Spinning the Globe? U.S. Public Diplomacy and Foreign Public Opinion*

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Abstract

Global public opinion has emerged as an important factor affecting international relations. But have U.S. public diplomacy efforts during the post-9/11 period successfully improved foreign publics’ images of the U.S. and its foreign policy? We examine this question by estimating the effects of U.S. high-level visits to foreign countries on public opinion in those countries. Our compositional data analysis shows that the effects of such visits were initially significantly large and positive, became weaker once the war in Iraq began and international media started reporting negative aspects of the war on terror, and eventually disappeared. When foreign publics were asked questions highlighting the relevance of U.S. foreign policy to their own country’s interests, the effects of high-level visits were particularly weak and eventually came to be negative. Theoretically, our findings point to the continuing importance of agenda setting and legitimacy in a world of “complex interdependence” and limited utility of military power. They also suggest the relevance of the “rational public” and “pretty prudent public” frameworks for global public opinion. Of relevance to policy makers, our evidence suggests that high-level public diplomacy can cause damage to a state’s image under conditions of lost legitimacy.

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1. Introduction

Global public opinion has emerged as an important factor affecting international relations. The United States (U.S.) leadership appears to increasingly make efforts to communicate directly with foreign audiences through public speeches and public appearances, as well as through other government-sponsored informational and citizen-exchange programs. While some analysts place high hopes in these “public diplomacy” efforts and programs (e.g., Nye 2004), others are understandably skeptical (e.g., Hoagland 2004; Krauthammer 2002/03). Does public diplomacy matter? More specifically, have U.S. public diplomacy efforts during the post-9/11 period successfully improved foreign publics’ images of the U.S. and its foreign policy? Although it seems clear that the importance of these questions is growing, the effects, if any, of public diplomacy on foreign public opinion have rarely been the subject of empirical scrutiny in the academic literature.¹ There is also a pessimistic (or perhaps convenient) view in the U.S. government that the effects of public diplomacy are difficult, if not impossible, to measure (United States Government Accountability Office 2004).

In this paper, we attempt to gauge the effects on public opinion around the world of a specific and high-profile form of U.S. public diplomacy – high-level visits. When top U.S. leaders make official visits to foreign countries, the traditional “substantive” business of diplomacy goes on behind closed doors. But modern diplomacy certainly has a public face and purpose as well. By using cross-national public opinion data and records of visits to foreign countries by the U.S. president and secretaries of state since 2001, we show that the effects of such visits were initially significantly large and positive, became weaker once the war in Iraq began and international media started reporting negative aspects of the war on terror, and eventually disappeared. When foreign publics were asked questions highlighting the relevance of U.S. foreign policy to their own country’s interests, the effects of high-level visits were particularly weak and eventually came to be negative.

Our analytical focus draws on two areas of academic research – the study of transnational dynamics in international relations and the study of public opinion and foreign policy. Theoretically, our findings point to the continuing importance of agenda setting and legitimacy in a world of “complex interdependence” and limited utility of military power (Keohane and Nye 1989). Even prominent realists now concede the critical importance of agenda setting and foreign perceptions of legitimacy to U.S. foreign policy in the post-2001 era (Walt 2005). The findings also suggest the relevance of the “rational public” (Page and Shapiro 1992; Shapiro and Page 1988) and “pretty prudent public” (Jentleson 1992; Jentleson and Britton 1998) frameworks for global public opinion.

Methodologically, we use seemingly unrelated regressions (SURs) to deal with the “compositional” nature of our dependent variable, and we conduct post-estimation simulations under various conditions to assess the substantive impact of our key independent variable, U.S. high-level visits. With a range of fixed effects and lagged variables as controls, we feel that our techniques yield valid and reliable results. We believe that our methods can be generally applied to other studies of public opinion using aggregate survey data, including analysis of recently proliferating multinational public opinion surveys (Heath, Fisher, and Smith 2005).

Finally, our results also have considerable policy relevance. With reference to George W. Bush’s Iraq war, our analysis clearly indicates that the administration’s public

¹ There are some recent studies investigating the impact of the media coverage of public diplomacy on public opinion (Nisbet, Nisbet, Scheufele, and Shanahan 2004; Wang and Chang 2004), but they do not estimate the causal effects of public diplomacy per se on foreign public opinion.
diplomacy loses its effect as events erode international trust. There is also evidence of a backlash effect, which we call “negative priming.” It appears that under conditions of lost legitimacy, increased public diplomacy efforts without substantial policy changes can actually cause more negative views of the U.S. than would doing nothing at all. As is well known, the U.S. did ramp up its public diplomacy efforts (particularly, in the Middle East) from 2004 onwards. Our results indicate that this caused additional damage to the U.S. image abroad, rather than spinning opinion in the U.S.’s favor.

2. Public Diplomacy and Foreign Public Opinion

In this section, we first define public diplomacy and discuss its growing importance. Second, we explain why we focus on high-level visits to study the impact of public diplomacy. Third, we connect public diplomacy to existing theoretical literature. Finally, we introduce the specific hypotheses tested in this paper.

2.1 The Growing Importance of Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is overt state-directed activity which seeks to promote the national interest of a given state through informing and influencing foreign audiences. It is clear that the George W. Bush administration has become quite concerned with how its policies are perceived abroad, and has increasingly turned to such public diplomacy, among other tools. When in office, former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld frequently commented on the need to more effectively communicate messages to foreign audiences in order to counter negative views of the U.S., especially regarding events in Iraq since 2003. In 2006, he stated, “Our enemies have skillfully adapted to fighting wars in today’s media age, but ... our country has not .... The longer it takes to put a strategic communications framework into place, the more we can be certain that the vacuum will be filled by the enemy” (British Broadcasting Corporation 2006).

The increasing importance of public diplomacy in U.S. foreign policy is also evident in recent organizational changes of the U.S. bureaucracy. Today, there are several offices within the foreign policy bureaucracy devoted to public diplomacy and similar activities. The position of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs was created in 1999, after the United States Information Agency was transferred to the State Department, and it was strengthened by U.S. President Bush in 2004 with the creation of the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. The Under Secretary now guides the State Department’s programs and coordinates efforts across the foreign policy bureaucracy.

Proponents of U.S. public diplomacy may assume the following logic. Other things being equal, public diplomacy can generate a more favorable attitude towards the U.S. in general and/or its specific policies in a foreign state, such that the foreign government either will be more enabled to support the U.S., or will feel more pressure from its own public to

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2 This is a slightly modified version of a definition by the Planning Group for Integration of United States Information Agency into the Department of State. See Public Diplomacy Web Site, United States Information Agency Alumni Association, http://www.publicdiplomacy.org, for various definitions.

