Supplementary Appendix for: The Damocles Delusion: The Sense of Power Inflates Threat Perception in World Politics

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A1 Survey Experimental Evidence from China

The China sample consisted of 880 adult residents of Beijing, recruited by Qualtrics in July 2021 (52% male, 35% 18-34 years old, 54% 35-64 years old, 11% 65 or older, with 64% of subjects having at least a four-year college degree). The survey instrument, which was housed on Qualtrics's online platform, was administered online. The instrument was translated from English to Mandarin Chinese by a native Chinese speaker also fluent in English and then assessed by a separate native speaker to ensure comprehension. After obtaining informed consent, subjects completed standard demographic questions before assignment to one of two conditions in a between-subjects design. All subjects were first told the following:

- Please take a moment to imagine that you are the leader of your own hypothetical country ("Country A"). Your neighboring country ("Country B") is developing nuclear weapons and will have its first nuclear bomb within six months.

  → 请想象一下，假设你是你自己假想的国家(“国家A”)的领导人。你们的邻国(“B国”)正在发展核武器，并将在6个月内拥有第一颗核弹。

Then, subjects were randomly assigned one of the following two prompts, which hold the objective level of external threat constant but vary relative power:

- **High power condition:** There is a 10% chance that Country B eventually uses its nuclear weapons to attack your country. Your country is much more powerful than Country B, and you can attack Country B's nuclear development sites with a 90% chance of successfully stopping its nuclear program. As the leader of Country A, you get to decide the course of action.

  → 如果B国拥有了核武器，该国有10%的可能性使用核武器攻击你的国家。你的国家比B国强大得多，你可以提前攻击B国的核开发场所，有90%的几率成功阻止其核项目。作为国家A的领导人，你要决定该国的行动战略。

- **Power symmetry condition:** There is a 10% chance that Country B eventually uses its nuclear weapons to attack your country. Your country is similar in power to Country B, and you can attack Country B's nuclear development sites with a 10% chance of successfully stopping its nuclear program. As the leader of Country A, you get to decide the course of action.

  → 如果B国拥有了核武器，该国有10%的可能性使用核武器攻击你的国家。你的国家实力和B国差不多，你可以提前攻击B国的核开发场所，有10%的几率成功阻止其核项目。作为国家A的领导人，你要决定该国的行动战略。

Finally, following treatment, subjects responded to two dependent variables that capture threat perception and aggression on 10-point scales:

- **Threat perception:** How much of a threat do you think Country B poses to your country's security, where 0 represents "not a threat at all" and 10 represents a "major threat"?

  → 你认为B国对你国家的安全构成了多大的威胁，0代表“根本不构成威胁”，10代表“主要威胁”?

- **Preventive attack:** How much would you favor sending your country's military to attack Country B's nuclear development sites, where 0 represents "strongly oppose" and 10 represents "strongly support"?

  → 你在多大程度上支持派遣本国军队去攻击B国的核开发基地，0代表"强烈反对"，10代表"强烈支持"?

Table A1 presents the treatment effects, alongside standard individual-level covariates, estimated using linear regression. The education variable is a binary indicator that captures whether the subject has completed at least a four-year college degree. National attachment was measured with the item "Being Chinese is important to how I feel about myself" (Herrmann, Isernia and Segatti, 2009). Finally, militant internationalism was measured via agreement with the item "Going to war is unfortunate but sometimes the only solution to international problems," a commonly used item from the MI scale (Kertzer et al., 2014).

Table A1: OLS Estimates: China Experiment Results

	Threat Perception	Preventive Attacks
(Intercept)	6.88***	7.05***
	(0.21)	(0.21)
High Power Treatment	0.25*	0.26*
	(0.11)	(0.11)
Male	−0.55***	−0.51***
	(0.11)	(0.11)
Age	0.03	0.08*
	(0.04)	(0.04)
4-Year Degree	−0.04	−0.17
	(0.13)	(0.13)
National Attachment	0.40***	0.42***
	(0.06)	(0.06)
Militant Orientation	0.23***	1.05***
	(0.06)	(0.06)
R^2	0.13	0.42
Adj. R^2	0.13	0.41
Num. obs.	879	879

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$; ^$p < 0.1$

Furthermore, I expect that intuitive thinking helps to explain the effect of the sense of power on threat perception. To examine this mechanism, the survey included a pre-treatment measure of prior beliefs about aggressive intentions in IR, measured with seven-point (dis)agreement with the following item: "Other countries often harbor aggressive intentions towards China." Table A2 re-estimates the

models in table A1 but interacts the power treatment with this prior belief measure. The moderation estimates (in the final row of the table) are positive and significant, suggesting that individuals predisposed to view the world in threatening terms report even higher threat perception and aggression in the high power condition. A reliance on prior beliefs in the threat assessment process is a classic intuitive thinking mechanism in behavioral IR, suggesting that intuition indeed helps to explain the effect of power on threat perception. Further, this result is highly consistent with psychological research on power, which shows that in addition to changing individuals on average, so too power often reveals individuals. Here, individuals predisposed to view the world in threatening terms report even higher threat perception with power.

