DOES PARTISANSHIP MODERATE THE EFFECTS OF DISCRETE EMOTIONS ON CANDIDATE EVALUATIONS?

By

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Does Partisanship Moderate the Effect of Discrete Emotions on Candidate Evaluations? By STEVEN KATZ

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This study examines whether perceived anger, perceived contempt, and felt contempt, when moderated by partisanship and party identification, affect participants' feelings of favorability towards four 2014 U.S. Senatorial candidates. Data were gathered from respondents in New Jersey and Iowa via two online surveys. Extrapolating from the Emotion System model, this study predicted that the combined effects of partisanship and perceived emotions in political videos would most lower participants' opinions of the targets of candidates' videos in two combinations: strong partisanship paired with a contemptuous video, and weak partisanship paired with an angry video. In addition, it was predicted that less partisan participants would react to contempt in videos by evaluating the attacker negatively. Finally, it was predicted that contempt – both observed in a video, and felt by a participant – would reduce target candidate favorability more for Republicans than Democrats. These hypotheses were designed to explore the effects of emotions on political decision-making, and address long-standing questions about the inconsistent effects of negative campaigning. None of the hypotheses were supported, but main effects of partisanship, anger, and contempt were observed among Republicans, suggesting the existence of intra-party factions and reinforcing the need for continued study of discrete emotions in political psychology.

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Introduction

Emotions and Negative Campaigning

This study seeks to add to the understanding of the effects of negative campaigning on voters in America. Negative campaigns have been defined as criticizing a political opponent's accomplishments, qualifications, or programs (Lau & Pomper, 2001). Negative campaigns are very common (Lau, Sigelman, & Rovner 2007), but their effects vary, helping and harming candidates in patterns that are not entirely understood.

Negative campaigns can work in favor of candidates by decreasing public opinion of their opponents (Devlin, 2005). However, negative campaigning can also carry a measure of backlash, e.g., decreasing public opinion of candidates who have crossed a line of political decorum (Jasperson & Fan, 2002). There is some evidence that negative campaigning increases voter turnout, galvanizing portions of the populace (Brooks, 2006). However, in other situations, negative campaigns are associated with depressed voter turnout, possibly pushing potential voters into apathy and inaction (Lau & Rovner, 2009). The finding of conflicting effects of negative campaigning on voters may be a result of studies describing campaigns in broad terms of being "negative" or "positive," rather than examining specific emotions elicited by campaigns (Johnston, Roseman, & Katz, 2014). Emotions are a powerful influence on decision-making (Parker & Isbell, 2009), especially political decision-making (Glaser & Salovey, 1998), and the specific emotions elicited by a negative campaign may determine the campaign's overall effect.

Studies have found that discrete emotions elicited by a campaign, such as anger, or anxiety, or contempt, may influence voter decision-making and attitude formation (Mattes, Roseman, Redlawsk, & Katz, 2017; Roseman et al., 2013; Valentino, Brader,

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Groenendyk, Gregorowicz, & Hutchings, 2011). These findings can be contextualized by the Emotion System model (Roseman, 2013), which looks beyond whether an emotion is positive or negative and establishes a distinct set of "emotivational" goals and strategies inherent in each discrete emotion. These strategies are enacted in response to a person's appraisal of a situation and associated desires. For example, an emotivational goal of contempt might be to dismiss or exclude something, often whatever is the source of the contempt (Roseman, 2013). Roseman et al. (2013) examined voter opinion of Barack Obama and John McCain, and found that some positive-valence emotions (e.g. hope) and negative-valence emotions (e.g. anger) mediated the effects of candidate presentation during a presidential debate, while others did not (e.g. fear). This indicates that specific emotions, rather than general positivity/negativity, may play a role in political decisionmaking. In addition, both anger and contempt mediated Republicans' evaluations of Obama, whereas Democrats' perceptions of McCain were only mediated by anger. Emotional effects on voter opinion are also, at least in certain situations, dependent on party identification.

A similar pattern was found in analysis of ANES 1995 data related to 1996 presidential candidates Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, conducted by Johnston, Roseman, and Katz (2014). Six emotions (measured by how often they were felt by participants because of the candidates) were tested as mediators between opinions of each candidate's leadership ability and favorability to the candidate: hope, pride, enthusiasm, fear, anger, and contempt. While enthusiasm and anger were consistent mediators across candidates, contempt only significantly mediated leadership ability and feelings of favorability toward Bill Clinton. Since a large amount of that contempt probably came from Republican participants, this suggests that the effectiveness of a negative campaign strategy may depend on an interaction between the discrete emotion felt about candidates and political affiliation – in these cases, feelings of anger and contempt for Republican participants, and feelings of anger for Democrat participants. However, this may not be the whole picture. Emotions play a powerful role in voter favorability throughout several election studies, but rarely in ways that are identical (Frazier, 2014; Johnston, Roseman, & Katz, 2014). While discrete emotions and party affiliation are significant in decision-making and formation of political opinion, there may be an additional mechanism that is not being considered.

Level of partisanship may be that mechanism. Political partisanship can be defined as a bias or allegiance toward a specific party or cause (Partisan, n.d.). No political party is a monolith. An avid, lifelong supporter of a single party may not respond to emotional appeals in the same way that a reluctant, moderate member of the same party would. Studies have shown that partisanship can affect participants' responses to political information, so individuals can potentially come to different conclusions when presented with the same set of facts (Blais et al., 2010). If partisanship can change voters' reactions to information, it may change how they respond to emotions as well.

The Emotion System model also offers support for the idea that partisanship can moderate the effects of discrete emotions. In the Emotion System model, anger is described as an attack emotion, is associated with high levels of control over a situation, and can be described as "moving against" something. It is not, however, entirely removed from the idea of future reconciliation (Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Roseman, 2011). The social function of anger comes from a desire to deter or alter undesirable outcomes (Roseman, 2013). For example, as part of Cory Booker's campaign for his Senate seat, he spoke angrily about his opponent, Jeff Bell. His speech focused on Bell as interfering with bipartisan efforts to get things done, a negative outcome that would come to pass if Bell were elected. Booker's anger emphasized what his opponent would do, not who he was. Contempt, however, is an emotion defined by rejection and social exclusion (Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Roseman, 2011), with an emphasis on undesirable characteristics (Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Hutcherson & Gross, 2011; Roseman, 2013). A motivation to avoid a person based on who they are, intrinsically, would be expected from a contemptuous argument. In Iowa, Bruce Braley was described in mocking terms as a litigious city-slicker, out of touch with Iowan sensibilities. The attack was not primarily focused on the consequences of Braley being elected, but rather on his most unappealing qualities.

Based on the Emotion System model of these two negative emotions, anger could resonate with less partisan voters, people who may be more disposed to seeing value in either party's ideology and less inclined to demonize the opposition. Campaigns expressing contempt for the opposing candidate may resonate with highly partisan voters, people who have strongly held beliefs at one end of the political spectrum, which may involve rejecting or excluding their political opposites. Highly partisan participants may also feel some level of contempt for the opposing party, and it has been shown that people are far more likely to absorb political information if it is congruent with their existing affect (Redlawsk, 2002; Roseman, Abelson, & Ewing, 1986). In this way, the effects of specific discrete emotions expressed by a negative campaign may be moderated by voters' partisanship.

Practical and Theoretical Significance

Political advertisements are a frequently viewed aspect of most candidates' campaigns (Lau & Rovner, 2009). Understanding their interactions with partisanship could provide valuable information about the effects of negative advertising, particularly given evidence that it has both worked and not worked in the past (Lau, Sigelman, & Rovner, 2007). Investigating emotional biases of the voting population may also prevent widespread misinformed decisions (Redlawsk, 2002). Illuminating the general effects of contempt on public opinion is also an important goal of this study. There is a danger in being unwilling to compromise politically (Shell & Hjelmgaard, 2013), and contempt is a very uncompromising emotion (Roseman, 2011).

Hypothesis Development

Since the videos shown to participants in this study were wholly negative, no increase in candidate evaluation was predicted. Contemptuous videos were expected to "work" for partisan participants, but inspire backlash in moderates. Angry videos were expected to "work" for moderates instead. More specifically, videos that were perceived as showing high levels of contempt were expected to be associated with low values of target favorability for highly partisan participants. Less partisan viewers who perceived high levels of contempt in these videos were expected to react differently, instead returning low favorability for the attacking candidate. Videos perceived as showing high levels of anger were expected to be associated with low favorability for the target candidate among less partisan participants. Hypothesis 1: After watching a political video perceived as expressing contempt for an opposing party's candidate, higher levels of partisanship will be associated with lowered favorability for the target candidate.



