Framing Wartime Success: Reporting Enemy Body Counts in America's UAV Campaigns

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Abstract

Recent research on American wartime public opinion has focused on the importance of perceptions of battlefield success as a determinant of support for ongoing military operations. Unfortunately, only limited research has been conducted to illuminate the metrics of success used by the U.S. mass public faced with complex and sometimes conflicting information regarding nontraditional conflicts. The taking of major geographical objectives or definitive victory in a set piece battle has been replaced by reports regarding enemy body counts and the achievement of development objectives. As U.S. kill/capture UAV campaigns further distance military operations from the traditional battlefield, it is important to understand the impact of enemy casualty reports (and concomitant “collateral damage” from these efforts) on casualty tolerance and perceptions of operational success. This study employs experiments embedded in public opinion surveys to probe responses to the framing of casualty data, both combatant and noncombatant, associated with this type of warfare.
After a decade of mostly covert use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs, commonly referred to as “drones”) to prosecute the United States’ Global War on Terrorism, the recent nomination and confirmation of John O. Brennan to become Director of the Central Intelligence Agency cast the public spotlight on the use of this tool of war (see Mazzetti and Shane, 2013). At roughly the same time, the Federal Aviation Administration’s consideration of rules to govern the domestic use of drone technology and burgeoning state and local interest in acquiring drones for public safety applications, raised the specter of UAVs buzzing above one’s community and perhaps being employed in non-lethal or even lethal attacks on American citizens (Savage, 2013; Sengupta, 2013). In each of these debates, public opinion about the use of drone technology has been cited as widespread evidence of support (mostly abroad) or opposition (mostly at home) to current or planned policies regarding the deployment/employment of UAVs (consider Swift, 2012 versus Hudson, Owens, and Callen, 2012). Local communities in some states have gone so far as to ban their police forces from acquiring drones for domestic enforcement tasks, while President Obama and his advisers have regularly pointed to >55% support for drone strikes in Pakistan and Yemen (see “Continued support…,” 2013). Issues within these debates have focused on the technology itself, rules of warfare and “just war,” developing transparent processes for the selection of UAV targets, the eventual acquisition of this technology by other countries and the need to set norms of behavior, and apocalyptic visions of robot warriors guided by artificial intelligence selecting humans for “death from above.” While a number of prominent polling firms have been collecting data on American views on UAV warfare (Pew, Gallup), scholars have only recently begun to compare this data to previous research on public opinion regarding combatant and noncombatant casualties in warfare.
In this paper we glean knowledge from earlier work (our own and others) to identify the independent variables most likely to affect individual attitudes about drone warfare as part of counterinsurgency campaigns in Iraq or Afghanistan and the wider Global War on Terrorism. We begin with a brief survey of the literature on the relationship between perceptions of the costs of war (“blood and treasure,” and mostly just U.S. blood) and perceptions of the success of individual attacks/battles and success of/support for the broader military efforts. We then describe our approach to the study of casualty frames based in notions of subjective rationality grounded in behavioral decision theory. Next, we develop a number of expectations regarding the manner in which the independent variables will affect public support/opposition for drone operations and select a subset of these variables (and accompanying demographic controls) for study in an experiment embedded in a public opinion survey. We then discuss the survey itself and its results. Finally, we consider the implications of our results for the current debates and propose a future research agenda examining the role of the broader set of independent variables.

Casualties and War

In “traditional” warfare the metrics of success and failure are generally clearer and more “objective” than counterinsurgency or counterterrorism campaigns. Reaching a prominent geographic salient, taking a hill or river, or laying siege to a capital city is no longer the sine qua non of military operations. “Winning their hearts and minds” in Vietnam was as difficult to quantify as making the civilian population the “center of gravity” in modern counterinsurgency efforts. In particular, complex metrics of success/failure in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism campaigns seldom appear in local or major newspapers, which instead tend to focus on “body counts” (ours and theirs) to keep a running tally indicating future victory or defeat (see Boettcher and Cobb, 2006). During the Iraq War in 2004 and 2005 public affairs
officers began to release numbers on enemy killed in action (EKIA) to contextualize U.S. casualties and give a better indication of the success or failure of a battle or engagement with insurgents. In previous work we highlight the importance and impact of this type of casualty-ratio data on perceptions of battlefield performance and overall support for war (Boettcher and Cobb, 2006). Modern warfare using UAVs or drones complicates the matter even further. Discrete, asynchronous, and stochastic drone attacks are reported only after information about the attack is released by the Obama administration or is reported by journalists on the ground in Yemen or Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). This allows the administration to control the information related to the “target” of the attack and judgments regarding the success of the attack. Of course, no U.S. troops are at risk in a drone attack, so the casualty-ratio of U.S. KIA to EKIA is not relevant. The new casualty-ratio of significance seems to be the asserted value of the “target” and the number of civilians or noncombatants killed in the attack. As Larson and Savych (2006) observed and Walsh (2012) empirically tested for UAVs, perceptions of success/failure in air operations are conditioned on reasonable “collateral damage” relative to the “importance” of the target.