Table A2: OLS Estimates: China Experiment Moderation Effects

	Threat Perception	Preventive Attacks
(Intercept)	9.17***	8.98***
	(0.45)	(0.46)
High Power Treatment	−1.26*	−1.99***
	(0.60)	(0.60)
Prior Beliefs (Aggressive Intentions)	−3.03***	−2.56***
	(0.54)	(0.54)
Male	−0.59***	−0.51***
	(0.11)	(0.11)
Age	0.04	0.08*
	(0.04)	(0.04)
4-Year Degree	−0.02	−0.16
	(0.13)	(0.13)
National Attachment	0.33***	0.38***
	(0.06)	(0.06)
Militant Orientation	0.27***	1.07***
	(0.06)	(0.06)
High Power Treatment × Prior Beliefs	1.95*	2.95***
	(0.78)	(0.78)
R^2	0.17	0.43
Adj. R^2	0.16	0.43
Num. obs.	879	879

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$; ^$p < 0.1$

A2 Survey Experimental Evidence from the United States

A2.1 Nuclear Proliferation Experiment

In the main text, I present results from an extended version of the China survey experiment fielded on the US public in May 2024. The sample was recruited by Prolific and consists of $N = 1{,}434$ adults (45.5% male, 41.5% 18-34 years old, 51.8% 35-64 years old, 6.7% 65 or older, with 56.1% of subjects having at least a four-year college degree). This section presents the remaining instrumentation that was not presented in the main text, as well as full regression tables and additional mediation analyses.

As mentioned in the main text, the survey included measures of intuitive thinking from the Rational Experiential Inventory (Pacini and Epstein, 1999). For readers interested in a dual-process perspective, I also included items from this inventory to measure trait deliberative thinking. The items are the following:

- I prefer complex to simple problems.
- I don't like to do a lot of thinking (rc).
- I try to avoid situations that require thinking in depth about something (rc).
- I trust my initial feelings about people.
- I believe in trusting my hunches.
- I can usually feel when a person is right or wrong even if I can't explain how I know.

The first three items measure trait deliberative thinking, and the latter three items measure trait intuitive thinking. The items were measured on seven-point (dis)agree scales. I use factor analysis to reduce the responses to unidimensional factor scores, where higher values indicate higher trait deliberative and intuitive thinking, respectively.

Table A3 presents the full regression results associated with the aggressive intentions, domino beliefs, and support for preventive attacks dependent variables (from Figure 2 of the main text). Notably, as expected, the high power treatment shifts subjects in the same direction as trait intuitive thinkers. By contrast, trait deliberative thinkers are less likely to perceive the neighbor as possessing aggressive intentions, less likely to employ domino logics, and less likely to support the use of preventive force. All models use the low power condition as the baseline to estimate the high power and symmetric power effects.

Table A4 presents the treatment effects of power on the three variables used as proxies to measure intuitive thinking. As described in the main text, subjects in the high power condition are more likely to display risk acceptance to avoid losses, more likely to perceive the situation as urgent, and more confident that their threat assessments are correct. Trait intuitive thinkers display the same patterns. By contrast, trait deliberative thinkers are less likely to display risk acceptance to avoid losses and no more or less likely to perceive the situation as urgent. Deliberative thinkers are also confident in their threat assessments, likely because they value the procedurally rational thought they put into their assessments. However, based on the coefficient size (coef = 0.17), subjects in the high power condition and trait intuitive thinkers are more prone to this tendency (coefs = 0.45 and 0.53, respectively), as expected.

Table A3: OLS Estimates: US Proliferation Experiment Primary DVs

	Aggressive Intentions	Domino Beliefs	Preventive Attacks
(Intercept)	3.25***	4.41***	1.71***
	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.24)
Symmetric Power Treatment	0.08	0.08	0.35*
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.16)
High Power Treatment	0.24**	0.15*	1.21***
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.17)
Trait Intuitive Thinking	0.24***	0.21***	0.60***
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.07)
Trait Deliberative Thinking	−0.20***	−0.08*	−0.36***
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.07)
Male	0.26***	0.24***	0.33*
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.14)
Age	0.06*	−0.00	−0.02
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.05)
White	−0.14	−0.09	−0.41**
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.15)
Conservative	0.16***	0.05*	0.38***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)
No College Degree	−0.11	0.07	−0.08
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.14)
R^2	0.12	0.05	0.16
Adj. R^2	0.12	0.05	0.16
Num. obs.	1432	1432	1432

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

Table A5 presents the results associated with the sense of power mediators. These results verify that material power activates a *sense* of power, as psychologists typically define the sense of power. Subjects in the high power condition feel a greater sense of control and influence over Country B and feel more able to get Country B to do what they want. Material power is not simply a balance sheet. Material power endows individuals with a subjective *sense* of efficacy and ability.

A2.1.1 Mediation Analyses

The main text describes mediation estimates for the objective power → intuition → primary DVs pathway using the Imai et al. (2011) mediation framework. Table A6 presents the full table of results associated with this mediation analysis. Note that the proportion mediated is larger than one for the aggressive intentions and domino beliefs DVs. There are basically two possible interpretations here.

Table A4: OLS Estimates: US Proliferation Experiment Intuition Mediators

	Risk Acceptance to Avoid Losses	Perceived Urgency of Situation	Threat Assessment Confidence
(Intercept)	2.49***	4.21***	4.75***
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.19)
Symmetric Power Treatment	0.14	0.11	0.13
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.13)
High Power Treatment	0.96***	0.37***	0.45***
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.13)
Trait Intuitive Thinking	0.28***	0.31***	0.53***
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Trait Deliberative Thinking	−0.24***	−0.08	0.17**
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Male	0.17*	0.40***	0.47***
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.11)
Age	−0.00	0.07*	0.03
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)
White	−0.32***	−0.29**	−0.04
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.11)
Conservative	0.21***	0.08**	0.12***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
No College Degree	−0.01	−0.02	0.05
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.11)
R^2	0.16	0.07	0.10
Adj. R^2	0.15	0.06	0.09
Num. obs.	1432	1432	1430