Figure 1. Map of Hypothesis 1

For this hypothesis to be supported, there should be a significant interaction effect between perceived contempt in the video and partisanship. Participants who perceive more contempt and rate themselves as being highly partisan should express lower favorability towards the target candidate. For example, if highly partisan participants who perceive large amounts of contempt do not lower their favorability of their opposing party's candidate, this hypothesis would not be supported. Hypothesis 2: After watching a political video perceived as expressing anger for an opposing party's candidate, less partisan participants will give more unfavorable evaluations of the target candidate.



Figure 2. Map of Hypothesis 2

Opinions of less partisan participants may be more highly correlated with emotivational goals of anger in that less partisan participants may disagree with both parties, but have not strongly rejected either one. Therefore, a video expressing anger might be more palatable and motivating to less partisan participants (Redlawsk, 2002).

For this hypothesis to be supported, an interaction between perceived anger in the video and partisanship should be observed, such that participants who perceive more anger in the video and are less partisan would report lower favorability toward the target of the video. If less partisan participants who perceive anger in the videos do not rate the target candidate significantly lower on the feeling thermometer, this hypothesis would not be supported.

Hypothesis 3: After watching a political video perceived as expressing contempt for an opposing party's candidate, lower levels of partisanship will be associated with lowered favorability toward the attacking candidate.



Figure 3. Map of Hypothesis 3

Because less partisan participants are less aligned with a particular side, it was expected that they will respond unfavorably to the more contemptuous appeals, generating backlash against the attacking candidate. Such a mean-spirited message, from the perspective of a less partisan participant, may reflect a lack of character or sportsmanship, leading to lowered favorability toward the attacker.

For this hypothesis to be supported, participants with low partisanship and high levels of perceived video contempt should express lower favorability toward their own party's candidate attacking his or her electoral opponent. This hypothesis will not be supported if backlash effects are not observed. For example, if low partisanship participants' favorability toward a contemptuous attacker were to increase, as expected of highly partisan participants, this hypothesis would not be supported. Overall, partisanship was expected to moderate the relationship between the discrete emotions perceived in negative videos and participants' favorability toward both targeted (Hypotheses 1 and 2) and attacking (Hypothesis 3) candidates.

Previous studies have shown that voters' opinions of Democratic candidates tended to be more influenced by particular negative emotions than their opinions of Republican candidates. Specifically, participants' favorability toward Democratic candidates were significantly mediated by ever felt contempt, whereas favorability toward Republican candidates was only mediated by ever felt anger (Roseman et al., 2013) or anger and fear (Johnston, Roseman, & Katz, 2014). Because the partisanship analyses had to be conducted on participant subgroups that were separated by party, two additional hypotheses were tested to investigate whether participants from each party would react to contempt differently. It was predicted that Republicans would show the lowest favorability, as measured by feeling thermometer evaluations of the target candidate, after perceiving high levels of contempt in their own party's candidate's video. Republicans were also expected to respond more strongly (i.e., have lowest favorability toward the target candidate, as measured by feeling thermometer evaluations of the target) in response to their own ever felt contempt toward the target candidate. Hypothesis 4: After watching a political video where their opposing party's candidate is the target of perceived contempt, Republicans will give lower feeling thermometer ratings of the opposing party's candidate than Democrats will.



Figure 4. Map of Hypothesis 4

Data supporting this hypothesis should show an interaction effect between party identification and contempt perceived in the video on feeling thermometer ratings of the target candidate. Republicans with high levels of perceived contempt should rate their opposing party's candidate significantly lower than Democrats rate their opposing party's candidate.

Hypothesis 5: Republicans with high levels of ever felt contempt toward their opposing party's candidate will exhibit lower feeling thermometer scores of that candidate to a greater degree than Democrat participants will.



Figure 5. Map of Hypothesis 5

While similar to the previous hypothesis, this hypothesis is an attempt to determine whether the moderating effects of contempt on political opinion exists beyond the context of advertisements or other recently viewed media. This hypothesis also seeks to extend the literature on the interplay between party and contempt.

An interaction between ever felt contempt for the opposing candidate and political party should be observed, such that Republicans with high levels of ever felt contempt should rate opposing candidates significantly lower on the feeling thermometer. If Democrats exhibit a thermometer response to ever felt contempt that is greater than or equal to Republicans' responses, this hypothesis would not be supported.

Method

Participants

This study drew 1338 participants over the age of 18 from the states of New Jersey and Iowa (NJ: 731, IA: 607). Participants who watched less than the entire thirty seconds of each video were removed from analyses (NJ: 210, IA: 63). Participants who, by the end of the survey, claimed they never heard of the candidates at the focus of the study were also removed (NJ: 141, IA: 121). Participants were excluded from analyses if they claimed to have never heard of the Democratic or Republican parties (NJ: 140, IA: 137), or if they failed to finish the survey (NJ: 130, IA: 122). Note that there was considerable overlap between excluded groups, suggesting some online participants were not paying sufficient attention to the survey questions.. The ultimate number of participants excluded was 243 for the New Jersey sample and 206 for the Iowa sample, leaving n = 488 and n =401 participants, respectively.

All participants were recruited by Survey Sampling International (SSI), an online panel provision company. Participants were compensated with vouchers, money, sweepstakes entrances, gift cards, airline miles, and/or redeemable points. In New Jersey, participants ranged from 20 to 94 years of age, with a median age of 49 (SD: 15.99); 51.3% were female. Of New Jersey participants, 18% were strong Democrats, 20.3% were not so strong Democrats, 16.8% leaned toward Democrats, 12.5% were Independents, 11.3% leaned toward Republicans, 9.2% were not so strong Republicans, 10.5% were strong Republicans, and 1.4% did not know. Despite participants' slight tendency to the left on a seven-point scale of political identification from Strong Democrat to Strong Republican (M: 3.49, SD: 1.96), ideological partisanship was slightly more moderate. Of these New Jersey participants, 5.3% were extremely liberal, 16% were liberal, 13.3% were slightly liberal, 34.6% were moderate/middle of the road, 9.4% were slightly conservative, 12.7% were conservative, 3.3% were extremely conservative, 4.9% did not know, and 0.4% did not answer (M: 3.82, SD: 1.50). Participants in New Jersey were majority (81.6%) White, while 14.3% were Black/African American, 4.9% were Asian, 1.8% were American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.8% were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific islander, and 0.6% did not answer.

In Iowa, participants ranged from 18 to 96 years of age, with a median age of 51 (SD: 16.38); 55% were female. Of Iowa participants, 17.2% were strong Democrats, 12% were not so strong Democrats, 16.5% leaned toward Democrats, 14.2% were Independents, 13.7% leaned toward Republicans, 11.5% were not so strong Republicans, 13.2% were strong Republicans, and 1.7% did not know (M: 3.84, SD: 2.01). Despite the slight tendency toward the Democratic, Iowan participants were much more conservative than participants in New Jersey. Of these Iowa participants, 6.7% were extremely liberal, 13.2% were liberal, 9.2% were slightly liberal, 28.9% were moderate/middle of the road, 14% were slightly conservative, 19% were conservative, 6% were extremely conservative, and 3% did not know (M: 4.26, SD: 1.76). Participants in Iowa were overwhelmingly (95%) White, while 3.3% were Black/African American, 3.5 % were Asian, 1.3% were American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.5% were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific islander, and only one participant did not answer.

Overall, the average participant from New Jersey was a slightly liberal, Democratic leaning, middle aged White woman, while the average participant from Iowa was a slightly conservative, Democratic leaning, middle aged White woman.

This study did not involve more than minimal risk. The videos shown were short, unlikely to cause distress, and were already available for public consumption. No collected information was incriminating or identifying, and all data were kept anonymous. Data collected were only associated with participant numbers, kept in a password-protected Google Drive database. Participants who found watching videos or answering the survey to be, for whatever reason, too disturbing were free to quit at any time. Contact information was available at the end of the survey and through SSI if participants wished to reach the principal investigator or IRB.

The small risk of distress associated with the study was well worth the projected benefits. Negative campaigning and the existence of discrete emotions are a subject of ongoing scientific debate (Mattes et al., 2017). If discrete emotions, moderated by partisanship, are the key to whether a negative campaign is effective, it would put to rest part of a long-standing mystery in political psychology. In addition, it would shed light on some possible biases present in voters, which would then contribute to any attempt to correct for those biases, giving the general population a more informed, better decision-making subgroup. Ultimately, every vote can be a deciding one, and by improving our understanding of how emotions affect political decision making, we improve the political landscape of the country as a whole.

