Multidimensional Reputation

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Abstract

Global politics is characterized by enduring uncertainty about actors' intentions, giving reputation a central place in the field of international relations. While scholars have identified many types or dimensions of reputation – including reputation for reliability, resolve, competence, compliance, and democracy, among others – existing studies tend to analyze them in isolation. In this project, we introduce a framework for understanding the multidimensionality of reputation. We theorize two distinct ways in which multiple dimensions of a state's reputation can interact. First, *reputational spillovers* reflect instances when foreign policy behavior traditionally associated with one dimension affects a state's reputation in other domains. Second, *strategic linkage* occurs when states leverage reputation costs in one dimension to burnish its reputation in another. We test these processes in several survey experiments focused on two dimensions of reputation that have been of primary interest to scholars of international security and cooperation: reputation for resolve and reputation for compliance with international law. Our findings shed novel light on the strategic incentives that confront states as they confront decisions about military force and international law.

Note: This is a preliminary draft. All comments, including on framing, theory, and survey design are welcome.

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1 Introduction

Foreign policy decisions often carry reputational consequences for states and political leaders. The choice to use military force, for example, is believed to enhance a state's reputation for resolve (e.g., Huth, 1997; Renshon, Dafoe and Huth, 2018; Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, 2015; Goldfien, Joseph and McManus, 2023). The decision to abide by international treaties can increase a reputation for compliance with legal commitments (e.g., Keohane, 1984; Guzman, 2008; Simmons, 2010). Similarly, scholars have argued that a state's foreign policy conduct meaningfully affects expectations about its propensity to repay debt (Tomz, 2012) and honor alliance obligations (Crescenzi et al., 2012), among other behavioral tendencies.

Strategic leaders anticipate these effects and incorporate them in their decision-making (Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, 2015; Yarhi-Milo, 2018). However, their task is complicated by the overlapping and potentially cross-cutting nature of reputation. Few foreign policy choices are simple enough to implicate only one reputational trait. Instead, a variety of reputational inferences may attach to a single policy decision. As a result, political leaders typically have to navigate complex tradeoffs and juggle multiple considerations when crafting foreign policy.

Consider the Bush Administration's decision to invade Iraq in 2003. U.S. policymakers were motivated, at least in part, by the desire to show resolve to Saddam Hussein and other perceived adversaries in the region (Butt, 2019; Leffler, 2023). For Vice President Cheney, an important justification for war was its "demonstration effect" (Gellman, 2008). At the same time, figures like Colin Powell worried that pursuing regime change without exhausting diplomatic options would damage America's perceived commitment to multilateralism and its broader standing in the international community (Stieb, 2021; Leffler, 2023). These officials anticipated that the use of force would enhance America's reputation for resolve but undermine its reputation for compliance with norms of multilateral diplomacy and non-aggression.[1] The foreign policy decisions they made – pursuing UN Security Council

[1]These concerns were not unique to the Iraq invasion. Decades earlier during the Cuban Missile Crisis,

Authorization while making clear the US would act even if the UN did not – reflected an attempt to balance these competing concerns.

Recent Israeli military action in Gaza offers another example. Like the Bush Administration, the Israeli government must navigate multiple reputational signals arising from its use of force: it seeks to signal unyielding resolve to Hamas and its backers, while conveying to US and European audiences that its actions are proportionate and lawful. As experts observed in the days after October 7, Israel confronted a core tension between the "principle of proportionality in international law" and the "logic of deterrence" (Byman and Palmer, 2023). Ultimately, Israel prioritized its reputation for resolve over its reputation for compliance with international law. The government may even have perceived strategic value in a diminished reputation for compliance. As Dan Drezner remarked, "it is possible that Israel believes it can restore its ability to deter by signaling its willingness to violate the laws and norms of warfighting."

As these examples underscore, foreign policy decisions create complex and potentially cross-cutting effects on a state's reputation. Understanding these effects is crucial, as they affect state incentives to wage war and comply with international commitments. While recent scholarship has grappled with the multidimensionality of reputation (Dafoe, Renshon and Huth, 2014; Jervis, Yarhi-Milo and Casler, 2021; Kertzer and Brutger, 2016; Morse and Pratt, 2022; Casler, Ribar and Yarhi-Milo, 2023), the research program remains largely siloed among communities that focus on a single reputational trait – limiting our understanding of more complex reputational effects.

Our paper emphasizes the potential for interaction among multiple dimensions of a state's reputation. We introduce a framework for understanding the relationship between different reputational traits. While our conceptual framework is quite broad, we focus specifically on the relationship between reputation for resolve and reputation for compliance. Reputation for resolve refers to beliefs about an actor's willingness to bear costs in foreign policy crises,

US officials grappled with the need to demonstrate the nation's "will and determination" to the Soviet Union while simultaneously preserving its "moral position at home and around the globe" (Kennedy, 1969).

especially as it pertains to the use of military force.(e.g., Fearon, 1995; Debs, 2022). Reputation for compliance refers to beliefs about an actor's propensity to fulfill their international legal obligations. Scholars of international security and cooperation have long been interested in reputations for resolve and compliance, although they have typically been studied in isolation.

Our main argument is that a state's reputation for resolve and for compliance are interdependent: actions in one realm can spill over to affect the other, and leaders can leverage this by violating or upholding laws strategically to shape how they are perceived. We theorize two specific mechanisms through which reputations for resolve and compliance interact to shape state incentives. First, we argue that *reputational spillovers* frequently arise across settings typically associated with resolve (military crises) and compliance (adherence to international law). Audiences who observe a state violate international law, for example, are likely to draw inferences not only about future legal compliance, but also about a state's willingness to stand firm in military crises. This spillover occurs because observers recognize (perhaps implicitly) a correlation of types among "resolved" and "noncompliant" states. Learning about a state's reputation in one domain thus offers an informative signal about its reputation in the other. If such spillovers exist, foreign poilcy behaviors understood to bolster reputation for resolve may undermine reputation for compliance and vice versa.

Second, states can exploit overlaps in reputational dimensions to improve their reputation for favored traits, a process we call *strategic linkage*. A classic example is a situation where international law prohibits the use of military force, helping states "save face" when backing down in a crisis. In this case, a state that backs down wields its reputation for compliance as a shield to mitigate harm to its reputation for resolve. But we argue that legal prohibitions on the use of force also have a dark side, creating counter-intuitive incentives for states to fight in *defiance* of international law as an especially strong signal of their resolve.

To test these arguments, we turn to survey experimentation. Across two experiments, we assess (1) whether foreign policy actions generate multiple, simultaneous reputational effects

("spillovers"), and (2) how reputational effects interact with each other to shape perceptions ("strategic linkage"). The first experiment examines how compliance with international law – including on non-military issues like trade and environmental protection – affects a state's reputation for resolve. We provide respondents with a vignette describing a policy shift in a hypothetical country, and we randomly vary whether the behavior complies with or violates a treaty commitment. We then measure the state's reputation for resolve and compliance. In the second experiment, we examine how the reputational effects of crisis behavior (fighting or backing down in a territorial dispute) depend on the state of international law.

The results of these experiments provide substantial evidence for the multidimensionality of reputation in general and for our two theoretical mechanisms in particular. In support of our spillover mechanism, we find that the decision to violate treaty commitments both decreases reputation for compliance *and* increases reputation for resolve, even when the issues at stake are far removed from security concerns. In support of our strategic linkage mechanism, we find that using force in contravention of international legal obligations increases resolve compared to fighting in compliance with international legal obligations. This 'defiance effect' represents a theoretical and empirical counterpart to the more sanguine expectation that international law deters conflict and helps states to save face when backing down.

Our study makes a number of contributions to international relations scholarship. First, the paper answers Jervis, Yarhi-Milo and Casler (2021)'s recent call to examine the multidimensionality of reputation. We advance the literature by theorizing and documenting dependence across two dimensions of reputation—-resolve and compliance—-that have been of central importance to the literature on reputation in international relations. By illuminating the interaction between reputation for resolve and compliance, our research suggests that the determinants of international reputation are more complex than previously recognized. Further, establishing the link between reputation for resolve and compliance paves the way for future investigation into dependencies across other dimensions of reputation, including

reliability, competence, hawkishness, respect for human rights, and others.

Second, and related, this research can help scholars more fully understand the challenges that leaders and states face in managing their international reputation. Our study highlights that the same foreign policy action can generate reputational benefits on one dimension and costs on another. Leaders can even leverage these costs to credibly signal their type in crisis bargaining. Future research could examine other strategic settings in which leaders face reputational tradeoffs, and assess how leaders navigate these tradeoffs when making foreign policy decisions.

Third, the paper has important implications for our understanding of the role of international law governing the use of military force. A key function of international law is to generate reputational costs for states that engage in noncompliant behavior (Guzman, 2008). By establishing a clear and precise "red line" for unacceptable behavior (Abbott et al., 2000), international law helps audiences distinguish between cooperative and non-cooperative types. In this conventional narrative, the desire to maintain a reputation for compliance acts as a deterrent against the use of unlawful military force. However, our paper suggests that the reputational benefits of compliance are offset by corresponding harm to a state's reputation for resolve. This can even offer a positive incentive to violate international law: the same red lines that identify behavior as unlawful can be exploited by states to burnish their reputation for standing firm.

2 The Many Dimensions of Reputation

Following Jervis, Yarhi-Milo and Casler (2021, 169), we define reputation as "beliefs about an actor's persistent characteristics or tendencies based on that actor's past behavior, which will influence what he or she does in the future."[2] Reputation has been of central importance to the academic study of international relations since at least the 1960s, when Thomas

[2]This is similar to Dafoe, Renshon and Huth (2014, 372-3), which defines reputation as "any belief about a trait or behavioral tendency of an actor based on past actions."

Schelling explored the "interdependence of commitments" in his seminal study of credibility and deterrence in the nuclear age (Schelling, 1966, 55). Reputation is theorized to shape the credibility of threats, and to affect a state's ability to achieve favorable outcomes in crisis bargaining (Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, 2015). It is central to compliance with international regimes (Keohane, 1984) and the functioning of international law (Guzman, 2008). It can be used to transcend rivalries (Kydd, 2005). States are thought to value having a good reputation (Sartori, 2005), and they may even fight to create or sustain it (Yarhi-Milo, 2018).

