Stretching the IR Theoretical Spectrum on Irish Neutrality: A Critical Social Constructivist Framework

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Abstract. In a 2006 *International Political Science Review* article, entitled "Choosing to Go It Alone: Irish Neutrality in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective," Neal G. Jesse argues that Irish neutrality is best understood through a neoliberal rather than a neorealist international relations theory framework. This article posits an alternative "critical social constructivist" framework for understanding Irish neutrality. The first part of the article considers the differences between neoliberalism and social constructivism and argues why critical social constructivism's emphasis on beliefs, identity, and the agency of the public in foreign policy are key factors explaining Irish neutrality today. Using public opinion data, the second part of the article tests whether national identity, independence, ethnocentrism, attitudes to Northern Ireland, and efficacy are factors driving public support for Irish neutrality. The results show that public attitudes to Irish neutrality are structured along the dimensions of independence and identity, indicating empirical support for a critical social constructivist framework of understanding of Irish neutrality.

Keywords: • Critical social constructivism • Neutrality • Ireland • Public opinion

Introduction

"Critical" social constructivism promises a significant research agenda beyond that of its "conventional" counterpart. This article seeks to make that argument by building upon Neal G. Jesse's theoretical and empirical findings on Irish neutrality in his 2006 *International Political Science Review* article, "Choosing to Go It Alone: Irish Neutrality in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective." I argue that critical social constructivism provides a more nuanced understanding of Irish neutrality than the neoliberal framework suggested by Jesse. The differences between the

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"neo-neo" synthesis of realist and liberal theories and social constructivist theory[1] are briefly explored after a fuller discussion of the differences within social constructivism(s) and how they relate to the central argument of this article.

Critical social constructivism can be distinguished from conventional social constructivism (and neoliberalism) through its anti-essentialist ontology and qualified-foundationalist epistemology, the use of post-structuralist approaches, and a concern with "omitted variable bias" in mainstream international relations (IR) theorizing, for example, mass publics in terms of "levels-of-analysis" and the consideration of "identity" as a driver of foreign policy. These characteristics underpin the approach used in this article, which supports alternative findings to the "neo-neo" story of the drivers of Irish neutrality.

The first half of this article evaluates the factors Jesse has identified as drivers of Irish neutrality that are understood as neoliberal, that is "public opinion, party politics, political institutions, leaders, and interest groups" (2006: 23), and cites a number of situations in which the agency and identity of the public arguably provide a stronger impulse to the maintenance of Irish neutrality. Jesse (2006: 20) cites an examination of public concepts of neutrality in a discussion on the trajectory of the public's view on continued neutrality. The "perspectivist" element of critical social constructivism is employed in a re-examination of this data; it suggests the literature has misinterpreted public concepts of neutrality, possibly due to elite, neorealist biases. The re-evaluation shows that the public has a reasonably stable and coherent concept of neutrality; it is a more "active" and broader concept than the Irish government's realist concept, which amounts to staying out of military alliances. These two important points have implications for the debate over the fit of a social constructivist approach with explanations of the maintenance of Irish neutrality.

Jesse identifies the issues of independence and sovereignty (2006: 19, 20), the continuing separation of Northern Ireland (2006: 8), and anti-British sentiment (2006: 21) as factors in Irish neutrality, and notes "that in no instance do the domestic sources consider the balance of power in the international environment to be a key to the neutrality policy" (2006: 23). Thus, he argues that realism is not the basis of substate actors' support for Irish neutrality and posits neoliberalism as an alternative framework of understanding. However, Jesse also cites the illumination of a concept of "security identity" as a consequence of his research (2006: 24) and theorizes that it will contribute to the continuation of neutrality (2006: 25); this variable fits nicely into a critical social constructivist framework of understanding. Using a recent Irish political attitudes survey, the second half of this article analyzes the results of a structural equation model that indicates which factors underpin public adherence to Irish neutrality. The model incorporates the three issues identified by Jesse (with anti-British sentiment broadened to ethnocentrism), including constructivist "identity" and realist "efficacy." Critical social constructivism contributes to an understanding of the identity issue in Irish foreign policy and the unmediated role of the public in this realm of international relations, as the results confirm Jesse's hypotheses of independence and identity as factors driving public support for Irish neutrality.

IR Theories and Understandings of Irish Neutrality

Jesse concludes by calling for (1) "comparative studies to investigate and examine our long-held theories of international relations" and (2) ways to understand

"a 'security identity' in Ireland that is tied to nationalism and independence from British hegemony" (2006: 24). These are interdependent academic objectives because a critical review of long-held IR theories must be undertaken in order to understand the notion of identity as a dynamic of Irish neutrality. The review must acknowledge that theories identify and prioritize the agents and variables considered in explanations and understandings of foreign policy. The state-centric, materialist focus of neorealism, neoliberalism, and "conventional" social constructivism does not recognize the identity of the public as a dynamic of foreign policy; thus it is unlikely to be included in empirical Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) models. Theories also guide discourses and conclusions on Irish neutrality. For example, a deconstruction (see Devine, 2006) demonstrated that two differing interpretations of Irish neutrality (including public opinion) are implicitly or explicitly underpinned by disparate sets of assumptions: a neorealist discourse concluded that Ireland is "unneutral," while a constructivist discourse that afforded agency to the public concluded otherwise. This evidence drives the re-evaluation of the analysis of public concepts of Irish neutrality cited by Jesse (2006: 20), to check whether the dominance of elite realist conceptions of neutrality has obscured any nonrealist public perspectives on neutrality. The re-examination could yield a clearer indication of the values underpinning the concept of neutrality supported by the Irish public. This investigation is important because public opinion is one of the "internal forces" that Jesse (2006: 20) identifies as drivers of Irish neutrality that are more powerful than neorealist "external" forces. The nature and consistency of this internal force must be properly understood in order to explain why Irish neutrality persists over time, despite realist hypotheses (Everts, 2000: 179; Jesse, 2006: 23) of Irish neutrality's demise in the post-Cold War era.

IR Theories and Public Opinion

Realists such as Hans Morgenthau have ignored the public as a variable of foreign policy, believing the public to be ill-informed, inattentive, and generally lacking the qualities needed to formulate "rational" foreign policy preferences (Morgenthau, 1978: 558; see also Althaus, 2003: 31; Rosenau, 1961: 35). This realist view was also held by public opinion analysts such as Gabriel Almond (1960) and Walter Lippmann (1955), who argued that public opinion threatens the normal course of rational foreign policy (Almond, 1960: 53, 69; Bjereld and Ekengren, 1999: 504; Holsti, 1992: 442; Knopf, 1998: 546; Marquis and Sciarini, 1999: 454). Neither school took the process of opinion formation seriously (Marquis and Sciarini, 1999: 454).

However, this negative view of the public has since been refuted (Isernia, 2001: 263; Page and Barabas, 2000: 347). Empirical analyses have found public opinion to be structured, "reflecting underlying values and beliefs" (Bardes and Oldendick, 1978: 497; Chittick et al., 1995; Holsti, 1996: 47; Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987: 1105; Page and Shapiro, 1992: 36; Peffley and Hurwitz, 1985: 872; Sniderman, 1993: 228; Wittkopf, 1990: 14, 21) and collectively rational (Jenkins-Smith et al., 2004: 291; Page and Shapiro, 1992: 281). Normative democratic theory supports the view that citizens are a wise source of foreign policy, preventing foreign policy designed solely in the interests of elites and even restraining leaders' war-making proclivities (Holsti, 1992: 440; Marquis and Sciarini, 1999: 454). Gaps between the policy preferences of leaders and citizens are seen as problematic (Page and Barabas, 2000: 339) and reflecting different values and interests, rather than levels of

attention or information (Page and Barabas, 2000: 360). Where public opinion is structured and informed, democratic theory calls for responsiveness by policy-makers (Page and Barabas, 2000: 352).