Procedure

Data were collected in 2014 from October 24th to October 31st in New Jersey and October 23rd to November 2nd in Iowa. Participants were emailed an invitation to the online Qualtrics survey. Participants first entered their date of birth on the survey, which was used to verify that that they were above the age of 18. Participants then read an introductory page about the subject matter of the survey and what it would require of them: less than an hour of their time, and their opinions on two videos and their associated candidates. As the survey would not (in order to encourage focus on the survey) save their data if they left and came back, participants were asked to complete the survey in one sitting.

The survey began with a brief series of questions to gather a baseline of opinions about candidates and the two major political parties. Each state's participants were then shown political videos from their state's senatorial contest; videos were either advertisements, an interview, or a short speech. Each video was approximately 30 seconds long, and featured some form of attack on an opposing candidate. Two videos were chosen for New Jersey, and four for Iowa, although each participant saw only one video per candidate. There were a number of negative videos to choose from in Iowa, likely owing to the competitive nature of the campaign. As a result, two videos per candidate were selected as being sufficiently negative. New Jersey did not have the same variety in its advertising. To compensate, a speech given by Cory Booker and an interview given by Jeff Bell were chosen for their emotional content (noticeable negative content), cut to 30 seconds each, and used instead of advertisements. Video order (and assignment from among the two videos per candidate used in this study, for Iowa) was chosen randomly by the random number generator built into the survey. Participants watched a video and answered questions about that video's emotional content, effect on favorability toward the candidates, and their overall feeling thermometer evaluations of the candidates involved. Participants then watched their second video, answering all the same questions again for the new video. All data analyzed were in relation to the video in which their party's candidate was the attacker, with their opposing party's candidate as the target of the video. Participants would likely have different evaluations of the emotional appeals made by the opposing party (Robideaux, 2002). To avoid this, only data from own-party videos were used in the analyses reported in this thesis.

The survey also gathered information on participants' ever felt emotions toward the candidates, ideological partisanship, political party identification, and general demographics.

Videos

The videos used in the experiment varied by state. For Iowa participants, two advertisements for Democrat Bruce Braley and two advertisements for Republican Joni Ernst were downloaded from their public posting on Youtube.com. Participants were randomly shown one advertisement from each candidate, in random order, so each participant saw one of the two Bruce Braley advertisements, and one of the two Joni Ernst advertisements.

The videos shown to the Iowan sample were all attack advertisements, with two chosen for each party. The Republican videos did not feature the Republican candidate, Joni Ernst, but both focused entirely on attacking the Democratic candidate, Bruce Braley. The Democratic videos briefly showed Bruce Braley endorsing the videos, but spent the rest of their runtime attacking the Republican candidate, Joni Ernst. Participants in Iowa only watched two out of the four possible videos, always one Republican and one Democrat, in random order to mitigate order effects.

In New Jersey, because of the low level of competition and thus financial investment in the campaign, no usable negative advertisements were aired during the

time that the survey was being constructed. Instead, video material of each Senatorial candidate speaking negatively about their opponent was substituted. The Republican video in New Jersey consisted of the Republican candidate, Jeff Bell, discussing his opponent, Cory Booker, in an interview. The Democrat video for New Jersey was a thirty second clip of Cory Booker giving a speech where he attacked his opponent, Jeff Bell. Videos were edited to be approximately equal to the Iowa videos in length, and shown in random order to mitigate order effects.

The survey was designed to take less than one hour to complete. The survey software unobtrusively collected data on the time spent watching each video and answering each question. Timing data from the videos was used to eliminate participants who had failed to watch the videos in their entirety.

<u>Measures</u>

Perceived Emotions. To account for the tendency to reject information coming from an opposing source (Chang, 2003; Robideaux, 2002), participants were only evaluated on their reactions to videos produced by their own party. Participants who identified as Independent were asked if they leaned toward one party or another, and those who couldn't choose were randomly assigned to either the Republican or Democrat groups, allowing the emotional data from the appropriate video to be analyzed.

Perceived contempt and perceived anger in the videos were measured on a fivepoint scale. For anger, participants were asked, "In this survey, "anger" and "angry" refer to feelings of hostility that people may have toward someone. How much ANGER was expressed toward ______ in this video?" For contempt, participants were asked, "In this survey, "contempt" and "contemptuous" refer to feelings of scorn that people may have toward someone when they have a very low opinion of that person. How much CONTEMPT was expressed toward ______ in this video?" Both questions used the same five-point scale: None at all (1), A small amount (2), A moderate amount (3), A large amount (4), and Don't know. Consensus ratings from coders were highly correlated with respondent ratings (Anger: .86; Contempt: .72). However, personal perception was paramount in this study, since participants could not react to emotions that they had not personally observed. Individual perceptions of the emotions in the videos were used in all video-based analyses.

Ever felt Emotions. Ever felt contempt was measured on a five-point scale using a question structure taken from the American National Election Studies survey (ANES, 2012). Participants were asked "Has _____, because of the kind of person he/she is or because of something he/she has done, ever made you feel CONTEMPTUOUS?" If participants answered yes, they were asked "How contemptuous would you say that ______ makes you feel?" with responses varying from Extremely contemptuous (5), Very contemptuous (4), Somewhat contemptuous (3), Not too contemptuous (2), and Not at all contemptuous (1). If participants responded "no" to the first part of the question, they were coded as 1 as well.

Partisanship. Partisanship was measured using the seven-point political ideology scale (ANES, 2012). The scale was scored Extremely Liberal (1), Liberal (2), Slightly Liberal (3), Moderate: Middle of the road (4), Slightly Conservative (5), Conservative (6), and Extremely Conservative (7). Because participants were divided by party, two sets of partisanship variables with opposing polarity were created from the ideology scale, scored as Moderate: Middle of the road (1), Slightly Liberal/Conservative (2),

Liberal/Conservative (3), and Extremely Liberal/Conservative (4), where Republicanfocused analyses used the Moderate to Extremely Conservative scale and Democratfocused analyses used the Moderate to Extremely Liberal scale. This was partially to avoid complicating analyses by interpreting both high values (7) and low values (1) as representing high levels of partisanship, as per the original scale. Similar variables were used by Norrander (1989) to measure ideological extremism.

Party Identification. In addition to ideological partisanship, political party identification was also measured. The process of ascertaining political party identification was broken in to three parts, using questions taken from the ANES survey (2012). First, participants were asked if they identified as Republican, Democrat, Independent, another party, have no preference, or don't know. If the participant responded that they identified as Democrat or Republican, they then were asked if they were a strong or not very strong Democrat or Republican. All other responses directed participants to specify if they leaned towards one party or the other. Participants' party allegiance was arranged Strong Democrat (1), Not very strong Democrat (2), Leaning Democrat (3), Independent (4), Leaning Republican (5), Not very strong Republican (6), and Strong Republican (7). Following practices employed by Roseman et al. (2013) and Johnston et al. (2014), only participants who identified as Democrat or Republican in the first round of questions were used, and all Independent or Leaning Independent responses were excluded from the analyses.

Favorability. Favorability after watching a video was measured with questions for each candidate, each following the same syntax: "Thinking about the video you just saw, is your opinion of ______ now more favorable, less favorable, or has it not changed?"

recoded as Less favorable (1), Not changed (2), and More favorable (3).

Feeling thermometer evaluations of each candidate. Evaluation of each candidate was measured using standard "feeling thermometers" from the ANES survey (2012), a zero to one hundred scale representing affective temperature. Zero represented a very cold or unfavorable feeling, one hundred represented a very warm or favorable feeling, and fifty represented no feeling at all. The exact wording of survey questions can be found in Table 8 in the appendix.

Results

Statistical Analyses

Testing for demographic differences. T-test analyses of gender were conducted to determine its effects on both change in favorability post-video and feeling thermometer ratings for both candidates at the end of the survey. In Iowa, women were significantly more negative than men in their evaluations of the Republican candidate, Joni Ernst. In New Jersey, women were significantly more positive toward Cory Booker. However, when separated by party, these significant differences were no longer observed, suggesting that any gender effects were the result of, or at least strongly influenced by, party identification. As women were significantly more likely to identify as Democrats than men (p < .01), this seems like a probable cause for any observed gender differences.

Perceived emotions in each video. For each video, participants evaluated the levels of contempt and anger that they perceived toward the target of the video. Average perceived levels of anger and contempt can be seen in Table 1. Values were calculated for the whole sample as well as for the opposing parties whose values were used in analyses.