3 There are also several interagency coordinating groups such as the Muslim World Outreach Policy Coordinating Committee, the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, and the Strategic Communications Fusion Team (United States Department of State 2006b; United States White House 2006). It appears that the White House Office of Global Communications, created in 2003, has not played a major role since mid-2004 (United States Government Accountability Office 2004).
stop opposing (and even start supporting) the U.S. They may argue that this logic applies not only to democratic systems but also to important non-democratic countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, and China because they are also concerned, at least to a degree, with public opinion in their own societies regarding relations with the U.S. In this paper, however, we argue that this simple logic of public diplomacy does not always work.

2.2 High-Level Visits as Public Diplomacy

Although public diplomacy includes a wide range of informational and citizen-exchange programs, we focus on visits by one country’s political leader to another country, frequently conceived as a “package” of public diplomacy activities (Manheim 1994; Wang and Chang 2004). When a political leader visits a foreign country, the visiting leader’s country often devotes significant time and resources to the public aspect of the visit, expecting a positive impact on the foreign public’s views of the visitor’s country, possibly including support for a particular foreign policy.

For example, when U.S. President Bill Clinton traveled to China in 1998, he insisted on being allowed to address the Chinese people directly, and, indeed, gave two nationally televised speeches and answered questions on a radio call-in show. At the time, future Bush-administration official Paul Wolfowitz commented that those “few hours on Chinese television … were very useful for American interests” (Public Broadcasting System 1998).

More recently, even before departing on her trip to Australia in March 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice held a roundtable meeting with Australian journalists (as well as journalists from her other destinations: Latin America and Indonesia). During her three-day visit, she had two joint press conferences with her Australian interlocutors, gave one TV and one newspaper interview, made remarks to and had a discussion with two groups of university students, addressed Australian soldiers in the Victoria barracks, addressed U.S. sailors onboard a Navy vessel, and attended a major sporting event covered widely by news media – the Commonwealth Games (United States Department of State 2006a). The visit received considerable media attention in Australia, as it was clearly intended to.

It is unlikely that powerful people with great demands on their time would devote so much of it to activities which they considered unimportant. But traditional approaches to international relations do not give much importance to the “public relations” aspect of such diplomatic activity.

2.3 Theoretical Relevance of Public Diplomacy

Although there are few theoretical discussions of public diplomacy and its relevance to today’s international relations, Goldsmith, Horiuchi and Inoguchi (2005) recently proposed an “influence model,” which assumes short- and medium-term effects on foreign public opinion through deliberate actions by the U.S. or any other country. The model is based on the assumption that states will seek to influence foreign public opinion to their advantage, and draws on “second-image reversed” (Gourevitch 1978) and “two-level games” (Putnam 1988) frameworks. Although these previous approaches concentrate on domestic elite groups and their beliefs, the logic is easily extended to mass public beliefs.

Specifically, public diplomacy can be considered a form of transnational influence in which leaders of Country A try to affect domestic (usually mass) beliefs in Country B.5 Nye

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4 Goldsmith, Horiuchi and Inoguchi (2005) propose two other models to explain dynamics of global public opinion about U.S. foreign policy. These models focus on the role of state-level security and economic interests (the interest model) and social learning and political culture (the socialization model).

5 Although not of concern in this paper, the influence model would also logically include forms of influence involving more “hard” than “soft” power such as inducements (e.g.,
Goldsmith, Horiuchi, and Inoguchi (2005) also argue, although briefly, that the influence model is consistent with the dynamics of “complex interdependence” as discussed by Keohane and Nye (1989). Further elaboration of this connection can shed light on the conditions under which the influence model is relevant. We expect that public diplomacy has significant effects on foreign public opinion in some situations but not in others. To begin to define such conditions, we feel that two aspects of the complex interdependence framework are especially relevant: international agenda setting and legitimacy.

Agenda setting is important in a situation of complex interdependence, but less so when traditional realist dynamics dominate international relations. According to Keohane and Nye (1989: 27, 29, 33), in a world of various (complex) transnational connections between states and societies, the traditional hierarchy of issue areas in foreign policy, with military security clearly at the top, is eroded. This is because the interests of domestic groups, including “mobilized populations,” can influence the order of policy priorities. And such “ politicization… from below” can often be critical as a barrier or a facilitator for foreign policy outcomes. In the realist world, military power is usually fungible because it can be linked to other issues at stake between states. But under interdependence, issue politicization often thwarts such linkages, and power is best conceived as “control over outcomes”, rather than as military capability. In such situations, the importance of transnational tools to influence “how issues come to receive sustained attention by high officials” (Keohane and Nye 1989: 149, 215) is greatly enhanced. Clearly, one such tool is influence over the politicization (or de-politicization) of issues “inside the domestic jurisdiction of another country” (Keohane and Nye 1989: 237).

The centrality of legitimacy emerges when Keohane and Nye discuss aspects of international leadership under complex interdependence. When a leading state has insufficient capability to exercise traditional power (i.e., military power) throughout the system, making other states do what they would not otherwise choose to do, foreign perceptions of “legitimacy” and a “willingness to follow” become necessary for leadership (Keohane and Nye 1989: 231). The importance of legitimacy arises even if there is a state with a preponderance of military capabilities, because the decline of hierarchy of issue areas in complex interdependence means “an erosion of the dominant state’s power to control outcomes in the international system” (Keohane and Nye 1989: 228).

This has important implications for public diplomacy by the U.S. after September 2001. The nature of public diplomacy would seem to be such that it rests on a foundation of understanding and trust regarding the values, motivations, and goals of the U.S. If such legitimacy is undermined by U.S. behavior, public diplomacy would become ineffective. Leaders attempting to influence foreign opinion would be less effective to the degree that the means of U.S. foreign policy are seen as illegitimate, the ends of U.S. foreign policy are seen as illegitimate, and the words of U.S. policy makers are not believed. As Nye has written more recently, there is a “continual contest for legitimacy” in the post-2001 world, and this involves not only the dissemination of information as a source of power, but also the need for that information “to be believed” (Nye 2004: 28, 31).

Indeed, we suspect that the international anti-terror regime, which the U.S. has attempted to develop since September 2001, has been gradually eroding due to all three de-legitimizing factors. This would imply a declining utility for U.S. public diplomacy, foreign aid), penalties (e.g., economic sanctions), or threats (e.g., military maneuvers).
beginning with a presumably high level of legitimacy in response to the 2001 attacks, and declining thereafter, especially in the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and subsequent related events, such as the Abu Ghraib prisoner torture and abuse scandal.