These points raise issues with the "Innenpolitik" and "Second Image" international relations literature. The Innenpolitik debate centers on which aspect of the domestic structure matters most in determining a state's response to international relations, for example pressure of the masses on policy, the autonomy of the state, and so on. It is a focus on process and institutional arrangements that is divorced from politics (Gourevitch, 1978: 901–3). The content of relations among groups and decisions is ignored; rather their formal properties or the character of decisions are considered: Waltz (1959: 80) favors an emphasis on the "container," rather than the "contents," and with that, "somehow politics disappears" (Gourevitch, 1978: 901). Critical social constructivism considers the content of what drives foreign policy preferences and unlike conventional social constructivism, takes account of the politics involved in the construction of that content and its effect on policy.

Studies have indicated a growing influence of public opinion on national policy-makers, European Union (EU) institutions, and the course of European integration (Anderson, 1998: 570; Eichenberg and Dalton, 1993: 507–8). A major restatement of neofunctionalist theory has explicitly assigned a substantial role to public opinion (Sinnott, 1995a: 20, 23). In short, the public and their opinions matter, despite mainstream theories' practice of omitting this variable from the study of IR.

Social Constructivism(s)

Several types of social constructivism have been identified. For example, Maja Zehfuss (2002) identifies three types in a spectrum of work from Kratchowil to Wendt, while Emanuel Adler (2002: 96) identifies four types (that is, modernist, modernist linguistic, radical, and critical) and Price and Reus-Smit (2000: 1811) point out "there are many constructivists, and thus perhaps, many constructivisms." The various approaches labeled social constructivism reflect different ontological and epistemological positions and are so ardently debated that "we still lack clarity on what constructivism is" (Zehfuss, 2002: 6).

The origins and character of "critical" social constructivism and its differences from conventional social constructivism are also disputed. Many suggest the "critical strand of social constructivism" (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 398) is derived from international "Critical Theory" associated with the work of Habermas and Foucault (Adler, 2002: 97), although others argue that conventional constructivism also has its intellectual roots in critical theory (Farrell, 2002: 59). Ted Hopf (1998: 181) outlines the similarities between conventional and critical constructivism, seeing both on the same side of Yosef Lapid's Battle Zone barricades, and differentiates them thus: "to the degree that constructivism creates theoretical and epistemological distance between itself and its origins in critical theory, it becomes 'conventional' constructivism." Conventional constructivists such as Alexander Wendt, Peter Katzenstein, and Ronald Jepperson label critical constructivism "radical constructivism," reflecting the work of David Campbell, Richard Ashley, and Cynthia Weber. Categorizations by mainstream IR theorists tend to miss the differences between postmodernist and post-structuralist work, for example John Mearsheimer lumps together the work of "constructivism,

reflectivism, postmodernism and poststructuralism" (Farrell, 2002: 56; Hopf, 1998: 181).

This problem of definition masks the underlying and more pressing issues that are revealed when distinguishing conventional from critical social constructivism through their respective research objectives, methods, and output. For example, Reus-Smit divides constructivism "between those who remain cognizant of the critical origins and potentiality of their sociological explorations and those who have embraced constructivism simply as an explanatory or interpretive tool" (2001: 224). The division is reflected in the assertion that critical social constructivists do not build or test new causal theories (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 398). Hopf (1998: 185) assigns the illumination of new understandings and the production of knowledge to the conventional realm of constructivism, implying that critical constructivist analyses of power relations and political constraints cannot do the same.

These distinctions are unhelpful for illuminating the potential of critical social constructivism as a research approach in IR and FPA – critical social constructivists can be both cognizant of their critical origins and use so-called "explanatory" or "theory-testing" research tools. As Bill McSweeney (1999: 112) argues, "To restrict the characterization of social theory to a choice over problem-solving versus critical is unhelpful, since some analyses of the social and political order are uncritical in Cox's sense of critical (being that critical theory 'stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about'), and some problem-solving ones are critical." Critical constructivists' emancipatory analyses of power relations produce new knowledge that can be hypothesized and tested empirically. Empirical testing can elaborate intangible or omitted variables of power relations and ideational values in IR. These possibilities are obscured by conventional understandings of what an emancipatory research approach produces and the dogged, yet illogical, disciplinary association of particular methods with essentialist ontology and foundationalist epistemology.

Differences between Conventional and Critical Social Constructivism

The main differences between conventional and critical social constructivisms of concern here are (1) different understandings of identity and a different emphasis on the role of domestic versus international factors in the production of that identity (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001: 399; Hopf, 1998: 183–5), (2) a concern of critical constructivism for missing variables and levels of analysis (Jacobsen, 2003: 59), and (3) different views on the acceptance and use of so-called "emancipatory" or "dissenting" traditions in constructivism (Checkel, 2004: 230; Farrell, 2002: 59; Houghton, 2007: 41). These differences also illustrate the qualities of critical constructivism that enhance understandings of the dynamics of Irish neutrality compared with conventional constructivism or neoliberalism.

Critical constructivists seek to understand the origins of identity; conventional constructivists assume state identity (Zehfuss, 2002: 89). "For Wendt, a key distinction is between the corporate and social identity of states, with the former deemphasized because 'its roots [are] in domestic politics' ... the result is that social construction at the level of individual agents or, more generally, at any domestic level is neglected" (Checkel, 1998: 341). Critical constructivism is a preferred approach because it allows for public agency in the foreign policy process (McSweeney, 1985a: 202) and considers its identity as constituting Irish neutrality (McSweeney, 1985b: 118). This ontological position allows the critical

distinction between governmental "state/foreign policy" identity and public "national/foreign policy" identity to be made and facilitates consideration of the role of power and alienation in the construction of competing foreign policy identities. In this paradigm, the exclusion of the public as a level of analysis in IR is political – a key point in attempts to understand the characteristics of Irish neutrality beyond those commonly identified in state and academic foreign policy discourses.

Hopf (1998: 182) suggests that "perhaps where constructivism is most conventional is in the area of methodology and epistemology"; for example, he points to the authors of the theoretical introduction to *The Culture of National Security* who vigorously, and perhaps defensively, deny that their authors use "any special interpretivist methodology." Thus, "The concern of Wendt to avoid a break with the explanatory model of neorealism ... has left its mark on the constructivist project" (McSweeney, 1999: 123). Conventional or mainstream academics tend to reject analytical modes or forms of analysis that challenge the scholarly status quo (Jacobsen, 2003: 39) and it is argued that the positioning of conventional constructivism as the "middle ground" of IR theory (Adler, 1997) excludes critical post-structuralist perspectives (Zehfuss, 2002: 260). A growing number of academics (Checkel, 2004: 239; Larsen, 2004: 66–7; Zehfuss, 2002) are advocating post-structuralist "methods" as part of the social constructivist approach to IR and FPA. This critical approach facilitates consideration of Irish national identity as a postcolonial phenomenon, which may explain why particular values are adhered to by the public and embodied in neutrality, for example the values of nonaggression and anti-imperialism, which can lead to opposition to perceived ideological or resource wars waged by "great powers."