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

First, as described in the main text, "full mediation" is perhaps the most traditional interpretation. The average direct effect (ADE) of power becomes small and insignificant in the mediation results, whereas the average causal mediation effect (ACME) of the intuition mediators is large and significant. This implies that the intuition mediators "fully" explain the effect of power on aggressive intentions and domino beliefs. A second interpretation is a "suppression effect" due to contrasting effect signs. Because the ADE of power on aggressive intentions and domino beliefs becomes *negative*, this would imply that perhaps material power devoid of its psychological effects would *decrease* threat perception (though, the ADEs are not statistically significant). Since that same material power also increases intuitive thinking which in turn increases threat perception, however, the positive psychological effects on threat perception essentially outweigh the negative material effects on threat perception, leading to a positive total

Table A5: OLS Estimates: US Proliferation Experiment Sense of Power Mediators

	Control and Influence Over Country B	Ability to Get What You Want
(Intercept)	3.17***	3.13***
	(0.13)	(0.12)
Symmetric Power Treatment	0.43***	0.32***
	(0.09)	(0.08)
High Power Treatment	1.32***	0.84***
	(0.09)	(0.09)
Trait Intuitive Thinking	0.12**	0.16***
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Trait Deliberative Thinking	−0.10**	−0.08*
	(0.04)	(0.04)
Male	0.03	0.14
	(0.07)	(0.07)
Age	−0.08**	−0.04
	(0.03)	(0.03)
White	−0.15	−0.06
	(0.08)	(0.08)
Conservative	0.02	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)
No College Degree	0.02	−0.00
	(0.07)	(0.07)
R^2	0.15	0.08
Adj. R^2	0.15	0.07
Num. obs.	1432	1432

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

effect. Either way, both of these causal stories are consistent with the paper's argument.

Furthermore, because I argue that the sense of power is the proximate psychological variable that generates this intuitive thinking, I report additional mediation analyses here that examine the objective power → sense of power → intuition pathway. Table A7, column 1 presents the results of this analysis. The sense of power mediates about 31% of the effect of objective power on intuitive thinking, as expected. Because these post-treatment mediators are measured rather than manipulated, I also assess the objective power → intuition → sense of power pathway for comparison. Table A7, column 2 presents these results. This pathway suggests that intuitive thinking mediates about 11% of the effect of objective power on the sense of power, a much smaller proportion. That is, as expected from psychology of power research, the sense of power does far more to activate intuitive thinking than the reverse.

Table A6: Mediation Estimates: Objective Power → Intuitive Thinking → Primary DVs

	Aggressive Intentions	Domino Beliefs	Preventive Strikes
ACME	0.31*	0.16*	0.92*
	[0.22; 0.40]	[0.10; 0.22]	[0.70; 1.17]
ADE	−0.07	−0.01	0.28*
	[−0.22; 0.07]	[−0.16; 0.14]	[0.04; 0.52]
Total Effect	0.24*	0.16*	1.21*
	[0.08; 0.39]	[0.01; 0.30]	[0.89; 1.54]
Prop. Mediated	1.30*	1.04*	0.76*
	[0.81; 3.29]	[0.36; 5.69]	[0.62; 0.96]

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table A8 presents the results of the objective power → sense of power → primary DVs pathway. The sense of power mediates approximately 87%, 64%, and 31% of the effect of objective power on aggressive intentions, domino beliefs, and support for preventive attacks, respectively. These mediation effects are statistically significant at the conventional $\alpha = .05$ level, although the domino beliefs proportion is borderline ($p = 0.051$). All of these mediation results together suggest that relative state power—and the sense of power that flows from those capabilities—activates intuitive thinking, which increases threat perception relative to state weakness.

Table A7: Mediation Estimates: The Sense of Power Activates Intuitive Thinking

	Sense of Power → Intuitive Thinking	Intuitive Thinking → Sense of Power
ACME	0.12*	0.08*
	[0.07; 0.17]	[0.04; 0.12]
ADE	0.27*	0.65*
	[0.16; 0.37]	[0.54; 0.76]
Total Effect	0.38*	0.73*
	[0.29; 0.48]	[0.63; 0.84]
Prop. Mediated	0.31*	0.11*
	[0.17; 0.48]	[0.06; 0.16]

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table A8: Mediation Estimates: Objective Power → Sense of Power → Primary DVs

	Sense of Power → Aggressive Intentions	Sense of Power → Domino Beliefs	Sense of Power → Preventive Strikes
ACME	0.21*	0.10*	0.37*
	[0.12; 0.28]	[0.02; 0.18]	[0.20; 0.54]
ADE	0.03	0.06	0.83*
	[−0.14; 0.19]	[−0.11; 0.22]	[0.47; 1.19]
Total Effect	0.24*	0.15*	1.21*
	[0.07; 0.39]	[0.00; 0.31]	[0.88; 1.53]
Prop. Mediated	0.87*	0.64	0.31*
	[0.45; 2.67]	[−0.00; 3.92]	[0.17; 0.50]

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

A2.2 Supplementary Time Pressure Experiment

The survey presented above measures proxies for intuitive thinking, and uses these measures as mediators between power and threat perception. However, given that these mediators were measured rather than manipulated, an open question is whether intuitive thinking causally increases threat perception. Here, I report an additional survey experiment fielded in August of 2023 to investigate this question. The survey was fielded on $N = 984$ US-based adults recruited on Prolific (54.8% male, 37.1% 18-34 years old, 55.0% 35-64 years old, 7.9% 65 or older, with 53.3% of subjects having at least a four-year college degree). The instrument was housed on Qualtrics's online platform.

The survey began by presenting subjects with the following information:

> Please imagine that you are the President of the United States. To make U.S. policy decisions, the President often relies in part on short intelligence summaries produced by the U.S. intelligence community. We will show you an illustration of these intelligence assessments and then ask your thoughts about the best way to handle the situation. There are no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in hearing your thoughts.