Table 1. Means (and Standard Deviations) of Emotions Perceived by Participants perVideo

	New Jersey		Iowa				
	Combined	Onnosina	Com	Combined		Opposing	
	Combined	Opposing	Minimum	Peep	Minimum	Peep	
CT Toward Rep	2.90 (.97)	2.79 (.96)	3.07 (.95)	3.01 (.84)	2.96 (.97)	2.98 (.84)	
AN Toward Rep	2.69 (.97)	2.57 (.96)	2.68 (.99)	2.45 (.98)	2.62 (1.00)	2.32 (.95)	
			Missed	Chicks	Missed	Chicks	
CT Toward Dem	2.47 (.93)	2.34 (.89)	3.29 (.83)	3.12 (.95)	3.29 (.74)	3.02 (.98)	
AN Toward	1.98 (.93)	1.87 (.89)	2.78 (.93)	2.73 (.97)	2.76 (.98)	2.57 (.95)	

Note. "Minimum" = Braley video attacking Ernst for her opinion on minimum wage https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEtpLZuNCvs

"Peep" = Braley video attacking Ernst for her fiscal policies

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3lwSSTEvNU

"Missed" = Ernst video attacking Braley for his record of voting absences https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lAajSUcqMSU

"Chicks" = Ernst video responding to Braley's "Peep" video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLAvszudbq4

CT Toward Rep = Contempt perceived in video attacking the Republican candidate AN Toward Rep = Anger perceived in video attacking the Republican candidate CT Toward Dem = Contempt perceived in video attacking the Democratic candidate AN Toward Dem = Anger perceived in video attacking the Democratic candidate Combined = Average ratings of all participants, regardless of party identification Opposing = Average ratings of participants who identify as members of the opposing party of the video's target candidate

Overview of hypothesis-testing analyses. Tests of the first three hypotheses were

divided into Republican and Democratic analyses. They were constructed using participants' own party's candidate as the attacker, so as to gather information about the effect of the videos' emotional content with less interference from participants instinctively rejecting out-party media (Robideaux, 2002). The first two hypotheses measured change in favorability toward the opposing party's candidate (the "target"), following an attack from participants' own party candidate (the "attacker"). The third hypothesis predicted change in favorability toward the participant's own party's attacker after their video, looking for backlash in response to perceived contempt from lowpartisan participants. For each analysis, the relevant perceived emotion and scores on the partisanship scale were centered and entered into a regression together in step one, then the interaction variable was entered in step two.

To maintain a perspective of "own-party attacker" and "other-party target," analyses were divided by party. Independent participants were randomly assigned to either Republican or Democratic analyses.

The fourth and fifth hypotheses combined both political parties and analyzed party identification's effect as a moderating variable on favorability, as measured by feeling thermometer ratings. The fourth hypothesis predicted the effects of perceived contempt in the videos on feeling thermometer ratings, while the fifth predicted the effects of contempt felt by the participants. A variable representing perceived contempt toward opposing candidates (OppAdCT) was created by combining participant responses for the video they saw targeting their opposing party candidate, so Democrats' perceived contempt toward the Republican candidate could be evaluated using the same variable as Republicans' perceived contempt toward the Democratic candidate. A similar process was used to create a variable combining each party's relevant ever felt contempt. (OppEvrCT). Analyses were conducted using centered independent and moderating variables. Line graphs depicting all analyses' mean values and simple slopes can be found in the appendix.

Following previous research on party identification and emotions, Independent participants were not included in analyses on hypotheses 4 and 5.

Hypothesis 1: Contempt and High Partisans

Table 2. Unstandardized Regression Weights for Partisanship and Perceived Contempt						
Predicting (Predicting Change in Target Favorability among Democrats and Republicans					
	H	ypothesis 1 B V	alues (Standard E	rror)		
Participant	Torgat	Dorticonchin	Perceived	Partisanship	Adjusted	
Party	Target	Partisaliship	Contempt	X Contempt	R^2	
IA Dems	Ernst (R)	030 (.035)	075 (.044)	.017 (.038)	.005	
IA Reps	Braley (D)	065 (.039)	102* (.047)	.065 (.043)	.036	
NUD		0.55 (0.07)	005 (000)		005	
NJ Dems	Bell (R)	066 (.037)	035 (.039)	001 (.040)	.005	
NIRens	Booker (D)	- 100* (039)	020 (047)	- 025 (043)	023	
its keps	DOOKEI (D)	100 (.037)	.020 (.047)	025 (.045)	.025	
<i>Note</i> . IA = Iowa. NJ = New Jersey.						
R=Republican. D=Democrat. Dems = Democrats. Reps = Republicans.						
Change in favorability: Less favorable (1), Not changed (2), More favorable (3),						
* <i>p</i> < .05						

The first hypothesis predicted that participants who perceive more contempt in the video attacking the opposing candidate, and who are also more partisan, would show a greater decrease in favorability toward the target of the video. As can be seen in Table 2, no interaction effect was observed in either state, in either party. Only two main effects were observed: Perceived contempt predicted reduced favorability for Braley among Republicans in Iowa, and high partisanship predicted reduced favorability for Booker among Republicans in New Jersey.

Table 3. Unstandardized Regression Weights for Partisanship and Perceived Anger						
Predicting	Predicting Change in Target Favorability among Democrats and Republicans					
	Н	ypothesis 2 B Va	lues (Standard Erro	r)		
Participant	Torgat	Dorticonchin	Derecived Anger	Partisanship	Adjusted	
Party	Target	Partisaliship	reiceived Aliger	X Anger	R^2	
IA Dems	Ernst (R)	034 (.036)	.033 (.040)	.003 (.036)	008	
IA Reps	Braley (D)	082 (.039)*	116** (.042)	.017 (.038)	.055	
NJ Dems	Bell (R)	060 (.037)	025 (.039)	.053 (.037)	.010	
NLDong	Pooler (D)	008* (028)	002 (046)	050 (042)	027	
NJ Keps	DOOKEI (D)	090* (.030)	002 (.040)	030 (.043)	.027	
Note, $IA = Iowa$, $NJ = New Jersev$.						
R=Republic	can. D=Democ	crat. Dems = Der	nocrats. Reps = Rep	ublicans.		
Change in favorability: Less favorable (1), Not changed (2), More favorable (3),						
* <i>p</i> < .05, ** <i>p</i> < .01						

Hypothesis 2: Anger and Low Partisanship

The second hypothesis predicted that participants who perceive more anger in the video attacking the opposing candidate, and who are also more moderate, would show a greater decrease in favorability toward the target of the video. As seen in Table 3, no interaction effects were observed between anger and partisanship. Again, only main effects were observed. Perceived anger and high levels of partisanship were associated with significantly lower favorability toward Braley among Republicans, and intensely partisan Republicans were significantly less favorable to Booker. These effects seem to mostly mirror the main effects observed in the first hypothesis, here for anger rather than contempt, with the addition of a significant partisanship main effect in Iowa.

Hypothesis 3: Contempt and Low Partisanship Backlash

Table 4. Uns	Table 4. Unstandardized Regression Weights for Partisanship and Perceived Contempt				
Predicting C	Change in Attac	cker Favorability a	among Democra	ts and Republica	ans
	Hy	pothesis 3 B Value	es (Standard Erro	or)	
Participant	Attackor	Dorticonchin	Perceived	Partisanship	Adjusted
Party	Allacker	Fartisaliship	Contempt	X Contempt	R^2
IA Dems	Braley (D)	.025 (.035)	.012 (.044)	.006 (.038)	013
IA Reps	Ernst (R)	.147*** (.038)	.087 (.045)	016 (.041)	.092
		0.66 (0.20)	0.50 (0.40)		0.07
NJ Dems	Booker (D)	.066 (.038)	052 (.040)	.008 (.041)	.007
NJ Reps Bell (R) .118* (.049) 139* (.058) .008 (.054) .055					
Note. $IA = Iowa$. $NJ = New Jersev$.					
R=Republican. D=Democrat. Dems = Democrats. Reps = Republicans.					
Change in favorability: Less favorable (1), Not changed (2), More favorable (3)					
* <i>p</i> < .05, *** <i>p</i> < .001					

While the previous hypotheses predicted interaction effects for the targets of videos, the third hypothesis focused on the backlash effects of contemptuous messages from the attacker. Low partisanship respondents did not indicate significantly lower evaluations of an opposing party attacker if they perceived the attacker's video as more contemptuous. As seen in Table 4, no interaction effects were observed, however, New Jersey Republicans who perceived contempt toward Booker did report significantly less favorability toward Bell, the attacker from their own party, exhibiting some level of backlash main effect. In addition, main effects of partisanship were observed in both states' Republican samples. More partisan Republicans, in both New Jersey and Iowa, liked their own candidates significantly more than less partisan Republicans.