The discussion above also implies that foreign public opinion is neither capricious nor impossible to explain systematically. Rather, foreign opinion responds rationally to new information provided and to new events. In this vein, our arguments are based on the “rational public” framework presented by Shapiro and Page (1988; also see Page and Shapiro 1992). We argue that non-U.S. publics update their beliefs as important new facts emerge or as events unfold. Publics can become skeptical about the motivations or prospects of U.S. foreign policy, and about the words of the U.S. leadership, when facts and events appear to contradict previous positive beliefs and expectations. It is also likely that the foreign publics are “pretty prudent” (Jentleson 1992; Jentleson and Britton 1998) when they perceive that U.S. policy may affect policies or interests of their own countries. This is termed “foreign policy restraint” in the literature of the “pretty prudent public.” In other words, they may support the U.S.-led war on terror in principle, but may be against particular aspects of it which are perceived as detrimental to themselves or their state.

2.4 Hypotheses

In sum, based on some existing theoretical frameworks in the literature of both international relations and public opinion, we test the following three hypotheses. Most basically, we hypothesize that high level visits do have an impact on opinion in the visited country (Hypothesis 1). Further, the impact of a high-level visit on foreign public opinion about the U.S. and its foreign policy is conditional on the degree to which foreign publics perceive the U.S. policy as legitimate (Hypothesis 2), and the degree to which they perceive it as affecting their own interests (Hypothesis 3). We also assume that change in perceptions of legitimacy is a function of new information and events, and that, as a specific tool of international agenda setting, the overall impact of high-level visits can be seen as one measure of a state’s global agenda setting power.

To test these hypotheses, we estimate the impacts of high-level visits during three different periods of the post-9/11 era. The first period is from September 2001 until before the war in Iraq started in March 2003. The second period is after the start of the war in Iraq but before the Abu Ghraib prisoner torture and abuse scandal was revealed in worldwide media in April 2004. The third period is the post-Abu Ghraib period. We expect that the rational foreign public’s attitudes change after each of these major events.

Furthermore, as we explain in detail later, we group the various questions available in the existing multinational surveys into two types, and estimate the impact of high-level visits on each type separately. The first type of question assesses “diffuse” support for the U.S. and its foreign policy, while the second assesses “specific” support. We borrow this distinction from empirical studies of legitimacy and trust in U.S. political institutions, such as the Supreme Court, Congress, and the Presidency (e.g., Gibson, Caldeira, and Baird 1998; Hetherington 1998). The difference lies in that specific support refers to how U.S. foreign policy is related to each survey country’s foreign policy, national interests, or well-being. Diffuse support includes more general questions about U.S. foreign policy and its role in the world, with no direct connection to a respondent’s country.

Specifically, for the first period (i.e., before the war in Iraq), we assume that foreign public opinion was easily moved in a positive direction by U.S. leaders on official visits when foreign publics saw U.S. foreign policy as broadly credible and legitimate. In this situation, we expect that high-level visits had significantly positive effects on both diffuse support and specific support.

After the U.S.’s invasion of Iraq without an enabling United Nations Security
Council resolution, the perceived legitimacy of U.S. policy was undermined. We assume foreign publics became increasingly skeptical about U.S. actions and thus more resistant to U.S. efforts at persuasion. This skepticism may be captured by estimating the differential impacts of high-level visits on diffuse support and specific support. Although foreign publics may still be swayed by the U.S. leaders’ general assertions about the need to fight terrorism, they may perceive specific negative consequences for their own country and security in supporting the U.S.’s specific illegitimate policies.

Finally, we assume that the foreign publics’ trust in the U.S. was further damaged when they were exposed to disturbing photos of prisoner abuse by U.S. soldiers at the Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq, and the erosion of legitimacy continued with subsequent events and revelations. Throughout 2004 and 2005, the Iraqi insurgency gained strength, highlighting both the failure of U.S. leaders to anticipate such developments and the plausibility of eventual U.S. defeat. In addition, the Central Intelligence Agency definitively and publicly concluded in an October 2004 report that the purported justification for the war, Iraq’s possession and production of weapons of mass destruction, was baseless. We therefore expect U.S. public diplomacy efforts through high-level visits to be ineffective from April 2004 until the end of our data in December 2005. We assume that during the post-scandal period, high-level visits cannot increase either specific support or diffuse support for the U.S. and its foreign policy. Not only are the negative effects and dangers of U.S. policy evident to foreign publics, but when leaders attempt to influence opinion by explaining U.S. policies, they are simply not believed.

3. Methods

To estimate the impacts of U.S. high-level visits to foreign countries on non-U.S. public opinion, we use cross-national surveys, as well as records of the president’s and secretaries’ of state overseas travels since 2001. In this section, we first explain our dependent and key independent variables. We then introduce a statistical model for our analysis and explain how we interpret the results.

3.1 Dependent Variable

The number and scale of cross-national surveys has increased dramatically in recent years (for a review, see Heath, Fisher, and Smith 2005). Some of the existing data are only available at the level of countries, while other data are available at the level of individual respondents. The sample size is obviously much larger when using individual-level data from multiple countries, and some recent statistical methods would allow us to examine such multi-level data by carefully modeling individual-level and country-level covariates and their interactions (e.g., Steenbergen and Jones 2002; Western 1998). Yet, since there is a theoretical rationale for using aggregate data when investigating the relevance of collective public opinion rather than individual opinion to foreign policy-making (Page and Shapiro 1992, 8, 15-34; Goldsmith, Horiuchi and Inoguchi 2005, 411-2), we use aggregate cross-national data for our analysis.

In selecting specific survey items from numerous existing cross-national studies, we set the following three conditions. First, we only use surveys conducted after September 11, 2001. It is worth comparing causal effects of the high-level visits before and after the 9/11 incidents, but we found that most of the publicly available cross-national surveys were conducted after 9/11. There is also a more active reason to focus on the post-9/11 period. As discussed in the previous section, we are interested in examining how the foreign public’s

6 Walt (2005, 168-69) assigns a similarly pivotal role to the Abu Ghraib revelations’ effect on worldwide perceptions of U.S. legitimacy.
attitudes toward the U.S. have changed as the “war on terror” continued and international media started reporting negative aspects of the war. We assume that since the 9/11 incidents, while U.S. leaders have made considerable efforts in public diplomacy, such efforts have not always had the intended effect. Therefore, we can shed light on exogenous conditions bringing about different consequences of U.S. public diplomacy within one broadly consistent global context.