Choosing Frameworks: Neoliberalism versus Critical Social Constructivism

The differences between critical constructivism and conventional constructivism are similar to the differences between critical constructivism and the neoliberal paradigm. There are several reasons why critical constructivism is a better framework for understanding the internal dynamics of Irish neutrality than neoliberalism. Constructivism argues that the study of international relations must focus on the ideas and beliefs that inform the actors on the international scene as well as the shared understandings between them (Jackson and Sørensen, 2006), directing analysis toward the consideration of public concepts of and attitudes toward neutrality, whereas neorealism considers only the governmental concept and policy (ignoring the substate level of the public)[2] and neoliberalism considers public opinion only insofar as it influences government. The latter paradigms reject the premise that the public has agency in international relations in and of itself, outside of the structural powers of the "intermediary" of the government. Empirical manifestations of this agency in the case of Irish foreign policy include voting in referendums, engaging in discourses through state and media channels, and taking action, for example protest marches and bringing the state to court in support of neutrality. Although the effects of these public activities are difficult to isolate and measure, they can directly influence international politics, including institutions, peoples, governments, and agencies in other states.

Neoliberal institutionalism and conventional constructivism hold domestic politics constant and explore variance in the international arena (Gourevitch, 2002: 309); this shared systemic theorizing flattens the role of domestic politics to zero in order to see whether changes in states' environment alter their behavior. This is also the central premise of realism: assuming a unitary, rational state in order to examine the variance within the international system. Conventional constructivists and neoliberals follow the neorealists in adopting a "third image" perspective, focusing solely on interactions between unitary states. Everything that exists or occurs within the domestic realm is ignored (Reus-Smit, 2001: 219). As a result, the "neo-neo" theories and conventional constructivism are theoretically inadequate for understanding the dynamics of public agency and identity in the maintenance of Irish neutrality. Thus, "we must venture outside of the orthodox" to analyze these variables because "the questions raised by our concern about identity, nationalism and the state cannot be responded to from within the current mainstream of IR theory" (Tooze, 1996: xvi–xx).

Neoliberal Factors: Governmental Political Institutions, Interest Groups, Leaders, and Party Politics

Jesse argues that political parties, political institutions, leaders, and interest groups are drivers of Irish neutrality rather than external factors such as the balance of power; therefore, neoliberalism is a superior framework to neorealism for understanding Irish neutrality. Considering the relative strength of these internal factors vis-à-vis the agency of the public, does critical social constructivism provide a superior framework to neoliberalism? First, some examples of the agency and behavior of these actors in situations in which Irish neutrality was perceived to be at stake are examined. Having established the relatively strong agency of the public, the second task is to look at whether the values, beliefs, and identity of the public are significant drivers of their attitudes toward (and by extension, their behavior in support of) the maintenance of Irish neutrality.

Governmental Decision-making Political Institutions and Interest Groups

Political parties, governmental decision-making political institutions, leaders, and a majority of interest groups supported a "yes" vote in the EU Nice Treaty referendum held in Ireland on June 7, 2001. The referendum proposal was defeated, in part because the voters who turned out perceived threats to Irish neutrality arising from the Treaty (Sinnott, 2001: v). In response, the Irish government asked the EU Heads of State to declare that the Nice Treaty did not affect Irish "military" neutrality, and the government added a protocol promising to hold a referendum on joining a European Union military alliance in the future. In this instance, the public had a direct influence on international affairs in an attempt to maintain their conception of Irish neutrality, as the strength of public opinion forced neutrality onto the EU agenda, despite the efforts of well-funded, pro-Treaty interest groups, employers' groups, labor unions, major political parties, and the government. The neoliberal hypothesis that these actors have a definitive influence in the maintenance of active neutrality is weaker than social constructivism's hypothesis that the public has an equally significant role that is independent of these actors.

Social constructivism's emphasis on the level of cognition and ideas as the medium and propellant of social action (Adler, 2002: 325) and its goal of identifying the intersubjective context within which deeds of one kind or another appear to be reasonable and therefore justifiable (Kubálková, 2001: 75) suggest the need to investigate governmental and public concepts of neutrality in order to explain the public's behavior (as a reflection of their opinion on the maintenance of neutrality) vis-à-vis that of governmental and substate actors.[3] The "divergence of concepts" hypothesis is alluded to in a broadsheet newspaper editorial noting that Ireland's involvement in EU security and defense developments, such as participation in EU battle groups, does not affect the concept of neutrality "defined minimalistically by the Government as non-participation in military alliances" (*Irish Times*, 2006).

Leaders

The difficulty in isolating the effect of public opinion as a direct determinant of the foreign policy process is compounded in the Irish case by a lack of research (Keatinge, 1973: 184). Nonetheless, it is possible to identify times when the Irish public constituency effectively controlled the capacity of Irish political leaders to participate in and influence international politics. During the 1970s and 1980s, Irish Taoisigh avoided participating in European Community post-summit leaders' discussions on the military aspects of European Political Cooperation because of public support for neutrality in Ireland. For example, despite his own deeply held personal convictions against Irish neutrality, the then Taoiseach, Garret FitzGerald, felt he had to absent himself from such discussions due to pressure to uphold neutrality (FitzGerald, 1988: 29; 1995). Furthermore, in the 1990s, Irish political elites have claimed that the public would determine the "pace and nature" of further European integration (Mitchell, in Sinnott, 1995b: v)[4] and successive governments have promised to leave the decision to abandon Irish neutrality and join an EU military alliance to the Irish people (Government of Ireland, 1996: 16; Seville Declaration, 2002), effectively casting the public as decision-makers on this aspect of neutrality and international politics and seemingly absenting themselves from their position, as designated by Robert Putnam (1988), between international negotiation and domestic political forces. This agency of the public is consistent with a social constructivist theoretical framework of understanding – more so than a neoliberal one.

Party Politics

Neoliberalism posits that party politics is a significant internal factor supporting Irish neutrality. Consistency is held as an important basis of an actor's power in the realm of foreign policy (Hill, 1993: 324–5). Irish neutrality was argued to be at stake during the debate over Ireland's membership of Partnership for Peace (PfP) between 1995 and 1999. This era illustrates the questionable influence and consistency of party political actors, in particular Fianna Fáil, the largest political party in the state and one that has held power for 57 of the past 75 years, commanding the support of between four and five out of 10 members of the electorate, and claiming the title of "chief architect and defender of neutrality" (*Irish Times*, 1997).

Before assuming the role of Taoiseach in July 1997, party leader Bertie Ahern committed Fianna Fáil to holding a referendum on PfP membership (Fianna Fáil, 1997). Ahern conceived of Ireland's membership of PfP as "seen by other countries as a gratuitous signal that Ireland is moving away from its neutrality and towards gradual incorporation into NATO and WEU [Western European Union] in due course" and that any attempt to join without a referendum would be "a serious breach of faith and fundamentally undemocratic" (*Irish Times*, 1996). Nonetheless, shortly after regaining office, on October 5, 1999 the Fianna Fáil-led government implemented a decision to join PfP without a referendum, marking a U-turn in the party's position (*Irish Times*, 1999). This example points to the inconsistency of the neutrality concept of the largest political party when in power (a limited or negative concept) and when in opposition (a comprehensive or positive concept) and raises the question of whether the government is less consistent than the public in its views on neutrality. An analysis of public concepts of neutrality from 1985 through to 1992 cited by Jesse (2006: 20) argues that Irish public concepts of neutrality are "inconsistent" and "limited," indicating there may be little to choose between the public and governments on that score. Attention now turns to the evaluation of this hypothesis.