Though it is common both in academia and policy circles to talk about "reputation" as a single quantity, reputation is also often linked to specific traits or tendencies. Scholars have explored reputation for resolve (Jervis, 1976; Powell, 1990; Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, 2015; Goldfien, Joseph and McManus, 2023), compliance (Keohane, 1984; Milgrom, North and Weingast, 1990; Tomz, 2012; Guzman, 2008; Simmons, 2010), reliability (Leeds, Long and Mitchell, 2000; Gartzke and Gleditsch, 2004; Tomz and Weeks, 2021; Crescenzi et al., 2012), competence (Levendusky and Horowitz, 2012; Crescenzi, 2018), belligerence or hawkishness (Kertzer and Brutger, 2016; Schultz, 2005; Mattes and Weeks, 2019, 2022), madness (McManus, 2021), and democracy (Bush and Zetterberg, 2021; Bush, Donno and Zetterberg, 2023), among much else. Whether these various reputational traits can be usefully distinguished – and the extent to which they might interact – is contested. Existing arguments on international reputation can be partitioned into three schools of thought.

The first tradition views a country's reputation as a single, consolidated quantity, which we term the *unitary perspective* (Jervis, Yarhi-Milo and Casler, 2021, 192). Rather than separately accounting for various traits, audiences develop a more general perception of a state's credibility or tendency to stay true to its word (Jervis, 1970; Sartori, 2002, 2005). According to this perspective, the various dimensions of a state's reputation can't be analytically untangled in a useful way. Reneging on a promise, whether it's violating an international agreement (Keohane, 1984), defaulting on sovereign debt (Tomz, 2012), or backing down

from a threat to use military force (Fearon, 1994), harms a country's general reputation for following commitments. Foreign policy actions across a range of issue areas are internalized in a broad running tally of "good" or "bad" behavior.

A second tradition, which we call *isolated multidimensionality*, argues that states develop and maintain multiple reputations, which exist distinct and independent from one another. Because state preferences differ systematically across issue areas, reputation tends to affect behavior only when the present interaction closely mirrors prior interactions (Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo, 2015; Huth, 1997; Downs and Jones, 2002). As a result, reputation tends to be context-specific (Hafner-Burton, Victor and Lupu, 2012), and a country's reputation for compliance may be distinct from its reputation for resolve, toughness, or other traits (Keohane, 1997; Guzman, 2008).[3] From this perspective, states maintain an array of reputations that exist largely in isolation from each other and evolve in response to different policy choices.

We advance a third perspective on reputation, which we call *interactive multidimensionality*. Less explicitly developed in the existing literature (Jervis, Yarhi-Milo and Casler, 2021), a number of recent studies have found evidence that foreign policy choices simultaneously affect several dimensions of a state's reputation. For example, Morse and Pratt (2022) show that attacking international norms increase a state's reputation for allegiance to its citizens, while undermining its reputation for compliance. Kertzer and Brutger (2016) similarly find that backing down in a military crisis can shape perceptions of both resolve and belligerence. We argue that connections between the multiple dimensions of reputation highlighted in existing work emerges because foreign policy behaviors reflect multifaceted inputs and are not easily attributable to a single trait or behavioral tendency. In the following section, we develop a set of arguments that underpin *interactive multidimensionality*.

[3]Indeed, according to Downs and Jones (2002, S101), a state may have many distinct reputations for compliance with international law, each specific to different regimes or even specific to treaties within a given regime.

3 Reputations for Resolve and Compliance: Spillovers and Strategic Linkage

To explore the complex multidimensional dynamics of reputation, we examine the relationship between perceptions of resolve and compliance. Reputation for resolve refers to beliefs about an actor's willingness to bear costs in foreign policy crises. Following the international security literature, we focus specifically on beliefs about an actor's willingness to use military force. Reputation for compliance refers to beliefs about an actor's propensity to fulfill their international legal obligations. While these are not the only reputational traits that international relations scholars have focused on, they are central to the subdisciplines of international security and international cooperation. Reputations for resolve and compliance are also believed to be two powerful motivators for state behavior, shaping choices about crisis escalation and adherence to international law, respectively.

We take as a starting point the conventional wisdom that foreign policy decisions about the use of force shape a state's reputation for resolve, and decisions about upholding international legal commitments shapes the reputation for compliance. These expectations – which reflect the isolated multidimensionality perspective discussed above – are visualized in the left panel of Figure 1. As the figure illustrates, a state's foreign policy choices within a given domain are expected to shape its reputation specifically within that same domain.

Building on this conventional wisdom, we advance two primary arguments about complex relationships between state reputations for resolve and compliance. The first is that we should observe *reputational spillovers* across the policy domains typically associated with resolve (military conflict) and compliance (adherence to international law). In other words, audiences are likely to draw inferences about a state's future behavior in one domain based in part on their observed behavior in another. For example, states that closely comply with international law may be perceived as less resolved in military crises than those that routinely violate legal commitments. This theoretical process is visualized in the middle panel of Figure 1.

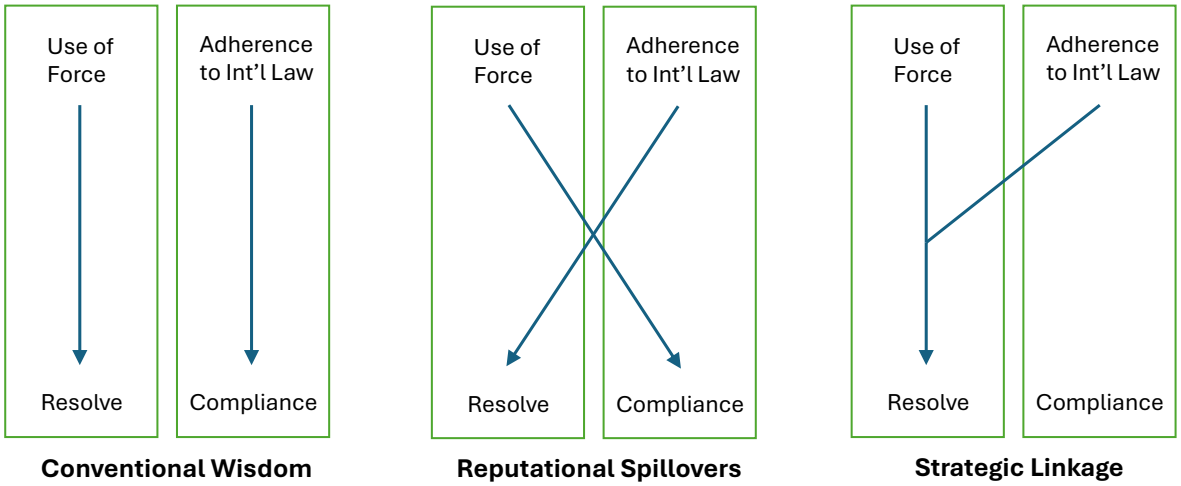

Figure 1: *Types of Reputational Effects.*

Second, we argue that perceptions of resolve and compliance interact to create strategic opportunities for political leaders. This interaction is based on the logic of costly signaling. Actions that accrue reputation *costs* on one dimension can be leveraged to increase reputational *benefits* on another. For example, consider the reputational effects associated with using military force in ways that openly violate international law. Scholars of international cooperation contend that such behavior would damage a state's reputation for compliance, since it contravenes a clear legal obligation (Abbott et al., 2000; Guzman, 2008). We argue that this statement is correct but incomplete: the violation will also increase the state's reputation for resolve. The underlying logic is familiar to scholars of costly signaling: by creating costs for a state's reputation for compliance, legal prohibitions simultaneously create an opportunity to credibly signal resolve.[4] This means that the effect of using force is conditional on whether such behavior complies with or contravenes international law, as illustrated in the right panel of Figure 1. Below, we describe the theoretical mechanisms that give rise to these two processes in greater detail.

[4]This logic is somewhat similar to Hollyer and Rosendorff (2011), though the cost incurred by the repressive government who signs the Convention Against Torture is not reputational in their theory.

3.1 Reputational Spillovers

We argue that reputational spillovers are a common phenomenon in international politics. When audiences observe a state's behavior, they do not draw narrow inferences that stay neatly within the bounds of a particular domain. Instead, they update beliefs about the state across a range of dimensions. This allows a single foreign policy behavior to generate multiple reputational effects.

Reputational spillovers occur because there is often an empirical correlation between actors' various behavioral tendencies. In the context of resolve and compliance, for example, there is likely a negative correlation between the tendency to use force (resolve) and the tendency to fulfill legal obligations (compliance). Using military force is a "coercive" tendency, while fulfilling legal obligations is a "cooperative" tendency (Dafoe, Renshon and Huth, 2014), and actors may have some underlying set of values, interests, or attributes that make them tend toward either coercive or cooperative behaviors. If that relationship holds true, audiences have good reason to draw broad, multidimensional inferences from specific foreign policy behaviors. A state that rigorously fulfills its international legal obligations is less likely to be willing to use military force than a state that brazenly violates its international legal obligations. Similarly, a state that regularly resorts to the use of force is less likely to adhere to its international legal obligations than a state that is very reluctant to use military force.

To illustrate the logic of reputational spillovers, consider the following stylized example. Suppose observers are uncertain about two dimensions of State A's type: its resolve and its compliance orientation. State A can be a high resolve type or a low resolve type. State A can also be a high compliance type or a low compliance type. Further, assume the distribution of types is correlated. To make things concrete, suppose the following:

- State A is high resolve with *ex ante* probability 1/5.
- State A is high compliance with *ex ante* probability 7/10.

- Conditional on being high resolve, the probability that a State A is high compliance is 1/4 (i.e., Pr(high compliance | high resolve) = 1/4).

This gives the following conditional and marginal probabilities that a State A is high resolve, high compliance, or both:

	High Resolve	Low Resolve	Total
High Compliance	5%	65%	70%
Low Compliance	15%	15%	30%
Total	20%	80%	

To understand how correlated types can lead to reputational spillover, suppose that only high resolve types fight in a crisis and that only high compliance types fulfill their international legal obligations.[5] If so, audiences that observe just a crisis or just a compliance decision can rationally update about both dimensions of reputation—even if the crisis doesn't implicate international law and the compliance decision doesn't implicate the use of force. For example:

- State A fights in a crisis in which international law is not applicable or relevant. Prior beliefs were that A was high resolve with probability 1/5 and high compliance with probability 7/10. Consistent with Bayes' Rule, posterior beliefs are that A is high resolve with probability 1. Further, because high resolved types are also only high compliance with probability 1/4, we downgrade our belief that A is high compliance. The posterior belief is now that A is high compliance with probability 1/4, even though we didn't observe a compliance decision.

