

Societal Reactions to an Official Disclosure of Non-Human Presence

A cross-scenario foresight study of entity types, evidence, modes of co-presence and origin hypotheses

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Version of October 10, 2026

Abstract

Background. Since 2017, unidentified anomalous phenomena have entered US institutional debate, yet no verifiable evidence of non-human technology has been made public. **Objective.** To model how a population would react to an official disclosure by the United States government of a non-human presence (NHP), with particular attention to the hypothesis that such entities live among humans. **Methods.** A factorial design crossing five entity types (interdimensional plasmoids, reptilians, “Nordics”, “Greys”, indistinguishable humanoids), four levels of evidence, five modes of co-presence and three origin hypotheses (independent, biologically created humanity, humans or ancestors travelling through time). Each scenario receives four scores (anxiety, hostility, institutional instability, acceptance), aggregated into a Societal Reaction Index (SRI, 0 to 100) assigned through structured judgment grounded in the literature. **Results.** Disclosure of bodies or craft without an active presence mainly produces a transient cognitive and religious reaction. Integration of indistinguishable entities shifts hostility onto humans suspected of being one, a phenomenon we call “being-ism”. A presumed presence among leaders maximizes the legitimacy crisis (SRI up to 92) and triples the estimated probability of institutional rupture. Common-origin hypotheses reduce everyday hostility (from 72 to 55) without defusing the political crisis. **Conclusion.** The most useful preparation for such a disclosure is legal and institutional: protecting people against accusation before anyone knows who would be accused.

Keywords: disclosure; non-human presence; intergroup relations; moral panic; institutional legitimacy; dehumanization; scenario-based foresight.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Since 2017, the question of unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP) has moved from the fringe to US institutional debate. Congress held public hearings in 2022 and 2023, including one in July 2023 at which a former intelligence officer asserted the existence of a program for recovering craft and “non-human biologics”. In March 2024, the Pentagon office in charge of the matter (AARO) concluded, in the first volume of its historical report, that it had found no verifiable evidence of extraterrestrial technology (AARO, 2024).

This contrast between claims and the absence of verified evidence creates an unprecedented situation: a large share of the public now expects that disclosure is possible. It is therefore legitimate for the social

sciences to model reactions to such an announcement before it happens, just as pandemics or natural disasters are modelled before they occur.

1.2 Prior research

Reactions to contact. The report prepared by the Brookings Institution for NASA (1960) already warned that the discovery of intelligent life might disorganize some societies, and recommended studying how and when the public should be informed. More recent empirical work tempers this pessimism. Kwon et al. (2018) show that media coverage and individual reactions to announcements of extraterrestrial life, mostly microbial, are largely positive. Peters' (2011) survey of believers from several faiths indicates that most do not expect a crisis for their own faith but predict one for others, a bias that feeds collective fear without grounding it.

The panic myth. Disaster sociology establishes that mass panic is rare. Quarantelli (2001) and Clarke (2002) show that populations in crisis mostly behave rationally and help one another. The *War of the Worlds* episode (1938), long cited as a national panic (Cantril, 1940), was widely overstated by the press of the time (Pooley & Socolow, 2013). The expected reaction is therefore not immediate collapse but a slower reshaping of beliefs and loyalties.

Intergroup relations and dehumanization. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) predicts that a new outgroup strengthens ingroup cohesion and unfavourable comparison. The contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) predicts instead a reduction in prejudice under four conditions: equal status, common goals, cooperation and institutional support. Haslam (2006) distinguishes “animalistic” dehumanization, which denies uniquely human traits, from “mechanistic” dehumanization, which denies warmth and emotion; the former mainly targets reptilian figures, the latter Greys and bodiless entities.

Hidden enemies and conspiracy thinking. Fear of an invisible infiltrated enemy has documented precedents: witch hunts, the McCarthyist “Red Scare”, moral panics (Cohen, 1972). Uncertainty-identity theory (Hogg, 2007) explains why uncertainty pushes people toward rigid groups and authoritarian leaders. Barkun (2003) shows that the narrative of “reptilians” infiltrating elites recycled long-standing antisemitic tropes. A disclosure of indistinguishable entities would thus reactivate persecution structures that have already targeted real human minorities. Finally, Douglas, Sutton and Cichocka (2017) link conspiracy belief to needs for understanding, security and group esteem, three needs such a disclosure would strike simultaneously.