Hypothesis 4: Conter	npt and Party	⁷ Identification
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Table 5. Unstandardized Regression Weights for Party Identification and Perceived					
Contempt Pr	edicting Change i	n Target Opposing	Party's Feeling Th	ermometer	
	Hypotl	hesis 4 B Values (St	andard Error)		
	Party	Perceived	Party X	Λ divised D^2	
	Identification Contempt Contempt Adjusted				
Iowa	a 6.204 (2.843)* -3.454 (1.608)* -1.662 (3.232) .030				
New Jersey	4.765 (3.517)	-5.565 (1.695)**	0.145 (3.620)	.028	
<i>Note</i> . Feeling Thermometer ratings scale from 0 (Very cold or unfavorable feeling) to					
100 (Very warm or favorable feeling).					
* <i>p</i> < .05, ** <i>p</i>	<i>v</i> < .01	_			

Based on previous studies in which contempt seemed to have more of an effect among Republicans, the fourth hypothesis predicted that perceived video contempt would prompt more negativity to the target from Republicans than from Democrats, in Iowa and New Jersey, in the feeling thermometer opinion toward the opposing candidate. As seen in Table 5, respondents in both New Jersey and Iowa showed significant main effects for perceived contempt (with more contempt perceived in the videos associated with lower thermometer evaluations of the opposing party target), and those in Iowa showed a significant main effect for party identification, where Republicans rated their opposing party's candidate higher than Democrats rated their opposing party's candidate. Hypothesis 5: Ever felt Contempt and Party Identification

Table 6. Unstandardized Regression Weights for Party Identification and Ever felt					
Contempt Pr	edicting Change i	in Target Opposing Pa	rty's Feeling Thermo	ometer	
	Hypotl	hesis 5 B Values (Stand	dard Error)		
Party IdentificationEver felt ContemptParty X ContemptAdjusted R^2					
Iowa	a 3.928 (2.455) -6.768 (.752)*** -2.823 (1.514) .281				
New Jersey	New Jersey -3.152 (3.216) -6.186 (1.210)*** -1.636 (2.439) .080				
Note. Feeling Thermometer ratings scale from 0 (Very cold or unfavorable feeling) to					
100 (Very warm or favorable feeling).					
*** <i>p</i> < .001					

The fifth hypothesis predicted that ever felt contempt among Republicans would be associated with a lower feeling thermometer rating for the opposing candidate than among Democrats. Again, contrary to hypotheses, there was no significant interaction between contempt and party identification. However, ever felt contempt predicted lower opposing-candidate feeling thermometer ratings in both states. Post-Hoc Analysis

Table 7. Means of Favorability Change Toward Attacker After Watching an Anti-					
Opposing-Party Video, Divided by Strength of Party Identification					
Participant	Attacker	Ind	Lean	Weak	Strong
Group					
Democrats	D-Braley (IA)	2.01	2.04	2.24	2.07
Republicans	R-Ernst (IA)	1.85	2.06	2.20	2.23
_					
Democrats	D-Booker (NJ)	2.05	1.95	2.19	2.27
Republicans	R-Bell (NJ)	1.93	2.30	2.33	2.31
Note. 1=Less favorable, 2=No change, 3=More Favorable					
Bold numbers are referenced in text.					

The backlash analyses testing Hypothesis 3 were further evaluated by breaking down average reported change in favorability for each level of party identification (Independents assigned to Democrat/Republican anaylses, Leaning Democrat/Republican, Weak Democrat/Republican, Strong Democrat/Republican). Mean trends of interest are highlighted, and show lower than expected values for Strong Democrats in Iowa, and Independents in Republican analyses in both states, although no significance tests were conducted.

Discussion

Summary of Results

Results of this study did not support the general hypothesis that emotions vary in persuasive power based on a person's strength of ideological partisanship. Perceived anger was not found to be more persuasive for moderates, perceived contempt was not found to be more persuasive for partisans, and contempt was not found to be particularly abhorrent to moderates. Contempt, both felt and perceived, was also not found to be significantly more potent in affecting feelings toward candidates for Republicans. However, the observed effects of each of these factors individually, and the conditions under which they are significant, are worthy of further study.

Unpredicted Findings

Partisanship. While no significant interaction effects presented themselves, there were patterns of significant main effects worth noting. Analyses of Republicans in New Jersey consistently, and in Iowa inconsistently, showed significant relationships between high partisanship within party and lowered favorability for the Democratic (target) candidate post-video. Highly partisan Republicans in both Iowa and New Jersey even liked their Republican (attacker) candidate more after seeing them attack their Democratic opponent (regardless of the amount of contempt perceived in the video). Varying levels of partisanship within party could be a potent predictor of both increased favorability toward participants' own party's attacking candidate, and decreased favorability toward their opposing party's target candidate, at least among Republicans.

This is an intriguing manifestation of a phenomenon that has seen rising importance in recent political discourse. Political zealots, hardened by bitter character attacks between parties and committed to extreme ideological crusades, may be registered under the same party name as relatively moderate voters. The Tea Party faction of Republican voters, for example, were a vocal minority that changed the face of conservative politics (Zernike, 2010). Separating out these sub-parties and learning how to harness them has become a key strategy among politicians at the state and national level.

This study was designed, in part, to explore whether anger or contempt could be used effectively in political messages to appeal to sub-groups within party. While the results do not demonstrate any such emotion-specific effectiveness, the fact that intraparty partisanship was a significant predictor of favorability suggests that these groups do in fact exist, and that they warrant further examination.

Contempt. Trends in emotion-based main effects are equally interesting. In Iowa, Republicans who perceived high levels of either contempt or anger in the videos lowered their favorability toward Braley (target). However, Republican participants in New Jersey who perceived high levels of contempt toward Booker (target) rebelled against Bell (attacker), exhibiting backlash unseen in Iowa. While the expected interaction effects of this study were non-significant, there was a case where perceived contempt for a Democratic candidate predicted lower favorability toward a target in one case, but predicted lower favorability toward the attacker in another. Instead of being moderated by partisanship, the effect of contempt seems to have been moderated by state, or perhaps by some attribute of the candidates running in the different states (see race and contempt, below).

When party was used as a moderating variable, Republicans did not exhibit

significantly greater responses to contempt, either felt or perceived, in either state. However, contempt, both perceived in videos and ever felt by participants, was a significant predictor of feeling thermometer ratings for opposing candidates in both states. This reinforces the impression of contempt as an important predictor of candidate evaluations, both when participants feel contempt, and when they perceive contempt coming from political sources.

Contempt has become a loud and obvious part of our political discourse from the highest political office in the country to the lowest and meanest internet arguments. It has been argued (Frimer & Skitka, 2018) that outrageous contemptuous statements like those from Donald Trump would divorce him from his base and his party. So far, Trump maintains support from his party. However, in this study, New Jersey Republicans who perceived contempt toward Cory Booker responded with lowered favorability to Jeff Bell, their own party's candidate. Clearly things could have gone differently, as Iowa Republicans showed in their reactions to perceived contempt toward Bruce Braley. Exploring what among the many differences between these two cases may have moderated the effect of contempt could have important implications for both political and emotion theory.

Interpretation of Findings

Interaction effects. Results of this study indicate that videos containing anger or contempt did not affect participants' opinion of opposing candidates depending on the participants' level of partisanship. This could be because the underlying claim that led to these hypotheses was flawed. It was originally supposed that more moderate participants would find contemptuous videos, containing character attacks and accusations, generally

unpleasant. A video that talked about policy, or the consequences of an opponent's track record, was expected to be more palatable. That simply might not be true.

It may be that the current political environment was so negative in recent years that even relatively moderate participants were used to slanderous attacks (Westfall, Van Boven, Chambers, & Judd, 2015). Alternatively, it could have been related to a lack of political engagement. Nearly forty-five percent of voting age citizens in the United States did not vote in the most recent presidential election (DeSilver, 2017). The lack of participation may be associated with an apathy that dulls the effects of political emotions and obscures the data. It should be mentioned that the majority of all respondents said their favorability toward candidates did not change in response to the videos.

