Why So Secretive?

Unpacking Public Attitudes Towards Secrecy and Success in U.S. Foreign Policy

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Online Appendix

This appendix provides supplementary materials for "Why So Secretive? Unpacking Public Attitudes Towards Secrecy and Success in U.S. Foreign Policy" by Rachel Myrick in *The Journal of Politics*. This document consists of:

- **Appendix A:** Text of Survey Experiments
- **Appendix B:** Sampling Methodology and Demographics
- **Appendix C:** Additional Models and Robustness Checks
- **Appendix D:** Results from Pretests & Replications

Full replication files for the figures and models in the paper are available at the JOP Dataverse: `https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/jop`

Appendix A: Text of Survey Experiments

This Appendix details the text of four survey experiments run in November 2018 via the Lucid for Academic Platform. Each was run on a separate sample of 1000 U.S. adults (between 1100-1200 adults completed the survey, and speeders—the fastest 20 percent of respondents—were dropped *pre-treatment*.). The results of the first three experiments are detailed in the text; Experiment 4 was run as a robustness check. In each experiment, respondents read two vignettes (a civil war spillover scenario and a dictator scenario), which were presented in random order. The region in which the vignette occurred (Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East) was randomized and responses are pooled across regions. Experiments 1-3 were sequential. Respondents evaluated the actions taken by the government twice for each vignette, ex-ante and ex-post (i.e., before and after the outcome of the operation was known). Treatment 2 (the "Covert" Treatment) was always implemented in a cross-over design, whereby in one vignette, the operation was kept secret and in the other vignette, the U.S. government informed the American public about the operation. The following things are randomized in each experiment:

- **Experiment 1**: (1) Whether or not the operation involved military action, (2) Whether or not the operation was kept secret from the American public, (3) Whether not the operation was successful.
- **Experiment 2:** (1) Whether or not the public disapproved of U.S. involvement, (2) Whether or not the operation was kept secret from the American public, (3) Whether not the operation was successful.
- **Experiment 3**: (1) Whether or not the operation involved military action, (2) Whether or not the operation was deliberately kept secret from the American public despite there being no operational advantage to secrecy (signaling deceit), (3) Whether not the operation was successful.
- **Experiment 4**: A replication of Experiment 1 with ex-ante and ex-post information presented concurrently (all three treatments in one vignette).

Alongside each survey, the following demographic information was collected from respondents: sex, age, race, income, state, education level, party identification, and ideology (liberal/conservative).

Text of Survey Experiment No. 1 (November 2018, n = 1000)

I. DICTATOR SCENARIO

dict1: Consider the following situation:

- A dictator in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] is widely known for torturing and repressing his people and threatening stability in the region.
- Rebels within the country are attempting to overthrow the current government but have been unsuccessful so far.
- After debating different policies, the U.S. government decided to [T1: send money and weapons to assist the rebels / send in a small military force to assist the rebels]. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public.]

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly

- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page

dict2: Now consider the results:

- No American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties.
- After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in removing the dictator from power and the situation has not stabilized / successful in removing the dictator from power and the situation has stabilized].

Considering this new information, how much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

II. CIVIL WAR SPILLOVER SCENARIO

civ1: Consider the following situation:

- A country in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] is experiencing a highly destructive civil war that is likely to spill over into surrounding countries and threaten the stability of U.S. allies.
- Rebels within the country are attempting to overthrow the current government but have been unsuccessful so far.
- After debating different policies, the U.S. government decided to [T1: send money and weapons to assist the rebels / send in a small military force to assist the rebels]. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public].

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page*

civ2: Now consider the results:

- No American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties.
- After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in supporting the rebels and the civil war has not ended / successful in supporting the rebels and the civil war has ended].

Considering this new information, how much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

Text of Survey Experiment No. 2 (November 2018, n = 1000)

I. DICTATOR SCENARIO

dict1: Consider the following situation:

- A dictator in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] is widely known for torturing and repressing his people and threatening stability in the region.
- Rebels within the country are attempting to overthrow the current government but have been unsuccessful so far.
- T1:[*NULL* / Public opinion polling demonstrated strong opposition (more than 80 percent) to U.S. interference in the country.]

