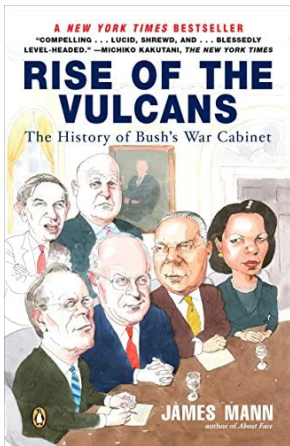
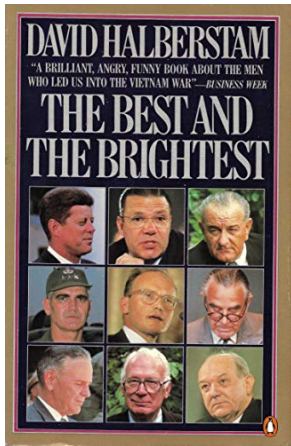


Foreign Policy Appointments

Matt Malis

Texas Triangle IR Conference
27 January 2023

paper: `mattmalis.github.io/research`



Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN), on Trump's foreign policy team:

I think Secretary Tillerson, Secretary Mattis and Chief of Staff Kelly are those people that help separate our country from chaos. . . [and] make sure that the policies we put forth around the world are sound and coherent.

Overview

Puzzle:

- ▶ No *de jure* independence – can be removed or overridden
- ▶ Can appointees affect their leader's foreign policy behavior?

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- ▶ Can appointees affect their leader's foreign policy behavior?

My answer:

- ▶ Advisory mechanism \implies shape leader's private information
- ▶ Fire-alarm mechanism \implies shape leader's electoral incentives

Overview

Model:

- ▶ domestic politics surrounding international crisis
- ▶ leader appoints agent
- ▶ agent advises leader in crisis
- ▶ voter assesses leader performance

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- ▶ domestic politics surrounding international crisis
- ▶ leader appoints agent
- ▶ agent advises leader in crisis
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Appointee attributes:

- ▶ *bias*: likelihood of preferring aggression vs. concession
- ▶ *loyalty/independence*: willingness to protest leader's decision

Overview

Results:

- ▶ leaders can enhance deterrence through appointments

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- ▶ ...but, at the expense of:
 - ▶ policy responsiveness
 - ▶ electoral selection
 - ▶ or both

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- ▶ ...but, at the expense of:
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 - ▶ or both
- ▶ partisan asymmetry in appointments
 - ▶ Dove party leaders appoint cross-partisans or non-partisans
 - ▶ Hawk leaders do not

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Descriptive patterns of cross-national cabinet appointments

Model

Foreign govt. F ; domestic Leader L , Appointee A , Voter V

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Foreign govt. F ; domestic Leader L , Appointee A , Voter V

1. L : appoint A with (bias, loyalty)
2. F : challenge, $a_F \in \{0, 1\}$
3. valuation $\omega \in \{0, 1\}$ realized
4. A : private advice, $s \in \{0, 1\}$
5. L : fight, $a \in \{0, 1\}$
6. A : resign/protest, $z \in \{0, 1\}$
7. V : reelect, $r \in \{0, 1\}$

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 - ▶ deterrence game: $Pr(a_F = 1) \downarrow$ in $Pr(a = 1)$
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 - ▶ is it worth fighting ($\omega = 1$) or not ($\omega = 0$)
4. A : private advice, $s \in \{0, 1\}$
 - ▶ recommend “fight” ($s = 1$) or “don’t fight” ($s = 0$)
 - ▶ function of state ω , and A 's bias
5. L : fight, $a \in \{0, 1\}$
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| Preferred Crisis Response | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dove Party | | Hawk Party | |
| Extreme ($\theta = 0$) | Moderate ($\theta = 1$) | Moderate ($\theta = 1$) | Extreme ($\theta = 0$) |
| $a = 0$ | $a = \omega$ | $a = \omega$ | $a = 1$ |

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6. A : resign/protest, $z \in \{0, 1\}$
 - ▶ L selects loyalty $\lambda \in [0, 1]$
 - ▶ if advice followed: no protest ($z = 0$)
 - ▶ if advice ignored: protest ($z = 1$) w/ prob. $1 - \lambda$
7. V : reelect, $r \in \{0, 1\}$

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6. A : resign/protest, $z \in \{0, 1\}$
7. V : **reelect**, $r \in \{0, 1\}$
 - ▶ wants to retain moderates, remove extremists
 - ▶ form belief $\mu = Pr(\theta = 1|a, z)$
 - ▶ $Pr(\text{reelect}) \uparrow$ in μ

