



# DECOMPOSING AUDIENCE COSTS

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**Q: How can leaders credibly signal their intentions in foreign policy crises?**

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**A: Make threats in public**

# DOMESTIC AUDIENCES





Fearon 1994, Fearon 1997, Smith 1998, Leeds 1999, Partell and Palmer 1999, McGillivray & Smith 2000, Schultz 2001, Guisinger and Smith 2002, Sartori 2002, Prins 2003, Baum 2004, Ramsay 2004, Slantchev 2006, Clare 2007, Kurizaki 2007, Tomz 2007, Weeks 2008, Hoffman et al 2009, Tarar and Leventoglu 2009, Potter and Baum 2010, Brown and Marcum 2011, Snyder and Borghard 2011, Trager and Vavreck 2011, Downs and Sechser 2012, Gartzke & Lupu 2012, Levendusky and Horowitz 2012, Levy 2012, Mercer 2012, Schultz 2012, Trachtenberg 2012, Uzonyi et al 2012, Davies and Johns 2013, Gibler and Hutchison 2013, Tarar and Leventoglu 2013, Potter and Baum 2013, Chaudoin 2014, Croco and Gartner 2014, etc.

# Classic audience cost experiments tell us:

- 1: **Significant audience cost treatment effects: people dislike inconsistency**

(Tomz 2007, Trager and Vavreck 2011, Levendusky and Horowitz 2012, Davies and Johns 2013, etc.)

# Classic audience cost experiments tell us:

- 1: Significant audience cost treatment effects: **people dislike inconsistency**
- 2: No treatment heterogeneity: Republicans, Democrats, hawks, doves - **everyone hates inconsistency equally**

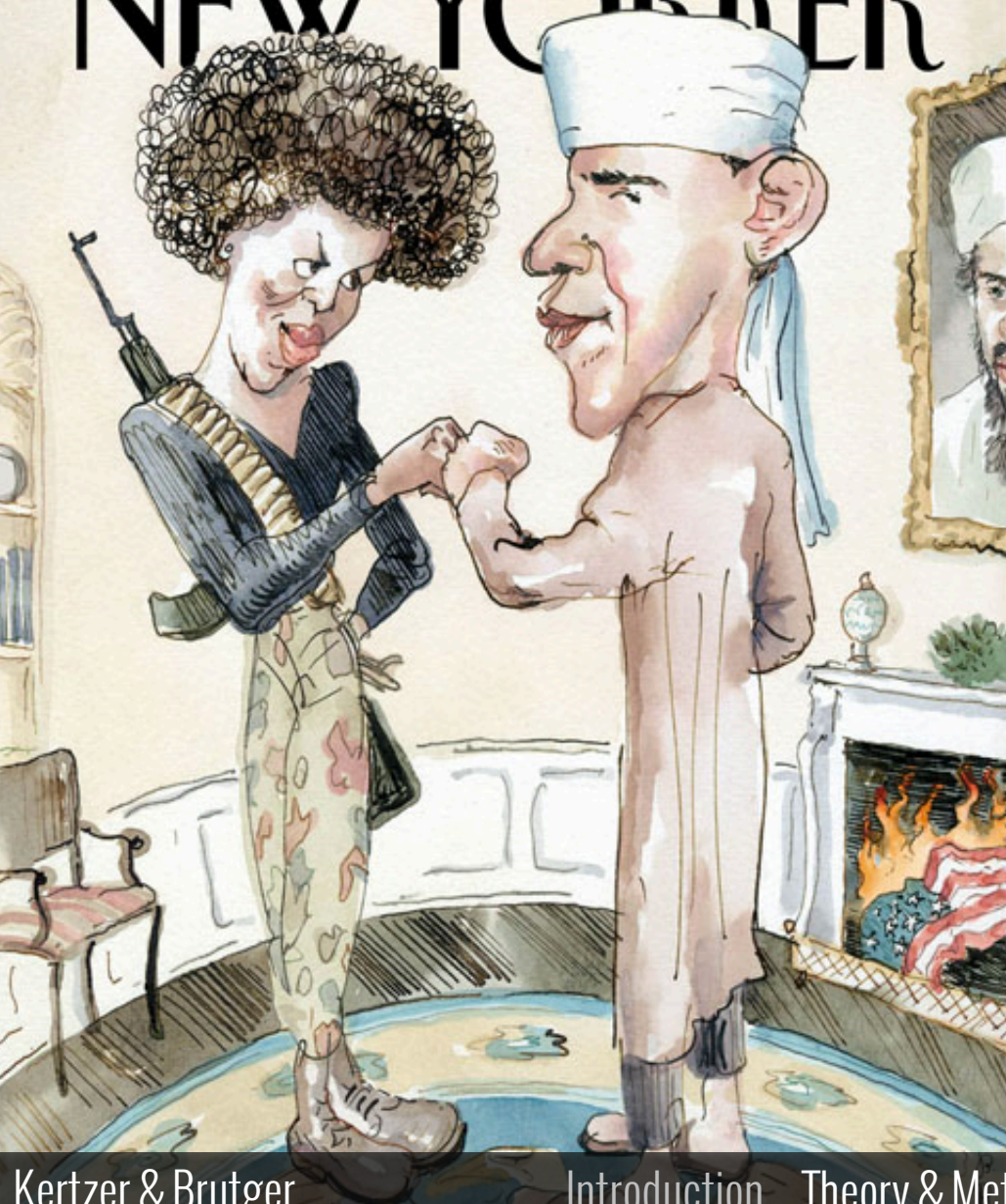
(Tomz 2007, Levendusky and Horowitz 2012, Davies and Johns 2013, etc.)