Reanalyzing Public Concepts of Irish Neutrality

The critical element of constructivism demands cognizance of the theoretical assumptions underpinning academic analyses. Knud Erik Jørgensen argues that the realism of many academics means that "much tends to remain unexamined because implicit assumptions and deeply held beliefs among analysts tend to replace analysis. What is considered to be of minor or major importance tends to be identified *ex post*, rather than *a priori* and by means of theory-derived hypotheses" (1999: 113). With respect to reporting on survey data, Ole Holsti and James Rosenau (1986: 478) admit that "there are ways in which the patterns uncovered can be shaped by the premises and preconceptions of the researcher." There are three issues that hinder the analysis of public concepts of neutrality. First, the majority of academic and government discourses on Irish neutrality define it narrowly as nonparticipation in a military alliance.[5] Government elites have also claimed that this narrow definition is the concept held by the Irish public: Minister for State Tom Kitt declared in the Dáil that "the central and defining characteristic of Irish people in this area ... is our non-participation in military alliances" (*Irish Times*, 2003). This dominant discourse may channel researchers' perspectives to see this narrow concept rather than a broader, active concept of Irish neutrality.

Two other difficulties contribute to differences in interpretations of the data. The 1985 and 1992 data used in Karin Gilland's (2001) analysis were opinion polls undertaken on behalf of a newspaper, and the responses to the open-ended questions on the meaning of Irish neutrality had to be coded in a matter of hours. The Irish Social and Political Attitudes Survey (ISPAS) carried out in 2001/02 presented the first academic opportunity to code verbatim responses to this question, with the benefit of a more favorable timescale. In addition, the 1985 and 1992 surveys were based on a quota sample of the population, whereas

the 2001/02 ISPAS survey was based on a random sample of the electorate (those aged over 18 and registered to vote). The lack of academic access to the 1985 and 1992 verbatim responses and code frames and the differing samples may contribute to a divergence in findings.

"Inconsistent" and "Limited"?

There are two bases for an assumption of concept stability across the three decades of data collected on the meaning of Irish neutrality. Recalling the premise that Irish foreign policy "is a statement of the kind of people we are" (Government of Ireland, 1996: 55), the first is that deeply held personal values underpinning public concepts of neutrality and foreign policy identities are slow to change, in part because these values are a function of cultural and historical experience. The second basis concerns the stability of state foreign policy activity: "One could argue for a greater stability of public opinion in countries where a relative exclusion from the vagaries and tensions of the international environment results in a less active foreign policy" (Isernia et al., 2002: 204). Ireland does not engage in wars, nuclear posturing, and other "active" variables identified by Isernia et al.; Ireland was not affected by an international upheaval (2002: 205) or major new events (2002: 216) in the period preceding or during the conduct of the surveys. Theoretically, therefore, one should not expect capricious change in public attitudes or concepts.

Gilland characterizes the public view of neutrality as inconsistent because "the response category 'no military alliance, not in NATO' lost 12 percentage points and went from 23 percent in 1985 to 11 percent in 1992" (2001: 150–1). The people "who associated it [neutrality] with military alliances" were outnumbered by those "who did not know what neutrality meant to them" (Gilland, 2001: 151). A pluralist perspective of the original response category data in Table 1 (see Irish Opinion Poll Archive, 2006) offers an alternative interpretation. Gilland's figure of 23 percent is derived from collapsing together two very distinct categories of meaning: 5 percent of respondents who said Irish neutrality means "not part of NATO" and 18 percent of respondents who said Irish neutrality means "no alliance with other nations/we don't take sides." In the context of the ISPAS

TABLE 1. *Original Response Category Data "What does Irish Neutrality Mean to You?"*

Survey: MRBI 22-23 April 1985		Survey: MRBI 8 June 1992	
Response category	%	Response category	%
We don't get involved in wars	21	We don't get involved in wars	35
Should stay as we are	12	We should stay independent/as we are	17
No alliance with other nations/ we don't take sides	18	No alliances, we don't take sides	9
Not part of NATO	5	We are not part of NATO	2
A free/independent state	4	We are a free/independent country	8
Don't know	31	Don't know	21

verbatims, these "no side taken/no alliance with other nations" codes signify impartiality, that is, not being seen to be allied with or supporting a nation at war. The corresponding response category in the 1992 data that allegedly amounts to 11 percent is a total of 9 percent of respondents that said "we don't take sides, no alliances" and 2 percent of respondents mentioning "we are not part of NATO."

The breakdown[6] of the 2001/02 ISPAS data in Table 2 shows that the most strongly supported public concepts closely resemble the wider, "active" concept of neutrality that embodies characteristics such as peace promotion, nonaggression, the primacy of the UN, and the confinement of state military activity to UN peacekeeping, not being involved in wars, and maintaining Ireland's independence, identity, and independent foreign policy decision-making (in the context of "big power" pressure). Adding the 2001/02 data code 18 ("not involved in a defence alliance") to code 11 ("no NATO involvement") gives a total figure of 1.4 percent for the super-category "not in a military alliance." This is roughly equivalent to the "not part of NATO" 1985 and 1992 figures of 5 percent and 2 percent of the population, respectively. Impartiality-related codes in the 2001/02 data include

TABLE 2. *ISPAS 2001/2002 selected response category data for the question 'what does Irish neutrality mean to you?'*

Code	N=	Definition of Irish neutrality (first mentions)	%
13	24	Peaceful/promotes peace/mediator	1.0
21/23	67	No enemies/free from war/conscription	2.7
4	123	Good thing	4.9
19	47	Important/means a lot	1.9
8	143	Not involved in other countries' war	5.7
5	366	Not involved in war/no war	14.6
2	120	Being neutral	4.8
14/15	71	UN involvement/ peacekeeping only	2.9
7	119	Independence/make own decisions	4.7
26	93	Ireland standing alone/minding own business	3.7
10	21	Irish Identity	0.8
31	186	No opinion	7.4
40	61	No side taken in war/non-partisan	2.4
0	151	Don't know	6.0
57	96	Right to decide to go to war	3.8
18	25	Not in defence alliance*	1.0
39	4	Military neutrality*	0.2
11	9	No NATO involvement	0.4
1	140	Nothing	5.6
29	15	Disagree with it	0.6
3	17	Fence-sitting	0.7
–	614	Other	24.4
Total	2512		100

*government definition.

code 40 ("no side taken in war/non-partisan") and code 26 ("Ireland standing alone/minding own business"), accounting for 6 percent of mentions. (Including code 2 ("being neutral [between aggressors]") brings total impartiality sentiment to 11 percent.)

In Gilland's (2001) analysis, themes relating to nonpartisanship or impartiality were coded into the categories "no alliances, we don't take sides" and "no alliance with other nations/we don't take sides" and subsequently written up as part of a super-category labeled "membership of a military alliance." Creating a "military alliance" super-category from the two "no alliance with other nations/we don't take sides" and "not part of NATO" codes effectively quadruples the number of people alleged to associate Irish neutrality with military alliances, but the two response categories are arguably too distinct in meaning to be collapsed together. Having the "membership of a military alliance" meaning (which has significantly less mentions than the impartiality codes) take precedence in the written presentation of these collapsed response categories is misleading, to the extent that elements of public concepts of neutrality, at best, are ignored and, at worst, are subsumed into a limited, realist concept of neutrality. If the above arguments are accepted, Gilland's claim that the meaning of Irish neutrality that is "associated with military alliances" has dropped from 25 percent to 11 percent between the 1985 and 1992 surveys cannot be sustained; the difference is between the 1985 figure of 5 percent and the 1992 figure of 2 percent, amounting to just 3 percent and as a result, the "inconsistency" claim (2001: 150) regarding public concepts of Irish neutrality is not sustained. In fact, significant elements of the public concepts of neutrality, such as the sovereignty and independence variables Jesse (2006) identifies as catalyzing Irish neutrality, are consistent over time. Table 3 shows the rank order[7] of the response categories and points to reasonable stability in the range of meanings of public concepts of Irish neutrality: the top four definitions of neutrality are "not getting involved in war," "independence/staying independent," "not taking sides [in wars]/impartiality," and "not possible/means nothing" (ISPAS, 2001/02; MRBI, 1985, 1992a, 1992b).