1.3 Epistemological framework

This article is a **scenario-based foresight study**. None of the entities described is scientifically attested at the time of writing. The typologies (reptilians, Nordics, Greys, plasmoids) are borrowed from ufological culture and treated here as **social stimuli**: what matters is how a population would react if these categories were officially presented to it, not whether they are real. The numerical indices are estimates modelled through structured judgment, not survey measurements.

1.4 Research questions

- Q1.** How do the nature of the entity and the nature of the evidence shape anxiety, hostility and acceptance?
- Q2.** What is the specific effect of terrestrial co-presence, and above all of indistinguishable integration into

human societies?

- Q3.** Does the presumed integration of leaders qualitatively change the reaction (legitimacy crisis, revolt)?
- Q4.** Do common-origin hypotheses, biological creation of humanity or humans travelling through time, mitigate or aggravate the reaction?

2. Methods

2.1 Factorial design

The study crosses four factors (Table 1). The full design has $5 \times 4 \times 5 \times 3 = 300$ combinations; the analysis focuses on main effects and on the most informative interactions rather than on every cell.

Table 1. Factors and levels of the factorial design.

Factor	Code	Levels
Nature of the entity	E	E1 interdimensional plasmoid · E2 reptilian · E3 Nordic · E4 Grey · E5 indistinguishable humanoid
Nature of the evidence	P	P1 testimony and documents · P2 craft studied · P3 bodies recovered · P4 confirmed live contact
Mode of co-presence	C	C1 distant (off Earth) · C2 regular contact with authorities · C3 separate bases (underground, undersea) · C4 integration among ordinary citizens · C5 integration among leaders
Origin hypothesis	O	O1 independent origin · O2 biologically created humanity · O3 humans or ancestors travelling through time

2.2 Stimuli: entity typology

The five entities are defined by their presumed morphology and by the cultural register they evoke, two properties that determine the expected type of dehumanization (Table 2). Mode C4 covers entities living as anonymous citizens on the same planet, whether within human societies or in separate places; C3 isolates the case of underground or undersea installations.

2.3 Reaction variables

Each scenario receives four scores from 0 to 10:

- **A, anxiety:** diffuse fear, withdrawal behaviours, demand for protection;
- **H, hostility (“being-ism”):** prejudice, dehumanization, discrimination and violence targeting the entities or people suspected of being one;
- **I, institutional instability:** loss of trust, protest, risk of revolt;
- **Ac, acceptance:** curiosity, willingness to cooperate, integration of the fact into existing frameworks.

2.4 Societal Reaction Index

The Societal Reaction Index (SRI) summarizes the risk of destabilization on a 0–100 scale; acceptance enters it inversely:

$$\text{SRI} = 10 \times (0.30 H + 0.30 I + 0.20 A + 0.20 (10 - Ac)) \quad (1)$$

The weights give more importance to hostility and instability, which cause lasting damage, than to anxiety, which disaster research shows to be generally transient.

2.5 Score assignment

Scores are assigned through structured judgment based on five determinants drawn from prior research: (1) morphological distance from humans; (2) capacity for concealment; (3) perceived power asymmetry; (4) revelation of a prior government lie; (5) compatibility with religious narratives. They are ordinal estimates meant to compare scenarios with one another, not quantitative predictions. Trajectory probabilities (Section 3.4) are relative shares estimated through the same procedure. A protocol for empirical validation is proposed in Section 4.3.

3. Results

3.1 Effect of entity type

With equal evidence and distant co-presence, reptilians elicit the most hostile reaction and Nordics the most favourable: morphological distance from humans and the associated cultural register matter more than actual threat (Table 2).

Table 2. Profiles of the hypothetical entities and baseline scores (evidence P3–P4, co-presence C1, origin O1). Scores from 0 to 10.

