

Appendix to
Denying the Obvious: Why Do Nominally Covert Actions Avoid Escalation?

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PART 1: Additional Tables from Experiment 1

Table A1: Demographics Provided by Lucid for the Experiment 1 Sample

Statistic	N	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	954	46.08	45	16.96	18	87
Male	954	0.47	0	0.50	0	1
Household Income	944	9.54	8	6.80	1	24
White	953	0.69	1	0.46	0	1
Black	954	0.11	0	0.31	0	1
Education	954	4.49	4	1.86	0	8
Republican	954	0.34	0	0.48	0	1
Democrat	954	0.45	0	0.50	0	1

Table A2: Summary Statistics for Variables Collected in Experiment 1

Statistic	N	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Escalation Preference	946	55.05	56.36	23.80	0.00	100.00
Denial	954	0.50	1	0.50	0	1
Reputation	949	52.89	50.64	28.17	0.00	100.00
Insult	954	3.16	3	1.32	1	5
Certainty	954	3.29	3	0.64	1	4
Militant Assertiveness	954	0.01	-0.05	1.88	-4.34	3.42
National Chauvinism	954	-0.03	-0.06	0.50	-1.15	1.12
Trust in Gov.	953	2.80	3	1.11	1	5
Trust in News	953	2.38	2	1.16	1	5
International Trust	952	2.97	3	1.03	1	5
Foreign Policy Interest	952	3.44	4	1.27	1	5

Table A3: Regression Results with Dispositional Controls from Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-13.711*** (1.304)	-11.059*** (1.664)	-0.492*** (0.118)	-2.993*** (0.181)
Militant Assertiveness	4.556*** (0.395)	5.174*** (0.504)	0.347*** (0.038)	0.322*** (0.046)
National Chauvinism	4.425*** (1.504)	-1.540 (1.923)	0.454*** (0.141)	-0.012 (0.168)
Trust in Gov.	0.743 (0.829)	-0.065 (1.059)	0.266*** (0.076)	0.082 (0.094)
Trust in News	1.450* (0.765)	0.134 (0.976)	-0.110 (0.069)	0.198** (0.087)
International Trust	-0.954 (0.681)	-3.771*** (0.867)	-0.201*** (0.063)	-0.175** (0.077)
Foreign Policy Interest	2.235*** (0.514)	0.896 (0.656)	0.137*** (0.046)	-0.013 (0.058)
<i>N</i>	942	945	950	950

Note: These results are depicted visually in Figure 1 in the main text. The constant is not shown. Standard errors in parentheses. N differs because some respondents did not answer all questions. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A4: Regression Results with No Controls from Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-14.748*** (1.472)	-12.088*** (1.787)	-0.525*** (0.116)	-2.827*** (0.171)
<i>N</i>	946	949	954	954

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A5: Regression Results with Demographic Controls from Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-15.311*** (1.375)	-12.466*** (1.750)	-0.606*** (0.118)	-2.987*** (0.178)
Age	0.340*** (0.043)	0.285*** (0.054)	0.030*** (0.004)	0.016*** (0.005)
Male	9.543*** (1.391)	2.922* (1.770)	0.296** (0.118)	0.150 (0.146)
Household Income	0.216* (0.115)	-0.014 (0.146)	0.018* (0.010)	0.013 (0.012)
White	0.495 (1.603)	0.893 (2.030)	0.284** (0.135)	-0.006 (0.166)
Education	-0.397 (0.422)	-0.933* (0.537)	-0.083** (0.036)	-0.122*** (0.045)
Republican	7.621*** (2.006)	5.942** (2.560)	0.533*** (0.169)	0.621*** (0.206)
Democrat	3.101* (1.881)	-2.425 (2.398)	0.278* (0.158)	0.511*** (0.192)
<i>N</i>	936	939	944	944

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A6: Mediation Analysis Results with Demographic Controls from Experiment 1

Mediator	ACME	Direct Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
Reputation	-4.08** (-5.38, -2.9)	-11.39** (-13.8, -9.01)	-15.46** (-17.93, -13.1)	0.26
Insult	-2.25** (-3.61, -1.05)	-12.82** (-15.41, -10.36)	-15.07** (-17.92, -12.39)	0.15
Certainty	-7.22** (-9.75, -4.82)	-8.29** (-11.52, -5.05)	-15.5** (-18.36, -12.73)	0.46

** p < .05

Note: Although we said in our pre-analysis plan that we would estimate a version of all our models without control variables, the mediation analysis would not converge without control variables. Therefore, the version with demographic controls above is the only alternative specification that we present.