Second, we use survey questions measuring whether non-U.S. respondents have (broadly defined) positive or negative attitudes toward the U.S. and its foreign policy. As explained earlier, we group these into two types. An example of a question assessing “diffuse” support for the U.S. is the following: “Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the United States.” An example of a question assessing “specific” support for the U.S. policy in consideration of its consequences for a respondent’s country is the following: “Generally, do you think American foreign policy has a positive effect on <this country>, a negative effect or does American foreign policy have no effect on <this country>? ”

Given the time-frame of our analysis, we also use questions asking respondents whether they favor the U.S.-led military actions to fight against terrorism (diffuse) and whether they think their country made the right decision to use (or not to use) their own military force against Iraq (specific). Since U.S. political leaders have often framed the “war on terror” as a struggle to protect “liberty” or “democracy,” we also use questions asking whether respondents like American ideas about democracy (diffuse). We feel that “American” ideas of democracy are likely to now be tied in people’s perceptions to the war on terror and other U.S. foreign policies due to the rhetoric.

Third, questions must be asked more than once in a given country. We follow the methodology of Page and Shapiro (1983, 1992) and Shapiro and Page (1998) by using repeated survey items with identical (or almost identical) question wording. Our preliminary analysis suggests that responses to the same question in a previous survey conducted in the same country are highly significant covariates, which we can use as controls. We think it is highly intuitive, if not self-evident, that countries with relatively favorable (or unfavorable) citizen attitudes to the U.S. at \( t-1 \) are likely to have favorable (or unfavorable) attitudes at time \( t \) as well. This is a useful and important control in our data. We will specify these variables and various sets of fixed effects in Section 3.2.

There are eight questions satisfying the above three conditions – four questions each to measure diffuse support and specific support (see Appendices A and B for a list of survey questions and their sources.) Since the number of observations for each question is not large enough for statistical analysis, we pool all observations by re-coding responses to each question into the following three categories – the percentage of “positive” responses for the U.S., the percentage of “negative” responses, and the percentage of “other” responses (see Appendix A for the categorization). It is usually preferable to use various survey items in a single study because no specific survey question is likely to measure an underlying conceptual variable with perfect validity (Heath, Fisher, and Smith 2005).

The total number of observations is 267, based on 11 surveys conducted in 59 countries and 2 regions without full sovereignty (Kosovo and Hong Kong). The average level of positive responses is 30.3% (standard deviation 18.0). The average of negative responses is 51.2% (s.d. 19.4), and of other responses, 18.5% (s.d. 16.1). Clearly, during the post-9/11 period, on average, negative views about the U.S. prevail; but the standard deviations are fairly large, particularly for the percentage of other responses.

It is important to note that we should not ignore the percentage of other responses. For nearly a third of the observations, it exceeds 25%, which indicates, we believe, that a significant portion of the foreign public face conflicting interests, mixed feelings, or
self-censorship regarding the U.S., and thus do not fully express their positive or negative attitudes. In other words, cross-national variation in responses such as “don’t know” or “refused” is not completely random, but exhibits systematic patterns (Berinsky 1999, 2002). This implies that any statistical model omitting information about such responses introduces specification error, which is potentially quite serious given the degree of variation in our data. Our method for compositional data analysis, explained in Section 3.3, avoids this problem.

3.2 Independent Variables

The goal of this study is to estimate to what extent public opinion about the U.S. is influenced by U.S. leaders’ visits to foreign countries. Specifically, we code our causal variable “1” if the U.S. president and/or the U.S. secretary of state visited country $i$, at least once in the four weeks (inclusive) before the survey period began in the country, and “0” otherwise. For example, President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin L. Powell visited the United Kingdom on April 7-8, 2003, before the survey period for the Pew Global Attitudes Survey began on April 29. Thus, for this case, our variable is coded “1”. Among 276 observations in our data, there are twenty cases with such a high-level visit just before the survey period began – fifteen by the secretary of state alone and five by the president accompanied by the secretary.

Since there is no a priori theoretical rationale for choosing the exact length of our time lag, our decision is based on balancing sample size and expected effects. We found that a lag of two weeks or more is required to have ten or more observations with high-level visits. If the number of such visits is too small, the estimated causal effects may capture some idiosyncratic characteristics of selected visits. If the lag is too long, however, the effects of high-level visits may dissipate or be overwhelmed by intervening events in a given country or globally. For this study, we chose a time lag (four weeks) that maximizes the number of visits in the analysis while keeping the pre-survey period short enough to justify inference about the effects of the visit.

An important feature of our estimation strategy is that we expect causal heterogeneity depending on when U.S. leaders traveled overseas after the 9/11 incidents. The number of observations for each of our three periods is 67, 119 and 90, respectively. We also estimate how high-level visits affect the distributions of answers to questions assessing diffuse support for the U.S. and to questions assessing specific support. The number of observation is 114 and 162, respectively. To estimate causal heterogeneity based on periods and question types, we use various sets of interaction variables and evaluate conditional effects by simulation and graphical presentation, which we explain next.

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7 The data source is the Office of the Historian, the U.S. Department of State (http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/), which records the dates when U.S. presidents or secretaries of state traveled abroad for official business. Note that within the period of investigation, there is no case such that the president traveled abroad without the secretary.

8 In our preliminary analysis, we tried to estimate the differential impacts of joint visits by both the president and the secretary of state and of visits by the secretary of state only. But we did not pursue this because of the small number of observations for presidential visits.

9 We leave examination of such temporal dynamics for future research.

3.3 A Statistical Model

We apply a statistical model for compositional data (a set of variables, each of which falls between 0 and 100, summing to 100 for each observation). Among the several available techniques, we apply a relatively easy but accurate regression model, involving seemingly unrelated regressions (Tomz, Tucker, and Wittenberg 2002). In the political science literature, almost all applications of methods for compositional data use multi-party electoral data, but aggregate survey data are equally vulnerable because variables comprise more than two percentages, summing to 100.

As discussed in Section 3.1, this approach is particularly valid when we cannot ignore the distribution of “other” responses, such as “Don’t know”. More basic alternative techniques are sometimes used, but they have inadequacies. Using the percentage of positive, negative and other responses as separate dependent variables and running three independent regressions seems reasonable, but this approach fails to impose the basic constraint that the sum of predicted values of the dependent variables is always 100%. Another alternative is to use the simple (i.e., un-logged) ratio of positive to negative response percentages and run a single regression. However, this approach does not allow us to distinguish, for example, between the effect given a 20% to 20% ratio without a visit and a 40% to 20% ratio with a visit, and the effect given a 20% to 50% ratio with a visit and a 40% to 50% ratio without a visit. In both instances, the estimated effect (coefficient) is “2”, but the substantive effects are different. While taking the log-ratio solves this identification problem, as long as we run a single regression with any ratio involving only positive and negative responses, we ignore the distribution of other responses and cannot evaluate substantive effects accurately. The compositional method that we use involves two log ratios (to account for the distributions of all three percentages) in seemingly unrelated regressions (SURs).