The most frequently mentioned meaning, "don't get involved in wars," correlates strongly with academic concepts of neutrality. For example, Jessup (1936: 156) claims, "the primary objective of a neutrality policy should be to keep out of war";

TABLE 3. *Rank Order of Neutrality Definitions Offered by the Irish Public, 1985–2001*

	Rank order			
Survey responses	April 1985	May 1992	June 1992	2001/2002
Don't get involved in wars	2	1	1	1
Don't know	1	2	2	2
Independence/staying independent	4	3	3	3
Don't take sides in wars/non-partisan/ neutral	3	5	4	6
Means nothing/not possible	8	4	6	4
Staying out of NATO/military alliances	5%	2%	2%	1%
Don't know	31%	25%	21%	16%

for Goetschel (1999: 119), "being neutral means not taking part in military conflict"; and according to Calvocoressi (1996: 172), "neutrality was a general declaration of intent to remain out of any war which might occur." The second and third most popular public concepts, "independence/staying as we are" and "not taking sides," are methods to achieve the objective of staying out of wars and constitute important elements of neutrality.

Linking Values and Identity of the Public in Foreign Policy

Understanding the public's concept of neutrality is central to explaining the role of identity as a driver of public opinion because there is theoretical and empirical evidence favoring the hypothesis of a relationship between the values embodied in the strongly supported public concept of Irish neutrality and the national identity of the Irish people portrayed internationally. In Ireland's first and only White Paper on Foreign Policy, the Irish government acknowledged that "Ireland's foreign policy is about much more than self interest. For many of us it is a statement of the kind of people we are" (Government of Ireland, 1996: 55) and that "the majority of the Irish people have always cherished Ireland's military neutrality, and recognise the positive values that inspire it, in peace-time as well as time of war" (Government of Ireland, 1996: 15). The White Paper states that "the values that underlie Ireland's policy of neutrality have therefore informed almost every aspect of our foreign policy" (Government of Ireland, 1996: 119) and cites an example of this using impartiality, an important element of the public concept of neutrality: "our international reputation for impartiality has enabled us to play a meaningful role in the preservation of peace in the world" (Government of Ireland, 1996: 119).

Theorists have argued that national interest depends on national identity, which is a construct in our minds describing and prescribing what we should think, feel, value, and ultimately, how we should behave in group-relevant situations. This identity has an internal (how groups imagine themselves) and external dimension and is a function of values (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 2001: 95). Values and identity are interlinked; as Poole argues, "an identity is a form of inscription: as such, it embodies a specific evaluative point of view. All identities involve values and commitments, and the acquisition of identity means coming to accept these values and commitments" (1999: 46). In effect, the concept of Irish neutrality as understood by the Irish people is a reflection of their values and a projection of their national identity in international affairs. Ireland is not a unique case in this respect, as this phenomenon is identified as a dynamic in other European neutral states' populations[8] and also in alliance states.[9] This theoretical move reflects the social constructivist emphasis on identity as a driver of foreign policy: this understanding of Irish neutrality will be evaluated in the next half of this article.

Evaluating the Drivers of Public Opinion on Neutrality

Before discussing the results of the structural equation model, it is worth noting the issues raised by the use of statistical models within the critical strand of social constructivism. Because constructivist scholarship has taken on the meta-theoretical challenges issued during the Third Debate (Price and Reus-Smit, 2000: 1786), some

critical constructivists have been associated with post-structuralist approaches and work within the school of critical theory. As regards testing theoretical hypotheses empirically, just as post-structuralist deconstruction is not anti-empirical (Der Derian, 1997: 57), neither is critical social constructivism – it has a qualified foundationalist approach to the empirical, acknowledging the shifting notion of "reality" and the politicization of identifying what is "real" and what is possible. This foundationalism, in a Derridian sense, rejects the notion of a value-neutral reality (Zehfuss, 2002: 207).[10] There is a need to emphasize the fact that using statistical methods to evaluate data capturing political concepts does not render the concepts epistemologically incontestable (Jupille, 2005: 216). The structural equation model technique employed in this article uses a number of different but related statements to measure the values that are hypothesized to drive attitudes to neutrality; these multiple indicators are translated into an operationalized latent variable that is interpreted as an orientation. Theoretically, this is a less essentialized operationalization than other techniques, such as multiple regression analysis, that use one single measurement to represent a variable. The meaning is a little more open to interpretation – although hardcore positivists might see this as merely introducing more error. While the language used is different from that used by the interpretative camp of critical constructivism, nevertheless, the findings are important to understand, as they build on the results of prior interpretative analyses. This cognitive empirical approach to understanding neutrality fits into the concept of social constructivism as a substantive theory of politics: "The cognitivists, especially in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), are told that their studies ... are a coherent constructivist approach" (Wæver, 1997: 23–4).

Variables and Hypotheses

Jesse (2006: 8) identifies factors such as hostile relations with Britain, the continuing separation of Northern Ireland, and notions of independence and sovereignty as drivers of Irish neutrality. There is plenty of support in the literature for the independence (Fanning, 1996: 14; Fisk, 1983: 39; Keatinge, 1984: 108), anti-British sentiment (Andrén, 1978: 174; Fanning, 1996: 145; Fisk, 1983: 76; Keatinge, 1989: 68; Kux, 1986: 36; Sundelius, 1987: 8), and Northern Ireland hypotheses (Karsh, 1988: 192; Keatinge, 1978: 112; Salmon, 1982: 205; Sundelius, 1987: 8). In this model, an "ethnocentrism" latent variable is substituted for anti-British sentiment, due to data limitations. In addition to these factors, the literature supports testing the notions of patriotism or identity (Fanning, 1996: 146; Keatinge, 1984: 6–7; McSweeney, 1985b: 119) and efficacy (Keatinge, 1978: 93) as drivers of neutrality, associated with social constructivist and realist dimensions of neutrality, respectively. The dependent latent variable comprising a zero to 10-point scale captures whether Ireland must remain neutral in all circumstances or give up its neutrality and whether neutrality is not at all important or very important. The data is derived from the ISPAS survey carried out during the winter of 2001 and spring of 2002, based on a random sample of the electorate (those aged over 18 and registered to vote).