Table A7: Mediation Analysis Results Accounting for Causal Dependence in Experiment 1

	ACME	Direct Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
Reputation	-2.44** (-3.33, -1.55)	-11.41** (-14.02, -8.80)	-13.85** (-16.49, -11.31)	0.18
Insult	-0.804** (-1.36, -0.25)	-13.04** (-15.62, -10.47)	-13.85** (-16.36, -11.24)	0.06
Certainty	-2.86** (-4.83, -0.89)	-11.04** (-14.23, -7.84)	-13.85** (-16.43, -11.40)	0.21

** p < .05

Note: Using Imai and Yamamoto's (2017) method, each row represents a separate model. The causal factor named in the row was treated as the main mediator, with the other two being treated as potential confounders. 95 percent confidence bounds appear in parentheses.

PART 2: Additional Tables from Experiment 2

Table A8: Demographics Provided by Lucid for the Experiment 2 Sample

Statistic	N	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	477	46.82	46	16.66	18	84
Male	477	0.46	0	0.50	0	1
Household Income	468	8.99	7	6.74	1	24
White	475	0.71	1	0.46	0	1
Black	477	0.10	0	0.30	0	1
Education	477	4.59	5	1.87	0	8
Republican	477	0.36	0	0.48	0	1
Democrat	477	0.44	0	0.50	0	1

Table A9: Summary Statistics for Variables Collected in Experiment 2

Statistic	N	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Escalation Preference	473	53.07	51.13	26.01	0.00	100.00
Denial	477	0.49	0	0.50	0	1
Reputation	475	53.74	50.64	29.10	0.00	100.00
Insult	477	3.15	3	1.31	1	5
Certainty	477	3.25	3	0.71	1	4
Militant Assertiveness	476	-0.01	0.01	1.89	-4.34	3.42
National Chauvinism	476	0.06	0.03	0.50	-1.15	1.12
Trust in Gov.	477	2.87	3	1.15	1	5
Trust in News	475	2.31	2	1.15	1	5
International Trust	477	2.93	3	1.07	1	5
Foreign Policy Interest	477	3.51	4	1.28	1	5

Table A10: Regression Results with Dispositional Controls from Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-20.393*** (2.025)	-15.830*** (2.328)	-0.742*** (0.171)	-3.133*** (0.252)
Militant Assertiveness	4.471*** (0.607)	5.835*** (0.696)	0.360*** (0.054)	0.293*** (0.062)
National Chauvinism	3.418 (2.364)	0.750 (2.720)	0.661*** (0.205)	-0.050 (0.235)
Trust in Gov.	-0.176 (1.255)	0.514 (1.446)	-0.119 (0.105)	0.061 (0.126)
Trust in News	0.131 (1.143)	-1.018 (1.317)	0.166* (0.096)	0.095 (0.113)
International Trust	-1.369 (1.054)	-3.850*** (1.208)	-0.167* (0.089)	-0.062 (0.106)
Foreign Policy Interest	1.109 (0.797)	0.240 (0.917)	0.223*** (0.069)	0.034 (0.078)
<i>N</i>	470	472	474	474

Note: These results are depicted visually in Figure 3 in the main text. The constant is not shown. Standard errors in parentheses. *N* differs because some respondents did not answer all questions.

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A11: Regression Results with No Controls from Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-21.891*** (2.172)	-17.712*** (2.547)	-0.801*** (0.167)	-3.037*** (0.244)
<i>N</i>	473	475	477	477

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A12: Regression Results with Demographic Controls from Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-21.686*** (2.083)	-16.385*** (2.458)	-0.776*** (0.171)	-3.191*** (0.256)
Age	0.275*** (0.067)	0.428*** (0.079)	0.030*** (0.006)	0.021*** (0.006)
Male	10.228*** (2.110)	0.871 (2.489)	0.327* (0.169)	0.251 (0.203)
Household Income	0.181 (0.177)	0.388* (0.209)	0.018 (0.014)	0.039** (0.017)
White	1.701 (2.416)	-0.114 (2.853)	0.079 (0.199)	0.314 (0.226)
Education	-1.575** (0.654)	-2.332*** (0.770)	-0.166*** (0.053)	-0.133** (0.064)
Republican	5.139 (3.145)	6.523* (3.710)	0.965*** (0.267)	0.115 (0.302)
Democrat	0.172 (2.968)	-1.888 (3.508)	0.543** (0.250)	-0.004 (0.277)
<i>N</i>	463	464	466	466

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A13: Mediation Analysis Results with Demographic Controls from Experiment 2

Mediator	ACME	Direct Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
Reputation	-5.76** (-7.86, -3.86)	-15.97** (-19.51, -11.75)	-21.72** (-25.59, -17.37)	0.27
Insult	-2.77** (-4.56, -1.3)	-18.5** (-22.35, -14.72)	-21.26** (-25.09, -17.21)	0.13
Certainty	-13.69** (-17.86, -9.75)	-8.48** (-13.45, -3.7)	-22.16** (-26.95, -17.65)	0.62

** p < .05

Note: Although we said in our pre-analysis plan that we would estimate a version of all our models without control variables, the mediation analysis would not converge without control variables. Therefore, the version with demographic controls above is the only alternative specification that we present.