For our study, therefore, we run SURs with the following model specification:

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\begin{align*}
\ln \left( \frac{Y_p}{Y_o} \right)_{ij} &= \pi_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \\
\ln \left( \frac{Y_n}{Y_o} \right)_{ij} &= \pi'_{ij} + \epsilon'_{ij}
\end{align*}
\]

where \( Y_p \), \( Y_n \), and \( Y_o \) are the percentages of positive, negative and other responses to questions asked to respondents in country or region \( i \in \{1,\ldots,61\} \). The subscript \( j \in \{1,\ldots,16\} \) refers to the \( j \)th observation for each country or region \( i \). The average number of observations for each country or region is 4.5 (standard deviation 4.4). The largest number of observations is 16 (Germany and Russia). The two log-ratios for our dependent variables impose a restriction that the predicted percentages sum to 100. The SURs assume that the error terms \( \epsilon_{ij} \) and \( \epsilon'_{ij} \) are correlated. If this assumption is valid, it produces more consistent estimates than two independent regressions. After the estimation, we tested the independence of the two equations by performing a Breusch-Pagan test. The results (not shown) support the validity of this assumption.

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11 For other models, see Honaker, Katz and King (2002), Jackson (2002), and Katz and King (1999).
12 We made two minor adjustments before taking the log ratios. First, if the reported percentage of \( Y_p \), \( Y_n \), or \( Y_o \) is zero, we replaced it with 1% so that the log transformation in compositional data analysis does not generate any missing value. Second, we re-coded each percentage as the percentage of \( Y_p + Y_n + Y_o \), because the reported percentages do not necessarily sum up to 100% due to rounding.
$\pi_{ij}$ and $\pi'_{ij}$ are systematic components with a linear combination of the following independent variables: (1) Visit dummy coded “1” if the U.S. president and/or the U.S. secretary of state visited country $i$ (for $j$th observation) in the four weeks before the survey period began and “0” otherwise, (2) Diffuse question dummy coded “1” if a question asks about diffuse support for the U.S. and “0” otherwise, (3) Period 2 dummy coded “1” if a question is asked during Period 2 (from the beginning of the war in Iraq until the Abu Ghraib scandal), (4) Period 3 dummy coded “1” if a question is asked during Period 3 (after the Abu Ghraib scandal), (5) Visit dummy $\times$ Period 2 dummy, (6) Visit dummy $\times$ Period 3 dummy, (7) Visit dummy $\times$ Diffuse question dummy. These are the main variables of interest in estimating the differential effects of the high-level visits depending on periods and question types. We follow recommendations by Brambor, Clark and Golder (2006) and include all constitutive terms to build our interaction model.

We also include a set of control variables. As explained in Section 3.1, in preliminary analysis we found that the distribution of responses to the same question in the same country but in a previous survey is an important determinant of the distribution of responses in the current survey. Accordingly, we add (8) Positive % at $t-1$, and (9) Negative % at $t-1$. It is important to note that the number of days between two surveys is not constant across observations and this variation itself may have some effect. Considering this, we also add (10) Lag between $t$ and $t-1$, the number of days between the end of the previous survey and the beginning of the current survey, (11) a non-linear variant $\text{(Lag between } t \text{ and } t-1)^2$, (12) Positive % at $t-1 \times \text{Lag between } t \text{ and } t-1$, (13) Positive % at $t-1 \times (\text{Lag between } t \text{ and } t-1)^2$, (14) Negative % at $t-1 \times \text{Lag between } t \text{ and } t-1$, and (15) Negative % at $t-1 \times (\text{Lag between } t \text{ and } t-1)^2$. Since they are used only as controls, we do not make substantive interpretations in our analysis.

We also add a set of country dummy variables. While the percentages of positive and negative responses in a previous survey may control a range of social, demographic, and political conditions in each country, they may not be sufficient to control all country-specific but time-invariant covariates, which may or may not be observable. Such covariates may include political institutions, historical relationships with the U.S., or political culture. By adding these fixed effects in addition to the lagged response percentages, we believe that we can produce consistent estimates of the marginal effects of a high-level visit after controlling all country-specific factors, question-type-specific differences, period-specific global conditions, and other potentially country-variant and time-variant factors.

Finally, let us explain how we interpret the marginal effects of our main causal variable – the high-level visit – for each of the three periods during the post-9/11 era and for the two types of questions. First, after running the two regressions, we calculate the predicted values of the log ratios, given particular values for Visit dummy, Period 2 dummy, Period 3 dummy, and Diffuse question dummy, while holding other variables constant at their means. For example, to estimate the impact of a high-level visit in Period 1 on diffuse support for the U.S., we compare the predicted value based on \{Visit dummy, Period 2 dummy, Period 3 dummy, Diffuse question dummy\} = \{0,0,0,1\} and the predicted value based on \{Visit dummy,
Period 2 dummy, Period 3 dummy, Diffuse question dummy\} = \{1,0,0,1\}. Then, by applying the inverse logistic function, we can transform each set of log ratios into predicted percentages of responses: \(^{15}\) Furthermore, to estimate uncertainty, we use a statistical procedure developed by Tomz, Wittenberg, and King (2003). \(^{16}\) It uses stochastic simulation techniques and produces 1,000 sets of predicted percentages of responses for a given set of values of all independent variables. The results of this post-estimation analysis are presented graphically, using \(E(Y^p)\) and \(E(Y^N)\) on the horizontal axis and the kernel density plots for scenarios with a visit and without a visit.

4. Results

In this section, we interpret conditional effects based on post-estimate simulation as explained in Section 3.3. (See Appendix C for the table of regression results and our rationale for not using the table to make interpretation and inference.) The results for the three periods are presented graphically in Figures 1-3. Each figure displays four panels. The top two panels show the marginal effects of high-level visits on “diffuse support” for the U.S, while the bottom panels show the effects on “specific support.” Each panel includes two kernel density distributions. The solid line indicates the distribution of the estimated percentages of negative (left panel) and positive (right panel) responses, when the president and/or the secretary of state visited a given country. The dashed lines are the estimated distributions without such a visit. The conditional effect and its uncertainly can be interpreted by comparing these two distributions. (Also see Table 1 for the summary of conditional effects.)