Then, subjects were presented with the following:

> Here is the situation:
>
> - China continues to conduct military exercises near Taiwan, a close U.S. partner near China.
> - There is some concern that China could attempt to take Taiwan by military force in the coming years.

The following screen presented the experimental intervention and measured the dependent variables. The experimental intervention took the form of random assignment to either a (1) time pressure or (2) no time pressure manipulation. Subjects assigned to the time pressure condition were told the following before the dependent variables: "A rapid response is necessary. Please try to answer the following questions within 20 seconds." A 20 second timer was displayed for these time pressure subjects, which began counting down after reading the text. This time pressure method is based on past prominent studies that use time pressure to experimentally activate intuitive thinking (e.g., Guo, Trueblood and Diederich, 2017; Rand et al., 2014). By contrast, subjects assigned to the no time pressure condition simply responded to the dependent variables.

The dependent variables were measured on seven-point (dis)agree scales: "China poses a serious threat to U.S. security," and "China harbors aggressive intentions towards the U.S." The former is a general measure of threat perception akin to the primary DV from the China proliferation experiment presented above. The latter is a more explicit measure of aggressive intentions central to traditional definitions of threat perception in IR theory (e.g., Singer, 1958). Aggressive intentions served as the primary measure of threat perception in the US proliferation experiment presented above. As such, this time pressure study provides an experimental assessment of the effect of intuition on threat perception across various measures of threat perception used in the paper.

Further, the survey included pre-treatment measures of intuitive versus deliberative thinking from the Rational Experiential Inventory (Pacini and Epstein, 1999), the same items used in the US proliferation experiment above. The items were the following:

- I prefer complex to simple problems.
- I don't like to do a lot of thinking (rc).
- I try to avoid situations that require thinking in depth about something (rc).
- I trust my initial feelings about people.
- I believe in trusting my hunches.
- I can usually feel when a person is right or wrong even if I can't explain how I know.

The first three items measure deliberate thinking, whereas the final three items measure intuitive thinking. The items were measured on five-point (dis)agree scales, and the models below retain these items on additive scales such that higher values indicate more deliberate and intuitive thinking, respectively.

The survey also measured the sense of US power using the following two items:

- The U.S. has a great deal of military power compared to other countries.
- The U.S. can get other countries to do what the U.S. wants.

The items were gathered on seven-point (dis)agree scales, and the models below retain the items on an additive scale, where higher values indicate a greater sense of power.

Table A9 presents the results of this experiment, with effects estimated using linear regression. Most notably, subjects randomly assigned to the time pressure condition are more likely to perceive China as a serious threat ($p = 0.011$) and more likely to believe that China harbors aggressive intentions towards the US ($p = 0.037$). This provides an experimental basis for this paper's $M \rightarrow Y$ effect of intuitive thinking on threat perception. In other words, this paper experimentally shows that objective power increases a reliance on proxies for intuitive thinking, and also experimentally shows that intuitive thinking increases threat perception. Together, this experimentally validates each segment of the paper's causal argument.

Two other results in Table A9 are noteworthy. First, the sense of US power correlates positively, not negatively, with the perception that China is threatening ($p = 0.015$) and harbors aggressive intentions ($p = 0.032$). This provides additional correlational evidence for the paper's central argument: the sense of power increases threat perception. Second, as found in the US experiment above, trait intuitive thinking correlates positively with the perception that China is threatening ($p = 0.002$) and harbors aggressive intentions towards the US ($p < .001$). By contrast, trait deliberative thinking does not correlate with either of these threat perception measures. All of this provides further evidence that the sense of power makes individuals think and behave more in line with intuitive thinkers, and intuitive thinking tends to increase threat perception.

A2.3 Supplementary Rising/Declining Power Experiment

The nuclear proliferation experiments fielded in China and the US assign subjects to static power conditions. That is, power is relatively stable. However, IR theory is often interested in the question of rising versus declining power. The survey of Russian elites, presented below, examines this question directly. While the survey of Russian elites included a number of theoretically important measures that

Table A9: OLS Estimates: Experimentally Induced Intuition Increases Threat Perception

	China Serious Threat	China Aggressive Intentions
(Intercept)	2.96***	2.74***
	(0.38)	(0.36)
Fast Thinking Treatment	0.23*	0.18*
	(0.09)	(0.09)
Sense of US Power	0.06*	0.05*
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Trait Intuitive Thinking	0.06**	0.07***
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Trait Deliberative Thinking	0.01	0.02
	(0.02)	(0.02)
Age	0.13***	0.09**
	(0.03)	(0.03)
Male	−0.08	−0.17
	(0.09)	(0.09)
White	0.07	0.13
	(0.11)	(0.10)
No College Degree	−0.07	−0.07
	(0.09)	(0.09)
Conservative	0.11*	0.09
	(0.05)	(0.05)
Republican	−0.01	0.05
	(0.05)	(0.05)
R^2	0.06	0.07
Adj. R^2	0.05	0.06
Num. obs.	983	983

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

serve as useful control variables, the survey is ultimately correlational in nature, which entails limitations to causal inference. Here, I present an additional survey experiment fielded on the US public. The survey uses a rising versus declining power manipulation that closely mimics the correlational items used to measure power in the Russia survey. In addition to an experimental robustness check on the correlational Russian results, this survey also cross-nationally extends the Russian survey results to the US.

The sample consists of 269 US-based adults recruited by Qualtrics in January 2021 (49.4% male, 33.5% 18-34 years old, 47.2% 35-64 years old, 19.3% 65 or older). The survey was administered online, and the instrument was housed on the Qualtrics platform. Subjects completed standard demo-

graphic questions before assignment to one of two vignettes, which varied relative US power, alongside a matching visual aid. Note that the visual aids were intended to increase the salience of the treatment text.

