Party Brands in American Politics: Strategy, Communication, and Electoral Response

By

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Chapter 1. Introduction

"The behavior of the candidates during the campaign is one of the least influential factors in determining electoral outcomes" --Lewis Froman (1966, 4)

Words matter in politics. Just ask Frank Luntz, a GOP political operative, and one of the pioneers of political message testing, whose "dial groups" have become a fixture of recent election coverage on cable news shows. And while commentators of all political stripes have decried the "Frank Luntz-ification" of American politics, the parties and campaigns have increasingly taken to experimenting with which words succeed in swinging key segments of the electorate to their side, the conditions under which such words make a difference, and the mediums that are the most effective in conveying certain campaign messages.

Words matter because they can come to symbolize a whole host of policies and past actions in an efficient manner (Edelman 1977; Green 1987; Jarvis 2005; Popkin 1991). They serve as shortcuts or heuristics for voters, and furnish candidates who know how to take advantage of these symbols with a cost-effective way of communicating their policy positions to members of the electorate. They may also serve as a means of pinning their opponents to other (unpopular) issues or actions, and of reminding voters of their opponents' commitments to a particular party or ideology. Although the campaigns actively cultivate a wide variety of symbols to employ in their efforts at winning elected office (see Block and Onwunli 2010 for one example), partisan labels and symbols undoubtedly stand as some of the most powerful, and most commonly employed, cues in American politics.[1] Partisan identities are often an integral part of many Americans' social selves (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). The existence of large swaths of the electorate who identify with one

[1] It is worth noting that certain campaign events can become symbols that are of relevance to voters without the input of the candidates. A *lack* of strategic awareness regarding the development and use of symbols can be just as important as those that are consciously cultivated and repeated to good effect by the campaigns. Gerald Ford's comic difficulties with a tamale stand out as a particularly memorable example. Unlike more recent incidents of this same type, however, such as Dukakis' "tank ride" or Kerry's "flip-flop," Ford's gaffe seems to have gone largely unexploited by his opponent.

political party or the other therefore helps to ensure that strategic politicians are careful about their use of partisan rhetoric on the campaign trail.

The relative balance of partisan identifiers in the electorate is not an immutable fact of the American political scene, however, as "macropartisanship" exhibits change over time (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002). There is also reason to believe that there is greater movement in party identification at the individual level (Clarke and McCutcheon 2009) than identity-based treatments of party ID would predict. Taken together, these twin facts suggest that the electorate evolves over time, and thus so does the attractiveness of certain labels to candidates and other political elites.

Recent work on party brands and party reputations (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Grynaviski 2010) provides another rationale for why politicians should pay attention to the ways in which they employ partisan symbols. That is, the electoral value of partisan labels and other associated symbols likely varies over time and space quite apart from the distribution of partisan identifiers in the electorate (though see Harbridge 2010 for a different perspective). A voter may generally think of herself as a Democrat or a Republican, but the context in which a particular electoral contest is being waged may dictate whether she wishes members of that party to confront the challenges that she sees as facing the nation (Grynaviski 2010).

Over time parties develop reputations for performing relatively well or relatively poorly on particular issues or in particular situations (Petrocik 1996), its members for having certain traits (Hayes 2005), and for their associations with myriad other images in the minds of the voters (Trilling 1976). Party reputations consist of both ideological and performance-based dimensions; legislation passed along party lines contributes to the parties' ideological reputations, while good government activities, scandals, and other non-ideological actions help to mold what has been termed the "valence" component of each party's brand name (Butler and Powell no date; Lee 2008).

A party's reputation is fluid, even though certain elements may admit of a great deal of staying power. One of the more striking findings to emerge from Campbell and colleagues' (1960) early look at the content of voters' images of the two major political parties was the association between contemporary images of the parties and key historical events and figures. For instance, the connection between FDR and the Democratic Party in the American public mind persisted long after Roosevelt's death. The Republican Party's reputation as the "Party of Lincoln" likewise continued to exist well into the mid-20th century. Meanwhile, the failures of the Iraq War were enough for the Republicans to lose their coveted place as the party to which Americans turn to handle matters of foreign policy and national security (Goble and Holm 2009). The images associated with a party's brand name need not of necessity have any "objective" basis, however, as the meanings of political labels can be shaped by politicians and other elites (Green 1987), and political actors at once attempt to define what certain labels and symbols mean and contend with the meanings of such labels as they encounter them.

Party labels and other symbols associated with the parties--the brand labels themselves--serve as shortcuts for the various elements that go into each party's brand name. Indeed, "party label" is often used interchangeably with "party reputation" throughout the literature (Butler and Powell no date). And there is ample evidence from experimental work by political psychologists that brand labels, in turn, matter for the practice of politics, as they help to shape voters' evaluations of both candidates and the policies that they advance (Rahn 1993; Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012; Tomz and Van Houweling 2009). Detailed content analyses of elites' public pronouncements likewise support the conclusion that brand labels are an important element of the American political landscape, if only because candidates and other strategic politicians fight over the meaning and usage of political labels (Jarvis 2005; see also Green 1987). Nevertheless, there is a disconnect in the existing literature between experimental studies which demonstrate how political labels affect

outcomes at the level of the individual voter and those focusing on candidate strategy with regard to how political brand labels are employed on the campaign trail and during the governing period. What is needed is a way to examine how, in Vavreck's (2001) words, the "reasoning voter" responds to the "strategic candidate."

For while it seems relatively clear that partisan symbols can induce changes in voter behavior in laboratory settings, these studies fail to account for the strategic nature of the ways in which candidates and other political elites utilize partisan rhetoric and other symbols that are commonly associated with the parties. The artificiality of the experimental approach "eliminates the everyday context of multiple and shifting cues" and avoids "observation of the wide range of relevant phenomena in people's everyday political worlds" (Edelman 1977, 10-11). Sensitivity to how members of the electorate encounter political brand labels over the course of a campaign helps to mitigate such concerns, especially when other elements of the campaign context are taken into account. The "supply side" (Tessin 2005) of partisan cues is therefore an important factor to consider when assessing the impact of political brand labels on outcomes of import to electoral politics.

Whether partisan symbols are used on the campaign trail by political elites dictates, at least in part, the availability of partisan cues to members of the electorate. Without their entry into the information environment created by the campaign--the context in which voters gather the necessary tools to make a decision about which party's slate of candidates best matches their own preferences--partisan symbols are less likely to be an element in voters' consideration set. As McGhee (2008) points out, national forces, such as the relative esteem with which the two major political parties are held, are important factors only insofar as the campaigns talk about them in their communications with voters. Vavreck's (2009) recent work on the role that the economy plays in shaping the outcomes of presidential contests likewise suggests that "the message matters."

Experimental investigations of the impact that party cues and other associated symbols have on voters largely support such a view. It remains to be seen, however, whether their use during a campaign has any noticeable effect. The influence of brand labels may be difficult to detect over the din of the rest of the campaign, in which numerous considerations fight for dominance in the minds of voters. To date, these inherent difficulties have been exacerbated by the lack of available data on the kinds of messages that candidates actually employ in their quest for elected office. Absent direct measures of the content of the messages that candidates relay to the electorate, many scholars have been forced to use proxies, such as campaign spending (Coleman 1999; McGhee 2008), in their efforts at capturing the effect of candidates' campaign communications on voters and on election outcomes (see Franklin 1991; Lipinski 2004; Sides 2007; and Sides and Karch 2008 for notable exceptions). Candidates employ their campaign war chests to a wide variety of ends. The development and dissemination of brand labels and partisan symbols is but one of many possible uses for such monies.

Rather than employing measures of campaign spending to stand in for the content of candidates' messages to voters, the present study gauges the use of partisan labels and other associated symbols directly using information on the content of candidates' televised political advertising. One case study detailed in this dissertation also examines the president's use of partisan rhetoric in his public pronouncements. Taken together, I use these data to explore the strategic logic behind how candidates and other political elites talk about the symbols associated with the parties, and gauge the impact of such machinations. Political scientists, for their part, have been slow to take up the examination of how candidate strategies matter for a variety of outcomes at the level of the individual voter, attending only rarely to the effect of candidate strategy on mass politics outside of discussions of "battleground" versus "blackout" states (Shaw 2006; see Sides 2007 for a notable

exception), even though, as Franklin notes, "it is in candidate behavior that politics intrudes into voting behavior" (1991, 1211).

Here I focus on connecting politicians' strategic calculations with respect to the use of partisan labels and other related symbols with outcomes at the level of the individual voter. I begin by establishing that candidates indeed are strategic about how they employ party brand labels on the campaign trail, and examine the factors that serve to shape candidates' calculations regarding their use of partisan symbols and imagery. And while this investigation serves to motivate subsequent chapters, it also tests prominent theories of legislative politics in the United States. In it I aim to adjudicate between prominent party government theories (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005) and "party-less" accounts of legislative action (Krehbiel 1998). In doing so, I join Lipinski (2004) in arguing that a key implication that follows from a conception of the party label as an informational brand name is that members will "run with their parties," employing the party's brand label when on the campaign trail. If, however, party brand labels do not factor into the messages that candidates communicate to the electorate, then "theories purporting the importance of parties are undermined" (Lipinski 2004, 4). The presumed electoral connection driving concern for the party brand has therefore been described as the "linchpin" of party government theories (Krehbiel 1998, 198). I find, contrary to Krehbiel's (1998) assertion, that party labels are in evidence in the messages that candidates communicate to the electorate. Their use, however, varies predictably depending on which party controls the reins of power in government and other factors that likely affect the relative esteem afforded to each party's brand name.