In interpreting the results shown in these figures, we focus on differences both across the three time periods and between the two question types (diffuse and specific). Comparison of Figures 1-3 shows clear patterns: the effect of high-level visits is initially large but declines over time; and diffuse support for the U.S. is more easily affected than specific support. Both of these dynamics make intuitive sense in light of our discussion in Sections 2.3 and 2.4. Regarding agenda setting, as U.S. foreign policy loses international legitimacy, the effectiveness of its leaders’ public diplomacy declines. Regarding the “rational” or “pretty prudent” public, at all times, people in a given country are more easily swayed to lend diffuse support to U.S. foreign policy but less easily convinced when that support might involve risk or cost for themselves or their country. In order to assess our hypotheses in more detail, a closer look at the effects across each time period is in order.

Figure 1 presents results for the period from September 2001 to March 2003. It is in this period that we find the strongest support for our Hypothesis 1 – high-level visits by U.S. leaders can be an effective tool of public diplomacy. The impact of such public diplomacy is substantial for specific assessments as well as diffuse ones, which we attribute to high post-9/11 perceptions of legitimacy for U.S. foreign policy. With regard to diffuse support, on average, a visit of the president and/or secretary of state increases the positive percentage by 15.4 points, while decreasing the negative percentage by 23.8 points.

Consistent with Hypothesis 3, however, there is less scope for influence on people’s

\[^{15}\] More specifically, we apply the following function:

\[
E(Y^p) = \frac{100\cdot e^{E(\ln(Y^p)/Y^{op})}}{1 + e^{E(\ln(Y^p)/Y^{op})} + e^{E(\ln(Y^p)/Y^{op})}}
\]

\[
E(Y^N) = \frac{100\cdot e^{E(\ln(Y^N)/Y^{op})}}{1 + e^{E(\ln(Y^N)/Y^{op})} + e^{E(\ln(Y^N)/Y^{op})}}
\]

The estimated percentage of other responses is simply \(100 - E(Y^p) - E(Y^N)\).

\[^{16}\] Also see King, Tomz and Wittenberg (2000).
specific perceptions about how the U.S. affects their country. A high-level visit increases positive answers by 11.0 points and decreases negative ones by 13.5 points for such questions. This makes sense if the “rational” or “pretty prudent” public does have some idea of its own preferences. Views about more abstract issues, such as the U.S. role in the world, may be open to influence by a prominent event such as a high-level visit. By contrast, views about things that touch on your own country’s interests or about something more concrete, on which people presumably have existing views, are less readily affected.

Examining results for Period 2 (March 2003 - March 2004) in Figure 2 allows us to begin to assess our expectations about changing legitimacy and the influence of public diplomacy (Hypothesis 2). We expected that U.S. foreign policy would garner less legitimacy after the invasion of Iraq. Our results show, concerning diffuse support, a smaller increase in positive response (12.6 points) and a smaller decrease in negative responses (10.3 points) for this period, as compared to Period 1. But there is a more dramatic change in the effects on responses to country-specific questions: high-level visits now appear to be ineffectual tools of public diplomacy for such issues. There are only small changes in positive or negative responses (5.5 points and -1.0 points, respectively).

This result is also strongly consistent with Hypothesis 3. As U.S. foreign policy loses legitimacy around the world, some influence is still possible on general perceptions, but not on country-specific views involving more concrete interests or risks. It seems clear that people feel the negative impact (or threat) from U.S. foreign policy on their own country and their own security. In terms of agenda setting and control over outcomes, the loss of legitimacy makes it harder to translate diffuse influence into more specific support for “your country” to do something supporting U.S. foreign policy, such as sending troops to Iraq. Period 2, accordingly, seems to characterize a situation in which U.S. “soft-power” (Nye 2004) resources, although extant, are not effective for influencing international outcomes because of a loss of legitimacy.

A continuation of these patterns and a consequent melt-down of U.S. influence are evident in Period 3 (April 2004 – December 2005). With the Abu Ghraib scandal and major military and administrative setbacks on the ground in Iraq, there appears to be a complete loss of legitimacy and credibility for U.S. foreign policy. When the president or secretary of state visit a country in this period, their public diplomacy efforts do not have the intended effect on diffuse public opinion about the general U.S. role in the world (increase in positive responses by 1.0 points and increase in negative responses by 3.1 points). The vivid (negative) images from Iraq and basic facts in the news cannot be displaced by public diplomacy efforts, consistent with Hypothesis 3.

In addition, there is what we call a “negative priming” effect when the country-specific questions are asked. The visit actually primes people to be more aware that U.S. policy is somehow affecting their own country negatively. While public opinion already opposes “your country” getting involved in a perceived U.S. policy, the presence of U.S. leaders in “your country” reminds people in that country that either they are involved, there is pressure to be involved, or there may be consequences of the conflict that affect their interests. As a result, we argue, respondents have had this issue primed in their minds by the visit and negative assessments are more readily available when the question is asked – consequently, the observed backlash to public diplomacy efforts (i.e., decrease in positive responses by 4.1 points and increase in negative responses by 13.7 points). We note that while public diplomacy in general might fit a standard understanding of priming in public opinion research (Iyengar and Kinder 1987) in which elite messages have a “positive” effect on opinion (from the perspective of the elites concerned), we are not aware of other research pointing to an unintended negative priming dynamic such as this.

An interesting aspect of our negative priming result is that it clearly shows the
importance of considering the interaction of the rational public perspective and global agenda setting in the current global context. When diffuse general issues are considered, one might think that public diplomacy at least does no harm to agenda setting efforts, and sufficient effort might even elicit some positive effect. But when country-specific issues are considered, it seems clear that public diplomacy may do harm and lessen a state’s influence over outcomes. Leaders would be better off staying home than making high-profile foreign visits when their policies are widely seen as illegitimate and their words are unlikely to be believed.

5. Discussion

Three decades ago, Keohane and Nye (1977) first advanced a theory of international relations which placed considerable significance on the assumption that there are important situations in which military force and military capability are irrelevant or of limited utility for states. There are issue areas, and even entire realms of relationships, to which military power cannot be effectively linked, and for which military power is not a useful tool for controlling outcomes. As linkage of other issues to the military realm becomes less effective, both transnational agenda setting and perceptions of political legitimacy should acquire enhanced importance as sources of real power in international relations.