- After debating different policies, the U.S. government decided to send in a small military force to assist the rebels. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public.]

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page

dict2: Now consider the results:

- No American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties.
- After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in removing the dictator from power and the situation has not stabilized / successful in removing the dictator from power and the situation has stabilized].

Considering this new information, how much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

II. CIVIL WAR SPILLOVER SCENARIO

civ1: Consider the following situation:

- A country in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] is experiencing a highly destructive civil war that is likely to spill over into surrounding countries and threaten the stability of U.S. allies.
- Rebels within the country are attempting to overthrow the current government but have been unsuccessful so far.

- T1: [*NULL* / Public opinion polling demonstrated strong opposition (more than 80 percent) to U.S. interference in the country.]
- After debating different policies, the U.S. government decided to send in a small military force to assist the rebels. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public].

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page

civ2: Now consider the results:

- No American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties.
- After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in supporting the rebels and the civil war has not ended / successful in supporting the rebels and the civil war has ended].

Considering this new information, how much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page

mcheck: We are checking to make sure you read carefully. In the last scenario, what did the U.S. government do?

- The government informed the American public about the operation.
- The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public.
- I don't know.

Text of Survey Experiment No. 3 (November 2018, n = 1000)

I. DICTATOR SCENARIO

dict1: Consider the following situation:

- A dictator in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] is widely known for torturing and repressing his people and threatening stability in the region.
- Rebels within the country are attempting to overthrow the current government but have been unsuccessful so far.
- After debating different policies, the U.S. government decided to [T1: send money and weapons to assist the rebels / send in a small military force to assist the rebels]. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / Although military experts agreed that keeping the operation secret would not affect its outcome, the government decided to keep it completely secret from the American public].

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page

dict2: Now consider the results:

- No American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties.
- After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in removing the dictator from power and the situation has not stabilized / successful in removing the dictator from power and the situation has stabilized].

Considering this new information, how much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly

- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

II. CIVIL WAR SPILLOVER SCENARIO

civ1: Consider the following situation:

- A country in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] is experiencing a highly destructive civil war that is likely to spill over into surrounding countries and threaten the stability of U.S. allies.
- Rebels within the country are attempting to overthrow the current government but have been unsuccessful so far.
- After debating different policies, the U.S. government decided to [T1: send money and weapons to assist the rebels / send in a small military force to assist the rebels]. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / Although military experts agreed that keeping the operation secret would not affect its outcome, the government decided to keep it completely secret from the American public].

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

New Page

civ2: Now consider the results:

- No American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties.
- After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in supporting the rebels and the civil war has not ended / successful in supporting the rebels and the civil war has ended].

Considering this new information, how much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

Text of Survey Experiment No. 4 (November 2018, n = 1000)

I. DICTATOR SCENARIO

dict1: Consider the following situation:

- A dictator in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] was widely known for torturing and repressing his people and threatening stability in the region.
- Rebels within the country were attempting to overthrow the current government but had been unsuccessful so far.
- Ultimately, the U.S. government decided to [T1: send money and weapons to assist the rebels / send in a small military force to assist the rebels]. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public.]
- In the operation, no American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties. After one year, the operation was ultimately [T3: unsuccessful in removing the dictator from power and the situation had not stabilized / successful in removing the dictator from power and the situation had stabilized].

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

II. CIVIL WAR SPILLOVER SCENARIO

civ1: Consider the following situation:

- A country in [Asia / Africa / Latin America / the Middle East] was experiencing a highly destructive civil war that was likely to spill over into surrounding countries and threaten the stability of U.S. allies.
- Rebels within the country were attempting to overthrow the current government but had been unsuccessful so far.
- Ultimately, the U.S. government decided to [T1: send money and weapons to assist the rebels / send in a small military force to assist the rebels]. [T2: The government informed the American public about the operation / The government kept the operation completely secret from the American public].

- In the operation, no American lives were lost, but there were high numbers of civilian casualties. [T3: unsuccessful in supporting the rebels and the civil war had not ended / successful in supporting the rebels and the civil war had ended].