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JULY 21, 2008

# NEW YORKER



Kertzer & Brutger

Introduction

Theory & Methods

Results

Conclusion



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## FEATURED SURVEYS

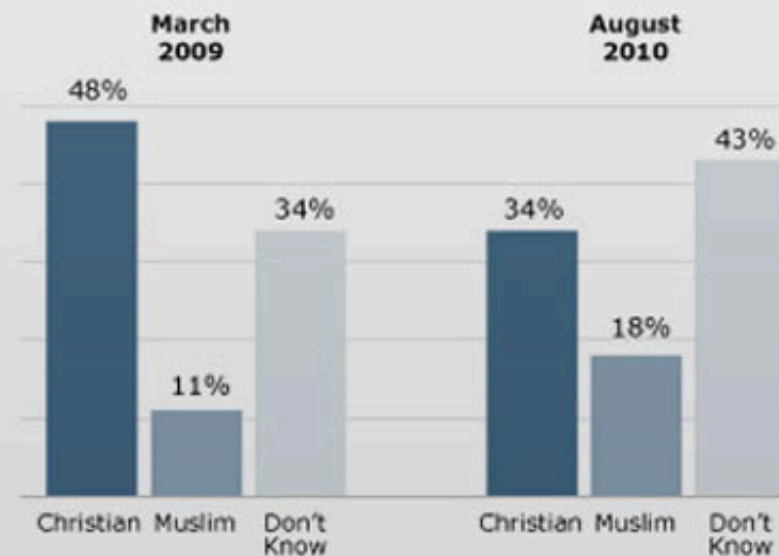
### NEW REPORT

August 19, 2010

## Growing Number of Americans Say Obama is a Muslim

Religion, Politics and the President

### What Is Obama's Religion?





**There's more to audience  
costs than meets the eye**

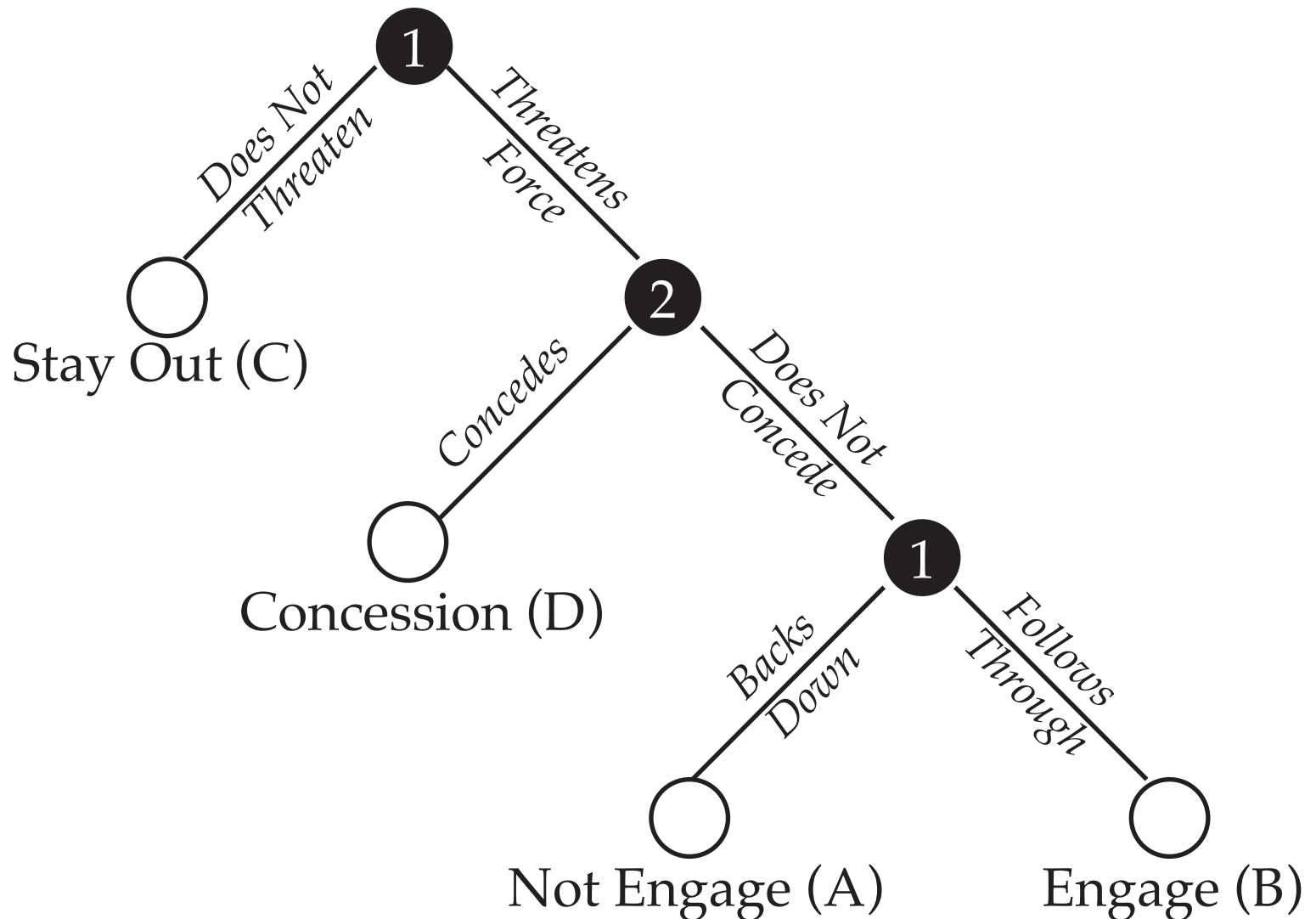
# **There's more to audience cost experiments than meets the eye**