- **US rise condition:** Over the past 10 years, many believe that U.S. power in international relations has substantially increased. By power, we mean the U.S.'s level of control over important resources and influence over other countries. The U.S.'s military and economy are becoming stronger, and the U.S. has more control over the ability of other countries to get what they want.

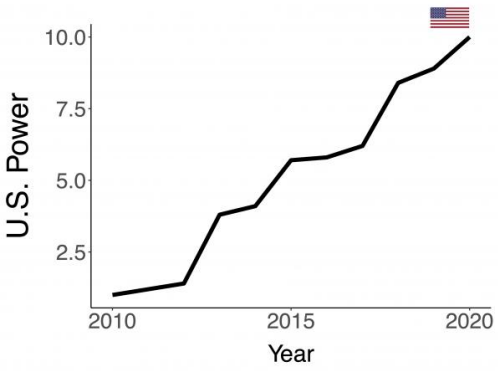

Figure A1: *Rising Power Condition Visual Aid.*

- **US decline condition:** Over the past 10 years, many believe that U.S. power in international relations has substantially declined. By power, we mean the U.S.'s level of control over important resources and influence over other countries. Other countries' militaries and economies are becoming stronger, and the U.S. has less control over the ability of other countries to get what they want.

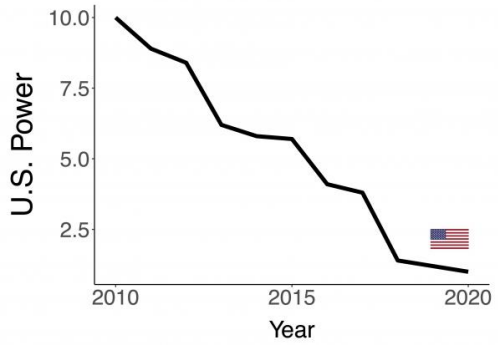

Figure A2: *Declining Power Condition Visual Aid.*

Following treatment, the survey measured threat perception with the following seven-point item: "In international relations, the U.S. faces many security threats," where higher values indicate higher threat perception. The wording of this item closely mirrors the wording of threat perception items used in other experiments reported in this paper. Conventional IR wisdom suggests that states in decline (i.e., subjects

in the declining power condition) should feel greater fear. On the contrary, I expect individuals in the rising power condition to report higher threat perception.

Table A10 presents the results, estimated with linear regression. Subjects randomly assigned to the rising power condition report higher threat perception relative to subjects assigned to the declining power condition. The effect is noteworthy given the brevity of the intervention and the fact that it stands in stark contrast to conventional IR wisdom: declining states, not rising states, are supposed to perceive greater threat in IR theory. IR scholars have missed this effect, because we have yet to seriously examine the psychological effects of power on threat perception.

Table A10: OLS Estimates: Rising/Declining Power Experiment Results

	Threat Perception
(Intercept)	4.23***
	(0.31)
Rising Power Treatment	0.33*
	(0.16)
Age	0.14**
	(0.05)
Male	0.34*
	(0.17)
White	0.36*
	(0.18)
Republican	0.14
	(0.22)
Conservative	0.00
	(0.08)
R^2	0.10
Adj. R^2	0.08
Num. obs.	269

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

A3 Re-Analysis of the 2020 Survey of Russian Elites

The main text presents regression coefficients from a re-analysis of the 2020 survey of Russian elites ($N = 245$). For further details about the survey and data-gathering process, see Zimmerman, Rivera and Kalinin (2021). Here, I note the wording of the most relevant survey items. Figure A3 presents the demographic composition of the sample. As expected from a Russian elite sample, the sample skews older and male.

- *Extensive Russian Interests.* There are various opinions about the national interests of Russia. Which of the two statements below is closer to your point of view?
  - The national interests of Russia for the most part should be limited to its current territory.
  - The national interests of Russia for the most part should extend beyond its current territory.
- *US Threat.* Do you think that the US represents a threat to Russian national security?
  - Yes
  - No
- *NATO Threat.* Which of the following represent the greatest threat to the security of Russia and which do not represent any threat whatsoever? Rate the level of threat on a five-point scale, where 1 means "the absence of danger" and 5 means "the utmost danger."
  - Further expansion of NATO to countries in the Near Abroad: [Five-point scale, where 1 = "The absence of danger," 5 = "The utmost danger," and midpoints 2-4 are unlabeled.]
- *Ukraine Threat.* Please tell me how friendly or hostile you think [Ukraine] is toward Russia today:
  - Very friendly
  - Rather friendly
  - Neutral
  - Rather hostile
  - Very hostile
- *Militant Orientation.* I will read you two statements about the role of military force in international relations. Which of these is closer to your view?
  - Military force ultimately decides everything in international relations.
  - The economic, and not military, potential of a country determines the place and role of a country in the world today.
- *Sense of Power #1.* What impact do you think that Russia's foreign policy in recent years has had on...
  - Russia's international influence: [Five-point scale, where 1 = Definitely positive, 2 = Rather positive, 3 = No impact, 4 = Rather negative, 5 = Definitely negative. (Reverse-coded)]
- *Sense of Power #2 and #3.* In the last twenty years since the year 2000, when Putin first became president, do you think the following things have increased, decreased, or remained unchanged...
  - The influence of Russia in the world: [1 = Increased, 2 = Decreased, 3 = Remained unchanged. (Recoded so higher values = greater sense of influence)]
  - Military readiness and strength: [1 = Increased, 2 = Decreased, 3 = Remained unchanged. (Recoded so higher values = greater sense of strength)]

- *Foreign Policy Elite.* To which elite group does the [interviewee] belong? *(Note: I code executive branch/ministries, legislative branch, and military/security agencies as "foreign policy elite," and all other options as "other elite.")*
    - Media
    - Science/Education
    - Private Business
    - State-Owned Enterprises
    - Executive Branch/Ministries
    - Legislative Branch (those involved in foreign policy)
    - Military/Security Agencies
- *Prior Military Service.* Did you serve in the armed forces, were you only in the reserves, or did you not serve at all?
    - Served
    - Was in reserves
    - Didn't serve at all (Reverse-coded so higher values = more direct military service)

Table A11 presents the full regression table associated with figure 3 in the main text. The results provide support for some existing explanations of threat perception in IR, notably perceptions of extensive Russian interests and militant orientation (i.e., trait hawkishness). However, IR scholars have overlooked the fact that the sense of power correlates positively with threat perception at the individual-level.