How much do you approve or disapprove of the actions taken by the U.S. government in this situation?

- Disapprove Strongly
- Disapprove Somewhat
- Disapprove Slightly
- Neutral
- Approve Slightly
- Approve Somewhat
- Approve Strongly

Appendix B: Sampling Methodology and Demographics

The experiments described in Appendix A were fielded through the Lucid Academic Marketplace in November 2018. Lucid is a professional survey firm that maintains a marketplace used to recruit survey respondents for academic research. When drawing nationally representative samples for researchers, Lucid targets specific demographic quotas by age, sex, ethnicity, race, and region. The target and actual characteristics of the sample (pooled across all three experiments) are displayed in the table below. Full demographic information for each of the respondents is available in the raw replication datasets.

Quota Name	Target	Actual
Age (18-24)	0.13	0.10
Age (25-44)	0.41	0.37
Age (45-64)	0.3	0.32
Age (65+)	0.16	0.16
Male	0.5	0.48
Female	0.5	0.52
Hispanic	0.11	0.08
Black	0.12	0.12
White	0.7	0.71
Midwest	0.22	0.20
Northeast	0.22	0.19
South	0.37	0.38
West	0.23	0.23

Targeted and Actual Demographic Characteristics of Pooled Sample

Appendix C: Further Robustness Checks

This appendix presents the following robustness checks:

1. Replication of main effects using a non-sequential experiment
    - **Table C.1:** Replication of Table 2 (Experiment 1) in Main Text using a non-sequential experiment
2. Replication of effects using logistic regression and conditional fixed-effects logistic regression
    - **Table C.2:** Replication of Table 3 in Main Text (Experiment 1)
    - **Table C.3:** Replication of Table 4 in Main Text (Experiment 2)
    - **Table C.4:** Replication of Table 5 in Main Text (Experiment 3)
3. Replication of effects using ordinal logistic regression
    - **Table C.5:** Replication of Table 3 in Main Text (Experiment 1)
    - **Table C.6:** Replication of Table 4 in Main Text (Experiment 2)
    - **Table C.7:** Replication of Table 5 in Main Text (Experiment 3)
4. Replication of effects on individuals who passed a manipulation check (asked in Experiment 2). *The results in Table C.8 should be interpreted with caution given that estimates of the treatment effects in these tables are conditioned on a post-treatment variable.*
    - **Table C.8**: Replication of Table 4 in Main Text with Manipulation Check

The core findings from these robustness checks can be summarized as follows:

- The magnitude and statistical significance of coefficients on the Covert Treatment (T2) remain consistent.
- The Success Treatment (T3) remains positive, statistically significant, and significantly larger in magnitude than the covert treatment in all models.
- Individuals who passed the manipulation check were slightly more likely to disapprove of covert operations than overt operations, relative to the full sample.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Covert (T2)	−0.171**	−0.171**	−0.239*	−0.200***	−0.0800
	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.095)	(0.055)	(0.096)
Military (T1)		−0.0964	−0.164	−0.0862	
		(0.079)	(0.110)	(0.077)	
Covert*Military			0.136		
			(0.152)		
Success (T3)				0.835***	0.950***
				(0.077)	(0.106)
Covert*Success					−0.229
					(0.149)
Constant	3.871***	3.920***	3.953***	3.493***	3.392***
	(0.042)	(0.068)	(0.078)	(0.076)	(0.076)
AIC	5933.1	8621.7	8622.9	8505.7	8504.7
BIC	5944.4	8638.7	8645.6	8528.4	8527.4
Observations	2146	2146	2146	2146	2146

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table C.1: Results from Full Replication of Experiment 1 without Sequential Results

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert	−0.859***	−0.160	−0.562***	−0.699***	−0.139	−0.0326
	(0.116)	(0.111)	(0.075)	(0.116)	(0.076)	(0.135)
Military			0.406***	0.286*	0.335***	
			(0.093)	(0.124)	(0.097)	
Covert*Military				0.255		
				(0.177)		
Success					1.246***	1.330***
					(0.103)	(0.137)
Covert*Success						−0.194
						(0.187)
Constant			−0.379***	−0.315***	−1.412***	−1.281***
			(0.082)	(0.091)	(0.112)	(0.106)
AIC	431.7	451.9	2770.8	2770.8	2566.9	2578.3
BIC	436.3	456.3	2787.8	2793.4	2589.5	2600.9
Observations	706	652	2110	2110	2110	2110

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are conditional fixed-effects logistic regression models.