The following chapter presents another variation on the same theme, and presents a case study of Roosevelt's attempted purge of conservatives from the Democratic Party in 1938. I focus on this episode for several reasons. For one, the targeted nature of Roosevelt's campaign against conservatives in his own party allows me to connect his strategic use of partisan labels and rhetoric

in his public pronouncements with opinion change at the mass level. Roosevelt worked to build support for a realignment of the parties that would remake the Democratic Party into the "liberal party" and the GOP into the "conservative party." His remarks in those states often highlighted the necessity of having political parties that represent distinct ideological perspectives. I argue that Roosevelt's efforts decreased popular opposition to the idea of a reorganization of the parties that would place liberals in the Democratic camp, and lump all conservatives together under the Republican banner. In turn, this shift in opinion laid the groundwork for a wholesale realignment of the parties decades later (see also Schickler 2013).

The purge episode also affords a look at the role that the president, as the presumptive leader of his party, plays in cultivating the presidential party's public image and the symbols that are attached to the party brand label. Existing studies concentrate heavily on the role that Congress plays in building the party brand (though see Lee 2008 for something of a unified approach). A common critique of this literature is that its nearly singular focus on Congress overlooks the important ways in which the president is responsible for the recognizable meaning of the party labels (Smith 2007). In this dissertation I address this concern, and demonstrate that Roosevelt's use of partisan rhetoric in his clash with prominent conservatives helped to shape public opinion toward the parties and build a foundation upon which future movement at the elite level was then possible.

A third essay examines how candidates for the U.S. Congress employ a different array of symbols in an effort to avoid being connected with an unpopular party brand in the minds of voters. Using words such as "bipartisan" or "independent," many candidates facing the prospect of being swept out of office in a partisan tide, or challengers hoping to take advantage of just such a swing, attempt to distance themselves from their political party. And while some candidates do so by simply omitting any reference to the parties in their campaign communications, as the analyses presented in Chapter 2 demonstrate, others may take extra measures to signal their independence

from their political party. Using content analyses of candidates' televised campaign ads from 2004 and 2006, survey data from those same years, and a dataset of presidential endorsements by members of the U.S. House over a longer time period, I develop and test a series of hypotheses concerning the effects of "distancing" on candidate placement, vote choice, and turnout. I root these expectations in the spatial voting literature (Downs 1957; Peress 2011). I find, contrary to recent experimental investigations of candidate distancing strategies (Arceneaux 2008; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011), that candidates' use of labels such as "bipartisan" or "independent" to describe themselves has, at worst, no effect on their electoral fortunes. There is even some evidence that the strategy actually helps at the polls, demonstrating that, in actual usage, symbolic efforts at distancing can be a boon to candidates' efforts at winning elected office. This is especially true for members of the "out" party, who may be able to employ such rhetoric in order to take advantage of favorable partisan tides.

Lastly, I explore the impact of anti-liberal campaign rhetoric on self-identified ideology and the electoral fortunes of Democratic candidates. Once again, I turn to the content of candidates' televised campaign advertising, coupled with survey data from recent elections, to speak to the efficacy of such efforts. I show that Republicans are often able to pin the liberal label--a label that has long been the target of sustained assaults from GOP--to good effect. Abandoned by the Democrats, who at one point actually embraced the label, and disparaged for decades on end by the Republicans, liberalism has become a symbol for government excess and moral weakness (among other negative associations). Attempts at associating an unpopular label with another attitude object, such as a candidate, can color voters' evaluations of the target of such efforts. I find some evidence to this effect, and show that Democrats running for the U.S. Senate in 2004 were hurt by Republicans' use of the liberal epithet. Meanwhile, exposure to anti-liberal rhetoric also pushed Democratic identifiers in the electorate away from the liberal label and toward its antithesis--the

more popular conservative moniker. That is, Democrats who received messages disparaging liberals during the campaign were more likely to self-identify as conservatives when queried as to their ideology. In spite of widespread conjecture to the contrary, however, favorability toward John Kerry in 2004 was unmoved by his association with the liberal label.

Taken together, the essays that comprise this dissertation serve to draw attention to the importance of connecting candidates' strategic use of brand labels, and in particular partisan labels and symbols, with voter behavior. Following Downs (1957), numerous studies have examined the subject of candidate positioning (e.g., Burden 2004), while others have often focused on strategic issue ambiguity on the campaign trail (e.g., Franklin 1991). Yet another strand of research explores how candidates utilize issues "owned" by their party to generate support (Petrocik 1996; Sides 2007; see Shaw 2006, 167 for an extension). The study of political brand labels neatly subsumes elements of each under a unified banner. The invocation of particular labels allows political elites to signal their issue positions and ideology, while the omission of key labels from their campaign communications, or the use of still other symbols (such as the use of "distancing" language), can be employed in an effort to differentiate candidates from their copartisans.

The focus on how candidates communicate their preferences to the electorate in symbolic terms connects candidate strategy with voting behavior at the mass level. It is by attending to the content of elites' campaign communications that I hope to explain why institutional factors often fail to elucidate why voters hold the opinions and beliefs that they do, or cast their ballots in a certain way on Election Day. In a hypothetical world in which members of the electorate are perfectly informed about the actions of their elected officials, members' voting records in Congress would undoubtedly serve as a primary source of voters' beliefs about the parties. In turn, such beliefs would influence the electorate's understanding of the policies that even unknown candidates, provided that they are affiliated with a political party, are likely to support and advance if elected

(Grynaviski 2010). However, the campaigns can both illuminate and obfuscate with regard to the kinds of information necessary for voters to make judgments about the candidates (Franklin 1991; McGhee 2008). One tangible consequence of this disconnect, I argue, is the legacy of studies showing only lukewarm support for theories of legislative action built upon the assumption that members of Congress care about the informational value of the party label (Woon and Pope 2008). With this dissertation, I join a growing number of scholars who argue that the impact of national factors on elections is likely moderated, at least in part, through candidates' strategic actions on the campaign trail (Johnston, Hagen, and Jamieson 2004; McGhee 2008; Vavreck 2009).

I also contribute a number of findings to a literature on candidate strategy that has produced remarkably little in the way of significant results. In spite of strong theoretical expectations regarding how the use of certain strategies ought to affect candidates' electoral fortunes, evidence in favor of their applicability has proven elusive (Sides 2007; Sides and Karch 2008). Collectively, the essays in this dissertation advance our understanding of campaign strategy and its effects on the vote, providing yet another nail in the coffin of the kind of thinking typified by Froman's (1966) remarks at the beginning of this chapter. While he may be correct in asserting that the behavior of the candidates during the campaign is of minimal importance when compared to the prime movers of election outcomes--factors such as the economy and the nature of the times--it is important to remember that campaigns are won and lost at the margins. Minimal effects, it seems, may be all that a campaign needs to generate in order to chalk up a win. As my work here shows, the effective use of partisan labels and symbols just might be what separates a winning candidate from an "also-ran" under certain circumstances.

Much of my contribution to existing literatures on party brands and congressional elections is methodological in nature, as I employ more direct measures of how politicians talk about the labels and other symbols associated with the parties than have been available to researchers in the

past. At a certain level this is a valuable addition to a stand of research that has, from the very beginning, muddled along using indirect tests or proxy measures to speak to core components of the party-theoretic framework. Smith (2007), for instance, takes Cox and McCubbins (1993; 2005) to task for illustrating that there is a sizable partisan component to the vote which, in turn, they submit as support for their contention that legislators care about their party's record of legislative accomplishment. Here, however, I employ extensive content analysis of candidates' campaign advertisements, and other indicators of politicians' use of partisan symbols and images, in my analysis.

The papers at the heart of this dissertation do rather more than just improve upon existing empirical work, though, as they also serve to add nuance to theories of political parties that carve out a sizable role for politicians' concern for the recognizable meaning and popularity of their party's "brand name" as a driving force behind their behavior in institutional settings. The centerpiece of my commentary and critique on these theories is the finding that politicians *rarely* talk about the parties directly in their communications with the electorate. Under a strict reading of certain variants of party government theories (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005), like the one that Krehbiel (1998) appears to take, this result could be taken as evidence against party-theoretic accounts of legislative action. At the same time, recent attempts at reconciling the existence of both party and candidate brand names (Grynaviski 2010) would seem to argue that candidates do not need to talk about the parties in order to take advantage of a favorable party brand name or, conversely, to be hurt by an unpopular brand. Yet, consistent with work that views campaigns as a crucial moderator between national electoral forces and election results (McGhee 2008; Vavreck 2009), some politicians *do* utilize partisan rhetoric in their communications with the voting public.

What is needed, then, is a new conception of political brands in which candidate and partisan brands not only coexist, but actively inform one another. At present, most work on party

brands views the party brand as being ideological in nature, and almost wholly determined by the aggregate voting records of the parties in Congress (Grynaviski 2010; Woon and Pope 2008).[2] Recent years have seen tremendously high levels of party-line voting in the legislative arena, and an increase in ideological consistency among members from each party. Nevertheless, the evidence that I present over the next several chapters indicates that politicians' use of these labels ebbs and flows from one year to the next in response to factors such as the state of the national economy and the institutional environment in which they must campaign. In this same vein, "distancing" rhetoric from congressional candidates is as prominent among members of the out-party as it is from those affiliated with the party who controls the reins of power, even in a year (2006) that was expected to see big wins across the board for the out-party. These observations are only possible if politicians believe both that the party label and other symbols associated with the parties can, depending on the circumstances, either hurt or harm their prospects at the polls, *and* that they can moderate the effect of the brand through their actions on the campaign trail.

My findings thereby suggest that several revisions to current theorizing about party brands may be in order. First and foremost, I argue for a more expansive list of factors influencing the recognizable meaning and relative esteem of each party's collective brand name. When voters think about what each party "stands for," they likely refer to a number of things beyond just ideology and the parties' records of legislative accomplishment in forming their judgments about the two major political parties. I also put forth the idea that how politicians talk about the parties helps to shape popular opinion about what the party system should look like--and with it the components of each party's brand name (see Chapter 3). Party brand labels are also attributes that politicians can incorporate into the personal brand that they develop and present to voters during the campaign.