Of great interest to us is that much of the recent polling on U.S. public support for UAV strikes asks whether it is okay to kill “terrorists” or “high-level terrorists” (seldom “Americans”) and the number of civilian casualties during the hypothesized attack is almost never stated (see “U.S. Drone Strikes…,” 2013; “Drone Program Poll…,” 2013). Despite our earlier work on the importance of casualty ratios, we know of no study that has attempted to calibrate the value of the target and the number of civilian casualties that produce the greatest support for drone operations (Walsh’s, 2012, path breaking study did not vary the value of the target and varied civilian casualties as none or some undefined number). The general literature on casualties and
wartime U.S. public opinion (summarized below) has identified a number of independent variables that affect perceptions of success/failure and support for ongoing military operations. Unfortunately, in the widespread belief that drone strikes are unique in some way, this literature has been largely ignored (Walsh being the most prominent exception).

**Wartime U.S. Public Opinion**

The conventional wisdom that emerged after Vietnam and that dominated the discourse until September 11, 2001 was that the American public was casualty-sensitive or, indeed, casualty-phobic. John Mueller’s seminal work on *War, Presidents and Public Opinion* (1973) established a clear relationship between increasing cumulative casualties and declining public support for war. Support for the wars he examined appeared to be a function of the logarithm of cumulative casualties (1973, p. 266), explaining an early monotonic decline in wartime public support. This conventional wisdom was reinforced by reactions to U.S. interventions in Lebanon and Somalia; the casualty sensitivity of decision makers planning operations in Iraq, Haiti, and Kosovo; and the decision to avoid intervention altogether in Bosnia (early on) and Rwanda. By the mid-1990s commentators lamented that the U.S. casualty-phobia would prevent it from acting as a great power maintaining the international system.

The attacks of September 11, 2001 were interpreted as watershed events that would quickly sweep casualty-phobia from the collective public and elite consciousness. The Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) project reported in Feaver and Gelpi (2004) provided the most comprehensive analysis to date of both the impact of casualty sensitivity on opinions regarding hypothetical U.S. military intervention and the determinants of casualty sensitivity in the U.S. public. Unlike previous research efforts, Feaver and Gelpi were able to collect individual-level data on casualty tolerance, rather than rely on aggregate-level data on
cumulative or marginal casualties and presidential approval. Based on a new survey of elite and mass opinion regarding hypothetical intervention scenarios, Feaver and Gelpi were able to test specific hypotheses related to the respondent’s military status, demographic variables, attitudes toward the use of force, political and social attitudes, and connection to those at risk (p. 170). They found the public to be much less sensitive to casualties than previously thought but that elites retained a phobia regarding U.S. casualties.\(^1\)

During the lead-up to the Iraq War, Kaplan (2003) critiqued the casualty-sensitivity assumptions of the U.S. military and political elite by pointing to the work of Feaver and Gelpi (2004) and Larson (1996). Kaplan noted that a majority of Americans were willing to tolerate “substantial” casualties and a long-term intervention in Iraq and that the mean response to an “acceptable casualty” question regarding Iraq was 29,853. While Kaplan does go on to discuss the more sophisticated explanations that Feaver and Gelpi (2004) and Larson (1996) offer for their observations, his reporting of prospective means is a bit disingenuous. First, psychological research has clearly shown that prospective cumulative utilities seldom predict contemporaneous utility judgments that are often based on changes in state (i.e., gains or losses) rather than overall asset levels (see Boettcher 2004; Jervis 1992; Kahneman and Tversky 1979; Levy 1992). Second, the mean response to acceptable-casualties questions is inflated by outliers—the use of median or modal responses is much more appropriate (see Feaver and Gelpi 2004; Boettcher 2004). Third, as Kaplan subsequently acknowledges, estimates of acceptable casualties are closely tied to the goal(s) of the military operation, and most of the casualty tolerance questions