Another possibility is that the videos were insufficient to generate consistent opinion change. The videos were short, and participants were only shown two, limiting the emotional effect, and the opportunity to affect participants. The data were also collected late in the election cycle, and participants may have already cemented their opinions. Iowa's race in particular was hotly contested (Inside Elections, 2014), and both candidates were well funded (Iowa Senate, 2014). Participants may have been overexposed to the many attempts made to sway their votes. In contrast, the New Jersey race was viewed by many as a race with a very certain outcome (Inside Elections, 2014). Jeff Bell received little funding (New Jersey Senate, 2014) and, as a result, ran a low-cost campaign with muted exposure. It is possible that the participants in one state were overfamiliar with their race, while the participants of the other state had little idea a race was even going on.

Partisanship. On the surface, the results concerning partisanship seem

straightforward. Higher levels of partisanship among Republicans consistently predicted lowered favorability toward opposing party candidates and higher favorability toward own party candidates. However, a more detailed analysis reveals that partisanship is more nuanced in its effects, and may be limited by video content, question wording, and the influence of Independent participants.

In Iowa, Democratic participants showed no main effect for partisanship on favorability toward Bruce Braley, the attacker. However, a breakdown of actual mean values (as shown in Table 7) of favorability post-video show progression from apathetic to favorable among Independent, Leaning, and Weak Democrat participants, but Strong Democrats fell back to apathetic, and may have been responsible for the relationship's non-significance. It is possible that these Democrats were put off by Braley's controversial advertisement, Chicks; it carried sexist language that may have been particularly unpleasant for women, who tended to identify as Democrats. Alternatively, Democratic participants could be exhibiting a ceiling effect. The wording of the question asks if participants are *more* favorable to the candidate after watching a video. Strong supporters may already have had their opinions more firmly set before watching the video, although it is unclear why this effect would only apply to Democrats in Iowa. In fact, New Jersey Democrats showed an overall trend of increasing favorability, including strong Democrats. The New Jersey Democratic regression testing the third hypothesis, however, was only marginally significant. A follow-up analysis was conducted to investigate whether including Independents in the operationalization of partisanship may have obscured a significant relationship by turning the New Jersey Democratic data into a slightly parabolic shape. The follow-up did not yield significant results.

A cursory look at the effect of partisanship on Republicans in Table 4 becomes radically changed upon closer examination of Table 7, where the outlying presence of Independent participants is clearer. Independent participants reacted much more negatively to both Iowa and New Jersey's Republican candidates' attack videos. In New Jersey, Republican participants of all strengths were essentially equal in their reactions to Jeff Bell's (R) attack video. While Iowan Independents' negative reaction to the Republican candidate's attack advertisement could be interpreted as part of a linear partisanship trend, in New Jersey the partisanship differences appeared not to be a matter of scale, but a dichotomous in/out group determination; Independents were the only group to decrease favorability to Bell after seeing his attack ad. Since Independents exhibited this schism only when compared to Republicans, it is possible that they actually preferred Democratic candidates. It is also possible that Independents, previously believed to be essentially centrist, may not belong at the middle of the political spectrum so much as outside of it. Independent participants, excluded from party analyses but randomly assigned to either Democrat or Republican groups for partisan analyses, may not have acted as non-partisan as predicted and possibly led to imperfect interpretations of the data. It has been shown that many Independents do not identify as such because of feelings of impartiality, and in fact still have implicit bias for or against one or more parties (Hawkins & Nosek, 2012). Alternatively, Independent participants' relatively negative reaction to contemptuous Republican videos could be a non-significant indicator that the original backlash hypothesis (that moderates would react badly to contempt and decrease favorability of their own-party candidate) is not entirely without merit, although that would not explain why a similar pattern was not observed in Democratic analyses.

The nature of Independent identification and its effects on perceived and felt emotions warrants further investigation.

Emotions. Among Republican participants in Iowa, both perceived anger and perceived contempt were significantly predictive of lowered favorability toward Bruce Braley (D). Assuming that the goal of Joni Ernst's (R) videos was to make people like Bruce Braley less, Iowa Republicans demonstrated the intended effects of negative emotions. Interestingly, the two videos attacking Braley in this study both made claims that accused him of moral deficiency. One video accused him of using sexist language, and another described him as a city slicker who was incapable of understanding or living by Iowan country values. Based on research exploring eliciting appraisals and emotional responses (e.g., Fischer & Roseman, 2007), these attacks on his character would both be strongly associated with contempt. The fact that perceived anger was also a significant predictor of negative feelings toward Braley might illustrate the difficulty of separating out emotional effects when they so often co-occur, despite the fact that their effects are not always so similar (Redlawsk, Roseman, Mattes, & Katz, 2015). Similar R^2 sizes between the two also suggest that contempt, a relatively under-studied emotion, may have effects that are of comparable importance and interest to the widely studied emotion of anger.

On a more fundamental level, it is also possible that the emotions perceived in the videos are being incorrectly described as the cause of changes in opinion, when in fact they are the result of existing opinions about the candidates, or projections of the participants' own emotions. The participants of this study may have had pre-existing opinions about the candidates that guided not just their initial feelings, but what they

thought of as the most appropriate way to respond to the questions following the videos. A staunch opponent of Bruce Braley, for example, may believe that they feel as negatively as they possibly can about him and therefore responded to questions about favorability toward him with "no change" because floor effects made change impossible.

Studying emotions presents inherent challenges of subjectivity and bias, particularly in a political context where feelings can run hot and cold partly because of tangential and unpredictable factors. If a participant thinks of Democrats as anarchosocialists, or Republicans as crypto-fascists, then that blanket opinion is going to be difficult to permeate with any research tool readily available. To overcome those environmental obstacles, it is important that the body of research on political emotions recognizes patterns of repeated findings. This study replicates findings that contempt makes situationally significant contributions to understanding political opinions (Redlawsk, Roseman, Mattes, & Katz, n.d.; Redlawsk, Roseman, Mattes, & Katz, 2018). These conclusions remain novel in a field in which the presence of discrete emotions is still controversial (Redlawsk & Pierce, 2017). That this study found significant evidence for the importance of contempt should reinforce the need for the literature at large to devote some measure of attention to its contributions to political decision-making.

Party Identification. Differences between the parties in this study must be measured in two different ways, depending on the hypothesis and associated statistical model. For Hypotheses 4 and 5, party identification was an independent variable, used to evaluate whether one party evaluated opponents more negatively than the other. In these analyses, the parties did not exhibit consistent differences in behavior. The only significant finding was in Hypothesis 4, where Iowa Republicans evaluated their opposing-party candidate more positively than Iowa Democrats did. For Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, participants were divided by party and were not analyzed in a way that would allow conclusions to be drawn about statistical differences between them. Conclusions about the effect of party identification, or any conclusions about traits among participants from either party, should be understood as comparative observations, not statistical analyses. From these observations, it appears that Republicans participants were more subject to influence from intra-party partisanship, perceived contempt, and perceived anger. Where Democrats showed no significant reactions to emotions or partisanship in any of the three hypotheses, more partisan New Jersey Republicans were more negative toward the Democratic party's candidate, Cory Booker, and more positive to the Republican party's candidate, Jeff Bell. Republicans' perceived contempt was also significant in New Jersey in that it predicted blowback to their candidate in the form of lowered favorability, while New Jersey Democrats did not. The overall impression from the data collected for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 is that Republicans' favorability was more significantly associated with perceived emotions in videos and their own level of partisanship.

Race and Contempt. When Jeff Bell (R) attacked Cory Booker (D) in New Jersey, it resulted in blowback for the attacker when participants lowered their opinion of Bell. This could have been related to Booker's significant popularity in a solidly blue state. However, the participants who lowered their opinions of Bell were Republicans. They may have had to do with Cory Booker's race. Cory Booker was the only black candidate in this study, which makes it difficult to draw any strong conclusions about the effect that race may have had, but contemptuous attacks from a white man to a black man may have been seen as offensive, or in poor taste. If so, matters of racial sensitivity, at least in New Jersey, may override personal politics, and be more important to participants than the emotional content of a video. Parallels to this idea may be drawn from the most recent presidential election, where then-candidate Donald Trump's comments concerning Mexican immigrants (for example, the infamous "some, I assume, are good people" speech) caused an uproar. However, it is worth noting that, despite extensive negative press, it is difficult to say whether that speech has had any lasting negative effect on Donald Trump's political career. The intertwining effects of race and emotions in politics are unclear, and merit further study.

Limitations

Partisanship. Participants were divided into groups based on their party identification, but Democrats outnumbered Republicans in both states' samples. New Jersey, a historically Democratic state, may actually have a majority Democrat population, but Iowa is a purple state with a mixed political history. The prevalence of Democratic participants may imply a sampling process that didn't adequately represent the larger voting population of Iowa, so those results may be difficult to generalize.