- Similarly, suppose A complies with a legal obligation that has nothing to do with military affairs. Posterior beliefs are that A is high compliance with probability 1.

[5]Fully strategic game-theoretic repeated crisis models are complicated somewhat by incentives to misrepresent (e.g., Renshon, Dafoe and Huth, 2018; Goldfien, Joseph and McManus, 2023). However, in these models fighting in a prior crisis nonetheless sends a credible signal of resolve. The assumption that fighting is completely informative is a simplification to illustrate the argument.

> Further, since we now know that A is high compliance, we lower our posterior belief that A is high resolve to about 7% (5/70), even though we didn't observe A's actions in a military crisis.

As these toy examples illustrate, reputational effects are very unlikely to remain isolated in particular domains if reputational traits are correlated. In section 3.3, we provide some evidence of correlation across reputational traits. Before doing so, we describe the mechanism underpinning the strategic linkage argument.

3.2 Strategic Linkage

In addition to repuational spillovers, we expect that reputations for resolve and compliance are likely to interact in meaningfully ways. Specifically, we argue that the effect of a foreign policy behavior (e.g., using military force) on a particular reputational dimension (e.g., resolve) will be conditional on the behavior's relationship to other reputational dimensions (compliance). This creates opportunities for states to strategically link reputational traits to advance foreign policy interests. We propose two such effects, both of which explain how perceptions of resolve depend on a state's compliance with international law.

The first – which we call the *face-saving effect* – arises when an international legal prohibition on force insulates a state's reputation for resolve when it backs down from a military confrontation. States that opt out of fighting are partially protected by the shield of legality. As Thomas Schelling articulated in *Arms and Influence*,

> One of the great advantages of international law..is that a country may be obliged *not* to engage in some dangerous rivalry when it would actually prefer not to but might otherwise feel obliged to for the sake of its bargaining reputation. The boy who wears glasses and can't see without them cannot fight if he wants to; but if he wants to avoid the fight it is not so obviously for lack of nerve...

This argument suggests that the multidimensionality of reputation—specifically reputation for compliance with international law and reputation for resolve (or what Schelling calls bargaining reputation)—can encourage restraint in the use of force. When a state backs down

in the face of a legal prohibition on fighting, it is unclear to observers whether this reflects truly low resolve (i.e., the state would have backed down even absent the legal prohibition) or rather the legal obligation to lay down arms. This face-saving function of international law is an optimistic story about the use of legal commitments to reduce incentives to fight.

Unfortunately, there are two sides to this coin. While the prospect of reputation costs on the compliance dimension help states to save face when backing down, these same costs also create an opportunity for states to send a very strong signal of resolve by fighting. We call this the *defiance effect*. States that use military force in contravention of international law suffer a loss of reputation for compliance. This reputation cost increases the overall cost of war, raising the bar for using force. But raising the bar means that those who nonetheless still fight must be especially resolved. That is, states that fight even in the face of a legal prohibition can distinguish themselves all the more.

To illustrate this mechanism formally, suppose State A faces a crisis in which it can choose to fight or back down. A's utility can be written as:

$$u_A(p, c_A, h, L) = \begin{cases} p - c_A - hL, & \text{if A fights} \\ 0, & \text{if A backs down} \end{cases} \tag{1}$$

where p is the probability of victory; $c_A \in [0, \bar{c_A}]$ is A's cost of war; L is the cost of violating international law in terms of reputation for compliance; and $h \in \{0, 1\}$ is the state of international law, where $h = 1$ means fighting is prohibited and $h = 0$ means the absence of a legal prohibition. The value of A's cost of war, c_A, is private information and is often conceptualized as A's level of resolve (i.e., a low cost of war means high resolve).

With this simple model, we can characterize State A's decision to fight in the absence and presence of a legal prohibition on force. When there is no law prohibiting force ($h = 0$), A fights if $p - c_A \geq 0$, or more simply when $p \geq c_A$. When fighting entails costs to A's compliance reputation ($h = 1$), A fights if $p - L \geq c_A$.

We visualize these cut-points in Figure 2 below and use them to define three distinct

"types" of states in terms of their resolve. Low resolve types are states who back down regardless of the state of international law ($c_A \geq p$). Medium resolve types are those who fight only when the state of international law permits uses of force ($p - L \leq c_A \leq p$). Finally, high resolve types fight regardless of the state of international law ($c_A \leq p - L$).

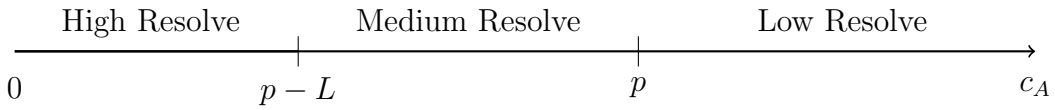

Figure 2: *State A Types, Resolve Dimension.*

In this context, the effect of an international legal prohibition is to move the cutpoint at which states fight or back down, from p to $p - L$. This shift contributes to both the "defiance" and the "saving face" effects described above. Consider how the shift in cutpoints shapes inferences when backing down and when fighting:

- *Back Down*: When A backs down in the absence of a legal prohibition against fighting, observers are certain they are the low resolve type ($c_A \geq p$). When A backs down in the face of a legal prohibition, however, A could either be the low resolve type or the medium resolve type. The additional reputation cost imposed by international law violations helps low resolve types to blend in with the medium resolve types. All audiences now know is that $c_A \geq p - L$. Because international law makes it difficult for observers to distinguish medium and low resolve states, it helps states that would have backed down even in the absence of a legal prohibition to save face.

- *Fight*: When A chooses to fight in the absence of a legal prohibition, it could either be a high resolve type or a medium resolve type, since both types have incentives to fight. Once we add on an international legal prohibition, only the high resolve types choose to fight. After observing a state fight despite a legal prohibition, observers are therefore certain that the state has a high level of resolve. In this way, international

law helps the high resolve types separate themselves from not just low resolve types but also from medium resolve types.

These two dynamics show why international legal prohibitions might have countervailing effects. By making military force more costly, it enables states to back down without suffering a severe penalty to their reputation for resolve. However, the same costs can be exploited by states who wish to credibly signal their resolve to use force. The concerning implication is that leaders that prioritize demonstrating resolve have positive incentives to violate international law.

3.3 Interrogating Assumptions

The arguments advance above rely on two assumptions. First, both the reputational spillover and strategic linkage mechanisms assume that states maintain multiple, distinct reputations. If audiences fail to distinguish states based on multiple behavioral traits, the case for a multidimensional approach is significantly weakened. To probe this assumption, we asked 1,200 American survey respondents to assess the reputation of eight real countries for resolve and compliance. We also ask about their "signaling reputation," or the propensity that each country stays true to its word (Jervis, 1976).[6] Figure 3 reports the reputations of eight countries along these three dimensions. As the figure shows, audiences draw clear distinctions between reputational traits within a given state. Russia, for example, has a very strong reputation for resolve (an average of 6 points on the 7-point scale), but a much weaker reputation for compliance and signaling. Respondents also perceive notable differences across countries that suggest the three traits are not easily collapsed to a single underlying dimension. For example, while Switzerland and the United Kingdom (UK) enjoy nearly identical reputations for compliance and signaling, the UK has a significantly stronger reputation for

[6]Each measure of reputation reflects the average level of respondent agreement with the statements "[Country X] is often willing to use military force internationally" (resolve), "[Country X] is the type of country that would comply with its international legal commitments" (compliance), and "[Country X] is the type of country that would stay true to its word" (signaling). Agreement is recorded using a seven-point scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree."

resolve.

Second, the reputational spillovers argument, in particular, assumes not only that multiple dimensions of reputation adhere to states, but that beliefs about types are correlated across these different dimensions. Specifically, we conjectured that resolve and compliance reputations are likely to be negatively correlated, since the former concerns a coercive tendency and the latter a cooperative one. In Figure 4, we visualize the correlation in our survey data among reputational traits. Consistent with our general expectations, the left panel shows a negative correlation between resolve and compliance reputation among the eight states. The right panel illustrates the strong positive correlation between states' reputation for compliance and signaling reputation. We interpret these descriptive trends as suggestive evidence of the plausibility of our theoretical assumptions.

4 Experimental Analysis

To examine our theory empirically, we turn to survey experimentation. We embed two experiments in surveys of American respondents in January 2023 to test the two theoretical mechanisms described above. Our first study focuses on the spillover mechanism, randomly varying information about a fictional state's record of treaty compliance and measuring its effect on multiple dimensions of reputation. Our second study focus on our strategic linkage mechanism, exploring how crisis behavior and international law interact to shape reputation for resolve.[7]

4.1 Study 1: Testing Reputational Spillovers

Our first theoretical mechanism concerns spillover effects. As Figure 4 indicates, there is a perceived correlation between actors' various behavioral tendencies. As a result, audiences are likely to update beliefs about multiple dimensions of a state's reputation after observing

[7]See Appendix A and B for the full text of the survey in studies 1 and 2, respectively.