## **Two logics of audience costs:**

**1: Inconsistency Cost**

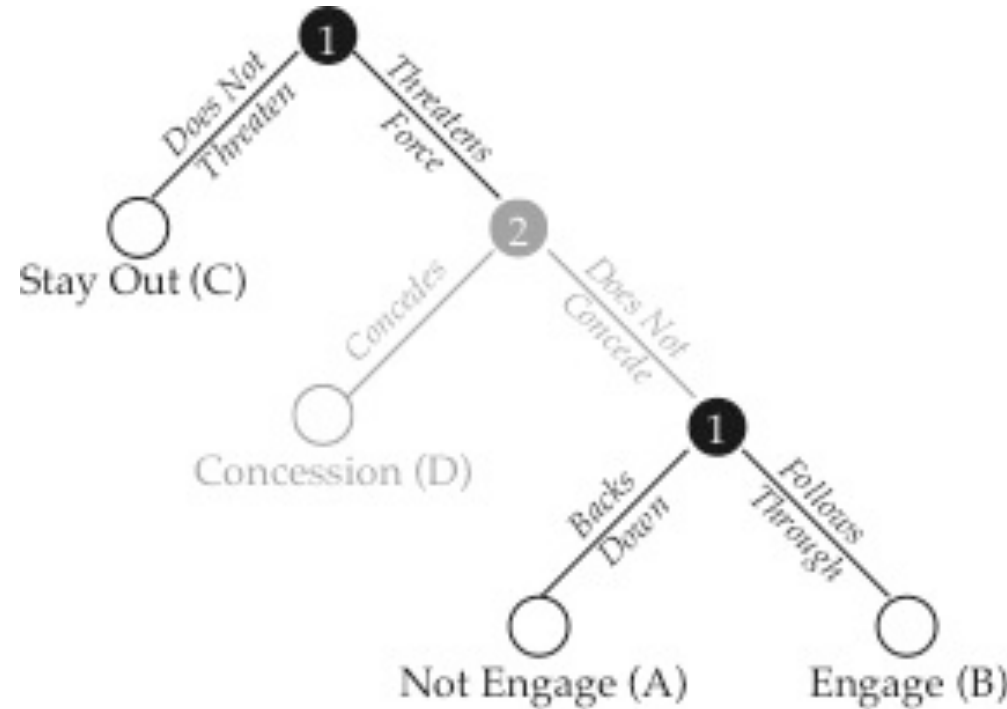
**2: Belligerence Cost**

# Canonical crisis bargaining model



# Audience costs are double-barreled

		Backs Down	Follows Through
Threatens Force	<b>A</b> <i>Not engage</i>	<b>B</b> <i>Engage</i>	
Does Not Threaten		<b>C</b> <i>Stays out</i>	





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**Audience cost:**  
 $E[Y_{Ai} - Y_{Ci}]$

# Our solution: three different treatments

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**Belligerence cost:**

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**Inconsistency cost:**

$$E[Y_{Ai} - Y_{Bi}]$$

**Belligerence cost:**

$$E[Y_{Bi} - Y_{Ci}]$$

**Audience cost:**

$$E[Y_{Ai} - Y_{Ci}]$$



# Two quantities of interest:

1:

$$\frac{E[Y_{Ai} - Y_{Bi}]}{E[Y_{Ai} - Y_{Ci}]}$$

Fraction of the audience cost  
due to **inconsistency**

<b>A</b> <i>Not engage</i>	<b>B</b> <i>Engage</i>	÷	<b>A</b> <i>Not engage</i>	<b>B</b> <i>Engage</i>
	<b>C</b> <i>Stays out</i>			<b>C</b> <i>Stays out</i>

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<b>A</b> Not engage	<b>B</b> Engage	÷	<b>A</b> Not engage	<b>B</b> Engage
	<b>C</b> Stays out			<b>C</b> Stays out

2:

$$\frac{E[Y_{Bi} - Y_{Ci}]}{E[Y_{Ai} - Y_{Ci}]}$$

Fraction of the audience cost  
due to **threat of force**

<b>A</b> Not engage	<b>B</b> Engage	÷	<b>A</b> Not engage	<b>B</b> Engage
	<b>C</b> Stays out			<b>C</b> Stays out

# Significance of Belligerence Costs:

- 1: **Sunk Cost:** Leader pays a price when they initiate threats.
- 2: **Secret Negotiations:** Incentive to avoid sunk costs through secret diplomacy.
- 3: **Distinct Motivations:** Different audiences may invoke distinct logics.