Entity	Presumed morphology	Dominant dehumanization	Cultural register	A	H	I	Ac
E1 Interdimensional plasmoid	No body; energy or plasma, partially perceptible	Mechanistic (“force”, non-person)	Spiritual, angelic or demonological	7	3	5	4
E2 Reptilian	Bipedal, scales, reptilian features	Animalistic (“predator”)	Biblical serpent, elite conspiracy	7	8	5	2
E3 Nordic	Near-human, tall, idealized European features	Low; idealization	Benevolent messenger, “space brothers”	3	3	4	7
E4 Grey	Small, large head, large black eyes	Mechanistic (“cold”, “clinical”)	Abductions, experimentation	6	5	5	4
E5 Indistinguishable humanoid	Identical to humans to the naked eye	None while invisible; suspicion afterwards	Sleeper agent, double, infiltration	4	3	4	6

Plasmoids. The absence of a body prevents any classic dehumanization: the entity can be neither seen nor fought. Anxiety is high because the threat is elusive, and the reaction runs mostly through religious frameworks (angels, demons, spirits). This is the scenario hardest to make publicly credible, and therefore the most conducive to doubt and conspiracy thinking.

Reptilians. This is the most loaded category. It triggers disgust, a reflex the literature strongly links to dehumanization, along with a pre-existing conspiracy narrative. Official confirmation would retroactively legitimize those narratives, including their antisemitic components.

Nordics. Their closeness to an idealized human favours acceptance but introduces a specific risk: racial hierarchization. A superior entity resembling one particular human phenotype could be co-opted by supremacist ideologies.

Greys. They are the most present in popular culture, which reduces the element of surprise. The abduction imagery nevertheless sustains lasting mistrust, especially if bodies are presented without context.

Indistinguishable humanoids. As long as they remain distant, they cause little concern. Everything changes once they are believed to live among us (Sections 3.3 and 3.4).

3.2 Effect of the nature of the evidence

The more tangible the evidence, the more the public believes it, but the more it blames the government for having concealed the information: instability rises with evidence even when anxiety does not (Table 3). The revelation of decades of concealment is, in itself, a legitimacy shock independent of the nature of the entities.

Table 3. Expected effects by level of evidence.

Level of evidence	Expected public credibility	Dominant effect	Concealment shock	Most reactive population
P1 Testimony and de-classified documents	Low to moderate; polarization	Debate, scepticism, reinforced conspiracy thinking	Low	Ufological communities
P2 Craft studied (reverse engineering)	Moderate to high	Technological fascination, perceived arms race	High	Scientific and military circles, geopolitical rivals
P3 Bodies recovered	High	Biological and religious shock; ethical questions about autopsies	High	Religious communities
P4 Confirmed live contact	Very high	Shift to politics: who negotiates, on whose behalf?	Very high	Entire population

The presentation of bodies has a particular effect: the public sees dead beings, potentially autopsied by the state. Two opposing reactions are expected. Compassion humanizes the entity and favours acceptance; retrospective fear (“why were they here?”) fuels hostility. The latter prevails when morphology is distant (reptilians, Greys). Craft, for their part, shift the debate toward security: if a single state holds superior technology, others will demand access, turning a scientific discovery into a diplomatic crisis.

Partial disclosure (P1) is paradoxically the most unstable in the medium term. It confirms enough to worry, not enough to settle the debate, and leaves ample room for the most extreme interpretations, including hidden human infiltration.

3.3 Effect of the mode of co-presence

Proximity is the main multiplier of the reaction: moving from a distant to an integrated presence adds 20 to 49 points to the SRI depending on the entity (Figure 1). The mechanism, however, changes along the way. As long as the entity is separate, people fear it; once it is integrated and indistinguishable, people fear one another (Table 4).

Table 4. Mechanisms associated with the modes of co-presence.