Appointee Influence

Two mechanisms of appointee influence:

- ▶ *advisory* mechanism
- ▶ *fire-alarm* mechanism

⇒ Tied-hands commitment device to deter F 's aggression

Advisory Mechanism

- ▶ L appoints A who will provide hawkishly-biased advice
- ▶ L follows advice $\implies Pr(a = 1|a_F = 1) \uparrow \implies Pr(a_F = 1) \downarrow$
 - ▶ (more likely to fight back \implies deter aggression)

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- ▶ L follows advice $\implies Pr(a = 1|a_F = 1) \uparrow \implies Pr(a_F = 1) \downarrow$
 - ▶ (more likely to fight back \implies deter aggression)
- ▶ Credible iff:
 - ▶ A 's bias bounded, and A 's expertise $>$ L 's expertise

Fire-Alarm Mechanism

- ▶ L appoints A who will speak out against policies she opposes
 - ▶ w/ prob. $1 - \lambda$ (= “political independence”)

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 - ▶ A protest $\implies V$ learns L is extreme
- ▶ threat of A protest forces extreme L to follow A advice

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Dove Leader

$\lambda \downarrow \implies Pr(a = 1 | \theta = 0) \uparrow$
 \implies strengthen deterrence

Hawk Leader

$\lambda \downarrow \implies Pr(a = 1 | \theta = 0) \downarrow$
 \implies weaken deterrence

Aside: Voter Welfare Implications

| <u>Dove Leader</u> | Deterrence | Responsiveness | Selection |
|---|------------|----------------|-----------|
| Hawkishly Biased ($\pi_A^H < 1$) | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ |
| Politically Independent ($\lambda < \bar{\lambda}$) | ↑ | ↑ | ↓ |

| <u>Hawk Leader</u> | Deterrence | Responsiveness | Selection |
|---|------------|----------------|-----------|
| Hawkishly Biased ($\pi_A^H < 1$) | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ |
| Politically Independent ($\lambda < \bar{\lambda}$) | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ |

- ▶ Deterrence: $Pr(a = 1)$
- ▶ Responsiveness: $Pr(a = \omega)$
- ▶ Electoral Selection: $Pr(r = 1|\theta = 1) - Pr(r = 1|\theta = 0)$

Leader's appointment strategy

Dovish appointments?

Hawkish appointments?

Independent appointments?

Leader's appointment strategy

Dovish appointments?

- ▶ Never

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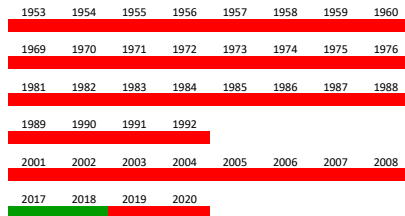
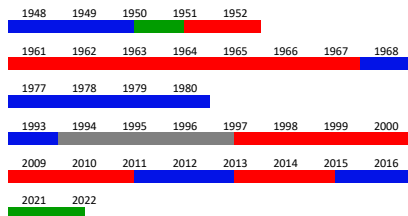
Independent appointments?

- ▶ Hawk L : never
- ▶ Dove L : yes, if $\gamma > \bar{\gamma}$

US Secretary of Defense Appointments

SecDef under Dem pres.

SecDef under GOP pres.



- ▶ 35 years total
- ▶ 17 GOP; 12 Dem; 3 “partisan”

- ▶ 40 years total
- ▶ 0 Dem; 38 GOP; 25 “partisan”

(Dem, GOP, Independent, Military)

Cross-National Cabinet Appointments

| | | Leader Party | |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | Hawk (n=607) | Dove (n=395) |
| Minister of Defense | Hawk Party | | |
| | Dove Party | | |
| | Independent | | |
| | Leader's party | | |

Note: Cabinet membership data from WhoGov. Party hawk/dove measures from Manifesto Project. 1,532 country-year observations, across 50 countries from 1966–2018, incl. presidential systems and coalition govts. in parliamentary systems.

Cross-National Cabinet Appointments

| | | Leader Party | |
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| | | Hawk (n=607) | Dove (n=395) |
| Minister of Defense | Hawk Party | 76% | 26% |
| | Dove Party | 14% | 63% |
| | Independent | 6% | 15% |
| | Leader's party | 64% | 48% |

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| | Dove Party | 16% | 72% |
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Summary

Appointees *can* influence foreign policy

- ▶ despite lack of *de jure* authority

Two mechanisms to improve deterrence:

- ▶ Advisory mechanism — Hawk or Dove leaders
- ▶ Fire-alarm mechanism — Dove leaders only
- ▶ Divergent implications for responsiveness and selection

Partisan asymmetry in appointment strategies:

| | Hawkish agent | Dovish agent | Independent agent |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Dove leader | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ |
| Hawk leader | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |

Consistent with cross-national patterns of cabinet appointments

Thank you!