[2] To be sure, some recent work has questioned the nearly singular focus in the literature on party ideology and the ways in which Congress shapes popular impressions of the parties (Butler and Powell no date; Lee 2008; Smith 2007).

Upon calculating that her party's brand name is an electoral liability, the strategic politician might omit any references to the parties in her campaign communications, or even go a step further by engaging in "distancing" rhetoric. Conversely, politicians may seek identification with party brand labels when they believe them to be more important to their prospects at the polls than other things that they might emphasize during the campaign. Undoubtedly party brands do exert a direct effect on candidates' electoral fortunes. The mere fact that some candidates choose to emphasize the brand label while others do not, however, would appear to signal that party brand labels can be enlisted in the service of politicians' personal brands, even as their words and actions also serve to build the reputations of the parties.

Chapter 2. The Strategic Use of Party Brand Labels in Congressional Election Campaigns

Party symbols play an important role in many theories of lawmaking, and have been placed at the center of numerous scholarly debates surrounding the validity of different explanations for the existence and continued influence of parties in Congress. In spite of this focus, remarkably few studies have examined the extent to which, and under what conditions, candidates for Congress use partisan symbols on the campaign trail. Employing data on candidates' televised advertisements over six elections (1998-2008) from the Wisconsin Advertising Project, the present study helps to fill this void and offers a look at when candidates turn to partisan rhetoric in making a bid for elected office. In doing so, I speak to recent work on party brands and contribute to the literature on candidate strategy—an area of inquiry that has lagged significantly behind work on voting behavior (Franklin 1991, 1201)—by illuminating the factors that weigh into candidates' strategic calculations regarding the content of their campaign appeals.

In the next two sections I review the relevant literature on party brands before going on to develop and test a series of hypotheses related to candidates' use of partisan symbols in congressional election campaigns. My findings suggest that candidates are strategic about when they employ party labels in their campaign communications, and respond to both the partisan composition of their districts and the institutional context in which they must campaign in deciding whether to use partisan symbols in their televised ads. Members of the party that controls the presidency are particularly calculated in their use of party symbols, and eschew mentions of partisanship except during periods of unified government. I conclude with a brief discussion of how future inquiries might build upon the analysis that I present here, examining the effects of candidates' strategic use of partisan appeals on voters and on their prospects at the polls.

Party Brands and Candidate Communication

Perhaps the chief motivating assumption behind party-centered theories of congressional lawmaking is that legislative parties grew out of a need to serve members' electoral goals. One of the core arguments advanced by proponents of such theories is that the party label is a collective good which provides members of Congress with a low-cost means of signaling their preferences to the electorate (Groeling 2010, 21-22; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991, 39-42; Snyder and Ting 2002, 91). Lacking more specific information about the candidates running in a particular race, voters use party labels to make inferences about the kinds of policies that they are likely to pursue once in office (Grynaviski 2010; Woon and Pope 2008, 823-825). In this way, party labels function as brands, providing voters with an efficient source of information about a party's policies and performance.

Among the most outspoken critics of party government theories is Keith Krehbiel, who has argued that, far from being a "treasured brand name," the party label is a "bad luck charm" from which legislators attempt to distance themselves on the campaign trail (1998, 223; see also Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, 23; Grose and Middlemass 2010; Groeling 2010, 17). In support of this view he offers that Democrats used television ads to separate themselves from their party in 1994, and were even instructed to do so by party strategists. Two years later, in 1996, many Republicans did the same, conveniently omitting their party label from the televised messages they were sending to constituents. On the basis of this evidence Krehbiel concludes that "the key condition in party-theoretic attempts to incorporate the electoral connection into a theory of lawmaking is not met" (1998, 223).

It is not altogether clear, however, that party government theories, such as those forwarded by Cox and McCubbins (1993, 2005), necessitate that legislators always cleave to their party label on the campaign trail. Recent developments in the literature have helped to reconcile the existence of both private candidate and party brand names and illuminate the conditions under which attempts at distancing are to be anticipated even if politicians care about the informational content (and electoral

value) of the party label (see Grynaviski 2010, especially ch. 5). While candidates concern themselves with the strength of their party's brand name heading into the elections, much as they might the state of the national economy, party reputations likely exert a direct effect on the vote regardless of whether individual candidates draw attention to their partisan affiliation on the campaign trail (see Cox and McCubbins 1993, 113; McGhee 2008, 734). Legislators (and, in particular, those from the majority party) exert control over their party's reputation by helping to promote its record of legislative accomplishment (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005) and vote with their party so as to preserve the informational value of the party label (Grynaviski 2010). In acknowledging that public evaluations of the president help to shape the presidential party's collective image, members of Congress from the president's party also rally to support the presidential policy agenda, while members of the nonpresidential party engage in efforts at damaging the opposition party's brand name by working to block the president's initiatives (Lee 2008).

But as Groeling notes, "parties use both their words and their deeds to establish a 'brand name' with the public" (2010, 165; see also Harbridge 2010). National forces, such as the state of the economy or the parties' public records, appear to have a direct impact on election outcomes (Basinger and Ensley 2007, 381; McGhee 2008, 734). Importantly, the effects of national conditions are also mediated through the messages that individual candidates send to voters (see Vavreck 2009; Schoenberger 1969). McGhee, for instance, argues that "if party popularity matters it is only in the way that candidates use it" (2008, 721). Even though partisan cues are available to voters on the ballot when they arrive at the polls on Election Day (at least in federal elections), the provision of party symbols on the campaign trail is of consequence because partisan cues help to shape voters' evaluations of the candidates well before the day of the election (Campbell et al. 1960, 128; Tessin 2007).

Tomz and Van Houweling (2009) uncover evidence to this effect, and find that "branded" candidates (that is, candidates whose statements are accompanied by their party label) who offer ambiguous policy positions are able to attract support from their copartisans in the electorate without injuring their prospects among voters who identify with the other party. Strikingly similar results were reported by Lawrence and colleagues (2011), as they found that senatorial candidates whose names were accompanied by their party labels were actually evaluated *more favorably* by voters from the opposing party than they were in the "unbranded" condition. In addition, when candidates employ party labels on the campaign trail they may be able "to prime the electorate to think about the issues that a candidate's party 'owns' " (Jarvis 2005, 146). Party labels also function as filters to the information contained in candidates' communications to voters (Campbell et al. 1960; Jarvis 2005, 42; Rahn 1993), and may go a long way toward mobilizing their copartisans in the electorate while at the same time helping them to attract the support of those who identify with a different party (cf. Campbell et al. 1960, 128). The "supply side" of partisan cues is therefore a subject worthy of some study (Tessin 2007, 1).

The present endeavor is also aimed at addressing a persistent puzzle of contemporary American politics. That is, while national forces appear to be playing an ever greater role in determining the outcomes of congressional elections (though see Stokes 1975), there is little evidence to suggest that individual candidates are using party labels or other partisan symbols in an attempt to take advantage of a national political climate that would appear to benefit members of their party. Neither does it seem that candidates for the U.S. Congress are engaging in a mobilization strategy by using partisan rhetoric to play to their base (Henderson 2012a). These observations run sharply counter to expectation (see McGhee 2008; Vavreck 2009). There is ample reason to believe that candidates, as rational actors who are often assumed to be singled-minded in their pursuit of elected office, should utilize any cues that might help to lower the costs of communicating with the

electorate. By focusing on candidates' use of partisan symbols during the campaign, I hope to explore the seeming disconnect between scholarly expectations about candidate strategy and earlier observations of actual candidate behavior.

The Strategic Use of Party Brand Labels

As with other kinds of information that can be relayed to voters during the campaign (Franklin 1991), candidates can be expected to make conscious, considered decisions regarding the circumstances under which they turn to partisan rhetoric in their campaign communications (Tessin 2007; Vavreck 2001). While the party's label may aid some candidates, partisan attachments can also be quite costly (Snyder and Ting 2002, 91).[3] As strategic actors, candidates should invoke party labels in situations where they stand to gain an electoral advantage and attempt to distance themselves from their party in other situations where the label is likely to present a liability. There is already mounting evidence that candidates make calculated decisions with respect to the use of partisan rhetoric. Earlier investigations of the content of campaign communications have found that candidates running for Congress in districts where the balance of partisanship is tilted against them are far less likely to use the party label in their political advertising (Vavreck 2001, 517) and campaign websites (Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009, 354) than those running in more consonant electoral environments.

With the exception of Krehbiel's exploratory investigation of members' campaign advertising in 1994 and 1996, though, previous studies have mainly attended only to the personal or district-level factors driving candidates' use of the party label in their campaign appeals, ignoring the national factors that have long been thought to affect candidates' chances at the polls (Jacobson 2004). As a

[3] As Lipinski (2004) has shown, majority party members of Congress who connected themselves with the party by communicating positive messages about the institution to their districts were more likely to lose than majority members who did not. There is also some evidence to indicate that professing support for an unpopular presidential nominee can be detrimental to members' reelection prospects (Schoenberger 1969), and that high degrees of party voting in Congress are an electoral liability (Carson et al. 2010).

consequence, existing scholarship is largely silent on whether the partisan strategies pursued by candidates vary from election to election in response to perceived shifts in the electoral value of the party label. Vavreck entertains this possibility in her study, acknowledging that "with cross-sectional data, one wonders about year-specific effects" (2001, 517).