National Identity or Patriotism

William Chittick has been trying to get the academic community to accept an identity dimension in models of public opinion on foreign policy (POFP) since

the mid-1980s (Hart, 1995). Part of the difficulty is probably due to the lack of a theoretical framework supporting the introduction of an identity dimension. Although many POFP analysts have linked dimensions to "venerable IR theories of realism and liberalism" (Bjereld and Ekengren, 1999: 515), to date, social constructivism has not featured in the POFP literature as a suitable theoretical avenue, probably because it only became influential as a tradition in IR in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Weber, 2001: 60), compounded by the fact that "IR constructivism is at a preliminary stage only; much work still remains before it becomes a normal and taken-for-granted way of doing IR theory and research" (Adler, 2002: 111). Outside of the POFP literature, the relationship between neutrality and national identity has been identified by Irish history and politics academics, for example Ronan Fanning notes that "no Irish government would be so foolhardy as to underestimate the fierce hold on the popular imagination of the historic bond between Irish neutrality and Irish identity" (1996: 146). This literature, combined with the theoretical reasons discussed earlier, supports the proposed hypothesis that an attachment to Irish national identity (operationalized in Table 4) is related to an attachment to neutrality.[11]

Notably, identity is a factor in analyses of European neutrality, that is, of Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, and Finland. In the Swedish case, Annical Kronsell and Erika Svedberg (2001: 154), quoting from Wæver (2002), argue that "A collective identity was shaped by the neutrality doctrine ... the neutrality doctrine can be seen as 'the state's external projection of itself into the world.'" Ann-Sofie Dahl claims "it is important to understand the position which neutrality has occupied generally in Swedish society. Neutrality evolved over the years from merely the security doctrine of the country to become a central tenet of Swedish national identity" (1997: 20). The former President of the Swiss Confederation, Max Petitpierre, argued that Swiss "neutrality's justification does not lie in foreign opinion, even though this is important to us and we must seek to inform it and influence it. Justification lies above all in our own conviction that in breaking away from neutrality we would lose our national character" (Ogley, 1970: 180). Furthermore, Jean Freymond explains that "neutrality became and remains the guiding principle of Swiss foreign policy, not only in the eyes of the authorities, but even more for public opinion, to the extent that it has become one of the components of Swiss identity" (1990: 181). Analyzing Austrian neutrality, Hans Thalberg surmised that "neutrality has to reflect the general character and temperament of a nation" (1989: 236). In a discussion of Finnish neutrality, Pertti Joenniemi argues that "neutrality is not only a role or status; it also connotes a more general foreign-policy profile or identity" (1989: 58).

TABLE 4. *Patriotism Indicators*

Variable label	Question wording	Scale
citizen	I would rather be a citizen of Ireland than of any other country in the world	1 – 7
proud	Would you say you are very proud, quite proud, not very proud or not at all proud to be Irish?	1 – 4
important	Overall, how important is it to you that you are 'Irish' or [other nationality]	1 – 4

Independence and Sovereignty

The modern history and politics literatures on Irish neutrality posit independence and sovereignty as key factors underpinning Ireland's neutrality; the former also makes explicit reference to public attitudes in this respect. Robert Fisk dubbed Ireland's neutrality in the Second World War "a publicly non-aligned independence that finally demonstrated the sovereignty of de Valera's state and her break with the Empire" (Fisk, 1983: 39; see also Fanning, 1996: 139; Karsh, 1988: 192; Vukadinovic, 1989: 41–2). Patrick Keatinge (1978: 73) notes a "psychological need" in Irish people "for a dramatic manifestation of independence," a factor, he argues, that underpinned people's reluctance to question the doctrine of neutrality. Due to the strong association of neutrality with independence, it is hypothesized that independence (see Table 5) should be a significant factor structuring attitudes to Irish neutrality – the more an individual favors Irish independence, the more that person should favor the maintenance of Irish neutrality.[12]

TABLE 5. *Independence Indicators*

Variable label	Question wording	Scale
EU unification	European Unification has gone too far → not far enough	0 – 10
Unite/Indep	Ireland should do all it can to unite fully with the EU → protect independence	0 – 10
EU memb	Ireland's membership of the European Union is a bad thing → a good thing	0 – 10
Nice I	I would like you to imagine you are voting on the next referendum on the Nice Treaty [Nice II]. Where would you place yourself on a scale of 1 to 7? [1 → definitely in favour; 7 → definitely against]	1 – 7

Northern Ireland

The comparative literature cites Northern Ireland as an important dynamic of Irish neutrality, for example Bengt Sundelius (1987: 8) declares that Irish neutrality "is intimately linked to the unsettled question of Northern Ireland" and Keatinge (1972: 439) posits Irish neutrality as "a symbol of two of the most emotionally charged Irish national aspirations," that is, independence and unification of the island. Efraim Karsh argues "neutrality has been both a product of the painful question of Partition and a means for its solution" (1988: 192). Many academics recall the British government's attempts to involve Ireland in the Second World War by floating reunification proposals (Keatinge, 1978: 110–11), which Eamon de Valera consistently refused. Although Róisín Doherty acknowledges that "partition was not the primary motivation for neutrality, sovereignty was more important to de Valera," she maintains that "the impression among the general public was different" (2002: 41). As academic discussions of the links between Northern Ireland and neutrality refer only to the level of statesmanship and there has been no convincing evidence that the issue embedded itself in the public mind, it is hypothesized that attitudes to the Northern Ireland question (operationalized in Table 6) should have little bearing on attitudes to Irish neutrality.

TABLE 6. *Northern Ireland Indicators*

Variable label	Question wording	Scale
united/sep	It is essential that all of Ireland becomes united in one state → the different parts of Ireland are best left as separate states	0 – 10
reunify	The long term policy for Northern Ireland should be to reunify with the rest of Ireland [disagree → agree]	1 – 7
Brit say	The British government should continue to have a lot of say in the way Northern Ireland is run [disagree → agree]	1 – 7
withdraw	The British government should declare its intention to withdraw from Northern Ireland at a fixed date in the future [disagree → agree]	1 – 7

Ethnocentrism

With only one indicator to estimate an anti-British latent construct, a wider theoretical perspective was taken in relation to this issue: rather than focus on one specific "outgroup," such as "the British" or the "English," an international and widely used "ethnocentrism" latent orientation is employed in the model. Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley (1987: 1108) define ethnocentrism as "the belief that one's country is superior to all others" and make a link between ethnocentrism's fostering of a self-centered and parochial view of the world and a tendency toward isolationism. Peter Schmidt and Aribert Heyder (2000: 27) identify two dimensions of ethnocentrism: a phenomenon of cultural narrowness and the overevaluation or idealization of the in-group. The cultural effect of Ireland's postcolonial legacy and the notable persistence of a self-critical discourse in the media indicate the small likelihood of "national superiority" and "blind nationalist" tendencies among the Irish population; that said, several realist academics (Doherty, 2002: 30; Fanning, 1996: 142–3; FitzGerald, 1995; Salmon, 1989) who maintain that Irish neutrality is a myth have alleged pietistic inclinations among some neutrality supporters, emboldened by an image of neutrality as a morally superior foreign policy option. As realist thinking drives the hypothesized link, ethnocentrism (see Table 7) is not expected to be a significant dynamic of Irish public opinion on neutrality.

TABLE 7. *Ethnocentrism Indicators*

Variable label	Question wording	Scale
interests	Ireland should always follow its own interests, even if this leads to conflicts with other nations	1– 7
wrong	Irish people should support their country even when it is wrong	1 – 7
Ireland better	Generally speaking, Ireland is a better country than most countries	1 – 7
Like Irish	The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the Irish	1 – 7

Efficacy

Another dynamic of neutrality that frequently appears in the foreign policy literature is the realist notion of efficacy, reflecting perceived levels of power. Neutrality violates the realist power assumption because "neutrality is the opposite of a typical policy followed by a small state" (Karsh, 1988: 4). The neorealist paradigm expects "small" states to seek security with other states in a military alliance because their low levels of efficacy hamper survival in an anarchic world. The Irish government believes that "Ireland is a small country with a limited capacity to influence its external environment" (Government of Ireland, 2000: 3.2.1) and the public may share this view. The efficacy latent variable in this model comprises a personal concept of efficacy (defined as "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process" (Acock et al., 1985: 1063)), a measure concerning the government's ability to influence factors affecting Ireland given the pressure of external factors, and a third concerning the influence of political parties (see Table 8). Given that the link between neutrality and efficacy is a realist-based "costs and benefits" hypothesis existing at the state–government level, it is hypothesized that efficacy is not a significant determinant of attitudes to neutrality.

