Online Appendix for Political Legacies: Understanding Their Significance to Contemporary Political Debates

A Reddit Comment Classifications, Study 1

Features	Definition
Legacy	Using the name of a President, Vice-President, Speaker for the House, House Minority Leader, Senate Majority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, or Attorney General whose tenure has come to an end by January 1, 2012.
Current Politician	Using the name of a President, Vice-President, Speaker for the House, House Minority Leader, Senate Majority Leader, Senate Minority Leader, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, or Attorney General who held office between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014.
Source	Using the name of one of 22 major online news sources: New York Times, Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, Washington Post, NPR, Fox News, Huffington Post, CNN, Daily Kos, Drudge Report, Wonkette, AmericaBlog, Politico, Salon, Slate, Townhall, Real Clear Politics, Political Wire, Conservative Voice, Factcheck.org, and Redstate.
Think Tank	Using the name of one of 16 major think tanks: Brookings Institution, RAND Corporation, Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, National Bureau of Economic Research, Pew Research Center, Council on Foreign Relations, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Peterson Institute for International Economics, Center for American Progress, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Hoover Institution, and Atlantic Council.
Numbers	Providing a figure in dollars, a percentage, or a number in the hundreds, thousands, millions, billions, or trillions.

B Examples of Reddit Comments

This appendix provides four additional examples of the strategies for using legacies observed on Reddit.

Invoking/Litigating Policy Brands

- Remember when Kennedy said, "Lets put a man on the moon" and we did? We can do it again, we can lead the way in science and technology but we need the politicians to grease the wheels.

- Every president including your beloved clinton managed to somehow work with the opposition. All Obama does is whine and complain because they wont pass bills that have already been tried and failed.

- [Conservatives] always forget that Reagan also raised the debt ceiling a bunch of times, negotiated with terrorists and so much more.

- That's absurd. Reagan was president during the first amnesty. Bush appointed a ton of high level staff from every race. Quick what political party freed the slaves?

Setting Benchmarks for Performance

- Clinton and Bush [unlike Obama] didn't take their vacations during a sequester

- If Libya is a failure because of the number of dead Americans then it's amazing people didn't hang FDR and Truman by their toes.

- Bush talked a lot about his platform of compassionate conservatism and how important it was to him, yet when he got elected he didn't really get much of that done for rather obvious reasons. Reagan promised to balance the budget, and did just the opposite. Clinton promised to get health care reform passed and failed miserably. Obama being like other presidents isn't a bad thing, it's just the reality.

- [Taxes] weren't *very* high under Clinton, they were a bit lower than under Bush Sr, but they weren't as low as under Bush Jr.

Allocating Credit/Blame for States of the World

- Nixon took us off the gold standard and gave us fiat currency. This combined with the fed has driven us into a system where we are being crushed under massive debt.

- Actually that [the creation of the Mujahideen] was Zbigniew Brzezinski under Carter.

- All that changed in the last year of Clinton. That asshole signed away our ability to scrutinize these things and opened the flood gates to low-wage markets

- The leftists seem to forget that Bush ran one of the best economies on record up until Clinton's repeal of Glass Steagall finally came back to bite us in the ass.

Establishing Precedents

- I don't disagree with this, but Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt both came from the same incredibly wealthy family. They spent their lives fighting for the working man.

- Chris Christie=Herbert Hoover Once he's elected he can usher in the real Great Depression and we can have our own ending to our gilded age.

- Remember that Nixon illegally sent people to spy on his political enemies. There is no protection in this system from a immoral president from declaring that a political protester is a member of an enemy organization and then assassinating him.

- So did Bush in 2000.

Contesting Historical Interpretation

- Reminds me of how some republicans claim Teddy Roosevelt, when in fact he was pretty much booted out which is when he started the Progressive Party.

- I definitely agree that the Republicans are not Eisenhower's party any longer.

- LBJ didn't "integrate society." He actually opposed the civil rights act of 1957. More important forces were the supreme court, cultural factors, the work of civil rights leaders/activists, and political pressure on LBJ.

- You could not be more wrong. LBJ broke the Dixiecrats and got Civil Rights through the Senate. And if you call Sam Rayburn a Dixiecrat I'll see you outside by the flagpole. And bring your people.

C   Question Wordings for Survey of Political Recollections, Study 1

We'd now like to ask you some questions about recent U.S. politicians. We are interested in what people remember about American public figures. Some politicians are remembered by many people, while others are remembered by very few.

Which of the following political figures do you recognize? (response options: definitely remember, somewhat remember, do not remember)

[PRESENT RESPONDENT WITH NAME OF FIVE OFFICIALS, ONE FROM EACH OFFICE. RANDOMIZE ORDER OF NAMES/OFFICES]

[INSERT NAME OF PRESIDENT/SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE/SENATE MAJORITY LEADER/SECRETARY OF STATE/SECRETARY OF TREASURY]

[FOR EACH NAME]

What do you remember the most about [NAME]?

