Economy	-.082 (.147 S.E.)	.451 (.099 S.E.) ***
Control	.858 (.191 S.E.) ***	.752 (.126 S.E.) ***
Party Unity	.008 (.043 S.E.)	-.003 (.028 S.E.)
Sample Size	399	999
Nagelkerke R^2	.168	.258
* indicates significance <.05		
** indicates significance <.01		
*** indicates significance <.001		

Foreign Bills

The empirical evidence for the foreign policy bills, as indicated in Table 4, shows that, of the variable examined, only the president's party's control of Congress can significantly predict a president's success rate in Congress. The Nagelkerke score of .168 indicates that 17% of the variance can be explained by examining the four independent variables in just the foreign policy bills. The binary logistic regression test, while looking at just the foreign policy bills, was able to increase the predictability of presidential success from 58% to 65%

The positive B score indicates that as the president controls more houses in Congress he is more likely to have success in Congress, as was expected. Individuals are less likely to be aware of or as directly affected by foreign policy issues and thus presidential popularity was expected to not significantly increase a president's success rate. Typically, the economy is not as directly related to foreign policy issues as domestic issues so foreign policy also was not likely to be influenced strongly by the misery index.

Domestic Bills

The results reveal that the president's success rate in Congress is explained more by the four independent variables for domestic bills compared with foreign policy bills. The binary logistic regression shows that within domestic issues, presidential popularity, misery index and party control of Congress all positively and significantly, at the .001 level, predict presidential success in Congress. Within domestic bills, these four independent variables are able to explain 26% of the variance, as indicated by the Nagelkerke value for domestic bills. The test also increases predictability more for domestic bills than for foreign policy bills, indicating that the variables are better able to predict the president's success in Congress for domestic bills than for foreign policy bills. The binary logistic regression for domestic bills increased predictability from 52% to 69%.

The results for the domestic bills confirm the hypotheses that the president is given more power over domestic policy when popularity increases, when the misery index increases and when his party has more control in Congress.

Honeymoon Period

To test the effect that the honeymoon period has on the variables, a logistic regression was done. This allows us to determine whether the honeymoon period is a significant factor in determining presidential success in Congress. The analysis shows that the honeymoon period is not a significant determinant of presidential success. This is confirmed by the fact that the Nagelkerke R^2 value does not change, indicating that more of the variance is not explained when factoring in the honeymoon period.

Table 5: Honeymoon, Overall Model		
	Dependent Variable	
	Presidential Success	
	Overall with Honeymoon	Overall Model
Independent Variables	B	B
Popularity	..032 (.006 S.E.) ***	.032 (.006 S.E.) ***
Economy	.267 (.081 S.E.) **	.263 (.080 S.E.) **
Control	.794 (.103 S.E.) ***	.793 (.103 S.E.) ***
Party Unity	.000 (.023 S.E.)	.000 (.023 S.E.)
Honeymoon	-.90 (.320 S.E.)	
Sample Size	1398	1398
Nagelkerke R^2	.218	.218
* indicates significance <.05		
** indicates significance <.01		
*** indicates significance <.001		

Honeymoon, Clinton and Bush

In order to ensure that the effects of the Honeymoon period on presidential success were not disappearing or reappearing within the specified time period, both presidencies were examined. The analysis shows that for both presidents, the honeymoon period was not significant in determining success, conforming that the honeymoon period does not increase a president's success in Congress.

Table 6: Honeymoon, Clinton, Bush and Overall			
	Dependent Variables		
	Presidential Success		
	Clinton	Bush	Both
Independent Variables	B	B	B
Popularity	.037 (.018 S.E.) *	.036 (.011 S.E.) **	.032 (.006 S.E.) ***
Economy	.369 (.127 S.E.) **	.095 (.154 S.E.)	.267 (.081 S.E.) **
Control	.777 (.138 S.E.) ***	.824 (.171 S.E.) ***	.794 (.103 S.E.) ***
Party Unity	.039 (.037 S.E.)	-.041 (.070 S.E.)	.000 (.023 S.E.)
Honeymoon	-.236 (.408 S.E.)	-.008 (.592 S.E.)	-.090 (.320 S.E.)
Sample Size	906	492	1398
Nagelkerke R^2	.191	.265	.218
* indicates significance <.05			
** indicates significance <.01			
*** indicates significance <.001			

Senate v. House

Separate analyses were done for the House and for the Senate to determine whether or not the variables affected the houses differently. The results indicate that which in house the bills are voted does change how the variables affect the president's success rate in Congress.