Mode	Description	Dominant public question	Psychosocial mechanism	Main risk
C1 Distant	Presence off Earth or occasional visits	“What do they want?”	Curiosity, abstract threat	Low; philosophical debate
C2 Regular contact	Ongoing exchanges with governments	“What was negotiated in our name?”	Perceived betrayal, distrust of the state	Legitimacy crisis
C3 Separate bases	Underground or undersea installations	“Where are they? Who knew?”	Territoriality, localized physical threat	Militarization, local conflicts
C4 Ordinary integration	Entities living as anonymous citizens	“Is my neighbour one of them?”	Generalized suspicion, moral panic	Persecution of humans, “being-ism”
C5 Integration in power	Entities among political, economic or military leaders	“Who really governs us?”	Collapse of trust, occupation narrative	Revolt, authoritarianism, political violence

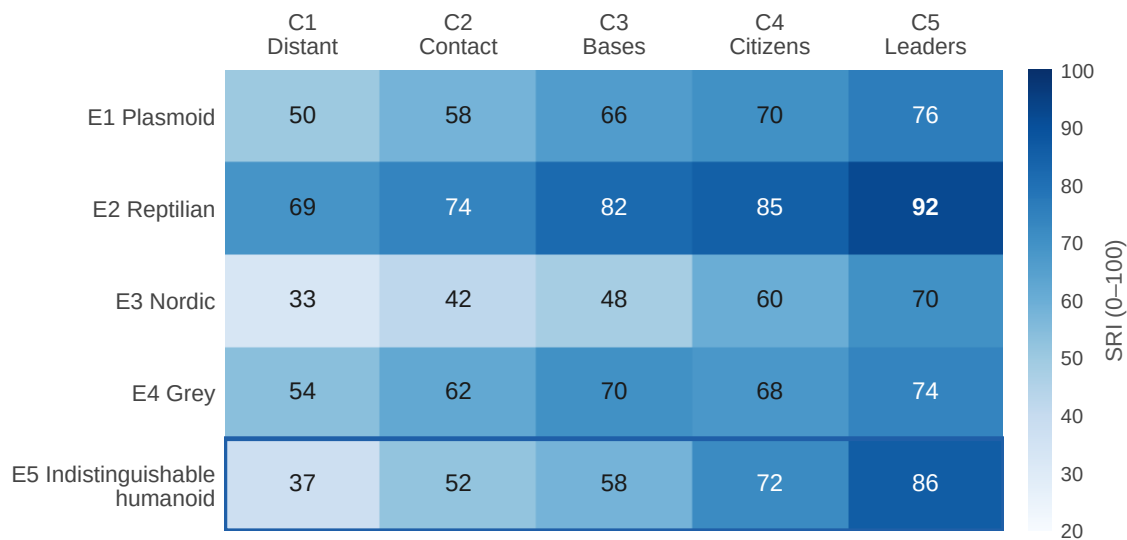


Figure 1. Societal Reaction Index (SRI, 0 to 100) by entity and mode of co-presence (evidence P4, origin O1). Column C1 repeats the baseline scores of Table 2. Framed row: steepest rise between C1 and C5 (from 37 to 86). Modelled estimates.

Appearance dominates at a distance; proximity dominates afterwards. Greys rise little, because their morphology prevents discreet integration; the indistinguishable humanoid rises the most, because it alone makes suspicion universal. The most destabilizing scenario remains reptilians among leaders (SRI 92).

Separate bases (C3). The revelation of underground or undersea bases creates a geography of fear: pressure on property, curiosity tourism, protests and evacuation demands in the regions concerned. Asymmetry aggravates the reaction: a civilization settled on Earth without consent looks like an occupation, which mobilizes the vocabulary of sovereignty and defence.

Ordinary integration (C4). If humanoid entities live as ordinary citizens, the public has no visible target. Hostility then shifts onto cues: physical differences, atypical behaviour, foreign origin, neurodivergence, marginality. Historical precedents suggest that the first victims would be humans belonging to already stigmatized groups. Three factors would determine the scale of this drift: (1) the existence of a reliable test, without which suspicion is endless, and with which comes the risk of compulsory screening and registration; (2) the legal status of the entities, for which existing law has no adequate category; (3) revealed past behaviour, since entities integrated for generations without documented harm may be perceived as neighbours rather than agents.

Hybrids. If mixed unions or hybrid descendants exist, the boundary between “them” and “us” blurs. This reduces hostility in the long term, since many families would be concerned, but aggravates it in the short term, because the question “who is pure?” reactivates eugenic logics.

3.4 Ordinary citizens and leading figures

Entities living among ordinary citizens mostly produce persecution; entities among leaders mostly produce revolt. In the first case, society turns against its margins; in the second, against its top (Figure 2).