A4 Text Analytic Evidence from the Cold War

A4.1 Hyperparameter Details

The embedding analysis uses the global vectors for word representation (GloVe) model to "locally" estimate the embeddings. That is, rather than use a model pre-trained on quotidian texts, like Wikipedia entries and newswire texts, I fit the model to the actual empirical materials of interest.[1] The main text reports nearly all of the relevant details of this analysis. Here, I simply note further model hyperparameter choices. The model was fitted using the `text2vec` package in the R statistical programming environment (Selivanov, Bickel and Wang, 2022). I train the embeddings in 300 dimensions with an x_{max} of 15 (i.e., a maximum of 15 term co-occurrences used in the weighting function). Finally, I use an algorithm convergence tolerance of 0.05, a learning rate of 0.001, and fit the model over 50 iterations. All of these choices are quite standard in embeddings research (Rodriguez and Spirling, 2022).

[1] See Pennington, Socher and Manning (2014) and Rodriguez and Spirling (2022) for more on this distinction.

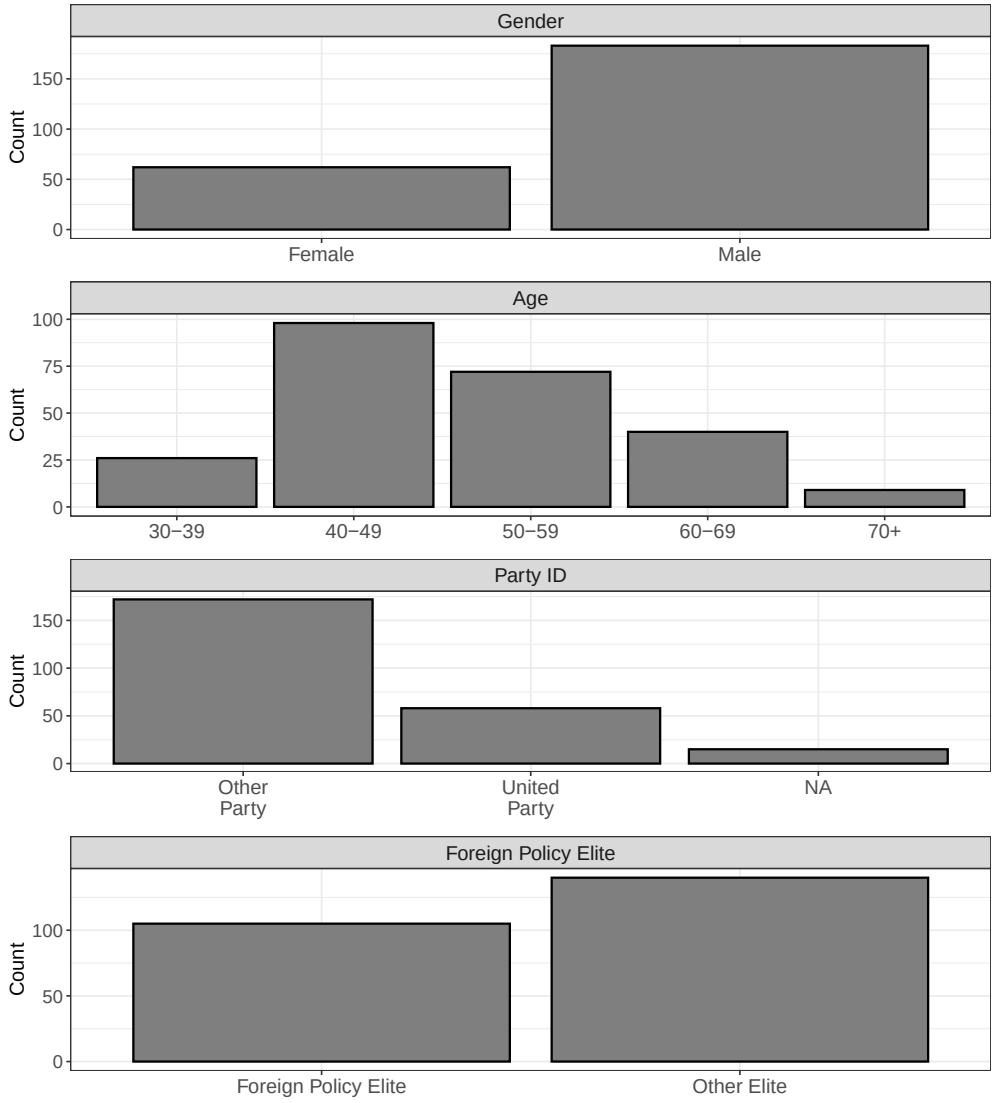

Figure A3: *Russian Elite Survey Demographic Distributions.*

A4.2 Rising/Declining Power Robustness Check

Figure 4 of the main text uses a dictionary meant to capture relatively static power comparisons. However, as described throughout the main text and in appendix section A2.3 above, IR theory is often interested in rising versus declining power. Here, I present a robustness check on the main text results using a more explicitly dynamic power dictionary. Furthermore, as in the US nuclear proliferation experiment and time pressure experiment above, I extend the mediator analysis to include deliberation terms for researchers interested in dual-process explanations of the findings. To measure dynamic power, as well as deliberate thinking, I use the following terms:

- Sense of Rising US Power: **`power, rise`**.
- Sense of Declining US Power: **`powerless, declin*`**.
- Deliberative Thinking: **`calcul*, study, diagnos*, examin*, investig*`**.