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| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| $j \in \{D, H\}$ | Leader's party, Dove (D) or Hawk (H) |
| $\theta \in \{0, 1\}$ | Leader type, congruent ($\theta = 1$) or incongruent |
| $\pi \in [\frac{1}{2}, 1)$ | Prior $Pr(\theta = 1) = \pi$ |
| $\omega \in \{0, 1\}$ | Domestic players' valuation, with prior $Pr(\omega = 1) = \tau \in (0, 1)$ |
| $x \in \{0, 1\}$ | Leader's signal of ω , with $Pr(x = \omega \omega) = \phi \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1)$ |
| $\theta_A \in \{0, 1\}$ | Agent's type, congruent ($\theta_A = 1$) or incongruent |
| $k \in \{D, H\}$ | Direction of agent bias, dovish ($k = D$) or hawkish ($k = H$) |
| $\pi_A \in (0, 1)$ | Magnitude of agent bias, prior $Pr(\theta_A = 1) = \pi_A$ |
| $s \in \{0, 1\}$ | Agent's message |
| $\eta^{x,s}$ | Leader's belief of $Pr(\omega = 1 x, s)$ |
| $a_F \in \{0, 1\}$ | Foreign government's action, challenge ($a_F = 1$) or not ($a_F = 0$) |
| $\omega_F \in \mathbb{R}$ | Foreign government's valuation, distributed $\omega_F \sim U(\underline{\omega}_F, \bar{\omega}_F)$ |
| $a \in \{0, 1\}$ | Leader's action, fight ($a = 1$) or not ($a = 0$) |
| $z \in \{0, 1\}$ | Agent's action, protest ($z = 1$) or not ($z = 0$) |
| $\lambda \in [0, 1]$ | Agent's loyalty, $Pr(y < 0) = \lambda$, where $y \in [\underline{y}, \bar{y}]$ is agent's outside option |
| $\mu^{a,z}$ | Voter's belief of $Pr(\theta = 1 a, z)$ |
| ε | (Expected) quality of domestic challenger, $\varepsilon \sim U(0, 1)$ |
| $\gamma > 0$ | Leader's value for deterring aggression |
| $\beta > 0$ | Leader's value for holding office |

Note: Parameters and distributions in bold are common knowledge.

Policy payoffs:

$$W_V = \mathbb{1}[a = \omega]$$

$$W_L = \theta W_V + (1 - \theta) \begin{cases} 1 - a, & j = D \\ a, & j = H \end{cases}$$

$$W_A = \theta_A W_V + (1 - \theta_A) \begin{cases} 1 - a, & k = D \\ a, & k = H \end{cases}$$

Total payoffs:

$$U_F = a_F \omega_F - a$$

$$U_L = -a_F \gamma + W_L + r\beta$$

$$U_A = W_A + zy + (1 - z)f_A(\theta)$$

$$U_V = r\theta + (1 - r)\varepsilon$$

F's incentives

Deterrence game:

$$U_F = a_F \omega_F - a$$

- ▶ F : challenge ($a_F = 1$) or not ($a_F = 0$)
- ▶ F 's valuation/resolve $\omega_F \sim U(\underline{\omega}_F, \bar{\omega}_F)$

$$a_F = 1 \iff \omega_F \geq \hat{a}_1 - \hat{a}_0$$

- ▶ $\hat{a}_1 = \Pr(a = 1 | a_F = 1) = \Pr(L \text{ fight} \mid \text{challenge})$
- ▶ $\hat{a}_0 = \Pr(a = 1 | a_F = 0) = \Pr(L \text{ fight} \mid \text{no challenge})$

$\implies \Pr(F \text{ challenge}) \downarrow$ in $\Pr(L \text{ fight back})$

Leader's incentives

Common knowledge:

- ▶ party $j \in \{D, H\}$: Dove or Hawk

Private info:

- ▶ type θ : moderate ($\theta = 1$) or extreme ($\theta = 0$)
- ▶ info re: ω
 - ▶ L observes noisy $x \in \{0, 1\}$, $Pr(x = \omega|\omega) = \phi \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1)$
 - ▶ and receives private advice s