Table A14: Mediation Analysis Results Accounting for Causal Dependence in Experiment 2

	ACME	Direct Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
Reputation	-3.19** (-4.41, -1.57)	-17.08** (-21.65, -13.75)	-20.27** (-24.39, -16.47)	0.16
Insult	-0.470 (-1.43, 0.33)	-19.80** (-24.17, -16.13)	-20.27** (-24.76, -16.45)	0.02
Certainty	-9.29** (-12.34, -6.39)	-10.96** (-16.17, -6.50)	-20.27** (-24.54, -16.76)	0.46

** p < .05

Note: Using Imai and Yamamoto's (2017) method, each row represents a separate model. The causal factor named in the row was treated as the main mediator, with the other two being treated as potential confounders. 95 percent confidence bounds appear in parentheses.

PART 3: Additional Tables from Experiment 3

Table A15: Demographics Provided by Lucid for the Experiment 3 Sample

Statistic	N	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	492	46.50	46	16.62	18	92
Male	492	0.49	0	0.50	0	1
Household Income	463	9.54	8	6.84	1	25
White	487	0.72	1	0.45	0	1
Black	492	0.10	0	0.29	0	1
Education	492	4.82	5	1.93	1	8
Republican	491	0.36	0	0.48	0	1
Democrat	491	0.47	0	0.500	0	1

Table A16: Summary Statistics for Variables Collected in Experiment 3

Statistic	N	Mean	Median	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Escalation Preference	485	65.83	69.23	21.02	0.00	100.00
Denial	492	0.51	1	0.50	0	1
Reputation	489	58.95	58.58	27.38	0.00	100.00
Insult	492	3.43	4	1.30	1	5
Certainty	492	3.62	4	0.56	1	4
Militant Assertiveness	492	0.00	0.10	1.88	-4.79	3.35
National Chauvinism	492	0.00	-0.03	0.50	-1.13	1.00
Trust in Gov.	492	2.96	3	1.16	1	5
Trust in News	492	2.53	2	1.24	1	5
International Trust	491	2.94	3	1.07	1	5
Foreign Policy Interest	492	3.46	4	1.28	1	5

Table A17: Regression Results with Dispositional Controls from Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-2.980* (1.733)	-6.049*** (2.197)	-0.217 (0.165)	-1.852*** (0.227)
Militant Assertiveness	3.873*** (0.537)	5.905*** (0.679)	0.385*** (0.054)	0.272*** (0.067)
National Chauvinism	3.626* (2.050)	-2.041 (2.606)	0.453** (0.205)	0.360 (0.252)
Trust in Gov.	-0.093 (1.072)	-1.010 (1.364)	0.113 (0.101)	0.137 (0.135)
Trust in News	-1.565 (0.967)	-1.509 (1.232)	-0.193** (0.093)	-0.231* (0.123)
International Trust	-0.488 (0.893)	-3.194*** (1.131)	-0.065 (0.085)	-0.033 (0.111)
Foreign Policy Interest	2.126*** (0.686)	2.450*** (0.866)	0.233*** (0.066)	0.041 (0.082)
<i>N</i>	484	488	491	491

Note: These results are depicted visually in Figure 5 in the main text. The constant is not shown. Standard errors in parentheses. *N* differs because some respondents did not answer all questions. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A18: Regression Results with No Controls from Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-3.677* (1.904)	-6.542*** (2.461)	-0.252 (0.161)	-1.801*** (0.217)
<i>N</i>	485	489	492	492

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A19: Regression Results with Demographic Controls from Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-4.161** (1.765)	-6.076** (2.395)	-0.328* (0.171)	-2.065*** (0.249)
Age	0.406*** (0.058)	0.463*** (0.079)	0.033*** (0.006)	0.040*** (0.008)
Male	9.310*** (1.786)	4.874** (2.414)	0.521*** (0.174)	0.486** (0.225)
Household Income	0.522*** (0.136)	0.544*** (0.185)	0.054*** (0.014)	0.006 (0.017)
White	3.436 (2.089)	-3.979 (2.834)	-0.115 (0.197)	0.459* (0.247)
Education	-0.805 (0.512)	-0.935 (0.691)	-0.087* (0.050)	-0.073 (0.065)
Republican	7.806*** (2.735)	9.458** (3.668)	0.497* (0.263)	0.753** (0.335)
Democrat	1.233 (2.546)	-1.516 (3.419)	0.049 (0.242)	0.259 (0.297)
<i>N</i>	450	454	457	457

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A20: Mediation Analysis Results with Demographic Controls from Experiment 3

Mediator	ACME	Direct Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
Reputation	-1.81** (-3.36, -0.15)	-2.17 (-5.6, 0.7)	-3.98** (-7.43, -0.7)	0.45
Insult	-1.01 (-2.54, 0.37)	-2.82 (-6.06, 0.38)	-3.83** (-7.16, -0.49)	0.26
Certainty	-5.46** (-8.16, -2.85)	1.36 (-2.31, 4.7)	-4.1** (-7.98, -0.31)	0.75

** p < .05

Note: Although we said in our pre-analysis plan that we would estimate a version of all our models without control variables, the mediation analysis would not converge without control variables. Therefore, the version with demographic controls above is the only alternative specification that we present.