# Linking audience cost mechanisms with Individual differences

**Militant assertiveness** (Holsti 1979, Wittkopf 1990, Herrmann, Tetlock & Visser 1999, etc.)

**International trust** (Chanley, Rudolph & Rahn 2000, Uslaner 2002, Brewer 2004; Binning 2007, Rathbun 2011)

**National chauvinism** (Schatz, Staub & Lavine 1999, Herrmann, Isernia & Segatti 2009 etc.)

**Political ideology** (Jost et al 2003, 2007; Duckitt et al 2002, Sidanius & Pratto 2001, etc.)

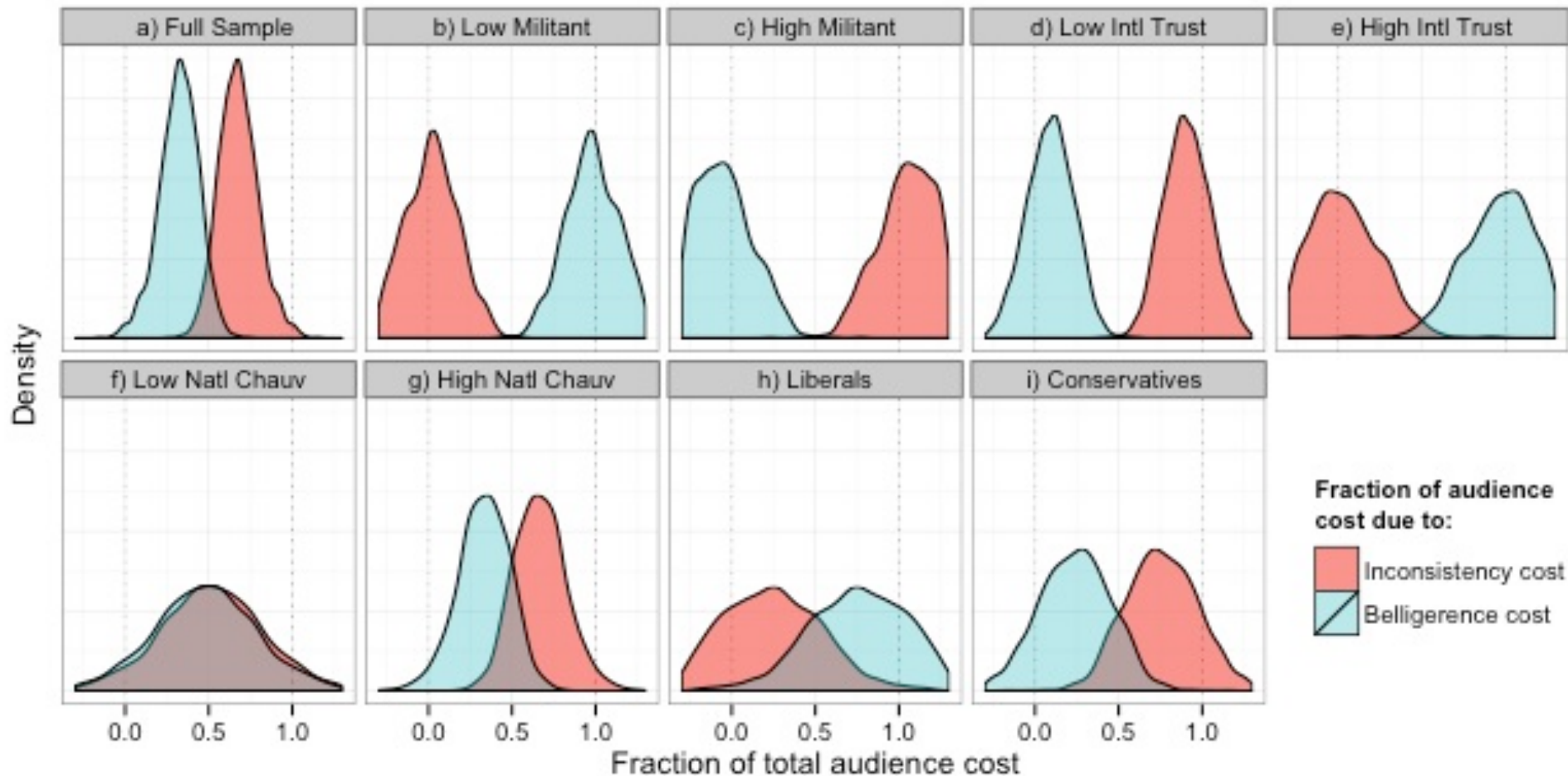