Action a : fight/escalate ($a = 1$), or concede/back down ($a = 0$)

Leader's incentives

Common knowledge:

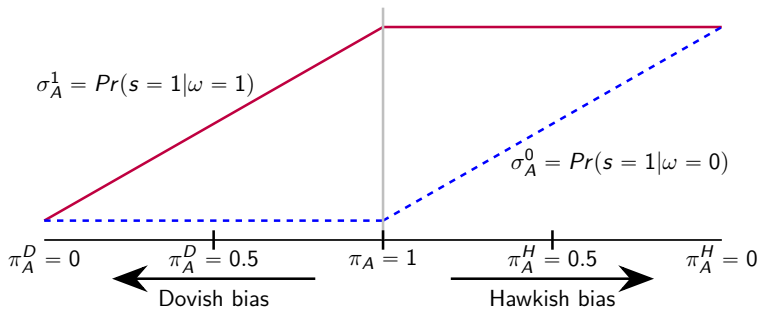
- ▶ party $j \in \{D, H\}$: Dove or Hawk

Private info:

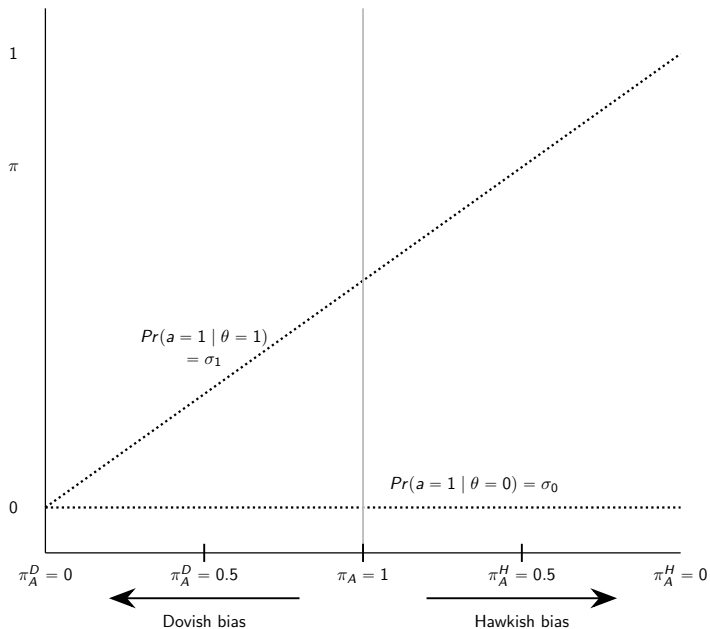
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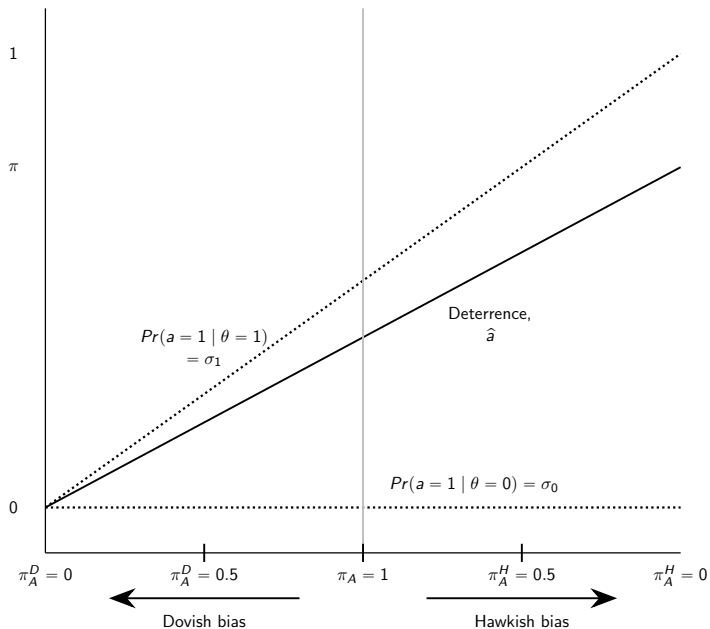
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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dove Party | | Hawk Party | |
| Extreme ($\theta = 0$) | Moderate ($\theta = 1$) | Moderate ($\theta = 1$) | Extreme ($\theta = 0$) |
| $a = 0$ | $a = \omega$ | $a = \omega$ | $a = 1$ |