Table A21: Mediation Analysis Results Accounting for Causal Dependence in Experiment 3

	ACME	Direct Effect	Total Effect	Proportion Mediated
Reputation	-1.32 (-2.21, 0.04)	-1.36 (-4.82, 2.10)	-2.70 (-6.38, 0.75)	0.49
Insult	-0.38 (-1.01, 0.24)	-2.327 (-5.74, 1.09)	-2.696 (-6.05, 0.97)	0.14
Certainty	-4.07** (-5.70, -2.45)	1.412 (-2.21, 5.03)	-2.696 (-6.14, 0.85)	0.66

** p < .05

Note: Using Imai and Yamamoto's (2017) method, each row represents a separate model. The causal factor named in the row was treated as the main mediator, with the other two being treated as potential confounders. 95 percent confidence bounds appear in parentheses.

PART 4: Extensions of the Analysis

Table A22: Predicting a Weighted Measure of Escalation Preferences

	(1) Experiment 1	(2) Experiment 2	(3) Experiment 3
Denial	-14.398*** (1.394)	-21.488*** (2.114)	-2.725 (1.839)
Militant Assertiveness	4.927*** (0.422)	4.931*** (0.634)	4.329*** (0.570)
National Chauvinism	4.876*** (1.607)	3.519 (2.468)	4.129* (2.175)
Trust in Gov.	0.881 (0.886)	0.132 (1.310)	-0.229 (1.137)
Trust in News	1.382* (0.817)	0.301 (1.193)	-1.385 (1.026)
International Trust	-1.133 (0.728)	-1.527 (1.100)	-0.504 (0.947)
Foreign Policy Interest	2.427*** (0.549)	1.069 (0.831)	2.274*** (0.728)
<i>N</i>	942	470	484

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Note: These are OLS models using an alternative version of the dependent variable in which we give a higher weight to more escalatory options before averaging support for the different options. We multiply support for the war option times 4, support for the airstrike option times 3, support for sanctions times 2, and support for verbal condemnation times 1.

Using our main dependent variable, there may be concern that someone who wants to condemn and sanction but not do an airstrike or declare war is weighted equally as someone who wants to do an airstrike and declare war but not condemn or sanction. In practice, there are very few people who want to do an airstrike and declare war but not condemn or sanction, so higher scores of our original measure do indicate support for more escalatory options.

We estimate the models above to further address this concern. The main results are replicated for Experiments 1 and 2. The result in Experiment 3 is insignificant, but this was only weakly significant in the main model.

Table A23: Interaction of Militant Assertiveness with the Treatment in Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-13.711*** (1.305)	-11.059*** (1.665)	-0.492*** (0.118)	-3.014*** (0.182)
Militant Assertiveness	4.349*** (0.534)	5.158*** (0.679)	0.341*** (0.051)	0.261*** (0.060)
Denial X Militant Assertiveness	0.399 (0.692)	0.031 (0.882)	0.012 (0.064)	0.122 (0.079)
<i>N</i>	942	945	950	950

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A24: Interaction of Militant Assertiveness with the Treatment in Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-20.418*** (2.025)	-15.897*** (2.320)	-0.764*** (0.172)	-3.153*** (0.254)
Militant Assertiveness	5.032*** (0.790)	6.997*** (0.902)	0.463*** (0.070)	0.379*** (0.087)
Denial X Militant Assertiveness	-1.188 (1.070)	-2.475** (1.227)	-0.216** (0.092)	-0.163 (0.112)
<i>N</i>	470	472	474	474

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A25: Interaction of Militant Assertiveness with the Treatment in Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-2.979* (1.735)	-6.076*** (2.198)	-0.218 (0.166)	-1.868*** (0.236)
Militant Assertiveness	3.897*** (0.722)	5.410*** (0.918)	0.394*** (0.074)	0.295*** (0.107)
Denial X Militant Assertiveness	-0.047 (0.921)	0.932 (1.163)	-0.015 (0.090)	-0.035 (0.123)
<i>N</i>	484	488	491	491

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A26: Interaction of National Chauvinism with the Treatment in Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-13.617*** (1.307)	-11.157*** (1.668)	-0.499*** (0.118)	-2.993*** (0.181)
National Chauvinism	2.897 (2.033)	-0.019 (2.592)	0.548*** (0.195)	-0.309 (0.227)
Denial X National Chauvinism	2.931 (2.624)	-2.932 (3.352)	-0.172 (0.246)	0.572* (0.294)
<i>N</i>	942	945	950	950