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\(^1\) Feaver and Gelpi (2004, 131) somewhat overstate casualty insensitivity by treating all-zero responses to their hypothetical casualty tolerance scenarios as spoiled ballots. They argue that these responses suggest “that the respondents are objecting to our phrasing of American deaths as ‘acceptable’ rather than offering a judgment of their actual willingness to suffer the human costs of war.” Of course, another interpretation might suggest that these individuals are simply consistent in their casualty sensitivity and worth including in the analysis.
regarding Iraq offered the goal of preventing Iraq from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. This goal clearly was called into question when U.S. forces failed to locate these weapons.

Debates over casualty-sensitivity/-insensitivity in the American public continued through the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars. Rationalist scholars argued that the “real world” mattered and that the perceived legitimacy of the war, perceptions of the possibility of long-term success, the worthiness of the goals of the interventions, and/or the performance of the president in press conferences all affected public casualty tolerance. The dominant cost/benefit approach to casualties and wartime public opinion is found in the work of Larson (1996), Gartner (2008 a&b), Eichenberg (2005), and Feaver and his colleagues (2004). This work was contrasted with efforts by Berinsky (2005), Johnson & Tierney (2007), Thrall (2005), and Boettcher and Cobb (2006, 2009) that focused on elite-driven cue taking and pathologies of decision making.

U.S. public opinion about UAV operations escapes the focus on U.S. casualties, but there is a new conventional wisdom that suggests that casualty-sensitivity regarding civilians killed in drone attacks may undermine public support for ongoing operations. Much less work has focused on the impact of civilian “collateral damage” on wartime opinion regarding military operations. Boettcher (2004) looked at the degree to which Americans “valued” the lives of foreign citizens, though still in a casualty-ratio context. Larson and Savych (2006) offers the only systematic look at perceptions of civilian casualties and wartime opinion in Iraq, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq again. They observed that the public approaches civilian casualties in a rational manner and wishes to avoid them, but not at the risk of American lives. They also found that the public generally trusts military efforts to avoid civilian casualties and military explanations for “accidents” as the exception rather than the norm. Without much systematic research to rely upon, a debate rages over the blowback to drone strikes internationally (Swift, 2012; Plaw and

**Potential Independent Variables**

PPO, Signature or Personality Strike, Target Value, Civilian Casualties (number and description), US casualties, Drones vs. other platform, Potential or Actual Success/Failure, Sovereignty vs. Failed State

**Potential Dependent Variables**

Operation Success/Support, War Support, Presidential Approval x 2, Constitutionality

**Public Opinion Abroad**

Yemen, FATA, Africa

**Research Design and Data**

We test our expectations experimentally. Our data come from embedding fictitious New York Times news stories in a survey asking for opinions about a drone attack in Afghanistan (see Appendix A for full survey). The news stories we created gave study participants different information about the value of a target of the drone strike (none, low, or high) and the number of civilian casualties (unspecified, zero, one or 19). Participants for the study were recruited from the Political Science Research Subject Pool (PSRSP) at North Carolina State University. We administered the survey online using Qualtrics software, and it was fielded March 11-19, 2013. Approximately 350 students were taking part in the pool at the time, and 249 completed the study. As with most samples in this subject pool, the majority of study participants were white (83%), male (56%), and self-identified as Republicans (51%).

**Dependent Variables**
To measure opinions about the utility of using drones, respondents were asked to evaluate whether the strike the read about was successful, unsuccessful or evenly mixed. Next, following prior PEW polls about drones, participants were asked how concerned they were that drone strikes would lead to (1) civilian casualties or (2) retaliation by extremists. They were also asked if how concerned they were about (3) the legality of drones and (4) whether using them damage America’s reputation. Participants’ answers to these four questions were measured on identical 4-pt scales. Our final two dependent variables inquired about approval of Obama’s handling of (a) the war in Afghanistan and (b) U.S. foreign policy.