Models 3-6 are logistic regression models with standard errors clustered at the individual level.

Table C.2: Experiment 1 Results (Logistic Regression)

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert	−0.889***	−0.464***	−0.533***	−0.695***	−0.285***	−0.249
	(0.127)	(0.122)	(0.071)	(0.112)	(0.072)	(0.128)
Public Disapproval			−0.327***	−0.492***	−0.323***	
			(0.093)	(0.126)	(0.096)	
Covert*Public Disapproval				0.351		
				(0.183)		
Success					1.096***	1.133***
					(0.100)	(0.134)
Covert*Success						−0.0447
						(0.187)
Constant			−0.0638	0.0153	−0.891***	−1.068***
			(0.077)	(0.088)	(0.100)	(0.101)
AIC	366.4	382.1	2705.4	2703.8	2532.6	2543.9
BIC	370.9	386.5	2722.3	2726.3	2555.2	2566.5
Observations	604	570	2062	2062	2062	2062

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are conditional fixed-effects logistic regression models.

Models 3-6 are logistic regression models with standard errors clustered at the individual level.

Table C.3: Experiment 2 Results (Logistic Regression)

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert (No Advantage)	-1.295^{***}	-0.734^{***}	-0.933^{***}	-1.020^{***}	-0.466^{***}	-0.286^{*}
	(0.124)	(0.118)	(0.081)	(0.132)	(0.075)	(0.130)
Military			0.188^{*}	0.120	0.107	
			(0.091)	(0.123)	(0.093)	
Covert (No Advantage)*Military				0.162		
				(0.194)		
Success					1.090^{***}	1.234^{***}
					(0.098)	(0.132)
Covert (No Advantage)*Success						-0.312
						(0.187)
Constant			-0.296^{***}	-0.260^{**}	-1.032^{***}	-1.060^{***}
			(0.078)	(0.089)	(0.097)	(0.101)
AIC	403.9	417.8	2651.8	2653.1	2604.7	2603.3
BIC	408.5	422.3	2668.8	2675.7	2627.4	2626.0
Observations	772	660	2130	2130	2130	2130

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are conditional fixed-effects logistic regression models.

Models 3-6 are logistic regression models with standard errors clustered at the individual level.

Table C.4: Experiment 3 Results (Logistic Regression)

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert	−0.913***	−0.231*	−0.564***	−0.737***	−0.191***	−0.207*
	(0.099)	(0.095)	(0.061)	(0.090)	(0.058)	(0.094)
Military			0.300***	0.131	0.202*	
			(0.080)	(0.108)	(0.078)	
Covert*Military				0.339*		
				(0.145)		
Success					1.168***	1.156***
					(0.086)	(0.110)
Covert*Success						0.0125
						(0.145)
Cut 1			−1.683***	−1.776***	−0.883***	−0.995***
			(0.087)	(0.094)	(0.088)	(0.082)
Cut 2			−1.123***	−1.215***	−0.233**	−0.345***
			(0.079)	(0.087)	(0.083)	(0.076)
Cut 3			−0.623***	−0.713***	0.300***	0.188*
			(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.075)
Cut 4			0.321***	0.233**	1.268***	1.154***
			(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.090)	(0.083)
Cut 5			1.154***	1.066***	2.077***	1.959***
			(0.080)	(0.087)	(0.100)	(0.094)
Cut 6			2.216***	2.128***	3.030***	2.909***
			(0.102)	(0.108)	(0.124)	(0.118)
AIC	1787.9	1987.5	7936.9	7934.0	7811.7	7818.6
BIC	1793.9	1993.5	7982.2	7984.9	7862.6	7869.5
Observations	2982	2892	2110	2110	2110	2110

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are fixed effect ordinary logistic regression models using the BUC estimator.