Table A11: The Sense of Russian Power Explains Threat Perception

	US Threatens Russian Security	NATO Expansion Dangerous to Russia	Ukraine Hostile Towards Russia
(Intercept)	−0.24	3.28***	4.46***
	(0.91)	(0.33)	(0.23)
Sense of Russian Power	0.76***	0.18*	0.18***
	(0.23)	(0.07)	(0.05)
Extensive Russian Interests	0.92*	0.75***	−0.34***
	(0.36)	(0.14)	(0.10)
Prior Military Service	0.25	−0.01	0.01
	(0.21)	(0.08)	(0.05)
Militant Orientation	0.96**	0.30*	0.11
	(0.35)	(0.12)	(0.09)
Foreign Policy Elite	0.34	−0.03	0.10
	(0.38)	(0.13)	(0.09)
United Party Member	0.43	−0.08	−0.05
	(0.45)	(0.15)	(0.11)
Male	−0.60	−0.10	0.04
	(0.45)	(0.16)	(0.12)
Age	−0.01	0.00	−0.00
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.00)
AIC	247.51		
BIC	277.51		
Log Likelihood	−114.76		
Deviance	229.51		
Num. obs.	207	219	222
R^2		0.20	0.11
Adj. R^2		0.17	0.08

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$; ^ $p < 0.1$

All other dictionary terms are identical to the terms presented in the main text. Figure A4 presents the results, which are substantively identical to the static comparisons presented in the main text. Figure A4(A) shows that terms indicative of a sense of rising US power correlate positively with terms that capture threat perception and intuitive thinking. Figure A4(B) shows that averaging the power terms with intuitive thinking terms significantly decreases the correlation between the sense of power and threat perception. By contrast, averaging the power terms with deliberation terms does nothing to impinge on the relationship between power and threat perception. Following the intuition of Acharya,

Blackwell and Sen (2018), these results suggest that intuition terms help to explain the relationship between the sense of rising power and threat perception in these US Cold War foreign policy texts.

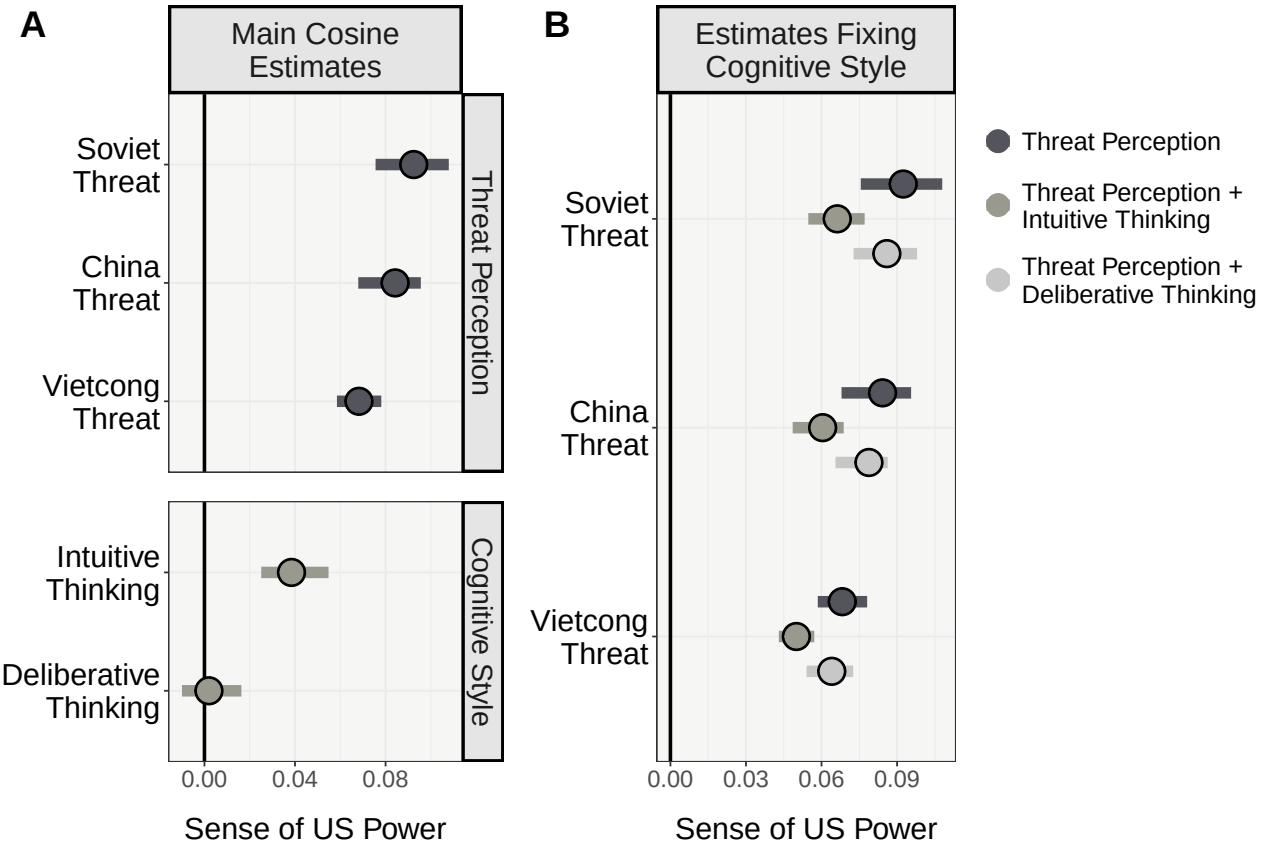

Figure A4: *Cold War US Elite Threat Perception (Dynamic Comparisons)*. Panel A displays cosine similarities between the sense of rising US power and threat perception, intuitive thinking, and deliberative thinking. Panel B re-estimates the similarity between power and threat perception while holding constant intuitive versus deliberative terms. The absence of intuition terms shrinks the relationship between power and threat perception, suggesting that intuition helps to explain the power-threat perception association. Nonparametric 90% confidence intervals derive from twenty resamples of the underlying corpus.