**Independent Variables**

Our theoretically important independent variables were constructed by manipulating two attributes of drone strikes (see Appendix A for stimulus materials). Prior to being exposed to the manipulations, all study participants were presented with a generic description of a drone that explained these were unmanned aircraft. They also all saw the same picture of a drone. Participants were then randomly assigned to a control group or to one of six treatment conditions in a 2 X 3 design that varied (1) the value of the target (low vs. high) and (2) the number of citizen casualties (zero, one, or 19). The control group did not read any overt statements about the value of the target or whether collateral damage occurred. We included a control group because it allows us to measure respondents assumptions about a generic drone strike compared to variation to in the value of the target and the number of civilian casualties. A control group also generates more information by providing estimates of the effects of each treatment compared to a baseline, as opposed to any potential effects across treatments (Boettcher & Cobb, 2009; Boettcher & Cobb, 2010, 2011).
Although we rely on the logic of randomization to estimate the impact of varying these two attributes of drone attacks, we also measured several characteristics of study participants that in have been found to affect attitudes about the use of military force. These variables include party identification, gender, awareness of the issue, and having prior or present military service.

**Results**

Before discussing the results of the study, we start by investigating first whether or not participants were cognizant of the information we manipulated. Respondents were asked at the end of the survey if they could recall (1) the value of the target of the strike and (2) how many civilians were killed as a result of the attack. For each question, they were provided multiple answer options, including incorrect answers and the ability to admit they did not remember. Our results indicate the manipulations were successful. In the three treatments with high value targets, for example, 86% of respondents correctly answered that they read about a high value target. The comparable figure for those who read about low value targets was 78% accuracy. Likewise, recall was high for the specific number of casualties. For treatments with zero casualties, 69% recalled that information correctly, for one and nineteen casualties, 80% and 73%, respectively, were accurate. Conversely, participants in the control group recognized that the value of the strike or mentions of casualties were absent in the story they read.

**Success**

We start by examining whether perceptions that the drone strike was successful are dependent on the value of the target or the number of civilian casualties. In Tables 1 and 2, we present results that reveal participants’ opinions are indeed shaped by these kinds of information. Importantly, the control group also allows us to identify how the different treatments matter. For example, it is clear that drone strikes targeting high value terrorists are on average deemed more
successful than strikes killing low-value targets. Yet, when opinions among these groups are compared to the answers of participants in the control group, it is clear that killing high value targets doesn’t increase perceptions of success as much as killing low-target terrorists reduces perceptions of success. These findings suggest respondents already have in mind that a generic drone strike that targets someone of high value, since the opinion in the control group are nearly identical to those reported in the high value conditions.

Next, it appears that perceptions of success decline linearly as a function of increasing civilian casualties, from zero to 19. With zero deaths, for example, 77% rated the strike as successful. That percentage falls to 36% when the death toll rises to 19 civilians. A more complete picture, however, is revealed only after considering the opinions among the control group. It turns out that when participants are explicitly told zero casualties occurred, they are more likely to think the strike was successful than respondents in the control group. Those in the control group, that is, judge the mission as equally successful as participants who read about exactly one casualty. Apparently, the prototypical drone strike is assumed to include some collateral damage, and thus the absence of collateral damage is a “cleaner” and “preferable” kind of drone mission than ordinarily imagined.

Success: A multivariate Model

In this second set of analyses, we now consider whether the treatment effects identified earlier are statistically significant, controlling for participants characteristics. To estimate these effects, we created a dummy variable for each treatment, so that the control group is the excluded group and all treatments are compared to it. Next, we regressed these dummy variables on
perceptions of success using its original five-point measurement. These results are presented in Table 3.

First, participants who said they were more aware about drones were more likely to rate the drone attack as successful, regardless of the experimental condition. So too were males, though this gender effect falls just short of conventional standards for significance (p < .10). Next, treatments with low level targets paired with at least one casualty significantly decreased perceptions of success. A low level target killed without a casualty, though, had no effect either way. Conversely, neither vignettes describing high value targets paired with at least one casualty significantly reduced the perception of success. Yet, a high level target killed without a casualty significantly increased the perception the attack was successful. Overall, it appears that targeting low-level terrorists lower perceptions of success, unless they are also absent of any collateral damage. Meanwhile, missions that take-out high level targets will not be judged as less successful even if they come with civilian casualties, and are judged as more successful when they avoid casualties.