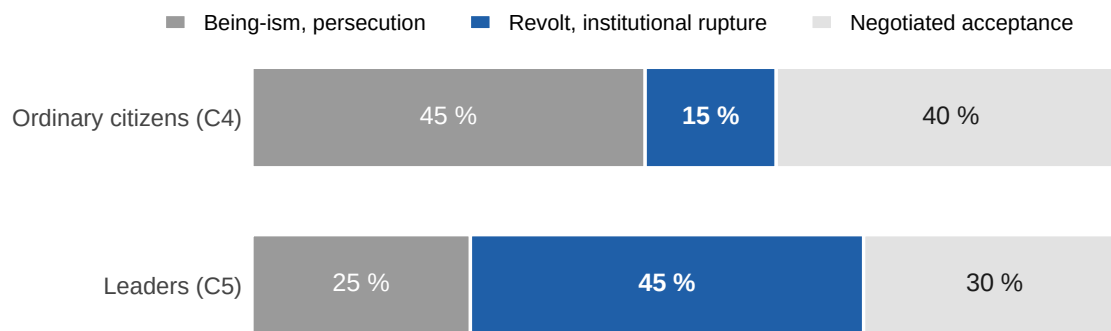
“Being-ism”. We define being-ism as any discrimination based on a person’s presumed membership in a non-human species. It borrows the mechanisms of racism (categorization, essentialization, attribution of hostile intent, dehumanization) but differs from it in one decisive respect: the category is invisible, and no one can prove they do not belong to it. The expected forms follow a familiar gradient: local rumours, denunciations, social exclusion, demands for testing, then, in the most tense contexts, collective violence. A counter-movement is also foreseeable, carried by rights groups, universalist religious communities and part of the youth, around a broader identity of “sentient beings”.

Presence among leaders. The hypothesis that a head of state, a minister, a general or a business leader could be a non-human entity turns the question into a legitimacy crisis: what decisions did they make, in whose service, and since when? The most concrete danger is not the entity itself but **accusation as a political weapon**. In such a climate, declaring an opponent non-human would become a disqualification strategy independent of any truth. The McCarthy precedent shows how a fear of infiltration can purge entire institutions on the basis of suspicion, and the narrative of “reptilian elites” would offer a ready-made vocabulary for targeting real human groups.

Both scenarios leave a substantial share to acceptance, consistent with disaster research, which predicts adaptation more often than collapse. A presence among leaders nonetheless triples the estimated probability of institutional rupture (from 15% to 45%).

Table 5. Possible social trajectories after disclosure.

Trajectory	Favouring conditions	Warning signs	Likely outcome
Being-ism, persecution	No reliable test, polarized media, economic crisis, morphologically distant entities	Rumours of “unmasking”, online lists of suspects, isolated assaults	De facto segregation, local violence, emergency laws
Revolt, institutional rupture	Leaders involved, long concealment, low prior trust in the state	Mass protests, defections in security forces, refusal to obey	Regime changes, “public safety” authoritarianism, fragmentation
Negotiated acceptance	Transparent and gradual disclosure, no documented harm, rapid legal framework, welcoming religious discourse	Calm public debate, dialogue initiatives, curious media coverage	Legal status for the entities, contact institutions, monitored coexistence

**Figure 2.** Modelled share of each dominant trajectory at twelve months, for an indistinguishable entity (E5) and confirmed contact (P4). At the top of power, revolt becomes the most likely trajectory.

3.5 Effect of origin hypotheses

The more shared the origin, the weaker the hostility, but the deeper the identity and religious shock (Table 6). A humanity created by these entities, or visitors who turn out to be our descendants or ancestors, makes the “us/them” boundary untenable: one does not easily dehumanize a relative.

Table 6. Origin hypotheses and score differences relative to O1 (Δ , added to baseline scores and bounded between 0 and 10).