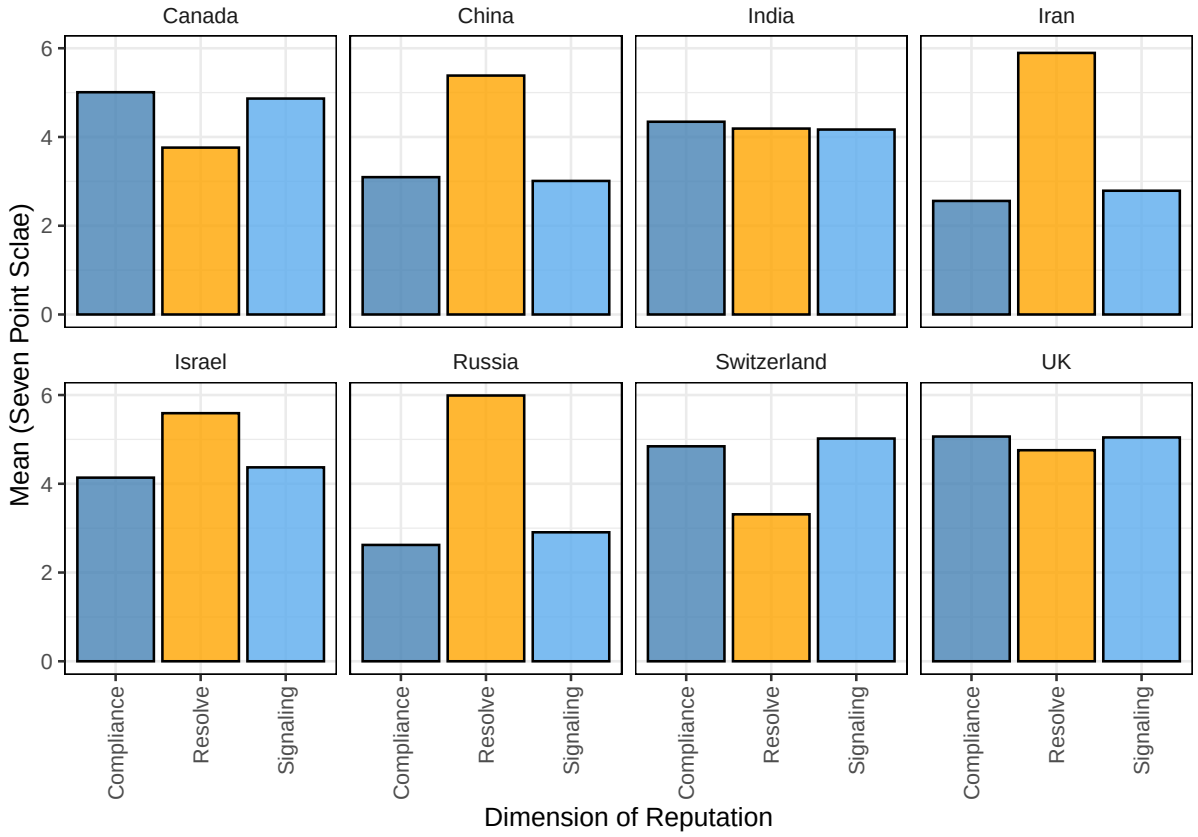

Figure 3: *Variation in Dimensions of Reputation for Real Countries*: We asked subjects to assess the reputation for resolve, reputation for compliance, and signaling reputation for real countries. Each subject rated two countries on each dimension using a seven-point scale.

only a single foreign policy decision.

To explore the logic of reputational spillovers empirically, we continue our focus on the dimensions of compliance and resolve. Specifically, we consider the reputational consequences of a state's record of fulfilling its treaty obligations. If our theoretical expectations are correct, states that violate international law should experience changes to their reputation for resolve – even when the law violation has no substantive bearing on questions of military force.

To test our argument, we embed a vignette experiment in a survey of adult US respondents. The survey sample includes approximately 1,200 US nationals recruited using the survey platform Lucid Theorem. The structure of the survey is illustrated in Figure 5. After answering a pre-treatment questionnaire that measures their foreign policy attitudes, re-

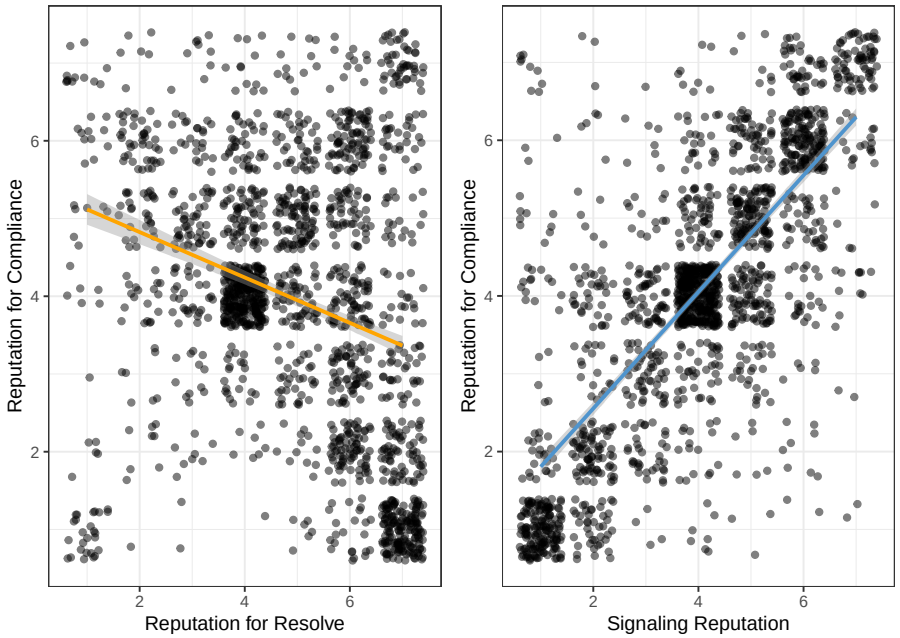

Figure 4: *Correlation between Dimensions of Reputation*: The plot above aggregates the data from our questions about the reputations of real countries. The left panel plots reputation for resolve scores against reputation for compliance scores; the right panel compares signaling reputation with reputation for compliance.

spondents read a vignette about a hypothetical country, Arcadia, which has recently shifted its foreign policy. We randomly vary whether the policy issue is closely tied to military matters (Arms Control) or focused exclusively on economic issues (Trade). We also randomize whether the policy shift violates or complies with the country's treaty obligations. After reading the vignette, respondents proceed to the outcome questionnaire where we measure perceptions of Arcadia's resolve and compliance reputation.

We present the text of the vignette below. Respondents view basic background information about Arcadia, read about recent changes in its policy stances related to trade or arms control, and then learn whether these shifts comply with or violate Arcadia's treaty obligations. Experimentally assigned portions are indicated in brackets.

> Arcadia is a [small/large] [democracy/dictatorship] with [an advanced/a developing] economy.
>
> Over the past 5 years, Arcadia has shifted course on a number of policy issues, including its approach to [trade/arms control]. Specifically, Arcadia [imposed new

tariffs in several key industries, raising the cost of imported goods./accelerated its development of advanced missile systems, increasing the country's stockpile of long-range weapons.]

The actions taken by Arcadia are [consistent with / a brazen violation of] a major international treaty that the country signed and ratified a decade ago. Arcadia considered its legal obligations and relations with other treaty members and [chose to follow the treaty closely/violated the treaty anyways].

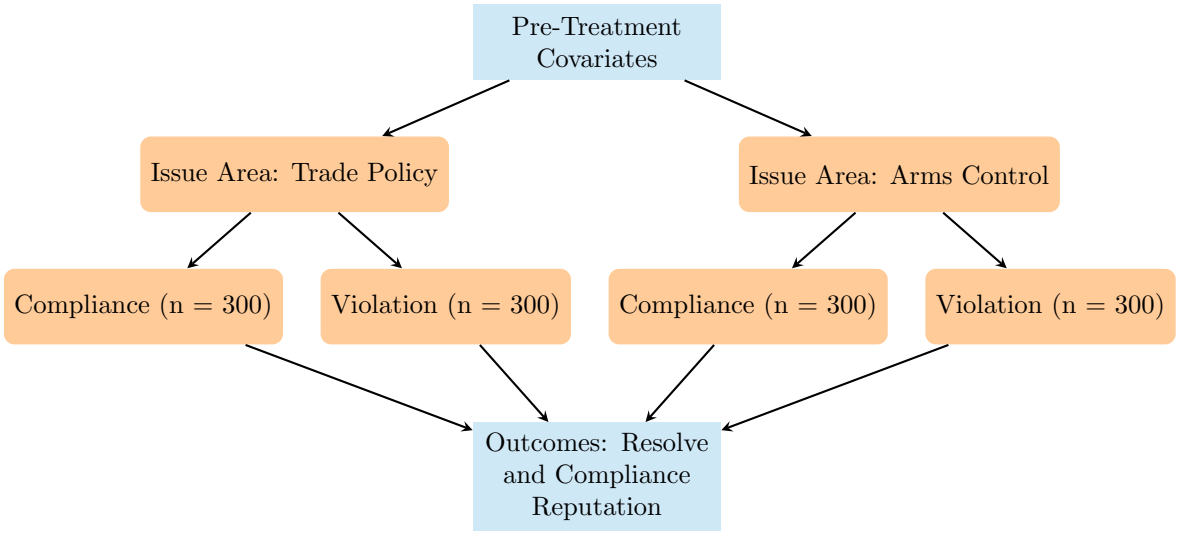

Figure 5: *Reputational Spillover Experiment: Diagram of Survey Flow*

After reading the vignette, subjects rate Arcadia's reputation for resolve and its reputation for compliance with international commitments. For our primary measure of reputation for resolve, we ask respondents to indicate their agreement with the following statement: "Arcadia is the type of country that is often willing to use military force." Responses are recorded on a seven-point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.[8] To measure compliance reputation, we assess respondent agreement with the statement "Arcadia is the type of country that would comply with its international legal commitments."[9]

[8]We include two secondary measures of resolve reputation. The first is respondent agreement (on the same seven-point scale) that "Arcadia is the type of country that does what it takes to achieve its goals, even in the face of significant opposition." The second asks respondents to imagine a hypothetical standoff between their own country and Arcadia in the future, in which Arcadia has threatened to use military force. We ask respondents to rate agreement with the statement "If my country does not give in, Arcadia will follow through on its threat to use military force."

[9]As in the resolve case, we also include a secondary measure of compliance reputation; we ask respondents

4.1.1 Hypotheses

We use the experiment to test several pre-registered hypotheses. First, consistent with the conventional wisdom, we expect that violations of treaty obligations harms compliance reputation. Therefore, we state the following pre-registered hypothesis.

> **H1: Domain-Specific Compliance Reputation Effect.** Violating international agreements harms a country's reputation for compliance.

However, our theory suggests that the effect of treaty violations will not be confined to the compliance dimension of reputation. Rather, the posited negative correlation between compliance and resolve suggests that violating international treaty obligations will bolster an actor's reputation for resolve. We further contend that this effect does not depend on the policy domain covered by the treaty. Instead, what matters is observers' underlying expectation that the types of states that comply with international law are unlikely to be the types of states that are highly resolved, and vice versa. Therefore, we expect treaty violations to have a positive effect on resolve reputation both when the treaty concerns arms control and trade.

> **H2a: Negative Spillover from Arms Control Compliance to Resolve Reputation.** Violating international agreements regarding arms control improves a country's reputation for resolve.

> **H2b: Negative Spillover from Trade Compliance to Resolve Reputation.** Violating international agreements regarding trade improves a country's reputation for resolve.

to imagine a hypothetical future international agreement between Arcadia and the United States and ask them to estimate the likelihood of that Arcadia will comply with the agreement.