**Concerned: Civilians, Retaliation, Constitutionality and Reputation**

This section reports the results of four separate ordinal regression models of participants’ concerns about externalities of using drones. As before, the treatments effects are captured by six dummy variables, and control variables are included that measure respondent characteristics. These results are reported in different columns in Table 4.

First, we examine the impact on concern over drones causing civilian casualties. Males and Republicans report being less concerned overall, as do participants who know someone who
has served in Afghanistan, although the latter effect falls just short of achieving conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < .10$). Similar to the prior analyses, attacking a low level target that generates collateral damage increases participants’ concern about harming civilians. Also similar, there is no effect for killing a low level target without casualties. Killing a high level target with 19 civilians accidentally killed too increases concern, whereas the same value target with just one civilian killed does not. Oddly, though, concern increases when no casualties occur at the same a high level target is killed. It is unclear whether this latter result indicates the mere mention of casualties in the stories tends to prime greater concern over civilian deaths, or that, given the intuitive pattern of the outcomes for the other treatments, it is randomly significant.

Concern about retaliation from extremists is affected by gender, and to a lesser extent also by killing a high level target with 19 accompanying civilian casualties ($p < .10$). None of the other treatment conditions have significant effects. Awareness and partisanship explain variation in concern over the legality of using drones, with those who pay more attention to the issue being more concerned and Republicans being less concerned. However, none of the treatments have significant effects in this model. In the final model, concern about damaging America’s reputation is lower among Republicans ($p < .10$), and among participants who read about 19 civilians being killed in the strike against a high level target. The only other treatment condition to approach levels of significance is when the strike targets a low level terrorist and it kills one civilian ($p < .15$). The pattern of results is puzzling, especially why the drone attack on a low level target that also kills 19 civilians does not equally increase concerns about reputation.

**Approval: War in Afghanistan and U.S. Foreign Policy**
The last set of analyses explores potential effects on approval of Obama’s handling of the war in Afghanistan and foreign policy more generally. These results are presented in Table 5. Repeating the same analyses described in the prior sections of the paper, we fail to find evidence that the nature of the drone attack influences these judgments. Instead, both models reveal that only participants’ party identification explains approval. In both cases, Republicans are less likely to approve than are Democrats, a fairly obvious finding.

==Table 5 about here==

Discussion

Ddd
References


Appendix A: 2013 Drone Survey

How aware are you about the U.S. use of drones to monitor and occasionally attack terrorists and insurgents in other countries?

Use the following scale that ranges from 1-10 to record your answer, where "1" stands for very unaware and "10" stands for very aware. Of course, you can use any number in-between.

1 (Very Unaware)  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10 (Very Aware)

Since the middle of 2008, the United States government has been using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs, commonly known as "drones") to monitor and occasionally attack members of the Taliban hiding in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) on the Pakistani side of their border with Afghanistan. The use of drones in this area is controlled by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and approval of drone strikes in Pakistan comes directly from President Obama. The main drone used by the CIA carries surveillance systems and can be configured with various strike packages of GPS and laser-guided bombs and missiles. The picture below is of a Predator drone with a standard weapons load.

On the next page you will read a news item about a recent drone strike in the FATA region. Please read the news item carefully and then move on to answer the survey questions.

News Item
Article from New York Times (Low-level target, 0 civilian deaths)

Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. The individual killed in the attack was described as a low-level operative associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The target was traveling alone and there were no reports of other casualties. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

News Item
Article from New York Times (High-ranking target, 0 civilian deaths)

Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. The individual killed in the attack was described as a high-ranking operative associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The target was traveling alone and there were no reports of other casualties. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

News Item
Article from New York Times (Low-level target, 19 civilian deaths)
Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. The individual killed in the attack was described as a low-level operative associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The target was traveling in a column of vehicles and nineteen civilians were killed. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

News Item
Article from New York Times (High-ranking target, 19 civilian deaths)

Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. The individual killed in the attack was described as a high-ranking operative associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The target was traveling in a column of vehicles and nineteen civilians were killed. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

News Item
Article from New York Times (Low-level target, 1 civilian deaths)

Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. The individual killed in the attack was described as a low-level operative associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The target was traveling in a column of vehicles and a civilian standing by the roadside was killed. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

News Item
Article from New York Times (High-ranking target, 1 civilian deaths)

Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. The individual killed in the attack was described as a high-ranking operative associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The target was traveling in a column of vehicles and a civilian standing by the roadside was killed. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

News Item
Article from New York Times (No ranking for target, no casualty data)

Peshawar, Pakistan-- A missile fired from a CIA-operated drone flying over North Waziristan hit a target near the village of Degan. One individual associated with the Pakistani Taliban was killed in the attack. Administration sources indicated they were satisfied with the strike, which was personally authorized by President Obama.