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A27: Interaction of National Chauvinism with the Treatment in Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-20.290*** (2.040)	-15.385*** (2.340)	-0.711*** (0.172)	-3.121*** (0.253)
National Chauvinism	4.224 (2.968)	4.085 (3.402)	1.010*** (0.265)	0.093 (0.303)
Denial X National Chauvinism	-1.813 (4.033)	-7.526 (4.626)	-0.746** (0.350)	-0.302 (0.400)
<i>N</i>	470	472	474	474

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A28: Interaction of National Chauvinism with the Treatment in Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-3.025* (1.724)	-6.061*** (2.197)	-0.204 (0.166)	-1.850*** (0.230)
National Chauvinism	-0.957 (2.739)	-4.358 (3.501)	0.163 (0.278)	0.342 (0.403)
Denial X National Chauvinism	8.610** (3.436)	4.341 (4.379)	0.531 (0.346)	0.025 (0.456)
<i>N</i>	484	488	491	491

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A29: Interaction of International Trust with the Treatment in Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-22.126*** (3.955)	-12.078** (5.057)	-1.042*** (0.367)	-3.817*** (0.473)
International Trust	-2.412** (0.938)	-3.946*** (1.193)	-0.296*** (0.087)	-0.317*** (0.108)
Denial X International Trust	2.838** (1.260)	0.344 (1.612)	0.185 (0.117)	0.275* (0.145)
<i>N</i>	942	945	950	950

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A30: Interaction of International Trust with the Treatment in Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-30.130*** (5.867)	-32.307*** (6.714)	-2.289*** (0.510)	-3.504*** (0.620)
International Trust	-2.931** (1.374)	-6.512*** (1.574)	-0.420*** (0.119)	-0.127 (0.146)
Denial X International Trust	3.336* (1.887)	5.657*** (2.164)	0.523*** (0.161)	0.126 (0.192)
<i>N</i>	470	472	474	474

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A31: Interaction of International Trust with the Treatment in Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-4.021 (5.088)	-11.086* (6.422)	0.411 (0.492)	-1.921*** (0.703)
International Trust	-0.665 (1.210)	-4.064*** (1.538)	0.044 (0.116)	-0.049 (0.188)
Denial X International Trust	0.353 (1.624)	1.714 (2.054)	-0.211 (0.156)	0.023 (0.219)
<i>N</i>	484	488	491	491

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A32: Interaction of Trust in Media with the Treatment in Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-18.846*** (2.955)	-16.752*** (3.776)	-0.935*** (0.268)	-3.820*** (0.370)
Trust in Media	0.321 (0.961)	-1.113 (1.226)	-0.212** (0.089)	0.023 (0.109)
Denial X Trust in Media	2.163* (1.118)	2.394* (1.426)	0.188* (0.102)	0.336*** (0.128)
<i>N</i>	942	945	950	950

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A33: Interaction of Trust in Media with the Treatment in Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-26.477*** (4.515)	-18.807*** (5.219)	-1.000*** (0.383)	-3.049*** (0.480)
Trust in Media	-1.322 (1.494)	-1.737 (1.735)	0.101 (0.129)	0.118 (0.158)
Denial X Trust in Media	2.648 (1.757)	1.298 (2.036)	0.114 (0.151)	-0.036 (0.179)
<i>N</i>	470	472	474	474

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A34: Interaction of Trust in Media with the Treatment in Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-4.949 (3.941)	-8.748* (4.972)	-0.256 (0.381)	-1.907*** (0.528)
Trust in Media	-1.961 (1.200)	-2.053 (1.526)	-0.201* (0.116)	-0.245 (0.172)
Denial X Trust in Media	0.775 (1.392)	1.066 (1.762)	0.015 (0.135)	0.021 (0.183)
<i>N</i>	484	488	491	491

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A35: Interaction of Trust in Government with the Treatment in Experiment 1

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-17.238*** (3.546)	-10.553** (4.532)	-0.968*** (0.322)	-3.594*** (0.428)
Trust in Gov.	0.061 (1.046)	0.032 (1.334)	0.178* (0.094)	-0.029 (0.118)
Denial X Trust in Gov.	1.262 (1.180)	-0.181 (1.506)	0.171 (0.107)	0.211 (0.135)
<i>N</i>	942	945	950	950

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A36: Interaction of Trust in Government with the Treatment in Experiment 2

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-20.298*** (5.413)	-16.459*** (6.230)	-1.102** (0.459)	-3.431*** (0.568)
Trust in Gov.	-0.161 (1.502)	0.412 (1.727)	-0.178 (0.126)	0.008 (0.155)
Denial X Trust in Gov.	-0.033 (1.755)	0.220 (2.019)	0.126 (0.149)	0.104 (0.176)
<i>N</i>	470	472	474	474