Table 8. *Efficacy Indicators*

Variable label	Question wording	Scale
govt	In today's world, an Irish government can't really influence what happens in this country. [Disagree–Agree]	1– 7
person	The ordinary person has no influence on politics. [Disagree–Agree]	1 – 7
party	It doesn't really matter which political party is in power, in the end things go on much the same. [Disagree–Agree]	1 – 7

The evaluation of the measurement model concerns the extent to which the observed variables are actually measuring the hypothesized latent variables (see Figure 1). The relationships between the observed variables and the latent variables are indicated by the factor loadings. Factor loadings are interpreted as unstandardized regression coefficients that estimate the direct effects of the factors on the indicators (Kline, 1998: 207); they indicate expected change in the indicator given a 1-point increase in the factor (Kline, 1998: 215). In this model (n = 1855), all of the unstandardized loadings that are not fixed to 1.0 to scale factors are significant at the .01 level and all of the error variances are different from zero and significant at the .01 level. Overall, the measurement model appears to perform well, helped by the fact that each latent variable is represented by at least three indicators that are psychometrically sound.

The evaluation of the structural model concerns the relationship between the neutrality, independence, patriotism, efficacy, ethnocentrism, and Northern Ireland latent variables. The statistical significance of parameter estimates (magnitude) and the direction (positive or negative coefficients) are required, to provide a meaningful interpretation of the results. The use of a correlation matrix results in more conservative estimates of parameter statistical significance (Kelloway, 1998: 19). Another important measure is the assessment of the "fit" of the data to the model, specifically, the comparative fit of the default model to the data vis-à-vis

the null model (Kelloway, 1998: 29). The goodness-of-fit statistics that evaluate the overall fit of the model are included. The RMSEA figure is the root mean square error of approximation and estimates how well the model would fit with the population matrix if it were available; a figure of less than 0.05 indicates a "close fit" (Arbuckle and Wothke, 1999: 402–3; Byrne, 2001: 84–5). Pclose provides a test of close fit and it should approximate 1.00; specifically, it is a "p-value" for testing the null hypothesis that the population RMSEA is no greater than .05 (see Figure 1).

Looking at the regression weights of the five latent variables shown in Table 9, only the two hypothesized determinants of public support for Irish neutrality,

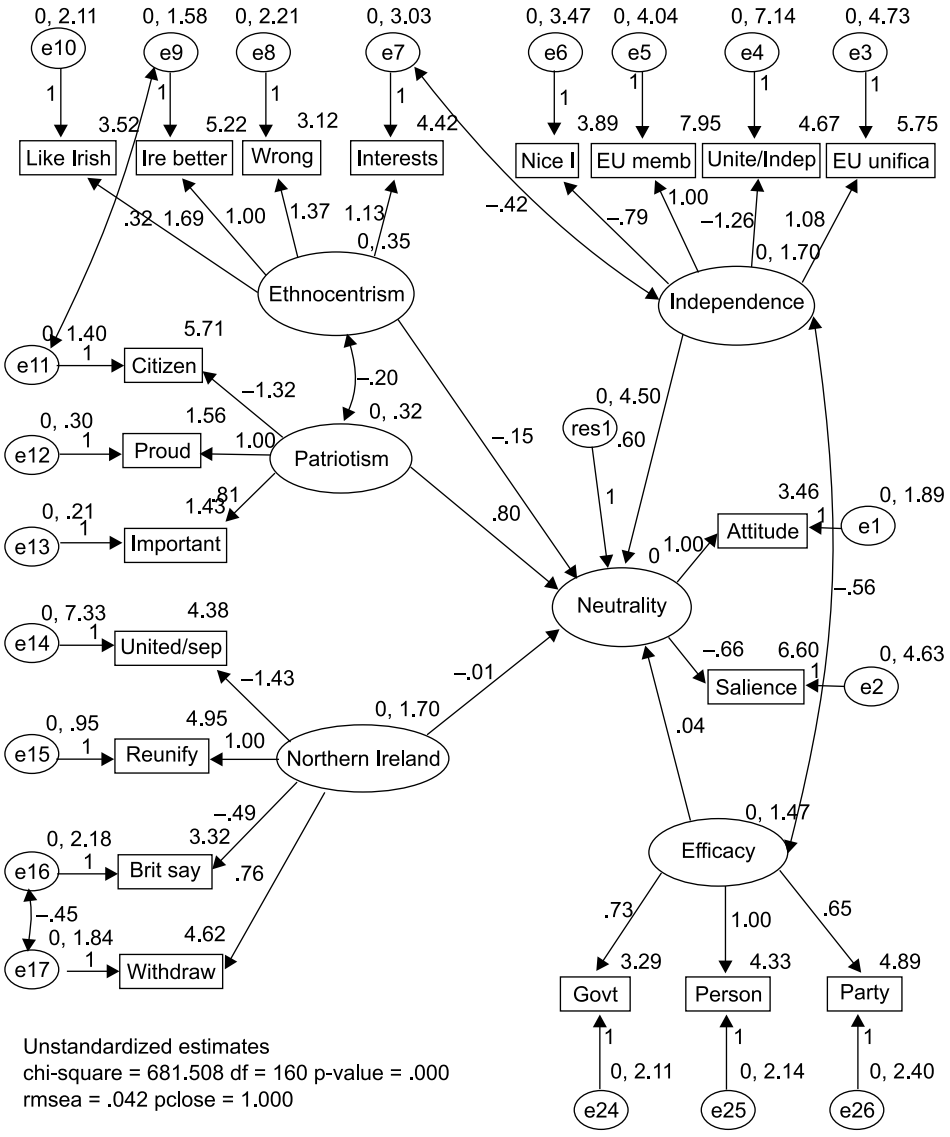

FIGURE 1. *The Result of Structural Equations Model of Public Opinion*

independence and patriotism, show statistically significant parameter estimates and positive relationships (.6 and .8, respectively) with the neutrality latent variable. In comparison, the efficacy (.04), Northern Ireland (–.01), and ethnocentrism (–.15) parameters are weak and are not statistically significant. Many public opinion researchers connect these types of "domain beliefs to international relations theory – realism and idealism" (for a list of researchers, see Jenkins-Smith, 2004: 291). The relative strength of the independence and patriotism factors in the model confirms the importance of these two drivers in the maintenance of Irish neutrality and the theoretical relevance of the social constructivist framework that considers the identity factor in foreign policy analysis. Jesse (2006) calls for ways to understand both sovereignty and identity as two central dynamics of Irish neutrality. Arguably, there is a dynamic of interdependence between these two factors, for example Keatinge (1984: 6–7) and Fanning (1996: 137) theorize interaction at the level of the state. Fanning (1996: 140) sees the interplay at work at the level of the public: "by the end of the Second World War neutrality had become what it largely remains in the popular mind until today: the hallmark of independence, a badge of patriotic honour inextricably linked with the popular perception of Irish national identity." The relationship between independence and patriotism is symbiotic.