How would you rate the outcome of this drone strike?

Very Successful
Somewhat Successful
Evenly Mixed
Somewhat Unsuccessful
Very Unsuccessful

How concerned are you about whether drones...

Endanger civilian lives
Lead to retaliation from extremists
Are conducted legally
Damage America's reputation

Very Somewhat Not too Not at all

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of President Obama's handling of the war in Afghanistan?

Strongly Approve
Approve
Neutral
Disapprove
Strongly Disapprove

Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Obama is handling U.S. foreign policy?

Strongly Approve
Approve
Neutral
Disapprove
Strongly Disapprove

Please answer the following demographic questions to make sure we have a representative sample, and can examine how different groups think about political issues.

What is your gender?

Male
Female

Generally, do you think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or other?

Republican
Democrat
Independent
Other

Do you think of yourself more like a Republican or more like a Democrat, or neither?

More like a Republican
More like a Democrat
Neither

Generally, when it comes to politics, do you consider yourself liberal, conservative, moderate, or what?

Liberal
Conservative
Moderate
Other

Which of the following best describes your personal military background?

I do not plan on serving in the military
I plan to serve in the military
I currently serve in the military
I have already finished my military service

Do you know someone in the military personally who has served, or is serving, in Afghanistan?

Yes
No

What is your primary racial/ethnic identity?

Caucasian/White
African-American/Black
Asian-American
Hispanic
Other

If you voted in the 2012 election, who did you vote for for President?

Obama
Romney
Other
I did not vote

Last, we wanted to see how well you recall information from the news story.

According to the news item, what was the status of the Taliban operative targeted in the drone attack?

High-ranking
Low-level
Can't recall
Information not provided

According to the news item, how many civilians were killed in the drone attacks?

19
1
0
Can't recall
Information not provided
Table 1. Evaluation of Drone Attack, by Target Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Value Target</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Value Target</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Entries are percentages; Control group N = 40; Low value target N = 111; High value target N = 97.

Table 2. Evaluation of Drone Attack, by Collateral Damage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Damage</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nineteen</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Entries are percentages; Control group N = 40; Zero casualties N = 65; One casualty N = 65; Nineteen casualties N = 78
Table 3. Effects of Varying Attributes of a Drone Attack on Perceptions of Mission Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Success of Mission</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of drones</td>
<td>.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>.49+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know someone who serves</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Level X Zero Casualties</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Level X One Casualty</td>
<td>-.93*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Level X 19 Casualties</td>
<td>-1.58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level X Zero Casualties</td>
<td>2.01*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level X One Casualty</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level X 19 Casualties</td>
<td>-.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cox and Snell Pseudo R²</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Method is ordered logit; entries are regression coefficients. Dependent variable is is a 4-pt measure of perceived mission success; *p<.05; +p<.10; N=248.
Table 4. Effects of Varying Attributes of a Drone Attack on Concern about Casualties, Extremist Retaliation, Legality, and Reputation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civilian Casualties</th>
<th>Extremists Retaliation</th>
<th>Legality</th>
<th>America’s Reputation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of drones</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
<td>-.76*</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>-.26+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
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<td>-.102*</td>
<td>-.44</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>-.12</td>
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<td>.06</td>
<td>-.19</td>
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<td>-.70</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.70</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cox and Snell Pseudo R²</td>
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<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
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</table>

Note: Method is ordered logit; entries are regression coefficients. Dependent variable for all four models is a 4-pt measure of concern; *p<.05; +p<.10; N=248 for all four models.
### Table 5. Effects of Varying Attributes of a Drone Attack on Approval of Obama’s handling of (a) the War in Afghanistan and (b) Foreign Policy

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Foreign Policy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Party ID</td>
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<td>-1.10*</td>
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<td>Sex</td>
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<td>.33</td>
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<td>-.39</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

Note: Method is ordered logit; entries are regression coefficients. Dependent variable for each models is a 5-pt measure of job approval; *p<.05; +p<.10; N=248.