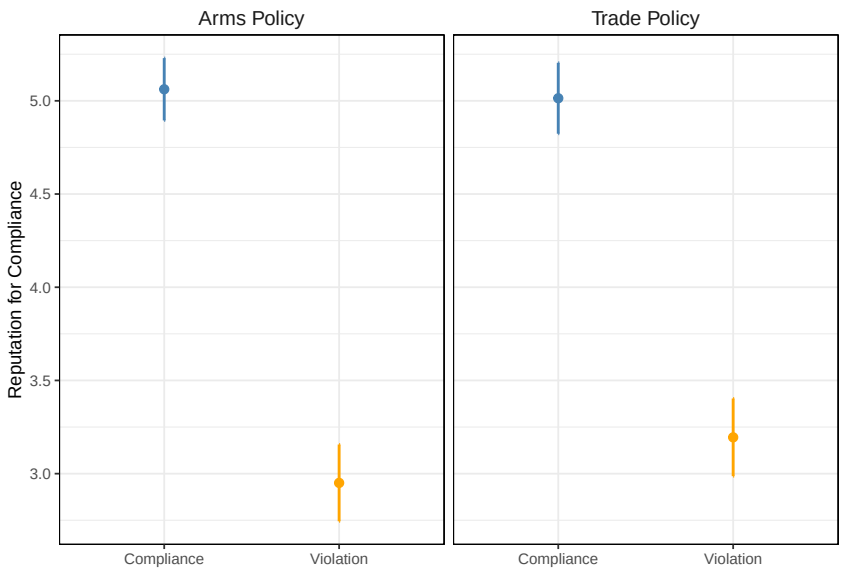

Figure 6: *Reputation for Compliance, Arcadia Experiment.* The figure displays average respondent ratings of Arcadia's compliance reputation across the four treatment conditions.

4.1.2 Results

To assess *H1*, we present average respondent ratings of Arcadia's compliance reputation in Figure 7. The left panel displays estimates in the Arms Control scenario, and the right shows results for the Trade Policy scenario. As the conventional wisdom suggests, we see a sharp decrease in Arcadia' compliance reputation when it violates its treaty commitments. Violating an arms control agreements reduces the country's reputation for compliance by more than two points on the seven-point scale ($p < 0.01$); violating a trade agreement reduces compliance reputation by approximately 1.6 points ($p < 0.01$).

Next, we examine whether treaty violations create spillover effects on Arcadia's reputation for resolve. Figure 7 displays the country's perceived level of resolve across the four treatment conditions. We find strong support for *H2a* and *H2b*. When Arcadia violates an arms control agreement, its reputation for resolve increases by approximately 0.8 points ($p < 0.01$). Perhaps most notably, violations of trade treaties generate an equivalently large increase in resolve ($p < 0.01$). Consistent with our theory, respondents appear to be drawing broad inferences about the country's resolve even when the policy domain in question is far

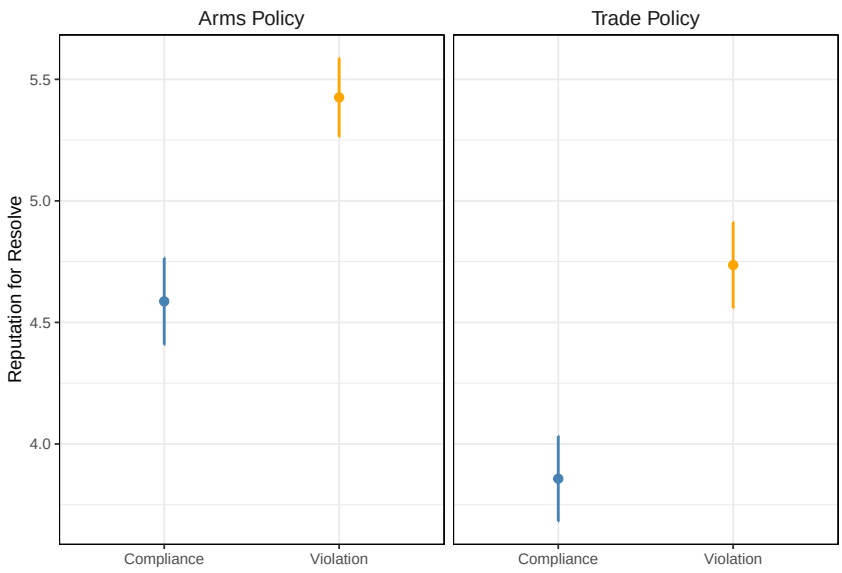

Figure 7: *Reputation for Resolve, Arcadia Experiment.* The figure displays average respondent ratings of Arcadia's resolve reputation across the four treatment conditions.

removed from security matters.

In addition to these pre-registered analyses, we perform several exploratory tests in the Arcadia experiment. First, we examine spillover effects on other dimensions of reputation that are *positively* correlated with compliance. We find that compliance with arms control and trade treaties increases Arcadia's reputation for following its word (signaling reputation), its commitment to human rights, and its perceived alliance reliability (see Figures A1-A3 in the Appendix). Second, to assess whether reputational spillover effects hold in other policy domains, we conduct a subsequent vignette experiment in which Arcadia violates an environmental agreement. We find substantively identical results; when the country fails to comply with environmental treaties, it experiences an increase in its reputation for resolve.

These results provide strong and consistent support for the reputational spillovers mechanism. When Americans learn about foreign policy behavior by other countries, their inferences are not constrained to first-order effects within the same narrow policy domain. Instead, we see notable second-order effects on dimensions of reputation that are often considered to be distinct and independent. We now turn to a test of the strategic linkage

mechanism.

4.2 Study 2: Testing Strategic Linkages

Our second experiment, conducted on the same sample of US adult respondents, examines whether reputational effects in one domain are conditional upon other dimensions of reputation. To test for these strategic linkages, we implement another vignette experiment involving a foreign policy dispute between the fictional countries of Sanova and Alzar, both of which lay claim to a contested territory. To vary the state of international law, we tell respondents that the International Court of Justice has ruled that the territory belongs to either Sanova or Alzar (or a control condition in which no legal information is provided). We then randomize whether Sanova decides to use military force to seize the territory. Finally, we have respondents rate Sanova's reputation for resolve and compliance. Figure 8 visualizes the structure of the experiment.

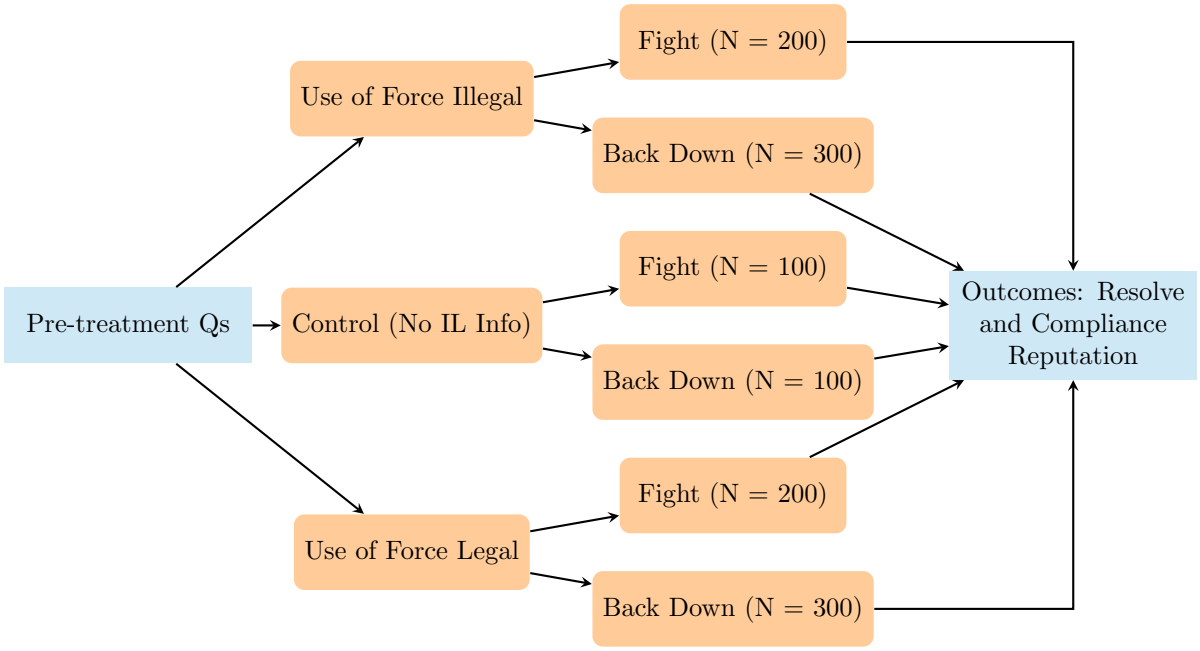

Figure 8: *Diagram of Survey Flow, Sanova Experiment.*

The vignette begins by describing the territorial dispute:

> Recent events have led to the flare-up of a serious dispute between Sanova and another country, Alzar, over ownership of a contested territory. The territory is rich in natural resources and could provide an economic boon to whichever country controls it. Sanova and Alzar are geopolitical rivals and frequently find themselves in foreign policy disputes.

We then present respondents with one of three treatment conditions regarding the state of international law. Those in the control condition receive no information on the legal status of the dispute. Others learn that the International Court of Justice has ruled that the territory belongs either to Sanova or Alzar.

- *Control*: No additional information
- *Legal to Fight Condition*: The International Court of Justice recently ruled that the territory belongs to Sanova. Alzar rejected the ruling and has refused to cede the territory to Sanova. As a matter of international law, Sanova has the right to claim sovereignty over the territory. Many governments around the world have urged the two countries to respect the Court's decision.
- *Illegal to Fight Condition*: The International Court of Justice recently ruled that the territory belongs to Alzar. Sanova rejected the ruling and has refused to cede the territory to Alzar. As a matter of international law, Sanova does not have the right to claim sovereignty over the territory. Many governments around the world have urged the two countries to respect the Court's decision.

All subjects then learn that government officials in Sanova are deciding whether to use military force. In a second set of randomized treatments, we vary whether Sanova ultimately decides to fight or back down. For respondents who received an international law treatment, we underscore whether the decision to use force is consistent or inconsistent with the ICJ ruling.

> Government officials in Sanova deliberated the benefits and risks of military action to seize control of the disputed territory. Among other considerations, officials weighed how their actions would be perceived by Alzar and other governments around the world.

- *Fight Condition*: Sanova decided to send military forces into the territory, [in compliance with international law/even though it is prohibited by international law/no additional information for control group that did not receive legal info.]
- *Back Down Condition*: Sanova decided not to send military forces into the territory, [in compliance with international law/even though it is permitted by international law/no additional information for control group that did not receive legal info.]