Table 7: How Variables Change in Senate and House		
	Dependent Variables	
	Presidential Success	
	Senate	House
Independent Variables	B	B
Popularity	.020 (.010 S.E.) ***	.047 (.009 S.E.) ***
Economy	.067 (.119 S.E.)	.319 (.116 S.E.) **
Control	.601 (.143 S.E.) *	1.116 (.172 S.E.) ***
Party Unity	-.081 (.037 S.E.) *	-.015 (.037 S.E.)
Sample Size	531	867
Nagelkerke R^2	.091	.332
* indicates significance <.05		
** indicates significance <.01		
*** indicates significance <.001		

House

While examining only the bills that passed through the House the variance explained is 33%, much more than has been explained in past tests, as is the jump in predictability, from 51% to 74%. The significance of the variables remains constant with past tests of presidential popularity, the national misery index and the president's party's control of Congress all showing significance and a positive correlation. In the House, the president's party's control of Congress proves to predict presidential success most strongly, with a Wald score of 42, followed by presidential popularity, with a Wald score of 26, followed by the misery index, with a Wald score of 7. Party unity remains insignificant. These findings are consistent with the hypotheses.

Senate

Results in the Senate prove to be much less significant. The binary logistic regression explains much less of the variance, 9% compared to the House, of 33% and just barely raises the predictability from 58% to 61%. The results from the Senate are surprising and unexpected. Presidential popularity, president's party's control of Congress and party unity are all significant, leaving the misery index insignificant in predicting presidential success in Congress. Of the significant variables, control of Congress is the strongest predictor, with a Wald score of 18, followed by the president's popularity, with a Wald score of 4. As party unity increases, the president's success rate in Congress actually decreases.

The differences between the effects of variables between the House and the Senate may be due to the longer terms of Senators as well as their increased power and independence within

politics. Due to the fact that Senators are elected less frequently than Representatives, decisions they make with or against the president have less of a chance of being brought up in an upcoming election and harming the candidate during election. The most surprising result, the increase of unity score predicting a decrease in the president's success rate, may be due to more volatile issue being discussed and thus cutting the important connection of ideology between the Senate and the president. Another explanation is that when the party is uniting, members are uniting against the president.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the multiple tests run several conclusions can be drawn. Overall, for Presidents Clinton and Bush, presidential popularity, economic conditions and control of Congress have shown to be significant in determining presidential success in Congress. Party unity was shown to not be significant, contrary to past theories and a hypothesis of this study. Control of Congress was demonstrated to be the strongest indicator of success, followed by popularity, and then by economic conditions.

As was expected, as presidential popularity increased, so too did presidential success in Congress. The only analysis that was conducted in which popularity was not significant in determining success was when examining foreign policy bills. This supports the idea that, concurrent with past theories, presidents are given more freedom to set the agenda when the public is not watching as closely or being affected as directly.

In concurrence with past theories, the president's party's control of Congress was demonstrated to be a significant factor in explaining variance in presidential success in Congress. Analyses have shown that as the number of houses in Congress that the president's party controls increases, his success in Congress increases as well.

The effect of party unity on presidential success was shown to be largely insignificant, with the exception being its effect on success in the Senate. Party unity actually affected presidential success in the opposite was as was expected. Results show that as unity increases, presidential success decreases. This result may be due to parties uniting against the president.

The study shows that as economic conditions worsened and the misery index increased, so too did presidential success. This supports the idea that as economic conditions worsen, members of Congress are more wiling to be deferential to the president in order to avoid blame for a worsening economy. The two tests in which the misery index was not a significant determinant was when examining success in the Senate and for foreign policy bills. I speculate that this is due to the idea that Senators tend to be somewhat removed from the fluctuations of the national environment due to term length as well as because foreign policy issues do not reflect changes in economic conditions.

Results on foreign and domestic policy differences show that, as expected, the issue of the bill as foreign or domestic was significant in explaining presidential success. More interestingly, and also in concurrence with past theories, the president is more likely to have success on foreign issues over domestic issues. These findings give credence to the theory that members of Congress are more likely to be deferential to the president because they are less likely to receive electoral retribution if their constituents do not agree with their vote on a foreign issues as well as because the president typically has more information and power available to him in foreign policy issues.

Through this study, the honeymoon period was demonstrated to be insignificant in explaining presidential success in Congress. The diminished honeymoon effect was confirmed by studying both presidencies separately.

While examining the House and the Senate separately, differences between the two become clear. The four variables used to examine presidential success in Congress explained only 9 percent of the variance in the Senate and 33 percent in the House. This finding indicates that members in the Senate behave more independently and may be influenced by other factors that may need to be examined further in future studies.

This study reveals that three of the four variables of presidential popularity, congressional control, economic conditions and party unity were significant, party unity being the factor that was not, in explaining the variance in presidential success in Congress. This study has demonstrated that the president alone cannot determine the legislative outcome. The president relies on the support of Congress and the fluctuations of the national environment through variables of popularity and the misery index.

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