Models 3-6 are ordinary logistic regression models with standard errors clustered by individual

Table C.5: Experiment 1 Results (Ordered Logistic Regressions)

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert	−0.932***	−0.464***	−0.561***	−0.702***	−0.264***	−0.216*
	(0.103)	(0.100)	(0.059)	(0.097)	(0.054)	(0.093)
Public Disapproval			−0.311***	−0.453***	−0.179*	
			(0.077)	(0.104)	(0.079)	
Covert*Public Disapproval				0.292		
				(0.157)		
Success					1.135***	1.184***
					(0.083)	(0.112)
Covert*Success						−0.0760
						(0.150)
Cut 1			−2.181***	−2.254***	−1.160***	−1.042***
			(0.091)	(0.101)	(0.093)	(0.089)
Cut 2			−1.436***	−1.510***	−0.514***	−0.397***
			(0.078)	(0.089)	(0.088)	(0.084)
Cut 3			−0.914***	−0.988***	0.0435	0.161
			(0.073)	(0.084)	(0.089)	(0.084)
Cut 4			0.0636	−0.00971	0.995***	1.110***
			(0.072)	(0.082)	(0.091)	(0.088)
Cut 5			0.843***	0.772***	1.702***	1.816***
			(0.076)	(0.087)	(0.096)	(0.095)
Cut 6			1.775***	1.707***	2.640***	2.752***
			(0.096)	(0.105)	(0.116)	(0.117)
AIC	1603.4	1733.3	7815.4	7813.8	7659.2	7664.2
BIC	1609.3	1739.2	7860.4	7864.5	7709.9	7714.9
Observations	2690	2596	2062	2062	2062	2062

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are fixed effect ordinary logistic regression models using the BUC estimator.

Models 3-6 are ordinary logistic regression models with standard errors clustered by individual

Table C.6: Experiment 2 Results (Ordered Logistic Regressions)

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert (No Advantage)	−1.279***	−0.815***	−0.871***	−0.991***	−0.483***	−0.356***
	(0.101)	(0.100)	(0.065)	(0.103)	(0.059)	(0.094)
Military			0.235**	0.120	0.140	
			(0.075)	(0.107)	(0.076)	
Covert (No Advantage)*Military				0.232		
				(0.155)		
Success					1.148***	1.272***
					(0.083)	(0.111)
Covert (No Advantage)*Success						−0.251
						(0.145)
Cut 1			−1.864***	−1.925***	−1.055***	−1.061***
			(0.086)	(0.095)	(0.089)	(0.090)
Cut 2			−1.163***	−1.223***	−0.427***	−0.434***
			(0.076)	(0.085)	(0.083)	(0.084)
Cut 3			−0.699***	−0.759***	0.0558	0.0481
			(0.071)	(0.081)	(0.082)	(0.084)
Cut 4			0.350***	0.291***	1.087***	1.080***
			(0.071)	(0.080)	(0.087)	(0.089)
Cut 5			1.127***	1.069***	1.869***	1.864***
			(0.077)	(0.086)	(0.095)	(0.099)
Cut 6			2.153***	2.094***	2.884***	2.882***
			(0.099)	(0.105)	(0.117)	(0.122)
AIC	1768.8	1862.7	7918.1	7917.8	7796.8	7797.4
BIC	1774.9	1868.7	7963.4	7968.8	7847.7	7848.4
Observations	3372	3018	2130	2130	2130	2130

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are fixed effect ordinary logistic regression models using the BUC estimator.