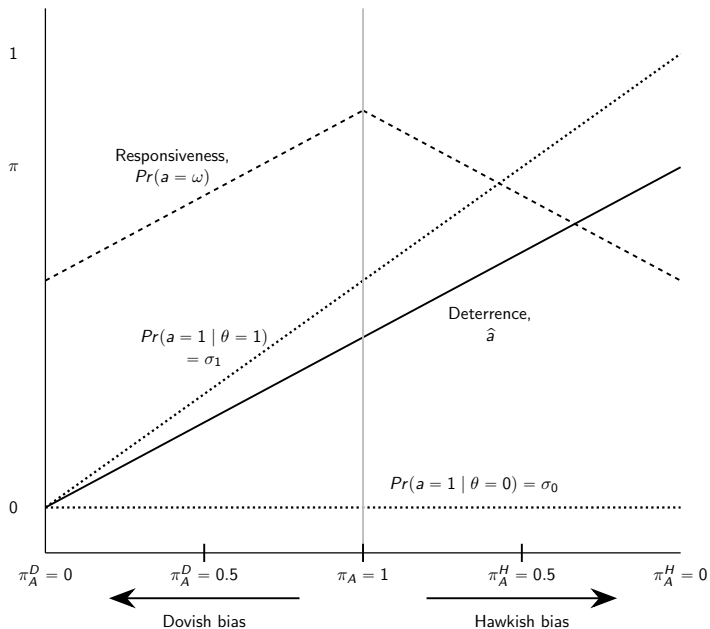
Effect of appointee bias (under high loyalty)