# Experiment

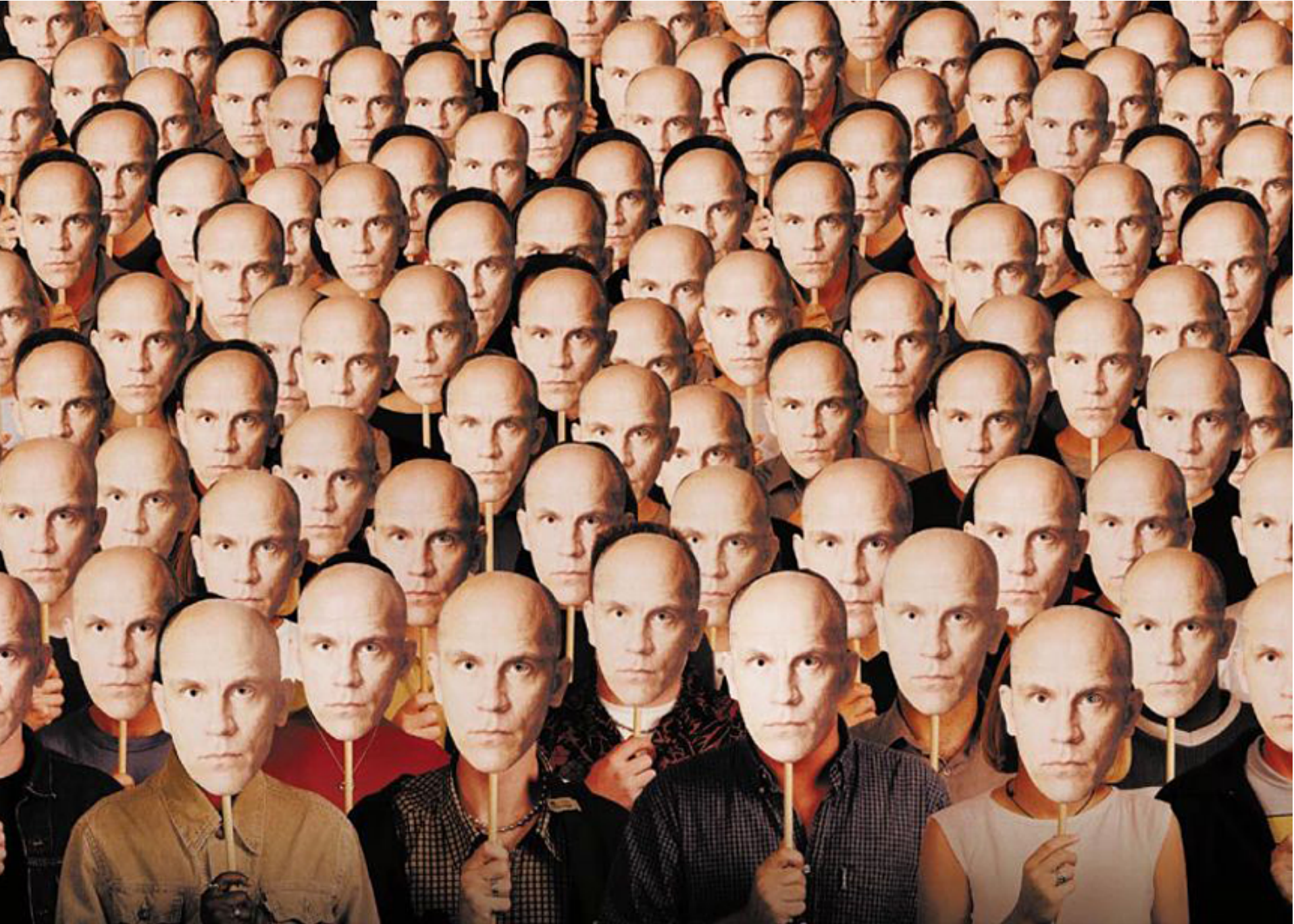
- N=942 Registered voters through SSI in Spring 2014
- Replication of classic audience cost scenario (“A country sent its military to take over a territorial region in a neighboring country...”)

		Backs Down	Follows Through
Threatens Force	Threatens Force	<b>A</b> <i>Not engage</i>	<b>B</b> <i>Engage</i>
	Does Not Threaten		<b>C</b> <i>Stays out</i>