Hypothesis	Effect on hostility	Effect on identity and religion	Central political question	ΔA	ΔH	ΔI	ΔAc
O1 Independent origin	Reference	Reference	Security and sovereignty	0	0	0	0
O2 Biologically created humanity	Lower, possible resentment (“guinea pigs”)	Very strong: creation, meaning, moral status of humans	Who has authority over humanity? What rights for the creators?	+1	−1	+2	+1
O3 Humans or ancestors travelling through time	Much lower: they are “our own”	Strong: free will, determinism, meaning of history	What do they know of our future, and who has access to it?	+1	−3	+1	+2

A created humanity (O2). This hypothesis strikes founding narratives directly. Abrahamic traditions may integrate it, the creators becoming instruments of a divine design, or experience it as a negation. A secular reading would see in it the reopening of the question of meaning: if the species was designed for a purpose, what purpose? Part of the population would tend toward veneration and the emergence of new religious movements; another would react with resentment if creation is perceived as an experiment. Integrated entities would no longer be strangers but creators, raising a question of hierarchy even more explosive than that of infiltration.

Ourselves, across time (O3). This hypothesis is the most speculative physically: travel to the past has no experimental basis and raises unresolved causality paradoxes. Socially, however, it is the most reassuring with respect to the entities, because the kinship is total. The risk shifts to information: did their interventions steer our history? Did leaders consult them? If time travellers are among the elites (C5 × O3), suspicion centres on an absolute advantage, knowing crises, markets and wars in advance. A variant concerns an earlier, technologically advanced humanity whose survivors still live among us or in isolated refuges; it would fuel strong claims of lineage, national or religious.

Hypothesis O2 is the most destabilizing at both extremes: through religious shock at a distance, and through the question of hierarchy at the top (Figure 3).

3.6 Change over time

The revelation of bodies and craft follows the classic curve of a shock: an immediate peak, then normalization. Integration scenarios instead follow the curve of a social crisis: the reaction rises for weeks as rumours, accusations and first measures accumulate (Figure 4). At the top of power, the crisis lasts longer because it becomes embedded in electoral, judicial and diplomatic cycles.

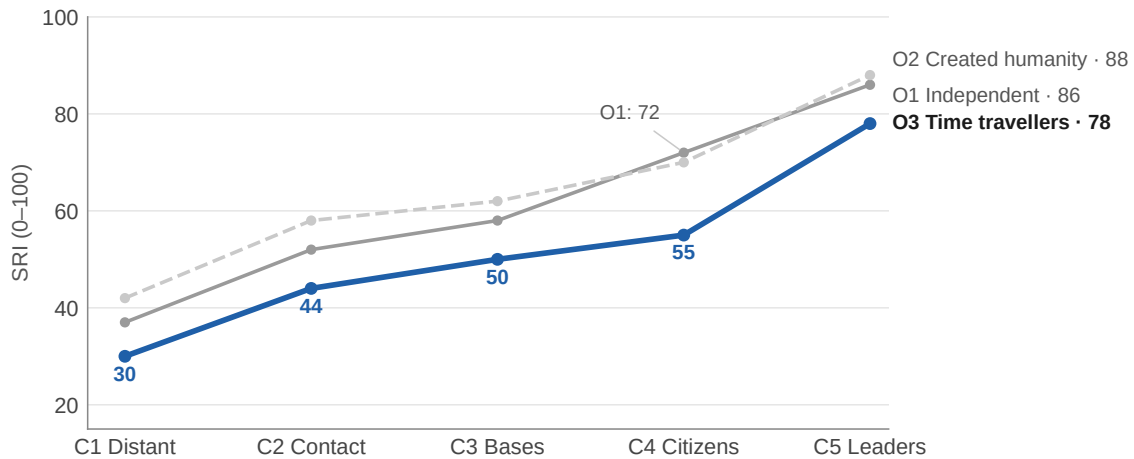


Figure 3. SRI of the indistinguishable humanoid (E5) by origin hypothesis and mode of co-presence (evidence P4). A common origin lowers the reaction among citizens from 72 to 55, but offers little protection at the top of power.