After reading the vignette, we measure Sanova's reputation for resolve and compliance using identical questions to Study 1.

4.2.1 Hypotheses

We use the second study to test conventional expectations about reputation as well as look for evidence of strategic linkages. Conventional wisdom suggests that the choice to use military force shapes a state's reputation for resolve, and the choice to comply with international law shapes its reputation for compliance. *H3a* and *H3b* formalize these "domain-specific" expectations.

> **H3a: Domain-Specific Compliance Reputation Effect**. Fighting for claims that are inconsistent with international law decrease a state's reputation for compliance, compared to fighting for claims consistent with international law.

> **H3b: Domain-Specific Resolve Reputation Effect**. Fighting (vs. Backing Down) in an international crisis increases a state's reputation for resolve.

Finally, we hypothesize that a foreign policy action's effect on perceptions of resolve depend on the state of international law. As discussed above, this strategic linkage between resolve and compliance produces two potential effects. The first is a face-saving effect in which legal prohibitions shield states that back down from suffering a severe decrease in perceived resolve.

> **H4: Face-Saving Effect**. Countries that back down in the face of a legal prohibition are perceived as more resolved than countries that back down despite a legal authorization.

The second is a defiance effect in which military force that involves a clear violation of international law sends a stronger signal of resolve.

> **H5: Defiance Effect**. Countries that fight despite a legal prohibition will be perceived as more resolved than countries that fight for legally permitted claims.

4.2.2 Results

Figures 9 and 10 display average ratings of Sanova's reputation for compliance and resolve, respectively, across the six possible treatment conditions. In each figure, the left panel corresponds to cases where the ICJ ruled in favor of Sanova ("Fighting Legal"), the middle panel is the control condition in which no ICJ information was provided, and the right panel reflects the condition where the ICJ ruled against Sanova's' territorial claims ("Fighting Illegal").

We begin by assessing the domain-specific effects anticipated in conventional reputational accounts. To assess *H3a*, we compare Sanova's compliance reputation when it uses force in the service of legally sanctioned territorial claims to its compliance reputation when it fights despite an adverse legal ruling. As Figure 9 shows, Sanova's compliance reputation is drastically different across these conditions. When Sanova fights in the "fighting legal" condition (left panel, second estimate), respondents rate its reputation for compliance more than 2 points higher then when it fights in the "fighting illegal" condition (right panel, second estimate). The difference between these estimates is substantively large and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Figure 10 provides similar support for *H3b*. The middle panel of the figure shows ratings of Sanova's reputation for resolve when no international law information is provided. We observe a clear and significant increase in perceived resolve when Sanova chooses to initiate military force ("Fight" estimate) compared to when it chooses not to fight ("Back Down" estimate). These findings are consistent with conventional expectations about domain-specific reputaitonal effects.

Next, we examine the potential for strategic linkages between separate dimensions of reputation. We hypothesized that countries that back down in the face of a legal prohibition on the use of force will be perceived as more resolved than states that back down despite legal authorization to use force (*H4*). Consistent with this face-saving hypothesis, Figure 10 shows that Sanova's reputation for resolve is significantly higher when it backs down following an

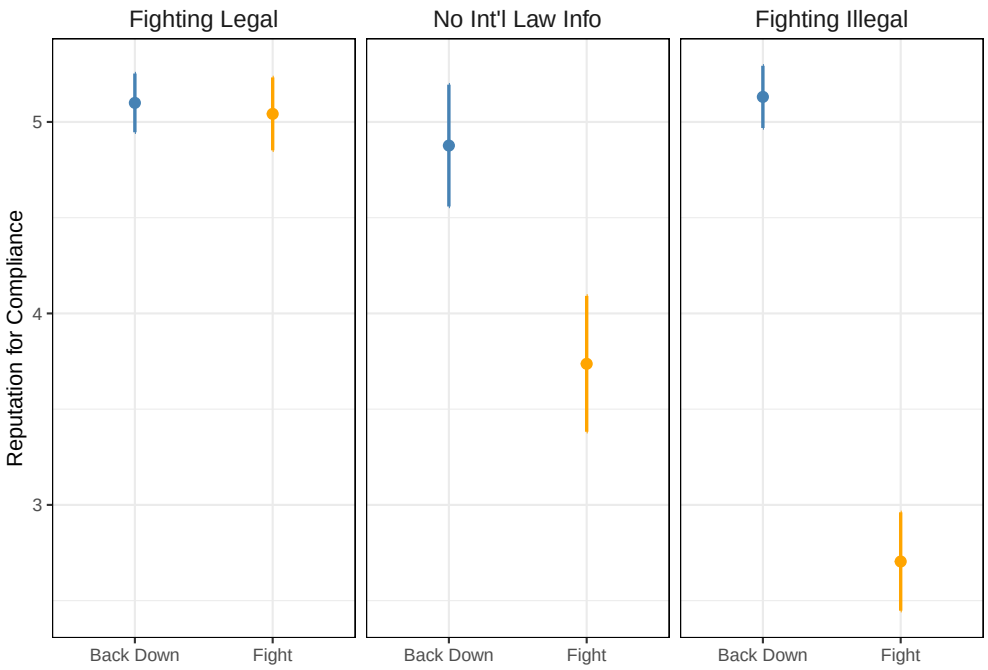

Figure 9: *Reputation for Compliance, Sanova Experiment.*

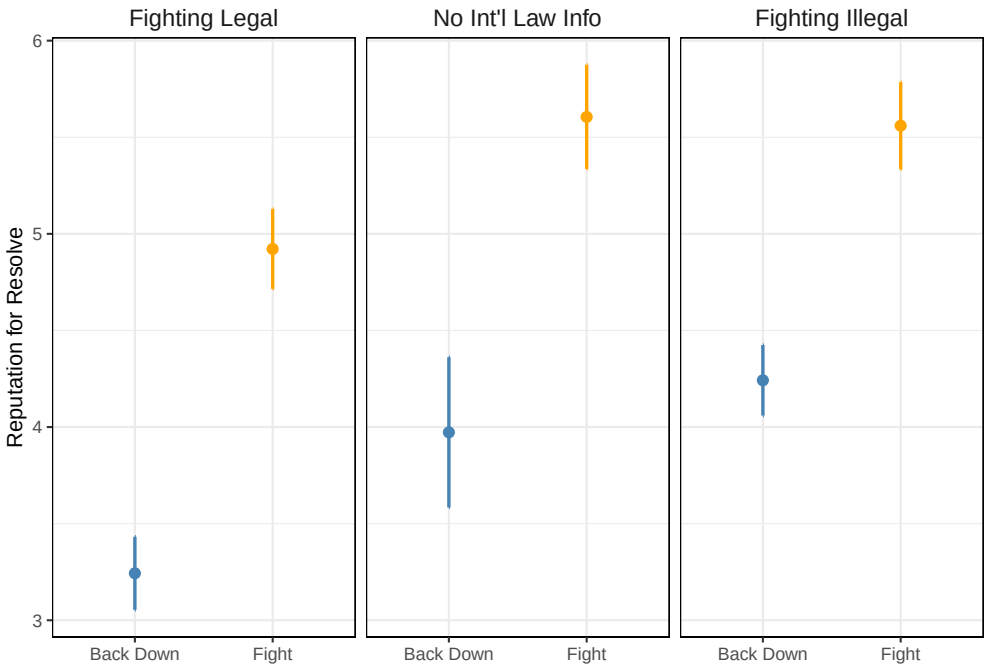

Figure 10: *Reputation for Resolve, Sanova Experiment.*

unfavorable ruling from the ICJ (3.7, "Back Down" estimate, right panel) than when it backs down following a favorable ruling (3.2, "Back Down" estimate, left panel). This result is positive news for the ability of international law to ameliorate incentives for conflict. Not only do international law violations generate a reputation cost on the compliance dimension, but legal prohibitions on force can also encourage de-escalation by shielding states from adverse inferences about resolve.

Finally, we hypothesized that countries that fight in violation of legal prohibitions will be perceived as more resolved than those that fight for legally authorized claims (*H5*). The results provide strong support for this 'defiance effect': when Sanova chooses to use force, its reputation for resolve is significantly higher when its territorial claims are illegal (Figure 10, "Fight" estimate, left panel) compared to when its claims are legal ("Fight" estimate, right panel). This finding – that a country's reputation for resolve can be burnished by engaging in unlawful behavior – tells a significantly more pessimistic story about the potential of international law to deter conflict. It suggests that international law may be strategically violated by states that wish to signal their resolve more clearly.

In summary, our experiment on the use of force provides support for both the conventional wisdom and the strategic linkage hypotheses. These results are robust to alternative measures of resolve and compliance reputation, including behavioral measures in which respondents predict how Sanova will navigate future decisions (Appendix Figures A4 and A5). In another exploratory study (not reported here), we also find some evidence that the defiance effect extends to the realm of international humanitarian law: countries that conduct military operations which fail to protect noncombatants are perceived as more resolved than those that comply with the laws of war.

5 Conclusion

A large body of work now shows that many different dimensions of reputation adhere to states and leaders. However, research on the causes and consequences of these different dimensions of reputation has typically occurred in silos, focusing only on one reputational trait within a given study. In this paper, we explored interdependence between two key dimensions of state reputation: resolve and compliance. We put forward two theoretical claims. First, a single foreign policy action will affect both dimensions simultaneously, but in opposite directions. Second, reputations for resolve and compliance should interact via costly signaling. Specifically, using force in a manner that directly violates international legal commitments should amplify the signal of resolve associated with using force precisely because it also amplifies the reputational cost on the compliance dimension.

We presented evidence in support of both of these claims. First, we showed that using force not only increases a state's reputation for resolve, but also decreases its reputation for compliance, even in the absence of information about international law. Second, we found that using force in violation of international legal commitments tends to increase a state's reputation for resolve compared to using force in compliance with international legal commitments. We attribute this stronger signal of resolve to the additional reputational costs associated with violating international law.

As noted above, this project makes a number of contributions to the academic literature and to policy debates. First, by theorizing and documenting reputational spillover, we break down barriers between scholarship focused on different dimensions of reputation and pave the way for collaborative work between those interested in the links between international security and cooperation. Second, by showing that a single action can simultaneously bolster one dimension of a state's reputation while harming another, we underscore the complex tradeoffs leaders face in crafting their foreign policy. Future work could investigate how leaders weigh these tradeoffs. Finally, our results present a challenge to the reputational logic of international law. While violations may deter illegal uses of force by harming a state's

reputation for compliance, these incentives are undermined because violating international law also increases a state's reputation for resolve.