# Subgroup analyses





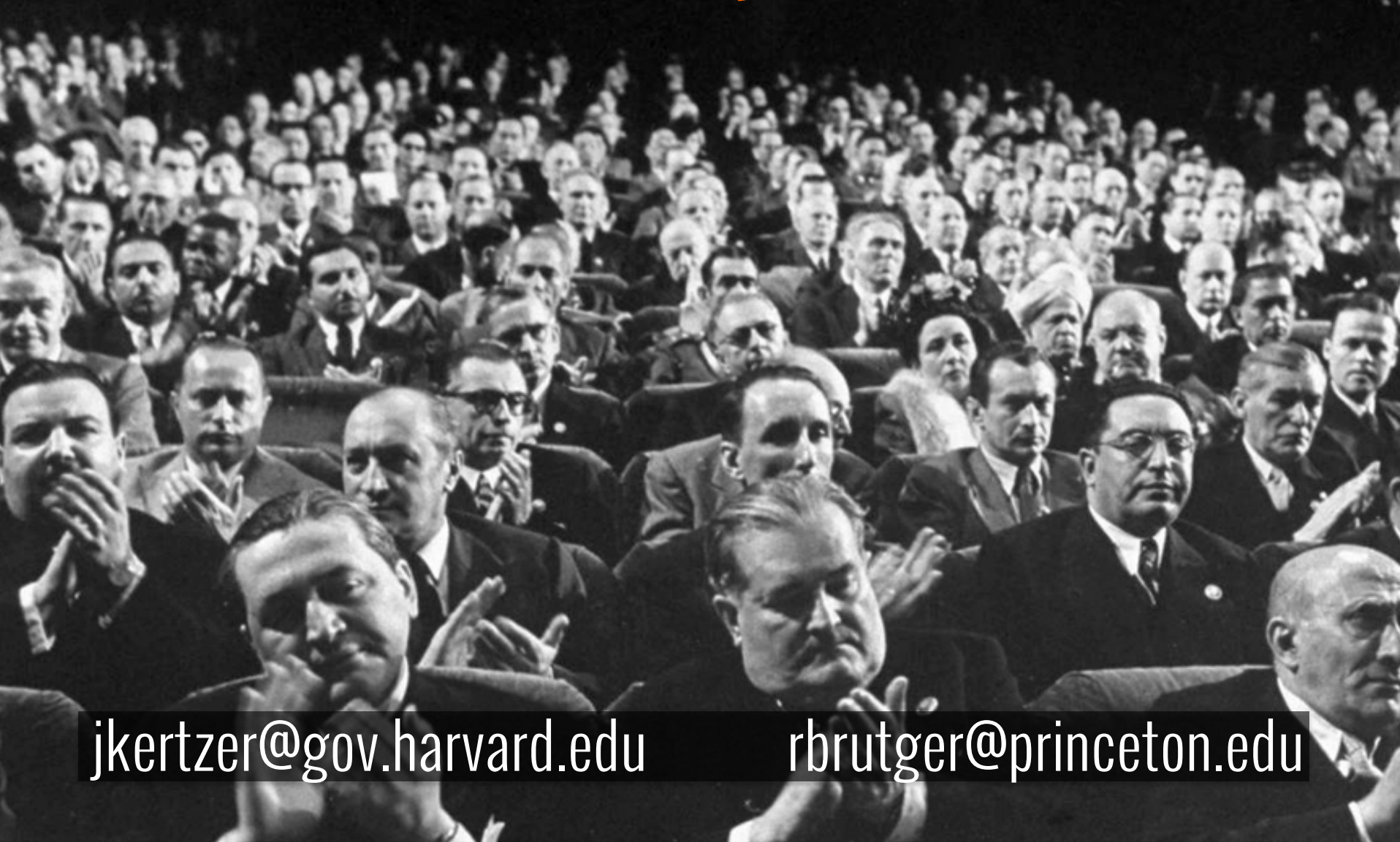


# Findings

- 1: No unitary logic of audience costs**
- 2: Crisis diplomacy has a noisy signaling environment**
  - **Mosaic audiences**
  - **Tying hands or sinking costs?**
  - **Relevant constituencies shift over time**