There is some evidence to suggest that candidates do adjust their use of partisan symbols and imagery from one year to the next owing to aspects of the electoral environment. Darrell West (2005), for instance, notes that party appeals in TV ads aired by presidential candidates, while never a prominent feature of presidential campaigns, were more prevalent in the 1950s when party loyalties in the electorate were at a relative high point. Now, with the resurgence of parties, it once again "makes sense" for candidates "to incorporate partisan pitches in their television advertising," as it may allow them to activate the support of partisans in the electorate and ultimately win votes (West 2005, 50).

Even though mass partisanship has been on the rise throughout the period under observation here, because the strength of a party's brand name is thought to depend on a number of different factors that exhibit change over time (see Cox and McCubbins 1993, 110-112; Harbridge 2010), I still expect to see systematic shifts in candidates' use of the label from one election to the next. Candidates running in a favorable partisan environment may have every motivation to trumpet their connection with the brand, as the label may allow them to "establish favorable differences between themselves and their opponents" on the campaign trail (Geer 1998, 190). Those who are running in a hostile electoral environment, however, have a powerful incentive to obscure their own partisan attachments. That is, when the party brand is in trouble nationally, as was the case with the Democrats in 1994 and the Republicans in 2006 and 2008, it seems likely that candidates would

downplay the party label, instead emphasizing particular issues, their record of constituency service (if an incumbent), or their ideological leanings in their quest for reelection.[4]

Which party controls the reins of power in government may also drive candidates' strategic considerations regarding whether to employ partisan symbols in their campaign communications (see Groeling 2010; Krehbiel 1998; Lipinski 2004). Members of the nonpresidential party have an incentive to draw attention to their own party label on the campaign trail, as well as their opponent's party label, given that the shortcomings of the incumbent administration are likely to shape voters' evaluations of the presidential party. Groeling, for instance, writes that "Members [of the out-of-power party] can unify around opposition to the presidential party's proposals without having to advance any of their own as alternatives" (2010, 167). As such, candidates from the "out" party may be able to gain support simply by highlighting the fact that they are not members of the president's party (see also Campbell et al. 1960). Meanwhile, members from the president's party should downplay their connection with the brand (Krehbiel 1998, 224).

Importantly, the combined focus on both the national and district-level factors driving the content of candidates' campaign appeals that I forward here runs sharply counter to Mayhew's (1974) observations about the influence of national conditions on candidates' electoral strategies. As he writes in *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, "All in all the rational way for marginal congressmen to deal with national trends is to ignore them, to treat them as acts of God over which they can exercise no control" (1974, 32). By contrast, I argue that rational candidates are likely to be responsive not only to the party composition of their districts, but also to national political conditions as they attempt to gain votes by either tapping in to the broader political context and channeling it into their campaign communications, or by attempting to dampen the effect of

[4] There is also some evidence suggesting that members of Congress also change their voting behavior in response to short-term shifts in the electoral value of being associated with a particular party at a given point in time. Legislators whose parties are unpopular in the eyes of the electorate display more of a tendency toward bipartisanship in Congress (Harbridge 2010).

partisan tides by eschewing partisan rhetoric on the stump (Basinger and Ensley 2007; McGhee 2008).

Hypotheses

Consistent with the findings of previous studies (Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009; Vavreck 2001), I expect that the partisan makeup of a candidate's district (or in the case of U.S. Senators, state) influences the degree to which he or she is willing to use the party label. More explicitly, I hypothesize that (**H1**) *candidates running in districts where the partisan balance is stacked against them are less likely to draw attention to their party in their televised ads than those running in more consonant partisan environments*.

Because they are better known by their constituents, and therefore gain no real benefit from providing voters with an information shortcut, I also hypothesize that (**H2**) *incumbents are less likely to air ads mentioning their party label than are challengers*. Incumbents are better able to run on their records, placing greater emphasis on other factors that collectively comprise the "the personal vote" (Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987; Mayhew 1974). By contrast, challengers often lack the kind of name recognition enjoyed by incumbents, but may be able to make up for this considerable deficit by taking advantage of a favorable partisan environment. Along these lines, Grynaviski notes that "electoral challengers (against candidates of both parties) rely on party brand names to provide credible signals of their political commitments" (2010, 206). Challengers also take greater risks than incumbents (Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009, 345), and therefore may be more willing to signal their partisanship on the campaign trail, regardless of the political climate.

As I have argued, candidates' use of the party label is also likely to differ from year to year, owing to the various national-level factors that have long been thought to affect the outcome of congressional elections and influence voters' evaluations of the two parties. Following Krehbiel (1998), I suspect that candidates running in a year where their party's "brand" is weak have much

less of an incentive to trumpet their partisan attachments than those running at a time when the party's brand is stronger. I expect to find that (**H3**) *candidates make greater use of their party's label in years favorable to their party*. More generally, I also suspect that, consistent with the above discussion regarding how partisan control of the presidency might influence the strategic considerations of the president's copartisans, (**H4**) *members of the president's party are less likely to air ads featuring their party label than are candidates from the "out" party*.

As David Jones (2009) has demonstrated, favorability toward the GOP was lower in both 2006 and 2008 than it had been in well over a decade. George W. Bush's approval ratings were likewise at near-historic lows in these same years. Taken together, these factors suggest that the Republican Party's brand name was severely damaged, and therefore something from which rational candidates running under the GOP label would attempt to gain some distance. Conversely, Democrats, in hoping to leverage the perceived weakness of the Republican Party into victories at the polls, likely employed their own party's label in their televised advertising, for perhaps the greatest electoral asset that Democrats had in 2006 and 2008 was the very fact that they were not Republicans.[5]

In addition to differences in candidates' use of their own party's brand label in years when one party's brand is in trouble, I also expect to observe candidates running in a favorable partisan environment attempting to draw attention to the partisan affiliation of their opponent (see Jarvis 2005). Such a strategy has a long history in American electoral politics. As Klinkner (1994) notes, part of the Republican Party's "Southern strategy" involved the use of advertising that attempted to connect southern Democrats with the more liberal national Democratic Party and the Kennedy administration. Kennedy himself also adopted a similar approach in 1960; throughout the campaign

[5] Eric Uslaner and Margaret Conway made a very similar observation with respect to the election of 1974, arguing that, "The major blessing a Democratic challenger had in that year was the simple fact of his or her party" (qtd. in Basinger and Levine 2007, 365).

he strove to "pin the Republican label on Nixon as tightly as possible" (Key 1966, 121). Though relatively uncommon (see Vavreck 2001, 516), I believe that I may observe the use of similar tactics by congressional candidates, and therefore hypothesize that, relative to the reference year, (**H5**) *Democratic candidates were more likely to highlight the partisan affiliation of their Republican opponents in 2006 and 2008*.

Data and Methods

In examining the conditions under which candidates turn to partisan rhetoric on the campaign trail, I turn to a dataset constructed by pooling data from the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project on campaign advertising by U.S. House and U.S. Senate candidates from 1998 to 2008.[6] In each of these years, WiscAds coded whether each ad mentioned the favored candidate's party, the opposing candidate's party, or both. For the sake of comparison, I also examine the extent to which candidates for U.S. Congress make reference to ideology in their campaign advertising, as the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project coded for mentions of both the liberal and conservative labels from 1998 to 2006. Consequently, I have detailed data on the kinds of cues that were being used in candidates' televised political advertising over six elections.

The University of Wisconsin Advertising Project collected ad data for the nation's largest 75 media markets (DMAs) in 1998 and 2000, and the top 100 media markets in 2002 and 2004. The data collection was much more limited in 2006, and offers a look at nine media markets in the East and Midwest.[7] In 2008 the scope of the project was expanded to include every single media market in the U.S.

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[6] Since my interest here is in candidate strategy, I do not include ads aired by the parties or other outside groups.

[7] These include Champaign (IL), Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Madison (WI), Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Philadelphia.

In 1998, 259 candidates aired ads during the general election. The following presidential election, 254 did so. In 2002 and 2004, 281 and 284 candidates, respectively, aired general election ads. Since data collection efforts were much more limited in 2006, only 47 candidates are in the dataset. But in 2008, the Ads Project collected data in every media market. Consequently, the dataset includes information on the content of 382 different candidates' televised advertising during the latest presidential election.

Apart from permitting a longitudinal look at the content of candidates' TV advertising, and with it the ability to examine differences across years, the pooled Ad Project dataset allows me to say something about the volume of candidate ads that mention the party label. Vavreck (2001), for instance, simply coded for whether a candidate used the party label in any of the television advertising he or she created (see also Spiliotes and Vavreck 2002). Such a coding strategy is unsatisfactory for my purposes because it assigns the same weight to each advertisement regardless of the number of times it aired. Furthermore, with archival ad data, it is impossible to know whether the ads used in the study were actually aired (see Goldstein and Ridout 2004). Earlier studies were therefore unable to differentiate between candidates who created (but did not air) one ad mentioning his or her party's label and those who aired thousands of ads featuring partisan symbols. By contrast, I look at the proportion of ads that each candidate aired containing different partisan symbols.

Perhaps the chief critique of using televised advertising to examine candidate strategy is that not every candidate for Congress airs campaign ads (Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009, 345).[8] In contrast to campaign websites—a form of media that is, admittedly, more representative of the universe of candidates running for Congress—TV ads are aired in an effort to reach potential voters and do not require voters to seek out the information contained therein. While websites and ads can

[8] See the attached Appendix for detailed analyses addressing this issue.

both be characterized as broadcast forms of communication (as opposed to targeted or "narrowcast" communications), as a medium that voters must look for on their own, campaign websites may contain content that is tailored to a particular subset of the electorate.