[TEXT BOX]

What do you remember the second most about [NAME]?

[TEXT BOX]

What do you remember the third most about [NAME]?

[TEXT BOX]

D Coding Procedures for Open-Ended Survey Responses, Study 1

Note: Research assistants were instructed to try to assign each response to a single category but in a few cases responses were assigned to multiple categories.

Monument: The response mentions something that is named after the person.

Policy-Relevant: The response points to a policy-related achievement of the politician, the politicians policy preferences (at a finer level of resolution than labels such as "conservative" or "liberal"), issues on the politicians agenda, or important events with which the politician was associated.

Scandal or Gaffe: The response refers to a specific event that reflects poorly on the character of the speaker or is otherwise embarrassing. Merely having held office during another politicians scandal (e.g., "was Senate Majority Leader during the Monica Lewinsky scandal") or electoral defeats do not count.

Affective Evaluation: The response either states whether the respondent likes the politician or not, performance evaluations, or subjective statements that imply an unambiguous position on the politicians performance (e.g., that the politician is "a liar" or that the politician did his best to move the country forward). Character traits which do not clearly imply the respondents evaluation of the politicians performance, such as "serious or "cantankerous count as biographical details. If there is any ambiguity, classify as a biographical detail.

Ideological/Partisan Affiliation: The response provides the individuals partisan affiliation or ideological predispositions. Statements that the politician was "bipartisan, "reached across the aisle, or was "divisive are all included here.

Biographical Detail: The response recalls details of the politicians life that are not relevant to public policy or how much the respondent likes that politician. Memories of the offices the politician held, the name of the politicians spouse, reports of how others felt about the politician, achievements that do not pertain directly to policy ("first Black president or "longest serving Senator), election campaigns, or personality traits that do not unambiguously show whether the respondent likes the politician or not.

Non-Response: The response is nonsense or is not a memory of that politician. Memories of a different individual with the same name (for example, John Snow recollections that are about *Game of Thrones*) or confuse the politician with someone else (for example, memories about Donald Regan that are clearly about Ronald Reagan) are included in this category. If you cannot figure out what the response is trying to say, put it in this category. Responses that are clearly copied from Wikipedia are also included in this category. However, factually incorrect statements should not be included in this category.

E   Results from Free Response Categories, Study 1

Table 1: Open-Ended Recollections of Politicians

Feature	Office	Proportion of Responses
Biographical Detail	President	0.558
	Congress	0.611
	Cabinet	0.612
Affective Evaluation	President	0.155
	Congress	0.176
	Cabinet	0.165
Partisanship or Ideology	President	0.025
	Congress	0.122
	Cabinet	0.061
Gaffe or Scandal	President	0.110
	Congress	0.038
	Cabinet	0.036
Policy Relevant	President	0.155
	Congress	0.044
	Cabinet	0.091
Monument	President	0.003
	Congress	0.000
	Cabinet	0.000

Note: These proportions are taken from the set of open-ended responses, with non-responses such as "Don't know" or "Can't remember" filtered out. Accordingly, the proportions should be interpreted as the probability that a memory exhibits a particular feature conditional on the respondent remembering anything at all. Some comments were assigned to multiple categories which is why some proportions do not sum to 1.0. Details on the coding rules are described in Online Appendix D.

Table 2: Relationship between Open-Ended Responses and Co-Partisanship

	(1) Biographical	(2) Sentiment	(3) Ideology	(4) Policy	(5) Scandal
Co-Partisan	0.051	-0.032	-0.012	-0.021	0.000
	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.012)
Intercept	0.472*	0.161*	0.068*	0.079*	0.042*
	(0.025)	(0.017)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.008)
Observations	1105	1105	1105	1105	1105

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. Partisan identifiers only.

* $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

F   Question Wordings and Experimental Design for Study 2

[ORDER OF WHETHER CLINTON EXPERIMENT OR REAGAN EXPERIMENT IS PRESENTED FIRST IS RANDOMIZED; ORDER OF ARGUMENTS IS FULLY RANDOMIZED]

[EXPERIMENT TESTING CLINTON'S LEGACY]

[RESPONDENTS ARE ASSIGNED TO ONE OF SIX CONDITIONS: demleg1, demleg2, demleg3, demleg4, demleg5, demleg6]

demleg1 (Legacy Attached to Good Argument; Relevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether governments should cut spending on social programs in order to balance the budget. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in favor of making a balanced budget a priority. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- Balancing the budget helps boost the economy by reducing the interest payments on debt.
- When the budget deficit is smaller, the market's confidence in the economy grows, leading to more investments.
- When President Clinton signed The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, one justification was that balancing the budget ensures that future generations don't have to pay for the overspending of the current generation.
- A balanced budget ensures that the government operates within clear bounds of the resources it has.
- If the government does not balance its budget, ordinary people won't balance their personal budgets.