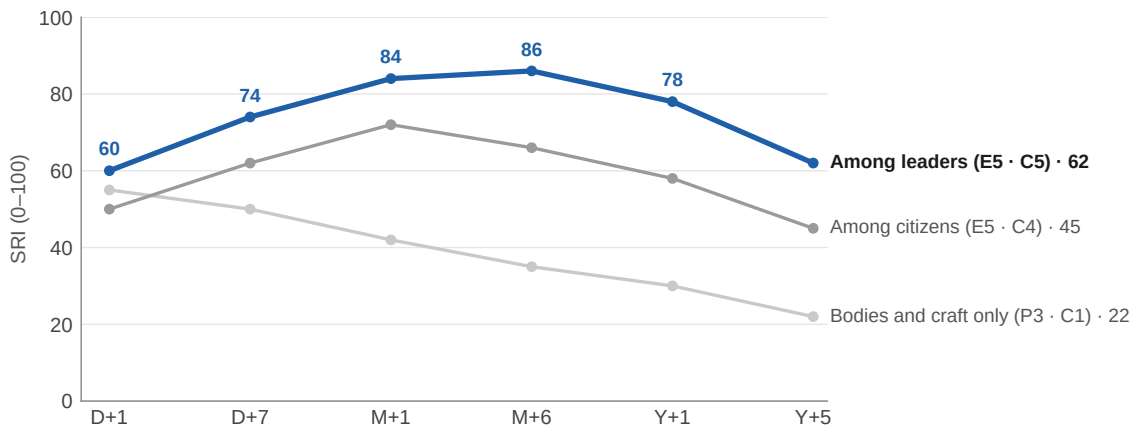


Figure 4. SRI over time after disclosure for three typical scenarios (D: day, M: month, Y: year). In power, the crisis peaks around six months and remains at 62 after five years.

3.7 Summary of cross-effects

Table 7 brings together the most informative combinations of the design, from the most to the least destabilizing.

Table 7. Notable combinations in the factorial design.

Combination	SRI	Dominant reaction	Most exposed group
E2 × C5 × O1 (reptilians in power)	92	Revolt, hunt for “infiltrators”	Elected officials, minorities already targeted by conspiracy narratives
E5 × C5 × O2 (creators in power)	88	Simultaneous legitimacy and religious crises	Political and religious institutions
E5 × C4 × O1 (indistinguishable neighbours)	72	Being-ism, denunciations	Marginalized or atypical people
E5 × C4 × O3 (descendants among us)	55	Uneasy curiosity, debate about the future	Low; the entities themselves
E3 × C1 × O1 (distant Nordics)	33	Fascination, marginal ideological co-optation	Low

4. Discussion

4.1 Interpretation

The main danger of a disclosure would probably not be a threat from elsewhere, but the way humans would treat one another. Two cross-cutting determinants organize all the results: the entity’s distinguishability and its access to power (Figure 5).

This finding is consistent with disaster sociology: immediate panic is rare, but the search for culprits is common. It also matches the history of infiltration panics, in which the fear of an invisible enemy has always ended up targeting real, identifiable people. Finally, it qualifies the optimistic conclusions of Kwon et al. (2018): these concern distant, non-intelligent life, whereas proximity and indistinguishability change the nature of the reaction.

4.2 Limitations

- **No empirical data.** Scores are structured judgments; they rank scenarios but do not predict absolute levels.
- **SRI weights.** They reflect a normative choice; other weights would change the order of some close scenarios.
- **Cultural bias.** The model assumes a US disclosure received by Western societies; reactions would vary with the dominant religion, trust in the state and relations with the United States.
- **Status of the hypotheses.** None of the entities described is attested, and time travel to the past has no established physical basis; the study concerns representations, not facts.
- **Information ecosystem.** The effect of social media, synthetic content and disinformation campaigns is hard to model and could amplify every scenario.