Also, as Tracy Sulkin notes (2011), the limited amount of time with which candidates are able to make their appeals in TV ads forces them to make strategic decisions about the content of their televised advertising, and it is these strategic decisions about content we wish to examine. And although Sulkin uses ad data to gauge candidates' legislative priorities during the campaign period, a similar argument can be made with respect to the priority that candidates assign to partisanship in their communications with the electorate. While it is relatively costless for candidates to indicate their partisan affiliation on their campaign website (provided that they believe that the party label is not a detriment to their electoral ambitions), in order for candidates to provide such information in their campaign advertising they must adjudge partisan symbols to be a boon to their campaign in order to highlight them above other personal or policy-based appeals that they might make in that same 30-second spot. Ultimately, however, televised campaign ads are but one form of campaign communications (albeit one that has become a fixture of the modern campaign), and in an ideal world I would have access to data on different forms of campaign media. And while I cannot be certain that any such patterns identified here are representative of what I might find if I were to examine other forms of candidate communication (e.g., speeches, websites, mailers), the very fact that it is difficult to target TV advertising to narrow subgroups of the population (Hillygus and Shields 2008, 162) ensures that I am capturing how the candidates want to appear to the entire electorate—that is, the extent to which their "presentation of self" includes a partisan dimension. TV ads therefore strike me as an important place to start in examining the factors that influence whether candidates run with their parties.

In addition to the advertising data described above, I also collected a number of other measures that permit me to test my hypotheses, beginning with the proposed relationship between district partisanship and candidates' use of partisan imagery. There are many ways to operationalize whether a candidate ran in a "hostile" partisan environment. I follow Vavreck (2001), however, in measuring the partisan makeup of a district using the presidential vote share for each party's candidate in the previous election—a measure that I collected from the Swing State Project[9] and various editions of the *Almanac of American Politics*.[10]

With respect to capturing the factors that are believed to influence the relative strength of each party's brand name from one year to the next, I draw my measurement strategy from a study by Basinger and Ensley (2007). Following their lead I use year dummies to estimate separate intercepts for each election, rather than employing more direct measures of national conditions. As they point out, this approach brings with it both benefits and drawbacks. Chief among the drawbacks to this strategy is that I am unable to identify the specific national-level factors that influence candidates' use of the party label. My approach does, however, neatly avoid the methodological problems associated with measuring these factors, as a scholarly consensus has yet to develop regarding which indicators to use in estimating their effects (Born 1986; Erikson 1990; McGhee 2008). In later analyses I gauge the impact of the institutional context in which the campaign took place—the partisan control of government—with an indicator for whether the candidate belonged to the president's party, an indicator for unified government, and an interaction term that captures the effect of being a member of the presidential party during a period of unified government.

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[9] http://www.swingstateproject.com/diary/4161/

[10] The Swing State Project lists presidential vote share in 2000 and 2004 even for districts that were newly created after the 2000 redistricting cycle. I therefore strongly suspect that the figures that they have made available take into account any changes in the composition of the districts attributable to redistricting.

I also control for a number of other factors identified in the existing literature as bearing some relation to the content of candidates' campaign messages (Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009; Vavreck 2001). These include the competitiveness of the race and whether the contest was for an open seat. These control variables require little additional explanation, although it is worth mentioning that I use Cook's ratings in gauging competitiveness. My competitiveness variable, then, ranges from zero to three, with the highest value representing a race that Cook rated as a "toss-up." Although a number of the other variables in the model undoubtedly go into Cook's assessment of the likely competitiveness of a given contest (an open seat, in particular, would seem to signal that a race was almost certain to be competitive), this particular measure is often utilized by scholars as a means of capturing competitiveness with a variable that is exogenous to the contests themselves (see Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009, 350). That is, unlike other commonly employed measures of competitiveness that are based on how close the final vote tally was on the day of the election, Cook scores reflect one expert's expectations about a race months in advance of the final contest.

In the next section I test my hypotheses. After pointing out some aggregate trends in the data—year to year variations in candidates' use of party brand labels and references to ideology in their televised advertising—I turn to results from a series of multivariate models that permit estimation of the conditional effects of the various factors that I have outlined. Since my dependent variable in all instances is a proportion (the number of ads that each candidate aired featuring partisan imagery divided by the total number of ads that he or she aired during the general election campaign), and shows clear signs of overdispersion, I use quasi-binomial models (see Harbridge 2010; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011) to examine whether candidates are strategic about the circumstances under which they turn to partisan rhetoric in their campaign advertising.

Results

I begin by describing the data, detailing 1) the percentage of candidates that made mention of the parties in at least one of their advertisements, 2) the mean number of ads that feature the party label of one or both candidates, and the mean percentage of airings that mention 3) just the favored candidate's party and 4) just the opposing candidate's party. As the first panel in Figure 1 shows, a non-trivial percentage of the candidates who aired ads mentioned the parties in at least one of their TV advertisements. This statistic ranges from a low of 15 percent in 2000 to a high of 30 percent in both 2004 and 2006. Averaged across all six of the years for which data are available, about one quarter of all candidates aired at least one ad mentioning their own party's label—just about the same proportion that Vavreck (2001) identified in her study of the partisan content of candidates' televised campaign advertising in 1998.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

What these statistics obscure, however, is the fact that, on average, candidates devoted very little airtime to talking about the parties. The second panel in Figure 1 demonstrates that, in 2000 and 2008, less than four percent of all airings mentioned the favored candidate's party. Even in 2004, the high-water mark for candidate mentions of the party label, on average less than ten percent of candidates' airings made reference to the their party. Fewer still made mention of the opposing candidates' party. This finding runs contrary to Sharon Jarvis' observations regarding candidates' use of partisan rhetoric, as she found that party labels were most often employed in discussions of the opposing candidate in an attempt to portray them as "unyielding ideologues" (2005, 220). Given the perceived weakness of the Republican brand, it is perhaps not surprising that 2006 saw the highest average percentage of airings that mentioned the opposing candidate's party label. Even still, this figure is just under four percent.

It does appear that ads mentioning the party label have become more commonplace over time. In 1998 and 2000 candidates aired an average of about 40 ads that mentioned the party label.

In 2002 that figure grew to an average of 62 ads, but more than doubled in subsequent years. Such a trend may indicate that candidates have increasingly taken to using the party label in their campaign communications; it is also possible, however, that these increases reflect the general growth in political advertising over this time period. And while it is certainly true that most candidates are reluctant to draw attention to their party label in their televised campaign ads (Franz and Goldstein 2002, 145; Jarvis 2005, 220), there is variance to explain both within years and across time in candidates' use of partisan symbols.

The patterns displayed in the second panel of Figure 1 also seem to suggest that the institutional context may shape candidates' strategic considerations regarding the provision of partisan symbols in their campaign ads. In 2004, a year in which the incumbent president was running for re-election with both houses of Congress also under the control of his party, the mean percentage of ads featuring the candidate's own party label reached a high point. Mid-term elections (1998, 2002, and 2006 in these data) saw the next highest percentage of advertisements that made mention of the favored candidate's party label, while 2000 and 2008—both presidential elections without a sitting president in the race—saw the lowest mean percentage of candidate airings featuring the favored candidate's party.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

Figure 2 breaks the above figures out by party, revealing some intriguing differences between Republicans and Democrats with respect to candidates' use of the party label. With the exception of 1998, greater percentages of Democratic candidates made mention of the party label in their televised advertising than did Republican candidates. This pattern also holds with respect to the percentage of airings that featured the party, as Democrats, on average, aired a greater percentage of

advertisements mentioning the party label in all but one year.[11] Interestingly, in 2006 Republican candidates aired no ads drawing attention to their opponents' party affiliation. On average, more than seven percent of airings by Democratic candidates mentioned the partisan affiliation of their opponent in 2006—a move presumably calculated to take advantage of the weakness of the Republican brand.

[Insert Figure 3 here]

By way of comparison, I also explore the extent to which candidates employed ideological rhetoric over the time period from 1998 to 2006 (in 2008 the Wisconsin Advertising Project did not code for the ideological content of campaign ads). Figure 3 displays the mean percentage of airings, broken out by party, in each year that mentioned either the liberal or conservative label. The picture that emerges is in some respects similar to the one displayed in the second frame in Figure 2, thereby suggesting that candidates, and in particular Republican contenders for Congress, treat ideological symbols in the same way as they do the party labels. GOP candidates' use of the conservative label mimics their use of the Republican brand name, reaching high points in 1998 and 2004. Similarly, Republican candidates employed the liberal moniker to describe their Democratic opponents to a greater extent in 2004 than they did in 2000, 2002, or 2006, much as they did the Democratic label itself. The clear outlier in this time series is Republicans' use of the word "liberal" in 1998, as on average nearly 14 percent of GOP candidates' airings identified their opponent in such a way. By contrast, the mean percentage of airings that mentioned the party label of their Democratic opponent in 1998 was less than two percent. Democrats, for their part, rarely referred to ideology at

[11] In an attempt to explain this disparity I removed African American majority-minority districts from the analysis. Even after doing so Democrats still aired more ads featuring the party label than did Republicans. Neither does it appear that Democrats run in districts that are more Democratic in their partisan leanings. If anything, Republican candidates aired ads in districts that are, on average, more favorable. As such, I must search for explanations elsewhere—explanations that might, perhaps, find roots in the idea that Democrats have long held a lock on very low turnout districts (the "cheap seats" according to James Campbell 1996).

all in their general election advertising, and as Jarvis (2005) also observes, have by and large refused to defend the liberal label. Some did, however, claim to be conservatives on the campaign trail. Once again, 1998 is exceptional in this regard, as the mean percentage of airings by Democratic candidates that mention conservatism hardly registers above zero in subsequent years. What is striking about the overall trends displayed in Figure 3 is that, 1998 notwithstanding, candidates aired fewer ads on average that made use of ideological rhetoric than they did ads featuring the party labels themselves.