Highly-partisan Democrats reported almost no change in opinion toward their candidate in Table 7, suggesting that ceiling effects among highly partisan participants may have influenced responses to candidates from their own party. Similar floor effects may also have caused responses of "no change," rather than "lower favorability" for opposing party candidates. These issues may have been exacerbated by the wording of certain questions.

Question Wording. Favorability questions asked if participants were "more"

favorable toward the candidate in question after watching the associated video. Participants may, rationally, have answered that they were not more favorable, because they were already as favorable as possible. Similar effects in the opposite direction may have manifested for candidates for whom participants could not possibly feel less favorable than they already did. In addition, Crowell et al. (2019) argued that the wording of certain questions on the ANES survey allowed for misleading interpretations by participants. In their view, participants who were strong Clinton supporters in the 2016 election may have felt positive emotions about Donald Trump in the months leading up to the election, not because of any warm feelings toward him, but because they believed he was sure to lose the election, filling participants who opposed him with hope. Questions in this survey about ever felt emotions were based on those same ANES questions ("Has [CANDIDATE], because of the kind of person [he/she] is or because of something [he/she] has done, ever made you feel CONTEMPTUOUS?"), and may have provoked similar, seemingly contradictory responses among strong supporters of any of the study's four candidates (e.g. strong supporters of Bruce Braley reporting warm feelings about Joni Ernst because they feel she would be an easy opponent to defeat).

The questions in this study were arranged so as to minimize the impact of early questions on later ones. Questions asking about current states (increasing/decreasing favorability) preceded questions that focused on persistent, enduring states (political identification, ever felt emotions). Despite this construction, it is possible that early questions relating to emotions influenced participant responses near the end of the survey by activating political opinions and causing subconscious adjustments to participant responses.

Demographics. Candidate demographics also may have been a factor in participant responses. Three candidates were White (Braley, Ernst, and Bell), while one was Black, and three candidates were male (Braley, Bell, and Booker), while one was female (Ernst). A secondary analysis was conducted on Iowa participants to see if gender had any effect on evaluations of Braley and Ernst. Women were slightly more critical of Ernst, but since women were also a majority Democratic group, it seems to have been a matter of party identification, rather than gender. Any effect that gender or race may have had on participants' evaluations would be difficult to generalize without having more than a single point of reference. As a result, any interpretations of how race or gender may have influenced statistical conclusions – for example, that contemptuous attacks against black candidates results in backlash – must remain tentative. Future research would ideally draw from a wide variety of candidate demographics to further explore their effects on political emotions and decision-making.

Similarly, the states studied may have introduced various complications to analyses that would be invisible without comparing the results to more states. Ernst's anti-Coastal advertisement ("A true Iowan would have just talked to his neighbors, but not trial lawyer Bruce Braley.") is a clear example of one way in which the states differ, but there was also a larger majority of white participants in the Iowa sample, which may have influenced socially conditioned responses to emotions (Durik et al., 2006). Iowa is a state with a history of heated political competition, unlike New Jersey's relatively consistent Democratic chain of senators. Without data from more states from all over the country, it would be difficult to understand how these factors affected analyses.

Videos. The video messages used were intended to create as much of a parallel

between all candidates as was feasible, but besides being the same length and focused mainly on the sub-par attributes of an opponent, the material collected varied widely. Minute differences in candidate qualities may have resulted in dramatic changes in video tone or content. In New Jersey, Jeff Bell's video attacking Cory Booker was primarily condescending, attacking Cory Booker's age and relative inexperience, whereas Cory Booker railed against Jeff Bell as an avatar of the intractability of national politics. These differences, and those observed in the four Iowa videos, may have contributed to participant responses in unpredictable ways. It is worth noting that more than three times as many participants were excluded from analyses for failing to watch the entire Cory Booker video than then Jeff Bell video, which may indicate some broad difference in the videos' abilities to hold participant attention. Differences between state values also introduced unavoidable variance in content. Joni Ernst launched an advertisement that mocked Bruce Braley for being too coastal ("After a chicken crossed into his Iowa vacation property...") to represent Iowa. Her argument would be absurd if made in a New Jersey race.

For whatever reason – possibly as a political strategy, a decision based on limited internal funding, or a lack of third-party funding because of Cory Booker's pronounced lead in the polls – there were no usable political advertisements available to use from the Booker/Bell race in New Jersey. Clips from an interview (Jeff Bell) and a speech (Cory Booker) were collected as substitutes. The clips were selected for their emotional content, anti-opponent focus, and their appropriate length to make then as analogous as possible to political advertisements. Their differing settings and formats still may have had an obscuring effect on the underlying relationships between anger, contempt, and political opinion. In an ideal study, custom advertisements would be created by researchers, ensuring synchronization of wording, tone, and content.

Timing. The data were collected in the last ten days of the election cycle. Studying participants so late in the election cycle may have introduced an obstacle that thirty second videos were ill-equipped to overcome: certainty. While voters can remain undecided up to the final weeks of an election, most have a decision in mind far before that (Gopoian & Hadjiharalambous, 1994). Collecting data after so many participants had made up their minds about their vote may partially explain why most participants reported no change in favorability in response to the videos.

Future Research

While no interaction effects were found, and the original hypotheses were not supported, significant effects of both partisanship and emotions were observed, and the effects of political messaging on voters remains a subject of intense and immediate interest to political, emotional, and fair electoral investigations. Partisanship and emotional appeals aren't likely to vanish from our political discourse, and understanding how they affect the ways that voters interact with political data may be vital to understanding how to protect the voting population from undue manipulation. Future research in this vein might advance this study's findings by mitigating some of the obstacles that may have occluded the relationships between party, partisanship, and political messaging.

Collecting data earlier in the election cycle would ensure that the maximum proportion of participants were surveyed at a time when their opinions are most vulnerable to change. This comes with an obvious trade-off; early in the election cycle, there are fewer advertisements to use, and not all of them use negative emotions. Of those that use negative emotions, not all use contempt or anger.

The most labor-intensive solution to this problem would be to create custom advertisements for real or fictitious candidates and show them to participants. This would also allow researchers to control the content of the advertisements in a way that would increase the comparability of different candidates' advertisements.

Future research in this avenue could also benefit from including a more detailed survey of the participants' race. The demographic data collected showed a high percentage of White participants, but it is unclear whether this number was inflated due to the lack of a Hispanic option in the survey's inquiry about participant race.

More fundamentally, any continuation of the study of partisanship and emotions would best be served by modifying how non-leaning Independent participants were analyzed. Independent participants were divided among Democrat and Republican groups randomly in an attempt to use them to represent minimum level of partisanship. As Independents, beholden to neither liberalism or conservatism, it was expected that they would be non-partisan. The data did not seem to support this view, instead suggesting that Independents' behavior more closely resembled Democrats than pure moderates. Other studies have discarded non-leaning Independents (Huddy, Mason, & Aarøe, 2015) or further subdivided Independent participants by voting behavior instead of randomly assigning them to groups (Bankert, Huddy, & Rosema, 2017). Principled, empirically informed methods for handling Independent participants would be essential for future research.

It may also be productive to study in more depth participants' reactions to

emotional appeals from their own party. Much of the focus in this study was on the effects of out-party favorability, but voters can also be drawn in by or pushed away from candidates of their own party. The emotional appeals of candidates of the same party as the participants are of particular importance in the primary process. Republicans in an Iowa caucus both perceived and felt contempt toward Republican presidential candidates in 2016, predicting candidate preferences and voting behavior (Redlawsk, Roseman, Mattes, & Katz, 2018). With the 2020 presidential election looming, and the Democratic primary contest turning into a battle royale, how voters respond to anger and contempt may soon become an influential factor in determining the candidate who will attempt to dethrone Donald Trump. Further insight into how that candidate will be chosen, how they might fare against the current president, and how future candidates' prospects may be influenced by political emotions, can hardly come soon enough.