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Appendix

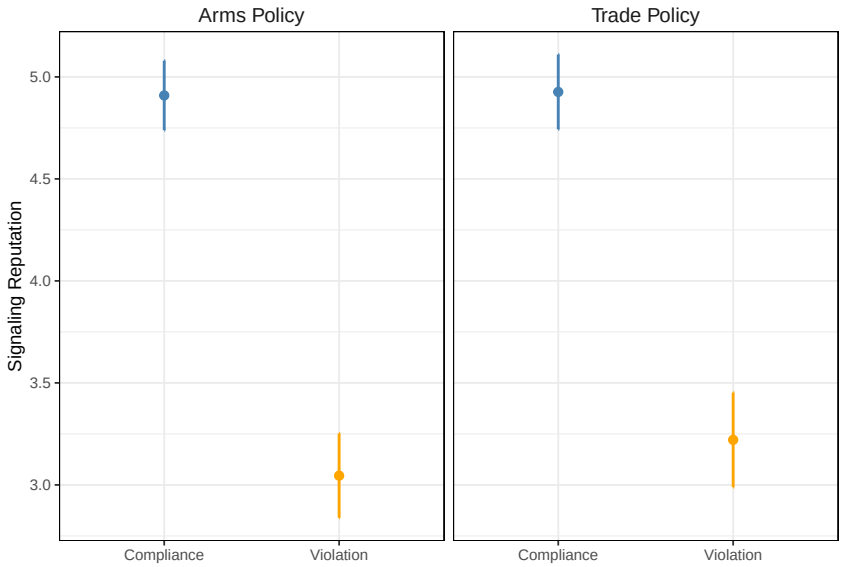

Figure A1: *Signaling Reputation, Arcadia Experiment.* Mean signaling reputation score (seven-point scale) across six experimental conditions.

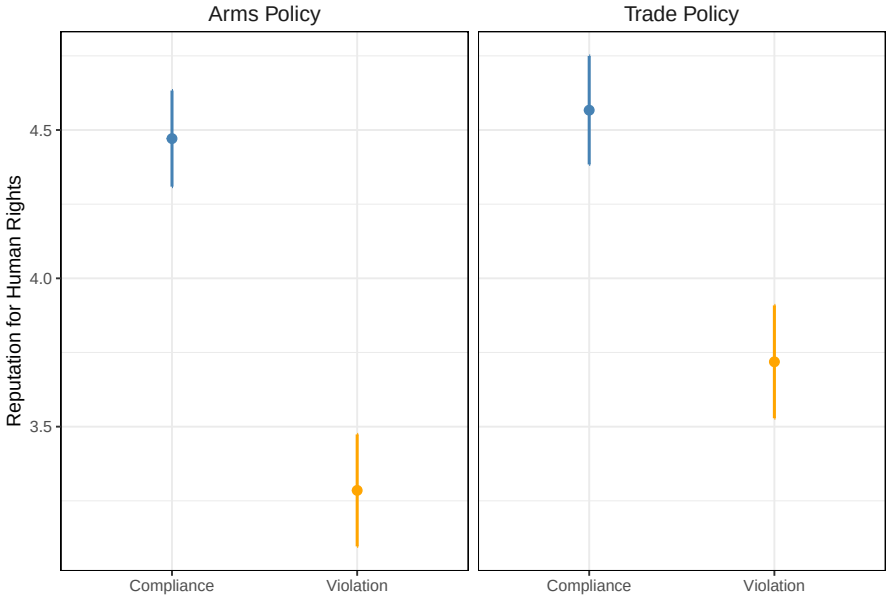

Figure A2: *Human Rights Reputation, Arcadia Experiment.* Mean reputation for respecting human rights score (seven-point scale) across six experimental conditions.

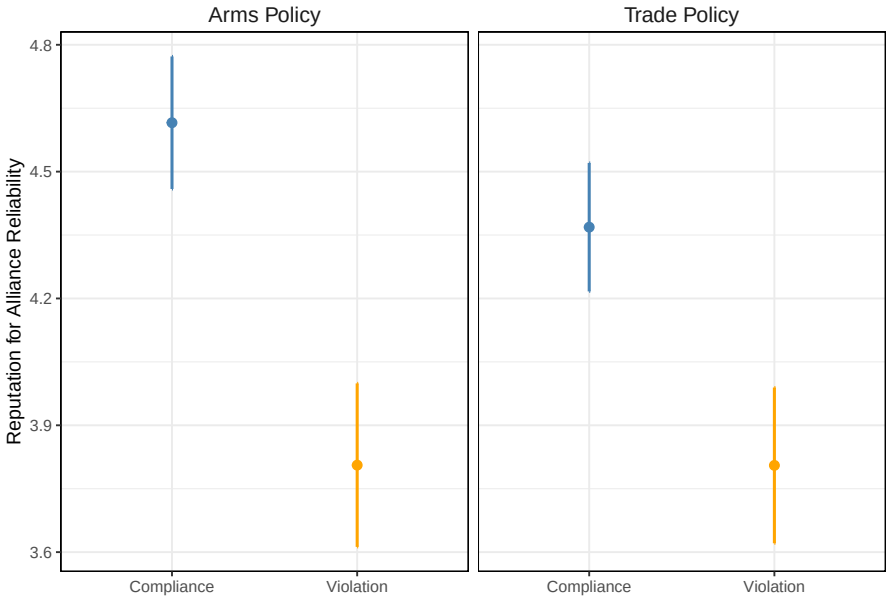

Figure A3: *Alliance Reliability, Arcadia Experiment.* Mean reputation for alliance reliability score (seven-point scale) across six experimental conditions.

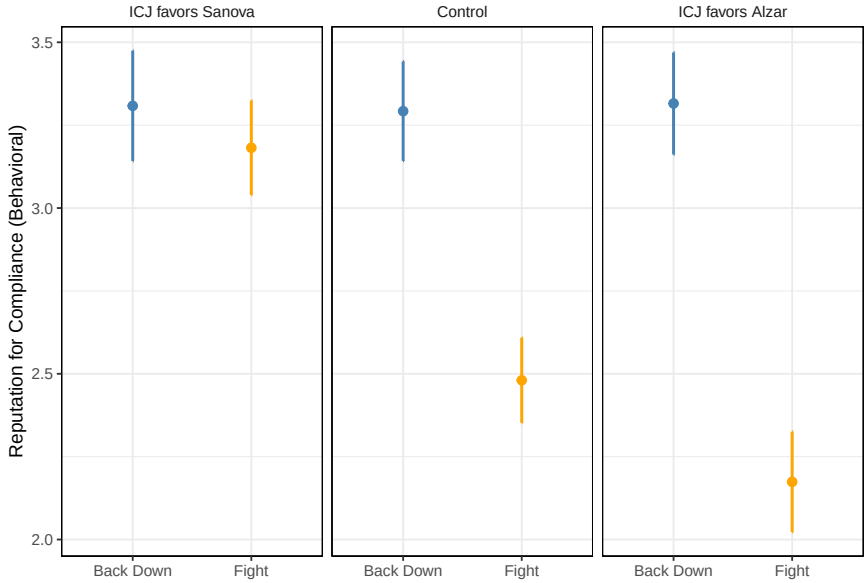

Figure A4: *Sanova Experiment: Effect of Fighting on Reputation for Compliance, Behavioral Measure*: Mean reputation for compliance score (seven-point scale) using respondent assessment of Sanova's future behavior.

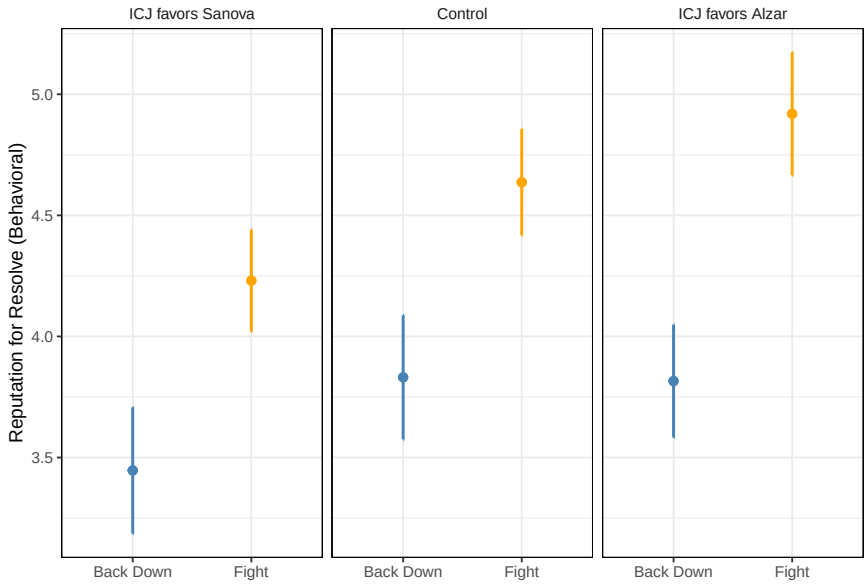

Figure A5: *Sanova Experiment: Effect of Fighting on Reputation for Resolve, Behavioral Measure*: Mean reputation for resolve score (seven-point scale) using respondent assessment of Sanova's future behavior.

A Survey Text, Arcadia Experment

A.1 Pre-Treatment Questions

1. **Political Ideology:** In general, do you think of yourself as...
   (a) Extremely liberal
   (b) Liberal
   (c) Slightly liberal
   (d) Moderate, middle of the road
   (e) Slightly conservative
   (f) Conservative
   (g) Extremely conservative

2. **Party ID:** Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a...
   (a) Republican
   (b) Democrat
   (c) Independent
   (d) Another party, please specify
   (e) No preference

   If Democrat: Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or a not very strong Democrat?
   If Republican: Would you call yourself a strong Republican or a not very strong Republican?
   If neither Republican nor Democrat: Do you think of yourself as closer to the...
   (a) Republican Party
   (b) Democratic Party
   (c) Neither party
   (d) Not sure

3. **Hawks/Doves:** Some people think that U.S. military force should never be used under any circumstances. They are at "1" on the scale below. Other people think there are many situations in which U.S. military force should be used to deal with problems. They are at "7" on the scale below. And, of course, other people have opinions in between. Where would you put yourself on this scale?
   (a) 1 – U.S. military force should never be used under any circumstances
   (b) 2

(c) 3

(d) 4

(e) 5

(f) 6

(g) 7 – U.S. military force should be used in many situations

4. **Attention Check 1**: We would like to get a sense of your general preferences. Most modern theories of decison-making recognize that decisions do not take place in a vacuum. Individual preferences and knowledge, along with situational variables can greatly impact the decision process. To demonstrate that you've read this much, just go ahead and select both red and green among the alternatives below, no matter what your favorite color is. Yes, ignore the question below and select both of those options.