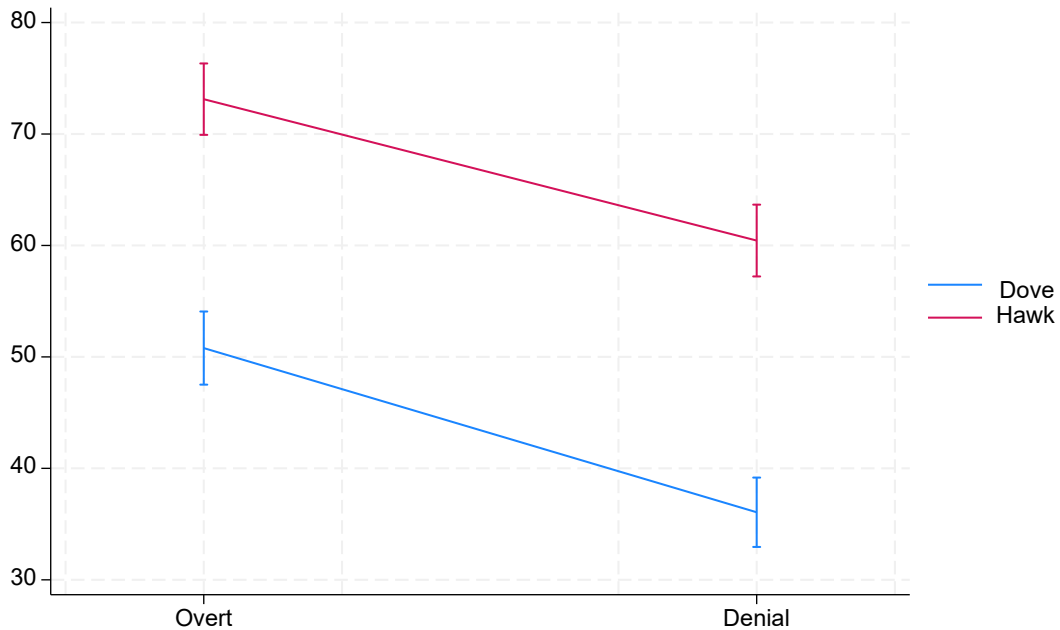
Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Table A37: Interaction of Trust in Government with the Treatment in Experiment 3

	(1) Escalation <i>OLS</i>	(2) Reputation <i>OLS</i>	(3) Insult <i>Ordered Logit</i>	(4) Certainty <i>Ordered Logit</i>
Denial	-12.296** (4.758)	-7.012 (6.017)	-0.286 (0.454)	-2.232*** (0.629)
Trust in Gov.	-1.567 (1.278)	-1.163 (1.630)	0.102 (0.122)	0.055 (0.184)
Denial X Trust in Gov.	3.137** (1.493)	0.326 (1.895)	0.023 (0.143)	0.128 (0.196)
<i>N</i>	484	488	491	491

Standard errors in parentheses. Other dispositional controls were included in the model, but are not shown in the table. * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Figure A1: Predicted Values of Normalized Escalation Preferences for Hawks and Doves



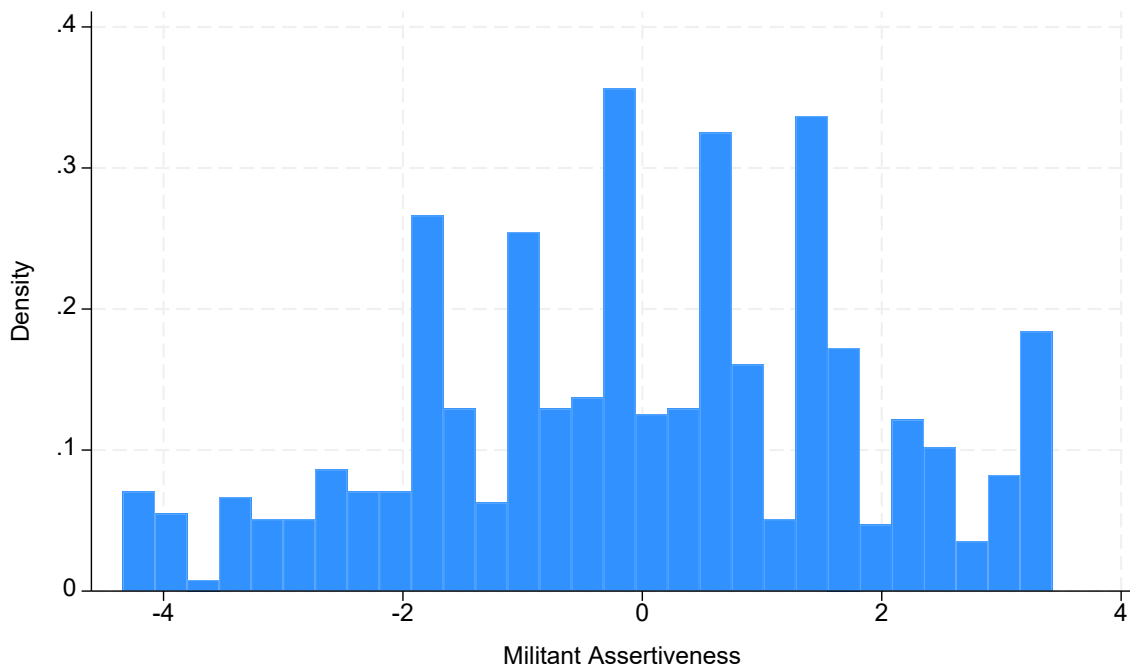
Note: The predicted values are calculated based on data from Experiment 1, using Stata’s margins command. We use a model interacting the treatment with militant assertiveness and controlling for other dispositional factors. For estimation purposes, we define a hawk as someone