Taken together, these findings suggest that candidates may employ partisan rhetoric in a strategic manner, as Democratic candidates seem to have done much to draw attention to their opponents' partisan affiliation in 2006. And in 1998, a year in which the GOP leadership expected to win big in the wake of the Monica Lewinsky scandal, Republicans similarly attempted to pin the liberal label on their Democratic opponents. These figures do not, however, say anything about the effects of incumbency, district partisanship, or the office being sought on candidates' use of the partisan symbols. It also remains to be seen whether the basic relationships highlighted above hold up in a multivariate framework.

I therefore estimated a series of multivariate regressions, running separate models for Republicans and Democrats. Table 1 displays results from a pair of quasi-binomial models predicting the proportion of ads aired that mention the favored candidate's own party and an accompanying pair of models predicting the proportion of ads featuring the opposing candidate's party label. I begin by focusing on the factors influencing the proportion of ads in which a candidate mentioned his or her own party. As hypothesized, incumbents were universally less likely to air ads mentioning their own party label. [12]

[12] Consistent with the idea that challengers are more comfortable with risk (see Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin 2009), and therefore and more likely to engage in partisan rhetoric on the campaign trail, *even in electoral*

[Insert Table 1 about here]

The models also bear out another one of my stated hypotheses, for district partisanship, as measured by the party's vote share in the district (or state) from the previous presidential election (in percent), is a positive and statistically significant predictor of the proportion of ads aired that feature the party label. That is, candidates running in districts where the partisan makeup is tilted in their favor air more ads highlighting their partisanship. This result holds even when controlling for the competitiveness of the race and whether the candidate was competing for an open seat.

Contrary to my expectations, the model estimates displayed in Table 1 demonstrate that Democrats, on average, were no more or less likely to mention the opposing candidate's party label in districts where the Democratic percentage of the presidential vote in the previous election was higher. Although the coefficient is signed in the hypothesized direction, it is not statistically significant. Republicans, conversely, were more likely to air ads mentioning the partisan affiliation of their opponent when running in a favorable electoral environment.

Although I did not develop explicit hypotheses regarding the effect of several other variables in the models, one result in particular stands out as being worthy of some comment, as candidates vying for an open seat are less likely across the board to use partisan symbols in their TV advertising. Democrats and Republicans alike shied away from mentioning their own party and their opponent's party in open seat races.

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environments that are believed to be unfavorable to their party, I re-estimated the models displayed in Table 1, this time including a series of year × incumbency interactions. Only in the model predicting Republican candidates' use of their Democratic opponent's party label in their TV advertising are any of these interactions statistically significant. In both 2002 and 2004, Republican incumbents were less likely than GOP challengers to mention their opponent's party label in their TV ads (see Table C in the Appendix). I also estimated a series of models that included an interaction term multiplying district partisanship with my indicator for incumbency status. In only one of the models is the interaction statistically significant ($p<0.10$). Contrary to the notion that challengers are willing to take greater risks on the campaign trail than are incumbents, Democratic challengers running in more consonant districts are more likely to mention their party label than are incumbents in the same partisan environment (see Table D in the Appendix).

With regard to the national factors driving candidates' use of partisan symbols, the results of the models displayed in Table 1 lend some measure of support to my hypotheses. Relative to 1998, the reference year in all of the models, Democrats aired a greater proportion of ads mentioning their party label in 2004 and in 2006, and ran more ads that drew attention to the party label of their Republican opponents in both 2002 and 2004. Although I did not expect to see differences between 1998 and 2004, I did expect to find differences in 2006. As for the Republicans, consistent with my expectations, GOP candidates were less likely to air ads in 2008 that mentioned their party label. Counter to my hypotheses, however, the estimates displayed in Table 1 indicate that, relative to 1998, Republicans were less likely to air ads featuring their party label in both 2000 and 2002. Most puzzling about the constellation of results displayed in the latter two columns of Table 1 is that Republicans were actually *more likely* to air ads featuring their party label in 2006—a year that I hypothesized would see Republicans drawing down their use of partisan symbols.

Although I fully expected Republicans to be less apt to invoke their party label in 2008, I did not expect to find a significant difference between 1998 and 2000, or between 1998 and 2002, as these were fairly similar elections in terms of the numbers of seats lost by the Republicans.[13] In 2002, the Republicans actually gained seats—one of the few mid-term elections where the party in control of the White House was able to do so. This surprising finding may reflect the difficulties inherent in attempting to infer candidates' beliefs about their electoral prospects prior to Election Day. As Butler and Stokes write, "rises and falls of party strength are often incomprehensible both to those whose fortunes most plainly depend upon them and to those whose profession it is to explain them" (1976, 2). Along these lines, GOP candidates in 2002 may have expected to pay a penalty for belonging to the president's party—as they have in nearly every mid-term election—but were instead

[13] In 1998 the Republicans lost five seats in the House while in 2000 they lost two seats.

surprised to find that the political winds were blowing in their favor come the day of the election. Another, perhaps more generalizable, explanation, has its roots in the fact that the GOP was the party in the White House throughout much of the time period under observation. Consistent with Krehbiel's (1998) observations, I might expect members of the president's party to distance themselves from the party label.[14] I go on to test this conjecture below.

Before doing so, however, I explicitly examine the impact of some of the national factors that have long been thought to affect candidates' chances at the polls on their willingness to use partisan labels on the campaign trail. Although using year dummies to capture the effects of national conditions on candidate strategy is appealing in some respects, on another level it is also deeply unsatisfying. In an effort to explore which, if any, aspects of the national political climate affect the strategic decisions that candidates make regarding whether to employ the party label in the campaign ads, I estimated a series of multi-level models that included random effects for presidential approval and the state of the national economy. My measure of presidential approval was sourced from the Roper Center Public Opinion Archive, and represents the average approval number of all of the polls conducted between January 1st and the day of the election in each year. Measures of the state of the economy were constructed from data released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Following Erikson (1990), I calculated three different measures of the state of the economy. Although each one captures change in per capita disposable income, they differ in the timing of the measurement of economic change. Specifically, I variously included Tufte's (1975), Jacobson and Kernell's (1983), and Born's (1986) preferred measures of income change in my models.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

[14] I also investigated the extent to which local partisan conditions interact with national factors by including a series of interaction terms multiplying district partisanship (as measured by the presidential vote) by each year dummy. Once again, I estimated separate models for Democrats and Republicans. The models are otherwise identical in specification to the ones displayed in Table 1. In neither set of models are any of the year × district partisanship interactions statistically significant (results not shown).

The results from a series of multi-level overdispersed binomial models (see the estimates displayed in Table 2) suggest that, while there is variance to be explained between years, economic change and presidential approval exert no direct effect on the intercept. A cross-level interaction that multiplies an indicator for whether the candidate is a member of the president's party by a measure of economic change, however, is significant no matter which measure [whether Tufte's (1975), Jacobson and Kernell's (1983), or Born's (1986)] is included in the model. The coefficient on the economic change × presidential party interaction is positively signed, suggesting that members of the presidential party are more likely to turn to partisan rhetoric in their campaign ads when the economy is better. Interestingly, the cross-level interaction multiplying presidential approval by the indicator for whether the candidate is a member of the presidential party is only significant when measures of economic change are omitted from the model (results not shown). Taken together, these results suggest that candidates from the president's party *do* respond to economic indicators, varying their use of partisan symbols and rhetoric accordingly.

It also seems likely that candidates also react to the institutional context in which they must campaign and the structure of partisan control in government. The set of quasi-binomial model estimates displayed in Table 3 explicitly address this possibility. I pool the Democratic and Republican subsets of the data and include in the models a series of indicators tapping 1) whether the candidate was a member of the president's party, 2) whether partisan control of the government was unified, and 3) an interaction term that captures the effect of being a member of the president's party during a period of unified government. Since I am no longer estimating separate models for Democrats and Republicans, I also include an indicator for party in the models. As expected, members of the president's party are, all else equal, less likely to air ads featuring their own party label. Most other variables perform much in the same way as they do in other models, with district partisanship driving up candidates' use of partisan symbols, while incumbency and open seat status

both decrease the likelihood that the favored candidate mentions his or her own party label during the campaign.

Lipinski's (2004) work finds that the primary factor driving how members discuss Congress as an institution in the messages that they send back to their districts is whether they are in the majority party. Here I show that the party that a member belongs to shapes more than just whether they "run for Congress by running against Congress," and affects the extent to which they are willing to tie themselves to their party's brand label in the context of a given race.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

One intriguing result to emerge from the models is the effect of unified government on candidates' use of their own party label. Unified government appears to encourage the use of partisan symbols on the campaign trail by those running for Congress (see also Lipinski 2004, 63-64). This finding helps to explain some of the more surprising results from the models detailed in Table 1. Recall that, relative to 1998, Democrats aired a greater proportion of their ads featuring their own party label in 2004. Republicans likewise were more likely to draw attention to their party label in 2006. The GOP enjoyed unified control over the reins of power in both years. Rather than shying away from partisan rhetoric during periods of unified government, then, candidates seem to run with their parties—a finding that holds even after controlling for candidate party. Indeed, in substantive terms, unified government exerts a greater impact on the probability of utilizing a partisan strategy than does either challenger status or belonging to the same party as the president (see Figure 4).

[Insert Figure 4 about here]

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Restricting the analysis just to incumbents and including members' party unity scores (obtained from Keith Poole's Voteview website) in the model reveals that, across a wide variety of

specifications, those with higher levels of party unity are less likely to air ads featuring their own party label than are those who exhibit lower degrees of party-line voting (see the model estimates displayed in Table 4). This intriguing result stands somewhat in contrast to Lipinski's (2004, 51) study in which he found that members who had higher "Majority Support Scores" were more likely to send positive messages about Congress to their constituents. It is entirely consistent, however, with the idea that candidates are strategic about the circumstances under which they employ partisan rhetoric, and are cognizant of the fact that a high degree of party support in Congress is an electoral liability (Carson et al. 2010).