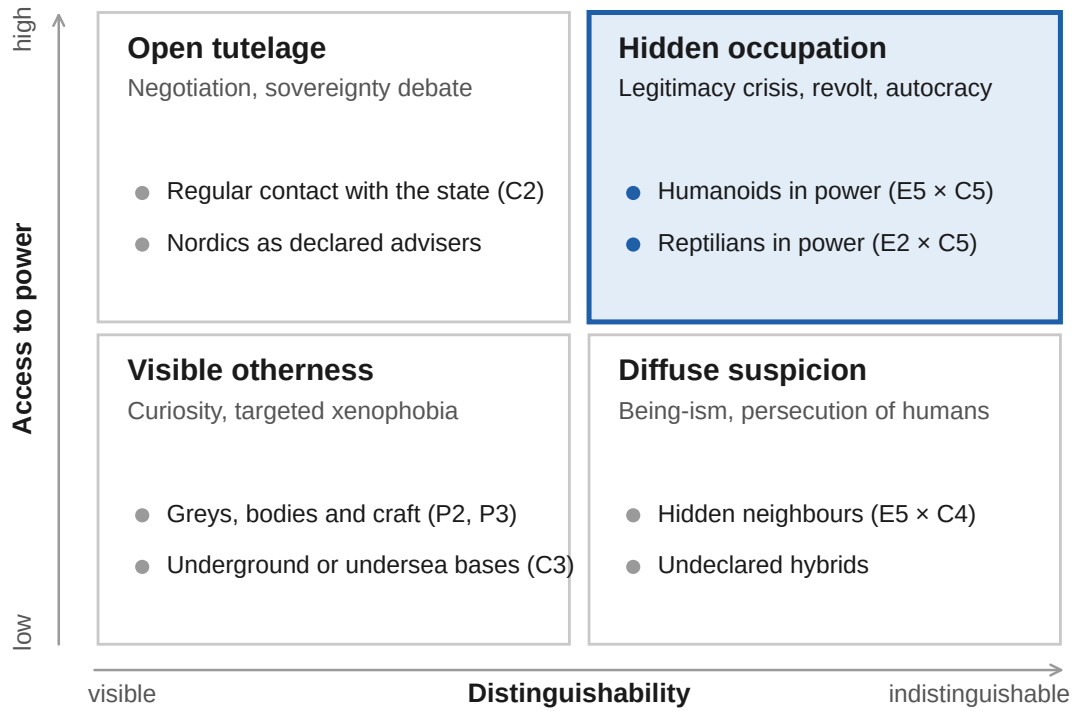


Figure 5. Two cross-cutting determinants and four reaction regimes. Risk peaks when the entity is both indistinguishable and in power.

4.3 Proposed validation protocol

1. Experimental vignette survey, each respondent reading a mock official statement clearly identified as fictional after completion.
2. Fractional factorial design covering the four factors, multinational sample of about 6,000 people (United States, Canada, France, Brazil, India, Japan).
3. Validated measures: prejudice and dehumanization, institutional trust, intention to protest, support for emergency measures, openness to contact.
4. Sensitivity analysis of the SRI weights and comparison of observed results with the estimates in this article.

4.4 Policy implications

5. Conclusion

An official disclosure of non-human presence would be less dangerous for what it reveals than for what it makes suspect. Bodies and craft would upend beliefs, but society would adapt within a few years. The announcement of entities living among us, and even more so among our leaders, would open a crisis of a different kind: a crisis of trust between humans, fertile ground for being-ism, persecution and authoritarian drift.

Common-origin hypotheses moderate hostility without defusing the political crisis. Whether the entities are creators or our own descendants from the future, the central question remains: who knows what, and

Table 8. Recommendations and targeted risks.

Domain	Recommendation	Targeted risk
Disclosure	Gradual announcement, with evidence examined by independent international scientists	Weak-evidence paradox, conspiracy thinking
Rights	Ban, from the announcement onward, compulsory screening, registration and discrimination based on presumed membership	Being-ism, persecution of humans
Institutions	Independent, adversarial inquiry into public officials rather than purges or loyalty tests	Accusation as a political weapon, authoritarianism
International cooperation	Regulated sharing of evidence and technology	Arms race, diplomatic crisis
Information	Fact-checking units, transparency about official sources	Disinformation, “unmasking” rumours
Civil society	Involve religious, educational and community leaders from the outset	Identity shock, breakdown of frameworks of meaning

who decides for humanity? The most useful preparation is therefore neither military nor technological. It is legal, institutional and educational: protecting people against accusation before anyone knows who would be accused.

Declarations

Competing interests. The author declares no competing interests.

Funding. This research received no specific funding.

Data availability. The modelled scores are reproduced in full in the tables and figures of this article. No survey data were collected.

Ethics. As it involves no human participants, the study did not require ethics approval. The proposed validation protocol would.

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