   What is your favorite color?

   (a) White

   (b) Black

   (c) Red

   (d) Pink

   (e) Green

   (f) Blue

5. **Use of Force**: Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

   (a) Using military force internationally is very often an effective tool for achieving US foreign policy goals.

   (b) It is important for the US to have a strong military.

   (c) Pursuing diplomatic accommodation with adversaries or rivals only signals weakness and invites aggression.

   (d) It is important for the US to pursue its foreign policy goals with the support of other countries.

   (e) The US should play an active role on the world stage.

   (f) It is okay for US presidents to disregard some domestic legal or Constitutional constraints to seek certain foreign policy goals..

6. **Foreign Policy Attitudes:** Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

   (a) It is essential for the US to work with other nations to solve problems such as over-population, hunger, and pollution (cooperative internationalism 1).

(b) The US needs to cooperate more with the United Nations (cooperative internationalism 2).

(c) In the United States, our people are not perfect, but our culture is superior to others (nationalism).

(d) The US should mind its own business internationally and let other countries get along the best they can on their own (isolationism).

(e) Please select "Neither Agree nor Disagree" if you are still closely reading this survey (Attention Check 2).

A.2 Vignette

Arcadia is a [small/large] [democracy/dictatorship] with [an advanced/a developing] economy.

Over the past 5 years, Arcadia has shifted course on a number of policy issues, including its approach to [trade/arms control]. Specifically, Arcadia [imposed new tariffs in several key industries, raising the cost of imported goods/accelerated its development of advanced missile systems, increasing the country's stockpile of long-range weapons.]

The actions taken by Arcadia are [consistent with / a brazen violation of] a major international treaty that the country signed and ratified a decade ago. Arcadia considered its legal obligations and relations with other treaty members and [chose to follow the treaty closely/violated the treaty anyways].

A.3 Outcome Questionnaire

1. **Reputation**: Based on your impression from reading the scenario, would you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree):

   (a) Arcadia is the type of country that is often willing to use military force (resolve reputation).

   (b) Arcadia is the type of country that does what it takes to achieve its goals, even in the face of significant opposition (resolve reputation, secondary).

   (c) Arcadia is the type of country that would comply with its international legal commitments (compliance reputation).

   (d) Arcadia is the type of country that would come to the aid of an ally that is under attack (alliance reliability reputation).

   (e) Arcadia is the type of country that would stay true to its word (signaling reputation).

   (f) Arcadia is the type of country that respects human rights (human rights reputation).

2. **General Reputation Effect** Thinking about the events in the scenario, do you think the reputation of Arcadia has been strengthened, weakened, or not affected by the way the country behaved? (Significantly weakened to Significantly strengthened).

3. **Future Compliance**: In the future, suppose that your own country is considering signing a treaty with Arcadia that would strengthen economic ties. How much confidence do you have that Arcadia would comply with the treaty? (Very high confidence to Very low confidence).

4. **Future Resolve**: In the future, suppose that a foreign policy dispute arose between your own country and Arcadia. Arcadia has threatened to use military force if your country does not meet its demands. Please rate your agreement with the following statements (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree):

   (a) If my country does not give in, Arcadia will follow through on its threat to use military force.

   (b) My country should compromise with Arcadia to avoid a military confrontation.

5. **Future Resolve - Open**: Please write 1-2 sentences explaining your answers above (open-ended text response).

6. **Approval** Suppose you are a citizen of Arcadia. Do you approve or disapprove of the country's actions? (Strongly approve – Strongly disapprove).

7. **Other Country Reactions**: Now we would like you to consider how other countries might respond to Arcadia's actions. Based on the scenario you just read, do you believe Arcadia's recent behavior will make it easier or harder for the country to achieve each of the following foreign policy goals? (Much easier to Much harder)

   (a) Establish military alliances with other countries

   (b) Secure other countries' diplomatic support for future military action

   (c) Obtain foreign aid from other countries

   (d) Acquire arms imports from other countries

   (e) Deter challenges from adversaries in the future

B Survey Text, Sanova Experment

B.1 Pre-Treatment Questions

1. **Political Ideology:** In general, do you think of yourself as...
   (a) Extremely liberal
   (b) Liberal
   (c) Slightly liberal
   (d) Moderate, middle of the road
   (e) Slightly conservative
   (f) Conservative
   (g) Extremely conservative

2. **Party ID:** Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a...
   (a) Republican
   (b) Democrat
   (c) Independent
   (d) Another party, please specify
   (e) No preference

   If Democrat: Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or a not very strong Democrat?
   If Republican: Would you call yourself a strong Republican or a not very strong Republican?
   If neither Republican nor Democrat: Do you think of yourself as closer to the...
   (a) Republican Party
   (b) Democratic Party
   (c) Neither party
   (d) Not sure

3. **Hawks/Doves:** Some people think that U.S. military force should never be used under any circumstances. They are at "1" on the scale below. Other people think there are many situations in which U.S. military force should be used to deal with problems. They are at "7" on the scale below. And, of course, other people have opinions in between. Where would you put yourself on this scale?
   (a) 1 – U.S. military force should never be used under any circumstances
   (b) 2

(c) 3

(d) 4

(e) 5

(f) 6

(g) 7 – U.S. military force should be used in many situations

4. **Attention Check 1**: We would like to get a sense of your general preferences. Most modern theories of decison-making recognize that decisions do not take place in a vacuum. Individual preferences and knowledge, along with situational variables can greatly impact the decision process. To demonstrate that you've read this much, just go ahead and select both red and green among the alternatives below, no matter what your favorite color is. Yes, ignore the question below and select both of those options.

   What is your favorite color?

   (a) White

   (b) Black

   (c) Red

   (d) Pink

   (e) Green

   (f) Blue

5. **Use of Force**: Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

   (a) Using military force internationally is very often an effective tool for achieving US foreign policy goals.

   (b) It is important for the US to have a strong military.

   (c) Pursuing diplomatic accommodation with adversaries or rivals only signals weakness and invites aggression.

   (d) It is important for the US to pursue its foreign policy goals with the support of other countries.

   (e) The US should play an active role on the world stage.

   (f) It is okay for US presidents to disregard some domestic legal or Constitutional constraints to seek certain foreign policy goals..

6. **Foreign Policy Attitudes:** Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

   (a) It is essential for the US to work with other nations to solve problems such as over-population, hunger, and pollution (cooperative internationalism 1).

(b) The US needs to cooperate more with the United Nations (cooperative internationalism 2).

(c) In the United States, our people are not perfect, but our culture is superior to others (nationalism).

(d) The US should mind its own business internationally and let other countries get along the best they can on their own (isolationism).

(e) Please select "Neither Agree nor Disagree" if you are still closely reading this survey (Attention Check 2).

B.2 Vignette

Recent events have led to the flare-up of a serious dispute between Sanova and another country, Alzar, over ownership of a contested territory. The territory is rich in natural resources and could provide an economic boon to whichever country controls it.

Sanova and Alzar are geopolitical rivals and frequently find themselves in foreign policy disputes. Both countries claim ownership of the disputed territory. The country of Sanova is considering whether to use military force to seize control of the contested territory.

The International Court of Justice recently ruled that the territory belongs to [Sanova/Alzar]. [Alzar/Sanova] rejected the ruling and has refused to cede the territory to [Sanova/Alzar]. As a matter of international law, Sanova [has/does not have] the right to claim sovereignty over the territory. Many governments around the world have urged the two countries to respect the Court's decision. (This entire paragraph omitted for those in IL Control condition.)

Government officials in Sanova deliberated the benefits and risks of military action to take control of the disputed territory. Among other considerations, officials weighed how their actions would be perceived by Alzar and other governments around the world.

Sanova [decided/decided not] to send military forces into the territory [. (for IL control)/, in compliance with international law./, even though it is prohibited international law./, even though it is permitted by international law./, complying with international law].

B.3 Outcome Questionnaire

1. **Reputation**: Based on your impression from reading the scenario, would you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree):
   (a) Sanova is the type of country that is often willing to use military force (resolve reputation).
   (b) Sanova is the type of country that does what it takes to achieve its goals, even in the face of significant opposition (resolve reputation, secondary).
   (c) Sanova is the type of country that would comply with its international legal commitments (compliance reputation).
   (d) Sanova is the type of country that would come to the aid of an ally that is under attack (alliance reliability reputation).
   (e) Sanova is the type of country that would stay true to its word (signaling reputation).
   (f) Sanova is the type of country that respects human rights (human rights reputation).
2. **General Reputation Effect** Thinking about the events in the scenario, do you think the reputation of Sanova has been strengthened, weakened, or not affected by the way the country behaved? (Significantly weakened to Significantly strengthened).
3. **Future Compliance**: In the future, suppose that your own country is considering signing a treaty with Sanova that would would promote cooperation on energy development. How much confidence do you have that Sanova would comply with the treaty? (Very high confidence to Very low confidence).
4. **Future Resolve**: In the future, suppose that a foreign policy dispute arose between your own country and Sanova. Sanova has threatened to use military force if your country does not meet its demands. Please rate your agreement with the following statements (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree):
   (a) If my country does not give in, Sanova will follow through on its threat to use military force.
   (b) My country should compromise with Sanova to avoid a military confrontation.
5. **Future Resolve - Open**: Please write 1-2 sentences explaining your answers above (open-ended text response).
6. **Approval** Suppose you are a citizen of Sanova. Do you approve or disapprove of the country's actions? (Strongly approve – Strongly disapprove).
7. **Other Country Reactions**: Now we would like you to consider how other countries might respond to Sanova's actions. Based on the scenario you just read, do you believe Sanova's recent behavior will make it easier or harder for the country to achieve each of the following foreign policy goals? (Much easier to Much harder)

(a) Establish military alliances with other countries

(b) Secure other countries' diplomatic support for future military action

(c) Obtain foreign aid from other countries

(d) Acquire arms imports from other countries

(e) Deter challenges from adversaries in the future