Discussion and Conclusions

Most candidates are simultaneously individuals and members of political parties. Accordingly, they must make strategic decisions about the degree to which their campaign communications emphasize their party affiliation over their positions on policy items and personal attributes. Party government theories hold that the party label serves to link candidates together in partisan teams and functions as the basis for party discipline in Congress. Recent years have seen a number of tests of various aspects of party-centric accounts of legislative behavior (Woon and Pope 2008). Little attention, however, has been devoted to the question of whether candidates cleave to their party label on the campaign trail, in spite of the central role that it plays in Krehbiel's (1998) critique of party-theoretic accounts of lawmaking. And even though recent developments in the party brands literature (Grynaviski 2010) have been able to reconcile the observation that candidates attempt to distance themselves from their parties under certain circumstances with other key aspects of party-centric models of lawmaking, I have argued that the provision of partisan symbols on the campaign trail is nevertheless a subject worthy of some investigation.

For one, party labels function as brand names, and under the right conditions, are "useful to voters as predictors of legislative behavior" (Grynaviski 2010, 71). Given that the party label is

printed next to candidates' names on the ballots, it would, at first blush, appear to be of little consequence whether partisans running for Congress made any use of their party's label on the campaign trail. The vast literature on party cues, however, suggests that voters use party labels to evaluate the candidates well in advance of Election Day. As the authors of *The American Voter* famously noted, "merely associating the party symbol" with a candidate "encourages those identifying with the party to develop a more favorable image of his record and experience, his abilities, and his other personal attributes" (1960, 128). As such, I expect candidates running for the U.S. Congress to employ partisan symbols in circumstances when either national or local conditions favor their party and eschew them when their party is believed to be at a disadvantage.

Here I find support for the proposition that candidates are strategic about their use of party symbols. Without a doubt, candidates running in states or districts where the partisan composition of the electorate runs in their favor are more likely to air more ads that highlight their party affiliation. The opposite is true in situations where the partisan makeup of the constituency might be thought to tilt the tables against them—when the party label may appear as more of a hindrance than a valuable informational shortcut. My results are consistent with previous studies finding that district-level factors influence the content of candidates' campaign messages, although my data allow me to generalize these effects beyond a single election (e.g., Spiliotes and Vavreck 2002; Vavreck 2001).

The results of my study may also explain why party brand labels are especially beneficial to challengers (Grynaviski 2010; Woon and Pope 2008). Challengers, it seems, are more likely to trumpet their partisan connections, and therefore appear to gain the most from the informational shortcuts afforded by the party brand label. Along these same lines, I find that candidates running for an open seat are less likely to employ party symbols in their TV ads than are those in races where there is an incumbent—a finding that may go a long way toward explaining why contests for open

seats are actually "*less* responsive to national tides" (McGhee 2008, 734) than are races in which there is an incumbent. Absent partisan cues from the candidates in open seat races, voters are likely to pay greater attention to local matters or to the personal characteristics of the candidates themselves.

It also appears that members of the president's party downplay their connections with their party's label, while members of the "out" party are, for the most part, content to profit from the mistakes of the "ins" by avoiding partisan rhetoric except during periods of unified government. Voters' images of the party that does not control the White House are highly resistant to change (Campbell et al. 1960), and as a result, the "outs" (the Democrats during most of the period under observation here) may see attempts at "branding" the particular alternatives that they offer as a moot point (see also Groeling 2010, 167). At the same time, members of the incumbent party may believe it to be prudent to distance themselves from their party's label under most conditions (Krehbiel 1998).

Unified partisan control of Congress and the presidency, however, apparently changes the strategic calculus for candidates from both parties. From a normative perspective, this is perhaps the most intriguing result to emerge from the present investigation. Proponents of the responsible party ideal should rejoice in this fact, as politicians run with their parties when it should be clear to voters which partisan "team" is most responsible for the state of the nation (see also Lynch and Madonna forthcoming). Neither does it appear that the imperative to "brand" is limited to campaign rhetoric during periods of unified government. As Lynch and Madonna note in a recent piece, "When control is held by one party, it is easier for both majority and minority parties to pursue policies that are consistent with that party's traditional brand name" (forthcoming, 4).

Members of the presidential party face an uphill battle as they attempt to communicate a consistent partisan message to the electorate. This challenge may be particularly daunting during periods of unified partisan control (Groeling 2010, 10). That unified government appears to

promote the use of partisan symbols among those running for Congress from both parties suggests that candidates may attempt to overcome institutional obstacles to branding by using paid media (such as TV ads) to associate their campaign appeals with partisan symbols in a calculated attempt to activate the support of copartisans in the electorate. And as Lipinski (2004, 99) notes, members of the majority party may also believe that it is not possible to distance themselves from their copartisans during periods of unified government. Since their electoral prospects are almost certain to be affected by their party's record, candidates running under the aegis of the party that is in control of Congress and the presidency may hope to mobilize their base by campaigning with the brand.

Left unresolved by this study is whether candidates' strategic use of partisan symbols has any impact on the electorate. The results of several recent experimental investigations of the effect of partisan cues on individual voters' evaluations of the candidates certainly suggests that the provision of party labels on the campaign trail might matter a great deal (Lawrence, Binder, and Maltzman 2011; Tomz and Van Houweling 2009). Similarly, as Sharon Jarvis (2005, 220) speculates, the kind of ads in which partisan symbols are embedded are likely to influence how the electorate responds to such rhetoric. Attack ads, in particular, may serve to "sharpen partisanship" when they contain party cues.

Also unanswered by the present investigation is whether candidates are employing a winning strategy by being selective about the circumstances under which they use partisan rhetoric in their campaign communications. It could be that the potential gains that a candidate might see from obscuring their attachment to a particular party are effectively negated by losses among disaffected partisans who choose to stay home rather than vote for a candidate who does not share their enthusiasm for the party's label. Further work is surely needed to determine whether partisan

strategies offer candidates an edge in the electoral arena, and what effects these strategies might have on voters.

Finally, the particular tea leaves that candidates are reading when they decide whether to employ partisan symbols in the televised advertising remain opaque. To be sure, the partisan composition of the district in which a candidate is running matters a great deal, as do the circumstances surrounding the race itself. The institutional context in which they campaign also seems to factor into candidates' decisions about when to use party labels in their campaign advertising. There is some evidence to suggest that the state of the national economy may play a role as well, particularly among members of the presidential party. There are numerous other indicators, however, that might provide candidates with information about the likely efficacy of employing partisan symbols and rhetoric in their campaign communications. Public evaluations of Congress, or of the parties themselves, stand out as possible barometers that candidates might consult as they consider what kinds of cues afford them the best chance at winning. Only after further study of these and other factors will a more complete picture of candidates' strategic considerations with respect to the use of partisan symbols begin to emerge.

Table 1. Personal and Environmental Predictors of the Use of Partisan Symbols in Political Advertising, 1998-2008
(Quasi-Binomial Models)

	Democrats		Republicans	
	Favored Candidate	Opposing Candidate	Favored Candidate	Opposing Candidate
District Partisanship	0.064**	0.012	0.037**	0.039**
(Candidate's Party)	(0.015)	(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.020)
Competitiveness	-0.030	0.243**	-0.021	0.310**
	(0.110)	(0.121)	(0.114)	(0.130)
Open Seat	-0.696**	-0.574**	-0.654**	-0.691*
	(0.273)	(0.282)	(0.333)	(0.382)
Senate	-0.242	-0.141	-0.006	-0.545**
	(0.208)	(0.211)	(0.242)	(0.244)
Incumbent	-1.237**	-0.477*	-0.885**	-0.166
	(0.289)	(0.282)	(0.268)	(0.282)
Year 2000	-0.463	0.855	-1.599**	-0.969
	(0.508)	(0.721)	(0.632)	(0.678)
Year 2002	0.472	1.534**	-1.640**	-0.096
	(0.454)	(0.683)	(0.586)	(0.527)
Year 2004	1.409**	1.531**	0.111	-0.217
	(0.424)	(0.691)	(0.412)	(0.781)
Year 2006	0.953*	1.110	1.053**	-15.293
	(0.562)	(0.935)	(0.497)	(838.194)
Year 2008	-0.302	1.279	-1.246**	-0.092
	(0.418)	(0.650)	(0.453)	(0.489)
Constant	-5.723**	-5.662**	-4.216**	-6.027**
	(0.920)	(1.068)	(0.909)	(1.058)
N=	743	743	763	763

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.
The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each candidate's advertising featuring partisan symbols.

Table 2. Multi-Level Models Predicting Candidates' Use of Partisan Symbols
(Overdispersed Binomial Estimates)

Fixed Effects			
Level 1 Covariates			
Presidential Party	-3.274	-5.563*	-2.841
	(2.394)	(3.309)	(2.159)
Pres. Party × Income Change	69.875*	118.730**	53.186*
	(36.346)	(57.496)	(27.313)
Pres. Party × Presidential Approval	-0.019	-0.003	-0.023
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.015)
Level 2 Covariates: National Factors			
Income Change (Tufte)	-15.333	---	---
	(49.277)		
Income Change (Jacobson-Kernell)	---	-83.632	---
		(70.323)	
Income Change (Born)	---	---	-11.211
			(37.439)
Presidential Approval	-0.001	-0.008	-0.0001
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.0294)
Intercept	-4.039	-0.545	-4.176
	(3.320)	(3.792)	(3.065)
Random Effects			
Estimated Parameter Variance (Intercept)	0.988	0.954	0.952
χ^2	101.970**	100.359**	101.607**
df	3	3	3
Reliability Estimate	0.952	0.953	0.986
Groups=		6	
N=		1506	

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.
The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each candidate's advertising featuring his or her own party label.