Conclusions

For Jesse (2006: 8) "it is obvious that realist theory grossly underestimates the contributions of domestic factors to the establishment and maintenance of Irish neutrality." Neoliberalism is not the best alternative framework because it accords public opinion agency in foreign policy only through governments; as the Irish government's concept of neutrality does not reflect or capture public concepts of neutrality, government, in this case, is an unlikely representative intermediary. Jesse's (2006: 23, 25) argument that the development of a security identity that is tied to nationalism and independence contributes to the continuation of neutrality is supported, but is inconsistent with claims that liberal theories give a better understanding of continued Irish neutrality (2006: 23) because identity and independence are the drivers underpinning the agency of the Irish public in maintaining Irish neutrality, and liberal theories, unlike critical constructivism, do not seriously consider identity as a variable in state foreign policy or as a driver of public support for foreign policy. This identity-based neutrality dynamic suggests there will be stability in the Irish population's support for Irish neutrality, as radical short-term change in the identity (and values) of mass publics is rare. This has implications for the future referendum on Irish neutrality in the context of governments' agreement to create a European Union military alliance.

TABLE 9. *Regression Weights of the Structural Model*

Dependent variable		Independent variables	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Neutrality	←	Ethnocentrism	–.146	.199	–.734	.463
Neutrality	←	Patriotism	.795	.192	4.137	***
Neutrality	←	Northern Ireland	–.014	.052	–.265	.791
Neutrality	←	Independence	.600	.073	8.200	***
Neutrality	←	Efficacy	.037	.074	.503	.615

David Dessler (1999: 123) has speculated on the contribution of constructivism to FPA and IR, asking whether constructivists would introduce new methods and new epistemological standards to empirical enquiry. The employment of a critical perspectivist approach to the analysis of public concepts of neutrality in this article has contributed to this task, demonstrating that the study of neutrality as a phenomenon of IR and FPA requires "new forms of theoretical and historical analysis" (Dessler, 1999: 123). Dessler also asked whether constructivism would turn attention to long-ignored causal factors and effects in world politics; the validation of a critical constructivist decision to include an identity variable in the analysis of the drivers of public attitudes to neutrality points to a long-ignored causal factor of foreign policy that deserves further empirical attention.

Liberals such as Andrew Moravcsik (1997) want a synthesis of liberal and constructivist theory, the conventional constructivist Alexander Wendt (1992: 425) wants strong liberals and constructivists to engage, and a sympathetic critical constructivist wants "a serious dialogue by both mainstream scholars and conventional constructivists with critical constructivists" (Jacobsen, 2003: 60). Others want constructivism to build bridges with particular subdisciplines: Finnemore and Sikkink (2001: 396) see constructivism building bridges with comparative politics and David Patrick Houghton (2007: 33, 42) advocates bridges with comparative FPA. While the constructivist project has sought to open up the relatively narrow theoretical fields in IR (Ruggie, 1998: 862), given its concerns with emancipation, methodological pluralism, and the origins, nature, and politics of identity, arguably, the critical strand of constructivism is better equipped to achieve that goal than conventional constructivism. Critical social constructivism should collaborate with the subdiscipline of POFP to theorize further the mass public as an agent in FPA and IR.

Notes

1. Strictly speaking, neorealism is classified as a "theory" by its adherents, although sympathetic critics have argued for neorealism to be understood as a philosophical orientation or a research program (Donnelly, 2000: 75) rather than a theory defined by an explicit set of assumptions (Donnelly, 2000: 6). Kenneth Waltz's (1995: 71) employment of "theory" as the term for neorealism indicates a hierarchy of variables and the notion of rigor and regularities; "theory" is attractive to neorealists because the latter indicate a commitment to positivist science. Critical constructivist adherents see social constructivism as an "approach," not a theory (Hopf, 2000: 1772), because they deny the worthiness of "grand theories" and that their own contribution to the study of world politics constitutes a "school" or even a unified theoretical approach (Burchill, 2001: 8). Others use the term "theory," but interpret it differently from neoliberals and neorealists; for example, Adler (1997: 323) argues that constructivism, unlike realism and liberalism, is not a theory of politics, but "rather, it is a social theory on which constructivist theories of international politics – for example, about war, cooperation and international community – are based." Thus, different strands of constructivism are associated with the adoption of either "approach" or "theory."
2. The neorealist accounts of world politics emphasizing "structure" over "agency" tend to draw deep distinctions between "international" and "domestic" politics, with the interrelationship between the two effectively ignored. Developments in domestic civil society or at the individual level are perceived as having little or no meaning at the international level (Rengger and Hoffman, 1990: 131). Neorealism presents hierarchic domestic and anarchic international politics as qualitatively different realms that must be studied with logically incompatible theoretical frameworks (Donnelly, 2000: 12).

3. This competing concepts hypothesis is borne out with the results of the referendum on June 12, 2008 in Ireland on the Lisbon Treaty, which was defeated by a margin of 53.4 percent to 46.6 percent, with an above-average [referendum] turnout of 53.1 percent. Despite the Irish political parties', the government's and the Referendum Commission's insistence that ["military"] neutrality was safeguarded, post-referendum "voxpop" and qualitative analysis conducted on June 13, 2008 shows that the issue of neutrality was a significant reason for "no" voters (although a lack of comprehension of the contents of the Treaty is likely to emerge as the most popular reason for the "no" vote in a forthcoming post-referendum survey).
4. However, many elites see their task as trying to persuade the public to follow their leaders in this respect and track public opinion using private party polls.
5. Garret FitzGerald asserts "Irish neutrality is, of course, as the main political parties have made clear, military neutrality viz. non participation in a military alliance" (1988: 28). Only Sinn Féin and the Green Party advocate a broader concept of active neutrality.
6. Not all 50 categories of verbatim responses are shown or discussed here; it is mainly the categories of responses comparable to Gilland's "supercodes" that are discussed. Little-mentioned or irrelevant codes comprise the "other" category. The responses are shown in order of strength of attachment, from most strongly supported down to least-supported concepts.
7. Rank order, according to quantitative frequency, is shown instead of percentages because of differences in the samples and coding frames across the surveys.
8. Christine Agius's (2006) social constructivist analysis of Swedish neutrality incorporates discursive aspects of identity in arguments concerning the maintenance of a state's neutrality. She argues active internationalism, as a cornerstone of neutrality practice, constitutes Swedish political identity (Agius, 2006: 156–7). Anti-neutrality discourses during the Swedish referendum on EU membership tried to reinvent national ideals for people to identify with, because neutrality, along with other issues, "was still part of the public memory of self" (Agius, 2006: 159). Laurent Goetschel argues that values, interests, and identity converge in the concept of neutrality because "neutrality has a role as an identity-provider for the population" (1999: 121).
9. There is also a link between people's support for alliances and their values and identity: "citizen support for alliance structures and international institutions contains a substantial 'diffuse', or affective, element that captures their sense of common values and identification in addition to assessments of security policy choices" (Eichenberg, 2000: 171; see also Eichenberg, 1989; Risse-Kappen, 1991).
10. The post-positivist issue is not with the methods used, but the unacknowledged IR theoretical assumptions brought to bear on data analysis that effectively exclude post-realist conceptions of neutrality and the role of the public in constituting neutrality.
11. The latent variable indicators for patriotism or national identity are separated from the more "negative" embodiments of blind nationalism or national superiority. See Thomas Blank et al. (2001) and Hurwitz and Peffley (1990: 8).
12. The independence indicators are constructed in a binary with deeper EU integration (not Jesse's (2006) suggestion of a "British" other), reflecting the importance of European integration for the government, academics' frequent use of EU referendum voting indicators, and the fact that elusive concepts such as independence are constructed and sustained in relation to perceived binary opposites.

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