Although we would argue that military capabilities certainly have some utility in the global terrorism issue area, it seems to us that the U.S. has tested the outer bounds of the utility of military force since it launched the war in Afghanistan in 2001. The U.S. has used force directly, and continues to do so, in that conflict and in Iraq, and it strongly supported Israel’s war in Lebanon in 2006. The broader U.S. strategy has been to attempt leadership based on military capabilities and the willingness to use them, rather than emphasizing international political consensus or multilateral institutions and norms.

Even in a situation of considerable unipolar preponderance in military capabilities, this strategy has not allowed the U.S. to exercise control over outcomes in many key areas. Obvious examples include the reluctance of China or Russia to support U.S. initiatives towards Iran, the unwillingness of erstwhile allies, such as Germany and France, to support a range of U.S. policies including those in Iraq, and the ability of militarily primitive groups of insurgents to frustrate, perhaps undo, attempts to stabilize governments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

After 2003, even George W. Bush and his foreign policy team seemed to realize the need for a wider range of tools for agenda setting and leadership. However, as Nye (2004) has argued, the U.S. has squandered its “soft power” assets since 2001. Our findings both confirm this observation and provide insight into the dynamics of soft power through public diplomacy.

Our results also point to foreign publics which are responsive to direct U.S. messages and open to influence, while remaining cognizant of their own states’ interests. There has been scant empirical evidence of such dynamics in past research. Further, U.S. attempts at influence may have no impact or even elicit a backlash through what we call “negative priming” in an environment in which trust and legitimacy have been degraded by U.S. behavior. We find some evidence of these dynamics in the wake of the invasion of Iraq and considerable evidence for them once the Abu Ghraib abuses became public worldwide.

We feel our analysis breaks new ground by providing insight into the complex dynamics of transnational agenda setting. We present rigorously derived evidence of a critical and potentially powerful avenue of influence, and are also able to point to factors that limit or negate that influence.
Appendices

A. Survey Items

We use the following eight survey items for our analysis. See Appendix B for details of each source. The first four questions are regarding “diffuse” support for the U.S., while the latter four are regarding “specific” support. The number of observations for each question is 29, 14, 36, 35, 36, 107, 3, and 16, respectively.

1. **Question Wording:** “Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of [the] United States.”

   **Categorization:** positive responses if “totally favorable” (in Pew GAP 2005), “very favorable” or “somewhat favorable”; negative responses if “somewhat unfavorable”, “very unfavorable” or “totally unfavorable” (in Pew GAP 2005); other responses if “don’t know” or “refused”.


2. **Question Wording:** “And which of these comes closer to your view? I like American ideas about democracy, [or] I dislike American ideas about democracy.”

   **Categorization:** positive responses if “I like American ideas about democracy”; negative responses if “I dislike American ideas about democracy”; other responses if “don’t know” or “refused”.

   **Sources:** Pew GAP 2002, Pew GAP 2003.

3. **Question Wording:** “And which comes closer to describing your view? [Which of the following phrases comes closer to your view? (in Pew GAP 2004 and Pew GAP 2005)] I favor the US-led efforts to fight terrorism, [or] I oppose the US-led efforts to fight terrorism.”

   **Categorization:** positive responses if “I favor the US-led efforts to fight terrorism” or “favor war on terrorism” (in Pew GAP 2004 and Pew GAP 2005); negative responses if “I oppose the US-led efforts to fight terrorism” or “oppose war on terrorism” (in Pew GAP 2004 and Pew GAP 2005); other responses if “don’t know” or “refused”.


4. **Question Wording:** “Please tell me if you think each of the following are having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world … the United States” [“For each of the following statements, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. The United States is having a mainly positive influence in the world” (in Globescan 2003-4 only)]

   **Categorization:** positive responses if “mainly positive”, “agree” (in Globescan 2003-4), or “somewhat agree” (in Globescan 2003-4); negative responses if “mainly negative”, “somewhat disagree” (in Globescan 2003-4), “disagree” (in Globescan 2003-4) or “strongly disagree” (in Globescan 2003-4); other responses if “depends”, “neither”, “no difference”, “don’t know” or “no response”.

   **Sources:** Globescan 2003-4, BBC 2004-5, BBC 2005.

5. **Question Wording:** “In making international policy decisions, to what extent do you think the United States takes into account the interests of countries like (survey country) – a great deal, a fair amount, not too much, or not at all?”

   **Categorization:** positive responses if “a great deal” or “a fair amount”; negative responses if “not too much”, “not at all” or “not much at all” (in Pew GAP 2004 and Pew GAP 2005); other responses if “don’t know” or “refused”.


6. **Question Wording:** “[Some say American foreign policy has contributed to the terrorism against the United States (in Terrorism 2001 only)]. Generally, do you think American foreign policy has a positive effect on <your country>, a negative effect or does American foreign policy have no effect on <your country>?”

   **Categorization:** positive responses if “a positive effect”; negative responses if “a negative effect”; other responses if “no effect”, “don’t know”, “no answer”, or “refused”.

   **Sources:** Terrorism 2001, VOP
7. **Question Wording**: “On the subject of Iraq, did (survey country) make the right decision or the wrong decision to use military force against Iraq?” **Categorization**: positive responses if “right decision”; negative responses if “wrong decision”; other responses if “don’t know” or “no response”. **Sources**: Pew GAP 2003, Pew GAP 2004, Pew GAP 2005.

8. **Question Wording**: “On the subject of Iraq, did (survey country) make the right decision or the wrong decision to not use military force against Iraq?” **Categorization**: positive responses if “wrong decision”; negative responses if “right decision”; other responses if “don’t know” or “no response”. **Sources**: Pew GAP 2003, Pew GAP 2004, Pew GAP 2005.

**B. Data Sources**
- **Terrorism 2001**: Gallup International End of Year Terrorism Poll, (Nov. – Dec. 2001)

**C. Regression Results Table**
Table 2 shows the results of three regressions using the log ratio of negative to positive percentages, the log ratio of “other” to positive percentages, and the log ratio of negative to “other” percentages. In a seemingly unrelated regression, we only need to use any two of them. The choice of denominator and numerator (e.g., the log ratio of positive to negative percentages or the log ratio of negative to positive percentages) is irrelevant. Switching denominator and numerator only changes the signs of coefficient estimates. Substantial interpretation of marginal effects and standard errors using simulation is not influenced by which two we choose.

We do not base our interpretation of conditional effects on this table of regression results. As Brambor, Clark and Golder (2006) write, “[T]he typical results table [for a multiplicative interaction model] often conveys very little information of interest because the analyst is not concerned with model parameters per se” (p. 74). Braumoeller (2004) makes a similar claim that the statistical significance of the lower-order coefficients in a multiplicative interaction model is useless for hypothesis testing.