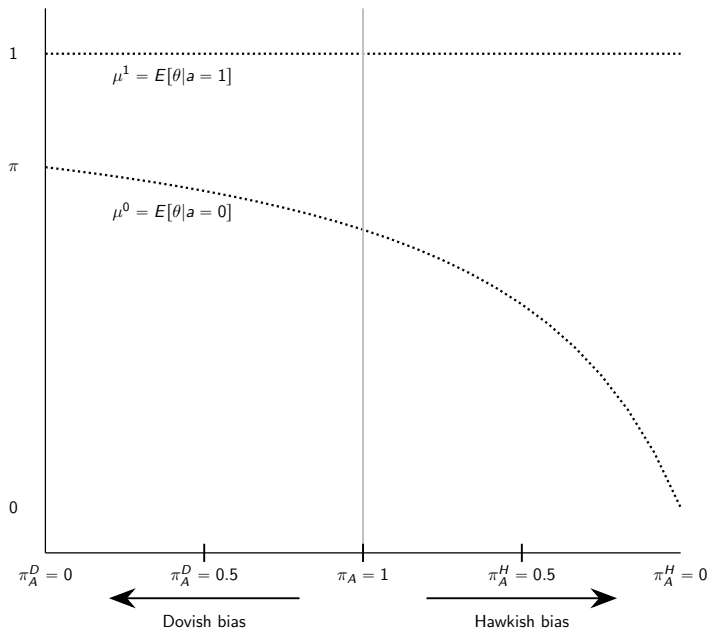
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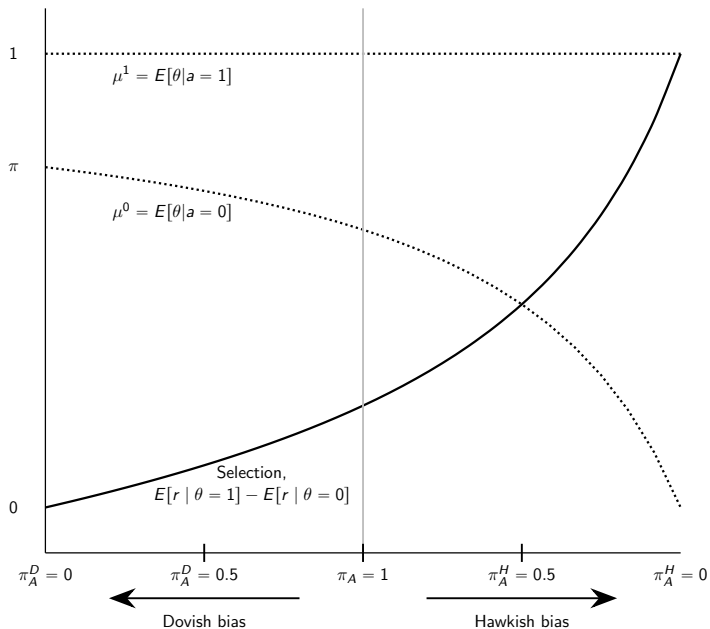
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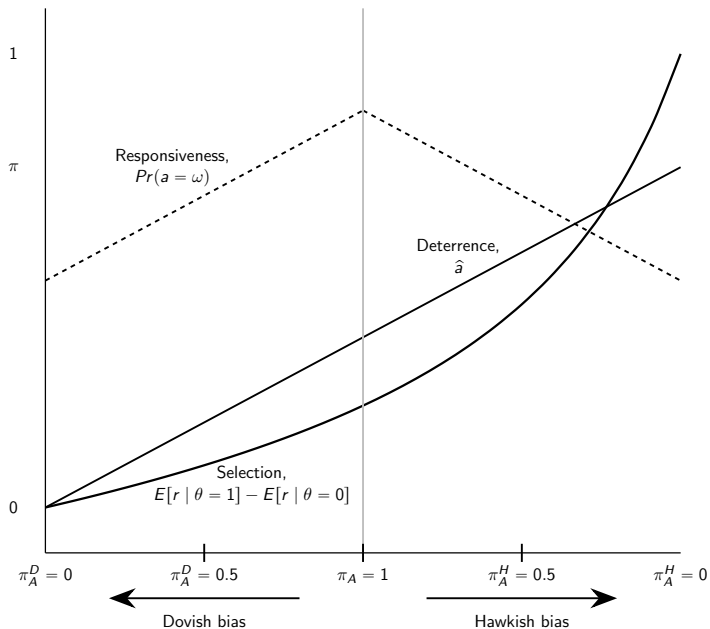
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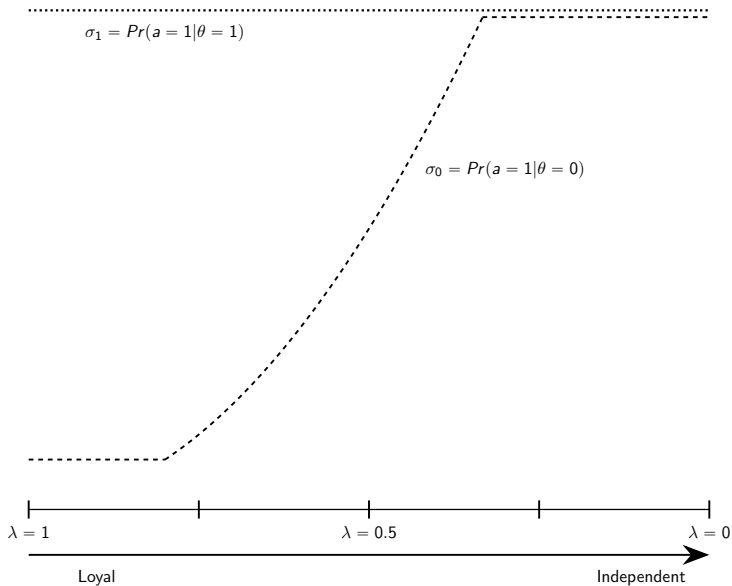
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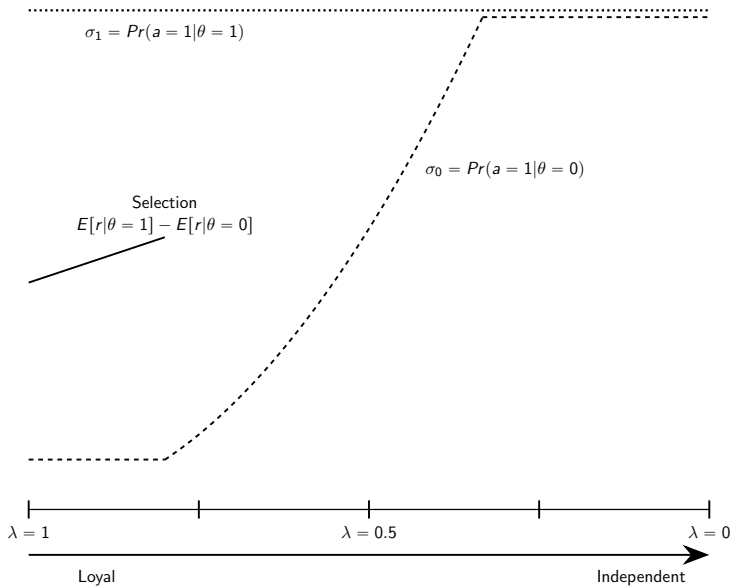
Effect of appointee bias (under high loyalty)



Effect of appointee independence



Effect of appointee independence



Effect of appointee independence