Models 3-6 are ordinary logistic regression models with standard errors clustered by individual

Table C.7: Experiment 3 Results (Ordered Logistic Regressions)

	(1) Before	(2) After	(3) Before	(4) Before	(5) After	(6) After
Covert	−0.799***	−0.410***	−0.812***	−0.958***	−0.403***	−0.153
	(0.079)	(0.081)	(0.078)	(0.126)	(0.072)	(0.119)
Public Disapproval			−0.426***	−0.585***	−0.256*	
			(0.103)	(0.141)	(0.104)	
Covert*Public Disapproval				0.320		
				(0.212)		
Success					1.354***	1.622***
					(0.104)	(0.143)
Covert*Success						−0.500*
						(0.202)
Constant	4.281***	3.879***	4.482***	4.556***	3.339***	3.087***
	(0.056)	(0.057)	(0.086)	(0.100)	(0.104)	(0.100)
Fixed Effects	*YES*	*YES*	*NO*	*NO*	*NO*	*NO*
Observations	2110	2110	2110	2110	2110	2110
AIC	3871.1	3916.2	5528.1	5527.7	5487.9	5488.1
BIC	3881.5	3926.6	5543.7	5548.5	5508.7	5508.9
Observations	1340	1340	1340	1340	1340	1340

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Models 1-2 are OLS models with fixed-effects and standard errors clustered by individual

Models 3-6 are OLS models with standard errors clustered by individual

Table C.8: Experiment 2 (Passed Manipulation Check)

Appendix D: Results from Pretests & Replications

Background

The research discussed in the manuscript was replicated in various forms across three different samples.

- A convenience sample on Amazon Mechanical Turk (3 experiments, each with 200-400 respondents)
- A high-quality national sample via YouGov (2 experiments, each of 1000 respondents)
- A high-quality national sample via Lucid (3 experiments, each of 1000 respondents)

The first two sets of experiments were fielded in Winter 2016 and Spring 2017. The third set of experiments was fielded in Fall 2018. This additional round of experiments was fielded via Lucid in November 2018 based on a suggestion from an anonymous reviewer to change the wording of the covert treatment. Between the YouGov and Lucid samples, the wording of the covert treatment was modified from "kept completely secret" to "kept completely secret from the American public." In addition, Experiment 3 was added to control for the possibility that covert action would pose an operational advantage.

Overall, the magnitude of all the main treatment effects are slightly larger in the Lucid sample. This seems to be primarily due to a higher baseline level of support for U.S. government action in the more recent (Fall 2018) sample compared to the earlier samples (December 2016, April 2017). If anything, the results from the YouGov sample suggest that the transparency norm may be even weaker than expected. The substantive interpretation of the experimental results—that secrecy overwhelms success—remains consistent across all three sets of experiments.

Results from Amazon Mechanical Turk

This section shows the results of three pretests run on Amazon Mechanical Turk. Pretest 1 and Pretest 2 (PT1 and PT2, $n = 423$) were run in November 2016. Pretest 3 (PT3, $n = 306$) was run in February 2017 before Experiment 2.

In the first two pretests, half of the sample received (PT1) received information about the policy ("Before") and then information about the policy outcome on a second screen ("After"). The dependent variable in each vignette was measured twice. The other half of the sample (PT2) received information about the policy and policy outcome on the same screen, such that the dependent variable was only measured once. The treatment effects represent the average within-subject difference in approval of government actions for policies that are covert and not covert.

The third pretest had the same structure as Pretest 1 but added a "Public Disapproval" treatment. In this pretest, the "Public Disapproval" treatment was held constant across both vignettes. A manipulation check was added to see if respondents were reading carefully.

In Pretests 1 and 2, respondents were further asked to describe how realistic they found the scenarios they had just read. The results are plotted below.

Description	N	Effect	p-value
PT1 After	215	-0.14	0.29
PT1 Before	215	-0.29	0.03
PT2 After	208	-0.20	0.14
PT1 After + PT2 After	423	-0.17	0.07

Table B.1: Main Treatment Effects from Pretest 1 and 2 (Amazon Mechanical Turk, November 2016)

Before or After?	MCheck?	N	Main Effect	p-value
PT3 Before		306	-0.37	0.001
PT3 After		306	-0.16	0.17
PT3 Before	✓	230	-0.40	0.0004
PT3 After	✓	230	-0.34	0.003

Table B.2: Main Treatment Effects from Pretest 3 (Amazon Mechanical Turk, February 2017)