These recent methodological arguments are particularly valid when we analyze the conditional effects of compositional dependent variables using a seemingly unrelated regression for two reasons. First, in our approach, the dependent variables are log ratios, but our substantive interest lies in estimating the conditional impacts of high-level visits on the percentages of positive and negative responses, not on log ratios. Thus, the estimate parameters are by themselves not revealing. Second, even when an estimate parameter for a particular variable (or an interaction variable) is positive on a particular log ratio, it is not necessarily the case that it has a positive impact on the percentage of responses. In a similar vein, interpretation of the magnitude of its effect and its standard error is difficult.
Reference


Table 1: Marginal Effects of High-Level Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>w/o Visit</th>
<th>w/ Visit</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>28.37%</td>
<td>43.76%</td>
<td>15.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.26)</td>
<td>(13.37)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative %</td>
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<td>30.51%</td>
<td>-23.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10.77)</td>
<td>(12.04)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>24.02%</td>
<td>34.99%</td>
<td>10.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7.51)</td>
<td>(11.22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative %</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(10.43)</td>
<td>(13.04)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>34.91%</td>
<td>47.50%</td>
<td>12.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(9.23)</td>
<td>(11.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Negative %</td>
<td>54.89%</td>
<td>44.63%</td>
<td>-10.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10.40)</td>
<td>(11.37)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>29.31%</td>
<td>34.82%</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.45)</td>
<td>(10.48)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative %</td>
<td>60.45%</td>
<td>59.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10.14)</td>
<td>(11.21)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>31.76%</td>
<td>32.73%</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.86)</td>
<td>(10.40)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Negative %</td>
<td>46.13%</td>
<td>49.19%</td>
<td>3.06</td>
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<td>(10.86)</td>
<td>(12.12)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Specific</td>
<td>26.93%</td>
<td>22.82%</td>
<td>-4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.17)</td>
<td>(8.39)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative %</td>
<td>50.31%</td>
<td>63.98%</td>
<td>13.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(11.24)</td>
<td>(11.54)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Period 1 is before the war in Iraq started in March 2003. Period 2 is after the start of the war in Iraq but before the Abu Ghraib prisoner torture and abuse scandal was revealed in April 2004. Period 3 is after April 2004 up to December 2005. The numbers in parentheses are standard deviations.
Table 2: Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>(\ln\left(\frac{N%}{P%}\right))</th>
<th>(\ln\left(\frac{O%}{P%}\right))</th>
<th>(\ln\left(\frac{N%}{O%}\right))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit dummy</td>
<td>-0.66*</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.83)</td>
<td>(-0.58)</td>
<td>(-0.72)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit dummy × Period 2 dummy</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.18)</td>
<td>(-0.85)</td>
<td>(1.62)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit dummy × Period 3 dummy</td>
<td>1.11**</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>1.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(2.38)</td>
<td>(-0.20)</td>
<td>(1.84)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit dummy × Diffuse question dummy</td>
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<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.61)</td>
<td>(0.59)</td>
<td>(-1.68)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 2 dummy</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>-0.76***</td>
<td>0.58***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.57)</td>
<td>(-4.86)</td>
<td>(3.53)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 3 dummy</td>
<td>-0.27*</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.42**</td>
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<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.88)</td>
<td>(0.74)</td>
<td>(-2.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse question dummy</td>
<td>-0.27***</td>
<td>-0.20*</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(-3.00)</td>
<td>(-1.67)</td>
<td>(-0.50)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive % at (t-1)</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(-0.58)</td>
<td>(-0.08)</td>
<td>(-0.33)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive % at (t-1) × Lag between and (t-1)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(-0.91)</td>
<td>(-2.36)</td>
<td>(1.61)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive % at (t-1) × (Lag between (t) and (t-1))^2</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.47)</td>
<td>(2.81)</td>
<td>(-1.65)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative % at (t-1)</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.05***</td>
<td>-0.06***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(-0.62)</td>
<td>(3.27)</td>
<td>(-3.54)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative % at (t-1) × Lag between (t) and (t-1)</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
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<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(1.73)</td>
<td>(-3.98)</td>
<td>(4.99)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative % at (t-1) × (Lag between (t) and (t-1))^2</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(-1.91)</td>
<td>(4.31)</td>
<td>(-5.43)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lag between (t) and (t-1)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01*</td>
<td>-0.01**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(-0.99)</td>
<td>(1.83)</td>
<td>(-2.43)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Lag between (t) and (t-1))^2</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\hspace{-1cm}(0.61)</td>
<td>(-2.63)</td>
<td>(2.92)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root MSE</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-square</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The number of observations is 276. The numbers in parentheses are z statistics. The estimates of country-region dummies and a constant term are not shown. *** \(p<0.01\), ** \(p<0.05\), * \(p<0.10\) (two-sided). \(N\)egative%+\(P\)ositive%+\(O\)ther%=%100.
Figure 1: The Impact of U.S. High-Level Visits, Period 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Response (%)</th>
<th>Positive Response (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Before March 19, 2003, Diffuse Question**

Note: The solid lines indicate the distributions of the estimated percentages of positive (right panel) and negative (left panel) responses, when the president and/or the secretary of state visited a given country within four weeks before the first day of a survey. The dashed lines are the estimated distributions without such a visit. Period 1 is before the war in Iraq started in March 2003.
Figure 2: The Impact of U.S. High-Level Visits, Period 2

After March 19, 2003; Before April 1, 2004, Diffuse Question

After March 19, 2003; Before April 1, 2004, Specific Question

Note: The solid lines indicate the distributions of the estimated percentages of positive (right panel) and negative (left panel) responses, when the president and/or the secretary of state visited a given country within four weeks before the first day of a survey. The dashed lines are the estimated distributions without such a visit. Period 2 is after the start of the war in Iraq but before the Abu Ghraib prisoner torture and abuse scandal was revealed in worldwide media in April 2004.
Figure 3: The Impact of U.S. High-Level Visits, Period 3

\[\text{After April 1, 2004, Diffuse Question}\]

\[\begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
\text{Negative Response (%)} & \text{Positive Response (%)} \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

\[\text{After April 1, 2004, Specific Question}\]

\[\begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
\text{Negative Response (%)} & \text{Positive Response (%)} \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

\textbf{Note:} The solid lines indicate the distributions of the estimated percentages of positive (right panel) and negative (left panel) responses, when the president and/or the secretary of state visited a given country within four weeks before the first day of a survey. The dashed lines are the estimated distributions without such a visit. Period 3 is after April 2004 up to December 2005.