# Thank you!

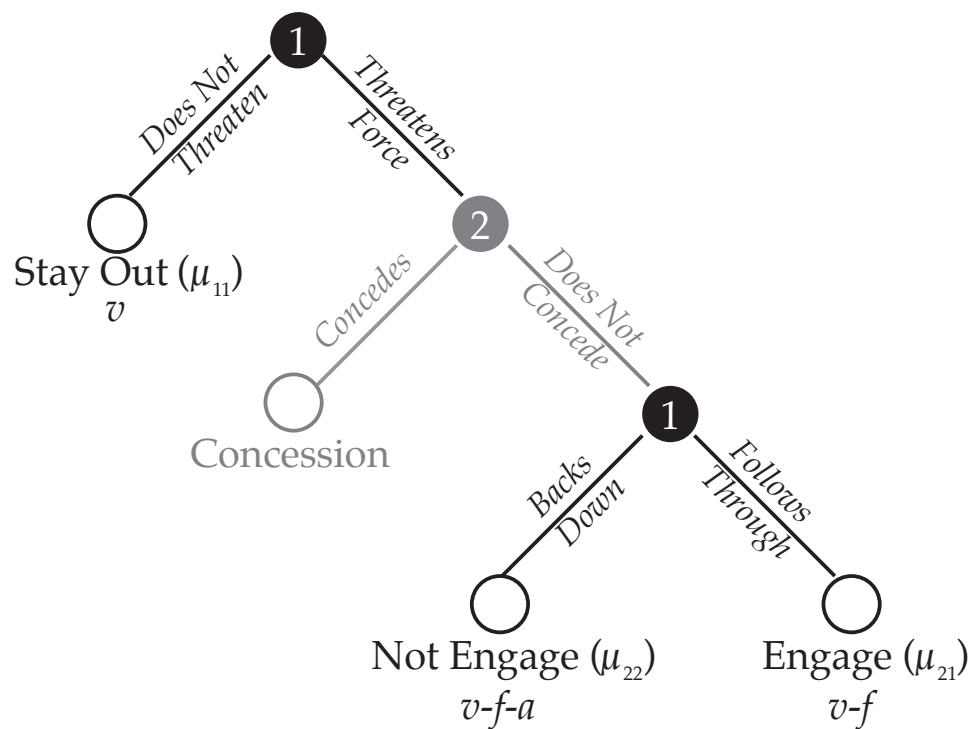


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	<i>Follows Through</i> $\beta_1$	<i>Backs Down</i> $\beta_2$
<i>Does Not Threaten</i> $\alpha_1$	Stay Out $\mu_{11}$	
<i>Threatens Force</i> $\alpha_2$	Engage $\mu_{21}$	Not Engage $\mu_{22}$



# Regression framework

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_a + \beta_2 T_b + \beta_3 Z + \beta_4 T_a Z + \beta_5 T_b Z + \beta_6 x + \dots + \beta_j x + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

$$E[Y_a - Y_c | Z = z] = \beta_1 + \beta_4 Z \quad (2)$$

$$E[Y_b - Y_c | Z = z] = \beta_2 + \beta_5 Z \quad (3)$$

$$E[Y_a - Y_b | Z = z] = (\beta_1 - \beta_2) + (\beta_4 - \beta_5) Z \quad (4)$$

$$\frac{E[Y_a - Y_b | Z = z]}{E[Y_a - Y_c | Z = z]} = \frac{(\beta_1 - \beta_2) + (\beta_4 - \beta_5) Z}{\beta_1 + \beta_4 z} \quad (5)$$

$$\frac{E[Y_b - Y_c | Z = z]}{E[Y_a - Y_c | Z = z]} = \frac{\beta_2 + \beta_5 Z}{\beta_1 + \beta_4 Z} \quad (6)$$

Table 2: Regression models

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Not Engage	-1.709*** (0.387)	-1.265*** (0.215)	-1.166*** (0.372)	-1.006** (0.420)
Engage	-1.634*** (0.434)	-0.144 (0.245)	-0.521 (0.446)	-0.864* (0.496)
Militant Assertiveness	-0.695* (0.390)	-0.588 (0.465)	-0.733 (0.553)	-0.639 (0.665)
International Trust	0.820*** (0.294)	1.130*** (0.317)	0.349 (0.264)	1.066*** (0.322)