A4.3 Full Results Tables

Figure 4 of the main text and appendix Figure A4 visually display the embedding analysis results. Here, I present the full results tables associated with these figures. As described in the main text, 90% nonparametric confidence intervals are obtained from twenty resamples of the underlying corpus. See Kozlowski, Taddy and Evans (2019) for more on this procedure.

Table A12 displays the results associated with Figure 4(A). The power terms correlate positively and significantly with various forms of threat perception, as well as terms that proxy for intuitive thinking. Table A13 displays the results associated with Figure 4(B). Holding intuitive thinking terms constant across power levels significantly reduces the relationship between power terms and threat perception. That is, the cosine estimate fixing intuition (in Table A13) is outside of the confidence interval without

Table A12: Cosine Estimates: Relationship Between Power Terms, Threat Perception, and Intuitive Thinking

	Main Cosine Estimates
Soviet Threat	0.081*
	[0.072; 0.091]
China Threat	0.079*
	[0.071; 0.091]
Vietcong Threat	0.061*
	[0.051; 0.073]
Intuitive Thinking	0.048*
	[0.040; 0.059]

* 0 outside the confidence interval.

intuition fixed (in Table A12).

Table A14 displays the results associated with Figure A4(A). Again, rising power correlates positively and significantly with various forms of threat perception, as well as terms that proxy for intuitive thinking. However, as psychologists of power often find, the sense of power does not correlate significantly with terms that proxy for deliberate thinking. Table A15 and A16 displays the results associated with Figure A4(B). Again, holding intuitive thinking terms constant across power levels significantly reduces the relationship between rising power and threat perception. By contrast, holding deliberate thinking terms constant across power levels does nothing to impinge on the relationship between power and threat perception. That is, the cosine estimates fixing deliberation (in Table A16) fall within the confidence interval of the cosine estimates without deliberation fixed (in Table A14). This suggests that terms that proxy for intuitive thinking help to explain the association between power terms and threat perception. Deliberation does not appear to explain the association between power and threat perception.

A5 Ethical Considerations

The original surveys reported in this paper and appendix were deemed exempt from review by the Institutional Review Boards at The Ohio State University (#2021E0578, #2020E1283), Dartmouth College (#00032803), and Stanford University (#75470). All subjects completed a consent form with study details, were given the option to withdraw from the study with no penalty, and were presented with a debrief form that described the study's purpose and any experimental deception involved. The debrief form also provided the chance for subjects to withdraw their data from analysis. Subjects opt-in to receive survey invitations from Qualtrics and Prolific, the two subject recruitment platforms used in the paper's original surveys. All subjects completed the studies anonymously. Like the original surveys fielded in the US, the China survey did not ask any politically sensitive questions and used a very hypothetical, stylized experimental vignette.

Table A13: Cosine Estimates: Relationship Between Power Terms and Threat Perception, Fixing Intuitive Thinking Terms

	Cosine Estimates Fixing Intuitive Thinking
Soviet Threat + Intuition	0.057*
	[0.049; 0.063]
China Threat + Intuition	0.056*
	[0.048; 0.065]
Vietcong Threat + Intuition	0.044*
	[0.035; 0.053]

* 0 outside the confidence interval.

Table A14: Cosine Estimates: Relationship Between Dynamic Power Terms, Threat Perception, and Thinking Styles

	Main Cosine Estimates
Soviet Threat	0.092*
	[0.076; 0.108]
China Threat	0.084*
	[0.068; 0.096]
Vietcong Threat	0.068*
	[0.059; 0.078]
Intuitive Thinking	0.038*
	[0.025; 0.055]
Deliberative Thinking	0.002
	[−0.010; 0.016]

* 0 outside the confidence interval.

Table A15: Cosine Estimates: Relationship Between Dynamic Power Terms and Threat Perception, Fixing Intuitive Thinking Terms

	Cosine Estimates Fixing Intuitive Thinking
Soviet Threat + Intuition	0.066*
	[0.055; 0.077]
China Threat + Intuition	0.060*
	[0.049; 0.069]
Vietcong Threat + Intuition	0.050*
	[0.043; 0.057]

* 0 outside the confidence interval.

Table A16: Cosine Estimates: Relationship Between Dynamic Power Terms and Threat Perception, Fixing Deliberative Thinking Terms

	Cosine Estimates Fixing Deliberative Thinking
Soviet Threat + Deliberation	0.086*
	[0.073; 0.098]
China Threat + Deliberation	0.079*
	[0.066; 0.086]
Vietcong Threat + Deliberation	0.064*
	[0.054; 0.073]

* 0 outside the confidence interval.

All samples were convenience samples. The samples gathered by Qualtrics included quotas for age and gender to increase sample representativeness. The models reported in the paper and appendix do not use weighting. In terms of question order and survey flow, the paper's original surveys consisted of (1) a consent form, (2) demographic and individual-level measures, (3) random assignment to relevant experimental conditions, (4) post-treatment measures of dependent variables and mediators as relevant, and (5) a debrief form.

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