demleg2 (No Legacy Attached; Relevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether governments should cut spending on social programs in order to balance the budget. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in favor of making a balanced budget a priority. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- Balancing the budget helps boost the economy by reducing the interest payments on debt.
- When the budget deficit is smaller, the market's confidence in the economy grows, leading to more investments.
- Balancing the budget ensures that future generations don't have to pay for the overspending of the current generation.
- A balanced budget ensures that the government operates within clear bounds of the resources it has.
- If the government does not balance its budget, ordinary people won't balance their personal budgets.

demleg3 (Legacy Attached to Bad Argument; Relevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether governments should cut spending on social programs in order to balance the budget. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in favor of making a balanced budget a priority. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- Balancing the budget helps boost the economy by reducing the interest payments on debt.
- When the budget deficit is smaller, the market's confidence in the economy grows, leading to more investments.
- Balancing the budget ensures that future generations don't have to pay for the overspending of the current generation.
- A balanced budget ensures that the government operates within clear bounds of the resources it has.
- When President Clinton signed The Balanced Budget Act of 1997, one justification was that if the government does not balance its budget, ordinary people won't balance their personal budgets.

demleg4 (Legacy Attached to Good Argument; Irrelevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether compulsory school uniforms are a good idea. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in favor of school uniforms. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- School uniforms help create an environment of seriousness and discipline.
- When President Clinton issued a memorandum to the Department of Education advocating a school uniform requirement, one justification was that uniforms allow students to focus on school rather than on what they are wearing.
- School uniforms reduce instances where young students wear age-inappropriate clothes.
- School uniforms decrease stress among students from poorer families who cannot afford expensive clothes.
- School uniforms are more comfortable than what students voluntarily choose to wear.

demleg5 (No Legacy Attached; Irrelevant Issue). People debate whether compulsory school uniforms are a good idea. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in favor of school uniforms. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- School uniforms help create an environment of seriousness and discipline.
- Such uniforms allow students to focus on school rather than on what they are wearing.
- School uniforms reduce instances where young students wear age-inappropriate clothes.
- School uniforms decrease stress among students from poorer families who cannot afford expensive clothes.

  School uniforms are more comfortable than what students voluntarily choose to wear.

demleg6 (Legacy Attached to Bad Argument; Irrelevant Issue). People debate whether compulsory school uniforms are a good idea. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in favor of school uniforms. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- School uniforms help create an environment of seriousness and discipline.
- Such uniforms allow students to focus on school rather than on what they are wearing.
- School uniforms reduce instances where young students wear age-inappropriate clothes.
- School uniforms decrease stress among students from poorer families who cannot afford expensive clothes.
- When President Clinton issued a memorandum to the Department of Education advocating a school uniform requirement, one justification was that school uniforms are more comfortable than what students voluntarily choose to wear.

[EXPERIMENT TESTING REAGAN'S LEGACY]

[RESPONDENTS ARE ASSIGNED TO ONE OF SIX CONDITIONS: repleg1, repleg2, repleg3, repleg4, repleg5, repleg6]

repleg1 (Legacy Attached to Good Argument; Relevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether Congress should reduce tax rates even for taxes primarily paid by the very wealthy. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in support of cutting taxes on the wealthy. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- When President Reagan reduced taxes from a top marginal rate of 50% to 28% by signing the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, one justification was that when tax rates are too high, lowering tax rates increases gross tax revenue due to increased economic activity.
- Reductions in marginal income and capital gains tax rates encourage greater allocation of resources to investment.
- The wealthy worked hard to earn their money, and it is unfair to punish success.
- Reallocation away from public investment to private investment will always yield superior economic results.
- Cutting taxes on the wealthy helps reduce the high workload on IRS employees.

repleg2 (No Legacy Attached; Relevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether Congress should reduce tax rates even for taxes primarily paid by the very wealthy, such as capital gains taxes. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in support of cutting taxes on the wealthy. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- When tax rates are too high, lowering tax rates increases gross tax revenue due to increased economic activity.