with a 90th percentile value of militant assertiveness and a dove as someone with a 10th percentile value of militant assertiveness. The bars show 95 percent confidence bounds.

The lines are nearly, but not entirely, parallel – a denial decreases escalation preferences by 12.68 points on the normalized scale for hawks and by 14.73 points for doves. Thus, as we might expect, hawks are slightly more resistant to the effects of a denial, but the difference is not significant. Overall, the effect of a denial is remarkably similar for both types.

As shown in the histogram below, also based on data from Experiment 1, we were able to capture a wide range of militant assertiveness, so the null interaction effect is unlikely to be due to insufficient variation.

Figure A2: Histogram of Militant Assertiveness in the Experiment 1 Sample



PART 5: Survey Instruments

Experiment 1

Start of Block: Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study. Our names are _____ and _____, and we are researchers at _____. Participation in this study will involve reading an imaginary scenario about a foreign policy dispute between the United States and another country and completing a survey about your opinion and feelings regarding aspects of the scenario. Reading the scenario and completing the questions will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

This study has been reviewed by _____ Institutional Review Board. There are no known or anticipated risks to you in participating in the survey. The benefit to you comes in the form of the compensation you were offered when you were recruited into the survey. In addition, we hope that this survey can also lead to a better understanding of important issues U.S. politicians must consider. You will be given attention check questions, and only respondents who correctly answer the attention check questions will be allowed to complete the survey. Failure to pass these checks may affect compensation.

All of your responses are anonymous. No one will be able to connect your responses to the survey with any identifying information.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to participate, to end participation at any time for any reason, or to refuse to answer any individual question. Your decision on whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your relationship with _____ or LUCID.

If you have any questions about this study, you may contact the researchers at _____ or _____.

If you would like to talk with someone other than the researchers to discuss problems or concerns, to discuss situations in the event that the researcher is not available, or to discuss your rights as a research participant, you may contact _____. Additional information is available at _____.

Would you like to participate in this study?

- Yes, continue
- I do not want to participate in this survey

End of Block: Consent Form

Start of Block: Attention Check

People are very busy these days and many do not have time to follow what is going on in the world. We are testing whether people read questions. To show you've read this much, check both "extremely interested" and "very interested."

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not at all interested

End of Block: Attention Check

Start of Block: Scenario Description Iran

The following screens will present an imaginary foreign policy scenario, set in the year 2023, involving the United States and Iran. After reading the scenario, we will ask your opinion regarding the implications of the scenario and what the United States should do. Although the scenario is fictional, it represents a common challenge for U.S. national security. Please take it seriously and read the following information carefully.

According to the previous screen, which of the following countries will be discussed in the scenario?

- The United States and Ukraine
- The United States and Iran
- The United States and North Korea
- The United States and Afghanistan

End of Block: Scenario Description Iran

Start of Block: Iran Scenario

You answered correctly. Now please read the following scenario carefully.

[Treatment Condition]

On March 22nd, 2023, sources reported that United States oil tanker ships were attacked in the Persian Gulf. Two of the US ships were sunk. Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels. Despite this, the Iranian foreign minister stated:

"The Iranian government denies any involvement in the attacks."

The United States has a large naval base in the region, but it is unclear whether it will respond.

- I have finished reading the prompt, continue on to the first question. (You will not be able to come back to the prompt.)
-

[Control Condition]

On March 22nd, 2023, sources reported that United States oil tanker ships were attacked in the Persian Gulf. Two of the US ships were sunk. Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels. Later, the Iranian foreign minister confirmed:

"The Iranian government claims responsibility for the attacks."

The United States has a large naval base in the region, but it is unclear whether it will respond.

I have finished reading the prompt, continue on to the first question. (You will not be able to come back to the prompt.)

Page Break

End of Block: Iran Scenario

Start of Block: Iran Escalation

Treatment Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
- Iran denied any involvement in the attacks.