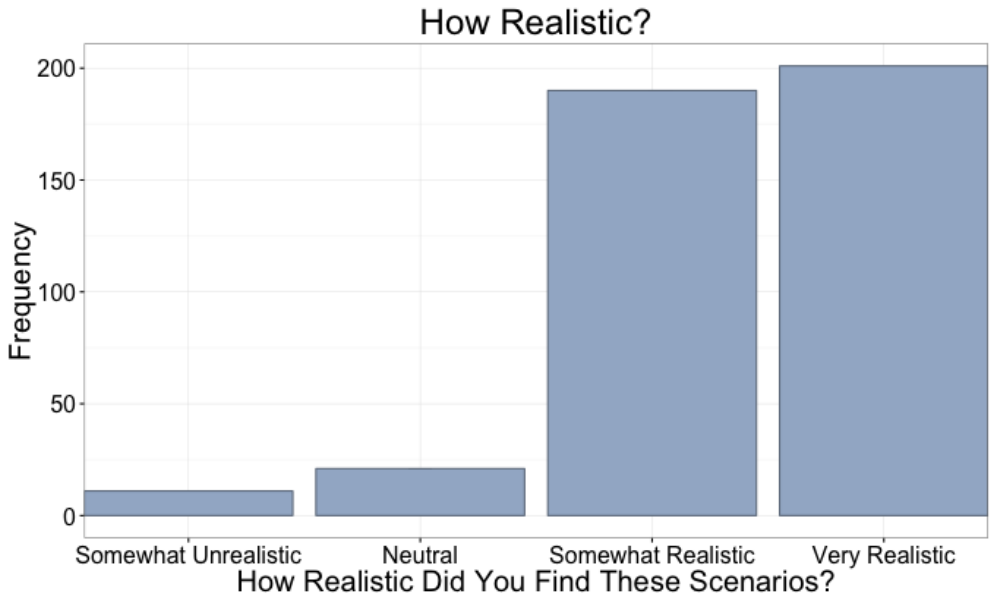

Figure B.1: Results from Amazon Mechanical Turk Pretest (November 2016, $n = 423$)

Results from YouGov Survey (2016-2017)

The two experiments presented in earlier drafts of this paper were fielded via YouGov. Experiment 1 was fielded in December 2016 and Experiment 2 was fielded in April 2017, each to a nationally representative sample of 1000 U.S. adults. The experiments are identical to those fielded in the 2018 Lucid Survey (see Appendix A) with one change: the covert treatment reads "kept completely secret" rather than "kept completely secret from the American public." The main effects of these experiments are below:

	Before	Before	After	After
Covert	−0.167**	−0.207*	−0.0655	−0.0651
	(0.060)	(0.098)	(0.059)	(0.097)
Military	0.159*	0.120	0.0931	
	(0.079)	(0.111)	(0.079)	
Covert*Military		0.0780		
		(0.160)		
Success			0.927***	0.928***
			(0.084)	(0.113)
Covert*Success				−0.00510
				(0.153)
Constant	3.848***	3.868***	3.281***	3.328***
	(0.066)	(0.077)	(0.080)	(0.079)
Observations	2000	2000	2000	2000

Standard errors (clustered at the individual level) in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 1: Results from Experiment 1 (YouGov, December 2016)

	Before	Before	After	After
Covert	-0.170^{**}	-0.0722	-0.125^{*}	-0.261^{**}
	(0.058)	(0.099)	(0.055)	(0.095)
Public Disapproval	-0.269^{***}	-0.170	-0.176^{*}	
	(0.081)	(0.110)	(0.081)	
Covert*Public Disapproval		-0.198		
		(0.157)		
Success			0.941^{***}	0.801^{***}
			(0.083)	(0.113)
Covert*Success				0.281
				(0.153)
Constant	3.873^{***}	3.823^{***}	3.288^{***}	3.267^{***}
	(0.068)	(0.079)	(0.078)	(0.077)
Observations	1998	1998	1998	1998

Standard errors (clustered at the individual level) in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 2: Results from Experiment 2 (YouGov, April 2017)