- Reductions in marginal income and capital gains tax rates encourage greater allocation of resources to investment.
- The wealthy worked hard to earn their money, and it is unfair to punish success.
- Reallocation away from public investment to private investment will always yield superior economic results.
- Cutting taxes on the wealthy helps reduce the high workload on IRS employees.

repleg3 (Legacy Attached to Bad Argument; Relevant Issue). Experts disagree on whether Congress should reduce tax rates even for taxes primarily paid by the very wealthy, such as capital gains taxes. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in support of cutting taxes on the wealthy. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- When tax rates are too high, lowering tax rates increases gross tax revenue due to increased economic activity.
- Reductions in marginal income and capital gains tax rates encourage greater allocation of resources to investment.
- The wealthy worked hard to earn their money, and it is unfair to punish success.
- Reallocation away from public investment to private investment will always yield superior economic results.
- When President Reagan reduced taxes from a top marginal rate of 50% to 28% by signing the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, one justification was that cutting taxes on the wealthy helps reduce the high workload on IRS employees.

repleg4 (Legacy Attached to Good Argument; Irrelevant Issue). Experts debate the justification and merits of policies designed to make it harder for Americans to own guns. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in support of placing tough restrictions on gun ownership. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- When President Reagan supported the Brady Bill, one justification for instituting an extended waiting period before a handgun purchaser could take delivery was that it would provide time for background checks reduce instances where felons or mentally ill people obtain guns.
- The more citizens have easy access to guns, the more homicides there are. Making guns more difficult to acquire will reduce the level of homicides.
- In the last two decades, almost 80% of the mass shootings in the U.S were carried out using legal weapons. To reduce mass killings, the U.S must make it hard to obtain guns.
- Successful interventions by armed civilians occur in only a tiny fraction of mass shootings, therefore it is better to reduce the overall number of weapons because they rarely provide protection.
- Instituting tough restrictions on guns would put the U.S. in line in with more cultured European nations.

repleg5 (No Legacy Attached; Irrelevant Issue). Experts debate the justification and merits of policies designed to make it harder for Americans to own guns. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in support of placing tough restrictions on gun ownership. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- Instituting an extended waiting period before a handgun purchaser could take delivery would provide time for background checks and reduce instances where felons or mentally ill people obtain guns.
- The more citizens have easy access to guns, the more homicides there are. Making guns more difficult to acquire will reduce the level of homicides.
- In the last two decades, almost 80% of the mass shootings in the U.S were carried out using legal weapons. To reduce mass killings, the U.S must make it hard to obtain guns.
- Successful interventions by armed civilians occur in only a tiny fraction of mass shootings, therefore it is better to reduce the overall number of weapons because they rarely provide protection.
- Instituting tough restrictions on guns would put the U.S. in line in with more cultured European nations.

repleg6 (Legacy Attached to Bad Argument; Irrelevant Issue). Experts debate the justification and merits of policies designed to make it harder for Americans to own guns. Listed below are some of the arguments proponents have advanced in support of placing tough restrictions on gun ownership. Please read the different arguments and rank them based on how convincing you find each one. Place the most convincing argument on top and the least convincing one at the bottom.

- Instituting an extended waiting period before a handgun purchaser could take delivery would provide time for background checks and reduce instances where felons or mentally ill people obtain guns.
- The more citizens have easy access to guns, the more homicides there are. Making guns more difficult to acquire will reduce the level of homicides.
- In the last two decades, almost 80% of the mass shootings in the U.S were carried out using legal weapons. To reduce mass killings, the U.S must make it hard to obtain guns.
- Successful interventions by armed civilians occur in only a tiny fraction of mass shootings, therefore it is better to reduce the overall number of weapons because they rarely provide protection.
- When President Reagan supported the Brady Bill, one justification for instituting an extended waiting period before a handgun purchaser could take delivery was that it would put the U.S. in line in with more cultured European nations.

G Results for Opposite-Party Politician, Study 2

Table 3: Effect of Legacy on Argument Rankings for Out-Partisans

	Bad Argument		Good Argument	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Legacy	0.20*	0.14	−0.21	−0.28
	(0.07)	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.10)
Legacy × Relevant	———	0.12	———	0.14
		(0.15)		(0.14)
Budget FE	1.86*	1.83*	3.46*	3.43*
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Uniforms FE	1.68*	1.72*	3.47*	3.50*
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Taxes FE	2.33*	2.30*	3.83*	3.80*
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Guns FE	2.75*	2.78*	3.72*	3.76*
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.09)
N	1359	1359	1383	1383
R^2	0.15	0.15	0.03	0.04

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

Note: A linear model of argument ranking for good and bad arguments as a function of issue, the presence of legacy, and whether the issue is relevant to the politician's legacy. As in Table 2 and Table 3 in the main text, argument rankings range from 1-5, where 5 denotes the strongest argument. Relevant policy pertains to whether the issue at hand is relevant to the politician being remembered. These results only include the effect of Reagan on Democrats and Clinton on Republicans. There are two important substantive differences between the results here and the copartisans analysis in Study 2. First, there is no significant relevance interaction. Second, invoking legacies for a good argument tends to backfire.