	Table 8. Variable Construction and Operationalization					
	Construct	Measure	*Item #s / Scoring			
Independent Variables	Anger in the Ad: No anger VERY LARGE AMOUNT OF ANGER	Amount of anger in the ad perceived by viewer	(Q14.4/Q18.4) In this survey, "anger" and "angry" refer to feelings of hostility that people may have toward someone. How much ANGER was expressed toward Cory Booker/Jeff Bell in this video? (Don't Know (5), None at all (4), A small amount (3), A moderate amount (2), and A large amount (1)**			
	Contempt in the Ad: No contempt VERY LARGE AMOUNT OF CONTEMPT	Amount of contempt in the ad perceived by viewer	(Q14.6/Q18.6) In this survey, "contempt" and "contemptuous" refer to feelings of scorn that people may have toward someone when they have a very low opinion of that person. How much CONTEMPT was expressed toward Cory Booker/Jeff Bell in this video? (Don't Know (5), None at all (4), A small amount (3), A moderate amount (2), and A large amount (1)**			
	Ever felt contempt toward Candidate: none VERY MUCH	Amount of contempt the participant has ever felt toward the candidates	(Q36.2/Q42.2) Has Cory Booker/Jeff Bell, because of the kind of person he is or because of something he has done, ever made you feel CONTEMPTUOUS? (Yes (1), No (2)) (Q36.4/Q42.4) How contemptuous would you say that Cory Booker/Jeff Bell makes you feel? (Extremely contemptuous (1), Very contemptuous (1), Very contemptuous (2), Somewhat contemptuous (3), Not too contemptuous (4), Not at all contemptuous (5))**			

Appendix

	Construct	Measure	Item #s / Scoring
Moderating	<u>Ideological</u>	Liberal/Conservative	(Q54.4) Here is a scale on
variables	<u>Partisansnip:</u> MODERATE	scale.	which the political views
	EXTREME		arranged from extremely
			liberal to extremely
			conservative. Where would
			you place yourself on this
			scale? (Extremely Liberal
			(1), LIDERAI (2), Slightly Liberal (3) Moderate:
			Middle of the road (4).
			Slightly Conservative (5).
			Conservative (6), and

		Extremely Conservative (7)
		\rightarrow (Moderate: Middle of the
		road (1), Slightly
		Liberal/Conservative (2),
		Liberal/Conservative (3),
		and Extremely
		Liberal/Conservative (4))
Political Partisanship:	ANES Political	(Q52.2) Generally speaking,
Democrat	Partisanship Scale	do you usually think of
REPUBLICAN	1	yourself as a
	Asks for a party, then	REPUBLICAN, a
	the strength of that	DEMOCRAT, an
	affiliation. If	INDEPENDENT, or what?
	unaffiliated, asks for	(Republican (2), Democrat
	leanings	(1). Independent (3). Other
	C	party (4). Don't know (5))
		(O52.4) Please specify your
		party.
		(O52.6/O52.8) Would you
		consider vourself a
		STRONG
		Republican/Democrat, or a
		NOT VERY STRONG
		Republican/Democrat?
		(Strong (1), Not very strong
		(2). Don't know (3))
		(O52.10) Do you think of
		yourself as CLOSER to the
		Republican or Democratic
		party? (Closer to Republican
		(2). Closer to Democratic
		(1), Don't know (3))
		(O53.2) Generally speaking.
		do you usually think of
		vourself as a DEMOCRAT.
		a REPUBLICAN, an
		INDEPENDENT. or what?
		(Democrat (1). Republican
		(2). Independent (3). Other
		party (4), Don't know (5))
		(052.4) Please specify your
		party.
		(053.6/053.8) Would you
		consider yourself a
		STRONG
		Republican/Democrat or a
		NOT VERY STRONG
		Republican/Democrat?
		(Strong (1). Not very strong
		(2), Don't know (3))

	1	1	1
			(Q53.10) Do you think of yourself as CLOSER to the
			Democrat or Republican
			party? (Closer to
			Democratic (1), Closer to
			Republican (2), Don't know
			(3))
	Construct	Measure	Item #s / Scoring
Dependent	Opinion of target	After viewing an	Jeff Bell Video: (Q15.2)
Variables	candidate:	advertisement,	Thinking about the video
	WORSE better	measures change in	you just saw, is your opinion
		favorability toward	of CORY BOOKER now
		the target of the	more favorable, less
		advertisement	favorable, or has it not
			changed? (More favorable
			(1), Less favorable (2), Not
			changed (3))
			$\mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{r}} = \mathbf{D}_{\mathbf{r}} 1 + \mathbf{V}^{\prime} 1 + (\mathbf{O}_{\mathbf{r}} \mathbf{O}_{\mathbf{r}})$
			Cory Booker Video: (Q19.2)
			I minking about the video
			you just saw, is your opinion
			favorable loss favorable or
			has it not changed? (More
			favorable (1) Less favorable
			(2) Not changed (3)
	Opinion of attacking	After viewing an	Leff Bell Video: (016.2)
	candidate:	advertisement.	Thinking about the video
	WORSE better	measures change in	vou just saw, is your opinion
		favorability toward	of JEFF BELL now more
		the sponsor of the	favorable, less favorable, or
		advertisement	has it not changed? (More
			favorable (1), Less favorable
			(2), Not changed (3))
			Cory Booker Video: (Q20.2)
			Thinking about the video
			you just saw, is your opinion
			of CORY BOOKER now
			more favorable, less
			favorable, or has it not
			changed? (More favorable
			(1), Less favorable (2), Not
	Easting the mean star	Maagumag	In the following question:
	reting of torget	ivieasures	in the following questions,
	andidate: VEDV	fooling toward	we would like to get your
	<u>Candidate:</u> VEKY	condidates on on	current reenings toward
	UNFAVUKABLE	candidates on an	some people who are in the
	very lavorable		like you to rate each one
1	1	1 100.	I HAG YOU TO TALG GACH UNG

			using something called a feeling thermometer.	
			For each question, you can choose any whole number between 0 and 100. On this scale, 0 means you feel very cold, 50 means you feel neither warm nor cold, and 100 means you feel very warm. If we ask about a person whose name you don't recognize, you don't need to rate that person.	
			Instead, just enter "999"	
			Pre-Advertisements:	
			(Q7.3/Q8.3)	
			How would you rate Jeff	
			Bell/Cory Booker? (from 0	
			– 100; if you don't recognize	
			this name, enter 999)	
			Post Advertisement 1:	
			(Q24.3/Q25.3)	
			How would you rate Jeff	
			Bell/Cory Booker? (from 0	
			-100)	
			Post Advertisement 2:	
			(Q31.3/Q32.3) How would	
			Pooker ² (from 0 100)	
Note Conitalia	rad variable values ind	ianta tha hymothatical d	booker (non 0 – 100)	
<i>Note</i> . Capitalized variable values indicate the hypothetical direction of relationships				
Viuer of party/candidate mentions were counterbalanced whenever possible				
"All item numbers are from the NJ Survey. Iowa Survey item numbers vary slightly,				
but are scored the same				

** Indicates reverse scoring



Figure 1a. Mean favorability change (1 = Less favorable, 2 = No change, 3 = More favorable) by partisanship and perceived contempt toward Republican candidate.



Figure 1b. Perceived contempt toward Republican candidate predicting favorability change in the context of partisanship.



Figure 2a. Mean favorability change (1 = Less favorable, 2 = No change, 3 = More favorable) by partisanship and perceived contempt toward Democratic candidate.



Figure 2b. Perceived contempt toward Democratic candidate predicting favorability change in the context of partisanship.



Figure 3a. Mean favorability change (1 = Less favorable, 2 = No change, 3 = More favorable) by partisanship and perceived anger toward Republican candidate.



Figure 3b. Perceived anger toward Republican candidate predicting favorability change in the context of partisanship.



Figure 4a. Mean favorability change (1 = Less favorable, 2 = No change, 3 = More favorable) by partisanship and perceived anger toward Democratic candidate.



Figure 4b. Perceived anger toward Democratic candidate predicting favorability change in the context of partisanship.



Figure 5a. Mean favorability change (1 = Less favorable, 2 = No change, 3 = More favorable) by partisanship and perceived contempt toward attacking Republican candidate.



Figure 5b. Perceived contempt toward attacking Republican candidate predicting favorability change in the context of partisanship.



Figure 6a. Mean favorability change (1 = Less favorable, 2 = No change, 3 = More favorable) by partisanship and perceived contempt toward attacking Democratic candidate.



Figure 6b. Perceived contempt toward attacking Democratic candidate predicting favorability change in the context of partisanship.



Figure 7a. Mean feeling thermometer by party identification and perceived contempt toward opposing party candidate.



Figure 7b. Perceived contempt toward opposing party candidate predicting feeling thermometer in the context of party identification.



Figure 8a. Mean feeling thermometer by party identification and ever felt contempt toward opposing party candidate. (Broken line indicates no respondents of that value)



Figure 8b. Ever felt contempt toward opposing party candidate predicting feeling thermometer in the context of party identification. (Broken line indicates no respondents of that value)

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