National Chauvinism	0.568 (0.588)	0.617 (0.475)	0.370 (0.356)	0.184 (0.685)
Ideology	-0.108 (0.067)	-0.080 (0.055)	-0.088 (0.066)	-0.040 (0.450)
Not Engage $\times$ Mil Assert	0.486 (0.500)			
Engage $\times$ Mil Assert	1.902*** (0.585)			
Not Engage $\times$ Intl Trust		-0.221 (0.456)		
Engage $\times$ Intl Trust		-1.418*** (0.544)		
Not Engage $\times$ : Nat Chauv			-0.363 (0.483)	
Engage $\times$ Nat Chauv			0.012 (0.563)	
Not Engage $\times$ Ideology				-0.534 (0.580)
Engage $\times$ Ideology				0.465 (0.695)
Constant	0.787* (0.455)	0.572 (0.359)	1.010** (0.423)	0.478 (0.503)
N	368	588	390	271
R <sup>2</sup>	0.144	0.128	0.107	0.137
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.125	0.116	0.088	0.111
Inconsistency Fraction	Low Mil Assert: 0.036*** High Mil Assert: 1.262***	Low Int Trust: 0.895*** High Int Trust: -0.082***	Low Nat Chauv: 0.557 High Nat Chauv: 0.670	Liberals: 0.008* Conservatives: 0.757*

\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01; Note that the quantities of interest here are not the regression coefficients but the inconsistency fractions calculated in the bottom two rows of the table, and their associated p-values derived from joint hypothesis tests. For ease of interpretation, we recommend comparing results visually using Figure 1.

Figure 1: Comparison of the probability distributions for  $\frac{E[Y_{22}-Y_{21}]}{E[Y_{22}-Y_{11}]}$  estimated using a mean-based approach versus OLS

