Replication Package for

"Democratic Backsliding Damages Favorable U.S. Image Among the Global Public"

Benjamin E. Goldsmith, Yusaku Horiuchi, Kelly Matush, Kathleen E. Powers
PNAS Nexus, forthcoming

---

1. Description

The perception that U.S. democracy has weakened in the 21st century has raised concerns among scholars about its potential impact on global public opinion. Many argue that democratic backsliding may diminish favorable views of the U.S. among foreign citizens in other democracies, thereby weakening U.S. foreign policy influence. To assess this, we conducted three multinational survey experiments across twelve countries with 11,810 respondents.

Our findings show that information about U.S. democratic backsliding does indeed reduce favorability toward the U.S. However, in an exploratory analysis, we find little evidence that it significantly affects support for cooperating with the U.S. While international reporting on democratic decline may damage America's global image, its ability to secure cooperation on key policies remains resilient in some important partner countries.

---

2. Data

- The original survey data files are located in the `build/data` folder.
- These files exclude survey questions that were not used in the article.
- The questionnaires also include questions used in the article only.

---

3. Files Included

Root Directory

- `README.md` — This file
- `README.pdf` — PDF version, generated from `README.md`
- `goldsmith-horiuchi-matush-powers.Rproj` — RStudio project file
- `master.R` — Master script that sources all other scripts

Data Processing

- `build/` — Files necessary for data wrangling and visualization

Analysis and Output

- `analyze/figures/` — Generated figures
- `analyze/output/` — Processed output files
- `analyze/scripts/` — R scripts for complete replication

Dependency Management (`renv` folder)

- `renv/` — Files generated by the `renv` package (version 1.1.3)
  - See renv documentation for details
- `renv.lock` — Lockfile to restore package dependencies

---

4. Software and Dependencies

Required Software

- **R** (version 4.4.2)

Required R Packages

- `tidyverse` (version 2.0.0)
- `estimatr` (version 1.0.6)
- `ggthemes` (version 5.1.0)
- `patchwork` (version 1.3.0)
- `renv` (version 1.1.3)
- `lme4` (version 1.1-36)

---

5. Replication Instructions

Using RStudio

1. Open `goldsmith-horiuchi-matush-powers.Rproj` in RStudio.
2. Install `renv` if not already installed:
   ```
   install.packages("renv")
   ```
3. Restore dependencies from the lockfile:
   ```
   renv::restore()
   ```
4. Run `master.R` to execute the replication process.

Without RStudio

1. Manually set the working directory to the folder containing `goldsmith-horiuchi-matush-powers.Rproj`.
2. Install the required R packages manually (see list above).
3. Run the scripts sequentially.

---

6. Most Recent Successful Replication

- **March 24, 2025**

This replication package ensures full reproducibility of our results. If you encounter any issues, please verify that all required packages are installed and that the working directory is set correctly.