Control Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
 - Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
 - Iran claimed responsibility for the attacks.
-

To what extent do you favor or oppose each of the following US responses to the attacks on the ships?

	Oppose strongly	Oppose somewhat	Neither favor nor oppose	Favor somewhat	Favor strongly
Publicly condemning Iran	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Imposing economic sanctions against Iran	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conducting air strikes on an Iranian military base	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Declaring war against Iran and invading the country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Iran Escalation

[Note: The Reputation, Insult, and Certainty questions below appeared in random order.]

Start of Block: Iran H2 Reputation

Treatment Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
- Iran claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Control Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
- Iran denied any involvement in the attacks.

If the US does not respond to the attack on the ships, what are the chances that each of the following things will happen?

	Almost no chance	25% change	50-50 chance	75% chance	Nearly 100% certain
US credibility, prestige, or reputation will suffer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other countries will be emboldened to attack the US and its allies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The US will be unable to deter other countries from attacking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Iran H2 Reputation

Start of Block: Iran: Emotional Response

Treatment Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
- Iran claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Control Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
- Iran denied any involvement in the attacks.

As a US citizen, how insulted do you feel based on the events in the above scenario?

- Not at all insulted
- Somewhat insulted
- Moderately insulted
- Very insulted
- Extremely insulted

End of Block: Iran: Emotional Response

Start of Block: Iran: Certainty

Treatment Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
- Iran claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Control Condition Reminder

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
 - Independent observers said the attacking ships looked like Iranian naval vessels.
 - Iran denied any involvement in the attacks.
-

Based on what you read, do you think that Iran was responsible for the attacks?

- Definitely not responsible
- Probably not responsible
- Probably responsible
- Definitely responsible

End of Block: Iran: Ambiguity

Start of Block: Iran: Manipulation Check

Which of the following statements is accurate based on the scenario that you read?

- Iran claimed responsibility for the attack.
- Iran admitted the attackers came from Iran but stopped short of admitting it was an Iranian government operation.
- Iran denied involvement in the attack.
- I don't recall the article mentioning anything about Iran admitting or denying responsibility.

End of Block: Manipulation Check

Start of Block: Control Questions

Page Break

The following questions will ask you about your general views on foreign policy and the United States.

The best way to ensure world peace is through American military strength.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

The use of military force only makes problems worse.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Going to war is unfortunate, but sometimes the only solution to international problems.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Page Break

Information provided by the government is generally reliable.

- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
-

Information provided by the news media is generally reliable.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Generally speaking, the US can trust other nations.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Page Break

How superior is the United States compared to other nations?

- Not at all superior
- Not so superior
- Very superior
- Vastly Superior

How many things about the United States make you ashamed?

- Very many
 - Many
 - Not many
 - None
-

Have you ever served in the military?

- Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to answer
-

How frequently do you read about foreign affairs, international relations, or international history in the news, in articles, or in books?

- Every day
- 2-4 times a week
- 2-4 times a month
- 5-20 times a year
- Less than 5 times a year

End of Block: Control Questions

Experiment 2

Experiment 2 is identical to Experiment 1 except that Iran and Iranian are replaced with Qatar and Qatari.

Experiment 3

Experiment 3 is identical to Experiment 1 except for the vignette wording and reminder wording.

New wording of denial vignette:

On March 22nd, 2024, sources reported that United States oil tanker ships were attacked in the Persian Gulf. Two of the US ships were sunk.

Crew members aboard the targeted ships as well as sailors on other ships in the vicinity identified the attacking ships as Iranian naval vessels. The US government later released satellite imagery showing that the ships came from Iran. Intelligence released by other governments and investigative reporting by independent news outlets also provided evidence that Iran's leadership ordered the attacks.

Despite this, the Iranian foreign minister stated:

"The Iranian government denies any involvement in the attacks."

The United States has a large naval base in the region, but it is unclear whether it will respond.

New wording of overt vignette:

On March 22nd, 2024, sources reported that United States oil tanker ships were attacked in the Persian Gulf. Two of the US ships were sunk.

Crew members aboard the targeted ships as well as sailors on other ships in the vicinity identified the attacking ships as Iranian naval vessels. The US government later released satellite imagery showing that the ships came from Iran. Intelligence released by other governments and investigative reporting by independent news outlets also provided evidence that Iran's leadership ordered the attacks.

Later, the Iranian foreign minister confirmed:

"The Iranian government claims responsibility for the attacks."

The United States has a large naval base in the region, but it is unclear whether it will respond.

New wording of denial reminder:

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Multiple sources of evidence indicated Iran was responsible for the attacks.

- Iran denied any involvement in the attacks.

New wording of overt reminder:

Here is a reminder of the main points in the scenario:

- US oil tankers were attacked and sunk.
- Multiple sources of evidence indicated Iran was responsible for the attacks.
- Iran claimed responsibility for the attacks.