Other level 1 covariates are not shown in the table, but each multilevel model includes the full complement of predictors from the model displayed in Table 2 in the paper, with the exception of the Unified Government variable and the Presidential Party × Unified Government interaction term.

Table 3. Unified Government, the Presidential Party, and the Use of Party Symbols in Political Advertising, 1998-2008
(Quasi-Binomial Models)

	Own Candidate	Opposing Candidate
District Partisanship	0.053**	0.027**
	(0.011)	(0.012)
Competitiveness	0.001	0.251**
	(0.078)	(0.086)
Open Seat	-0.708**	-0.570**
	(0.203)	(0.224)
Democrat	0.391*	0.180
	(0.222)	(0.226)
Senate	-0.157**	-0.301*
	(0.153)	(0.157)
Incumbent	-0.972**	-0.348*
	(0.189)	(0.188)
Presidential Party	-0.534**	-0.210
	(0.237)	(0.245)
Unified Government	1.312**	0.259
	(0.210)	(0.274)
Pres. Party × Unified Government	0.228	-0.419
	(0.348)	(0.447)
Time Trend	-0.129**	0.091*
	(0.050)	(0.047)
Constant	-5.174**	-5.676**
	(0.601)	(0.665)
N=	1506	1506

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.
The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each candidate's advertising featuring partisan symbols.

Table 4. Personal and Environmental Predictors of Incumbents' Use of Partisan Symbols in their Political Advertising, 1998-2008
(Quasi-Binomial Model)

District Partisanship	0.061**
	(0.025)
Competitiveness	0.027
	(0.150)
Party Unity Score	-0.048**
	(0.013)
Democrat	0.618*
	(0.321)
Senate	-0.116
	(0.293)
Year 2000	-1.618*
	(0.967)
Year 2002	-0.138
	(0.567)
Year 2004	0.449
	(0.543)
Year 2006	1.643**
	(0.603)
Year 2008	-0.646
	(0.516)
Constant	-2.817**
	(1.391)
N=	700

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.
The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each candidate's advertising featuring his or her own party label.

Figure 1
The Percentage of Candidates, Mean Number of Airings, and the Percentage of Airings Mentioning the Party Label

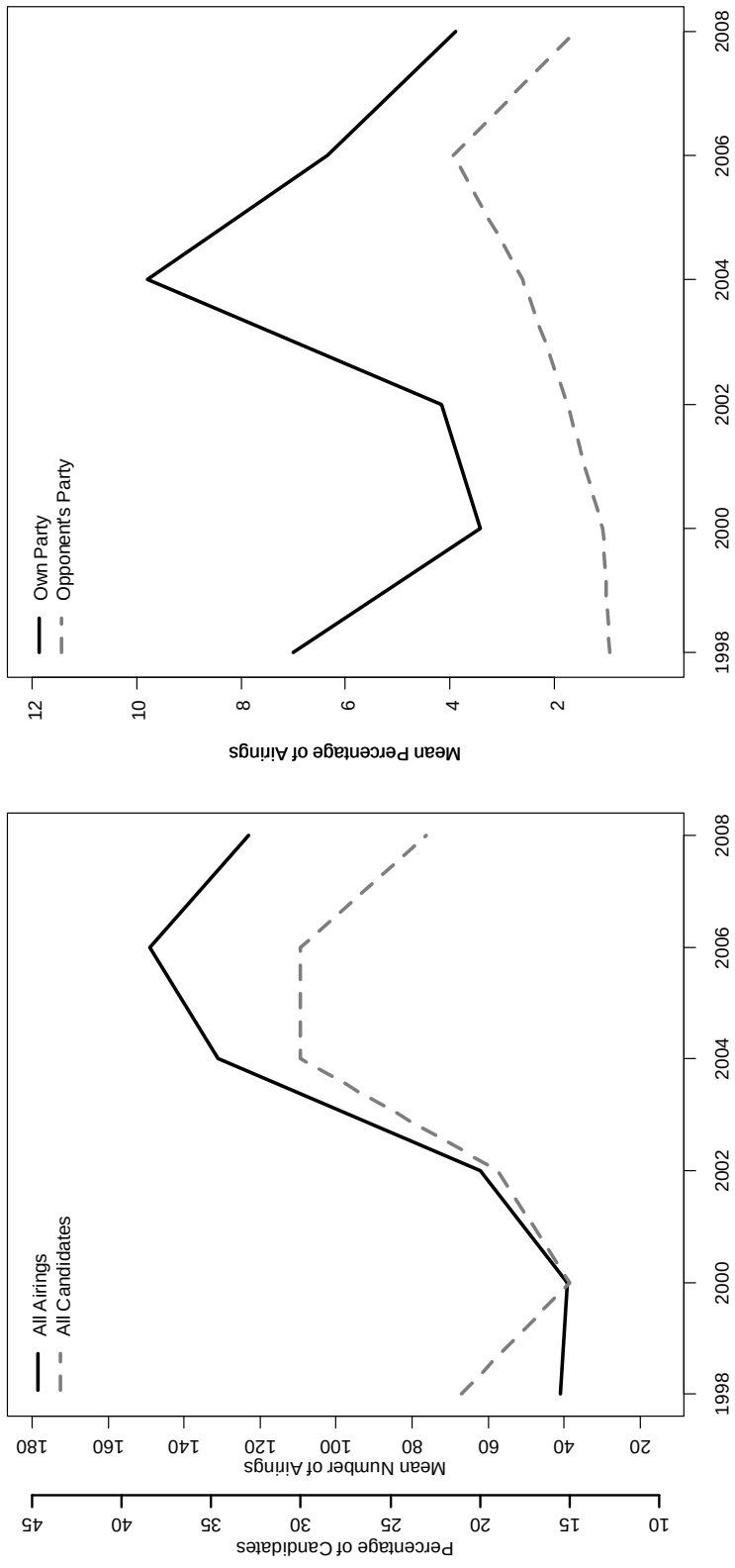


Figure 2
The Percentage of Candidates, Mean Number of Airings, and the Percentage of Airings Mentioning the Party Label, Broken Out by Party

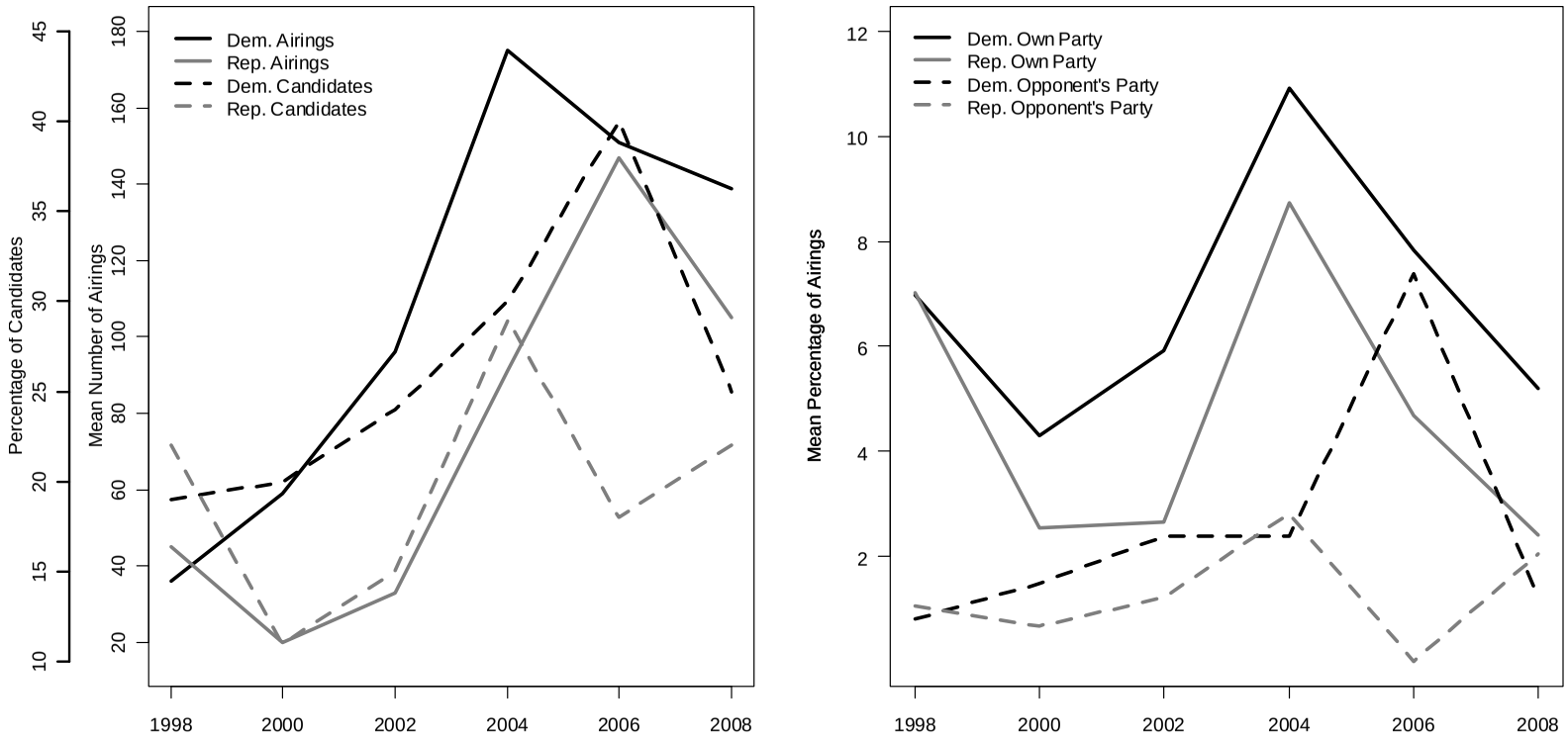


Figure 3
The Mean Percentage of Airings that Mention Ideology, by Party and Year

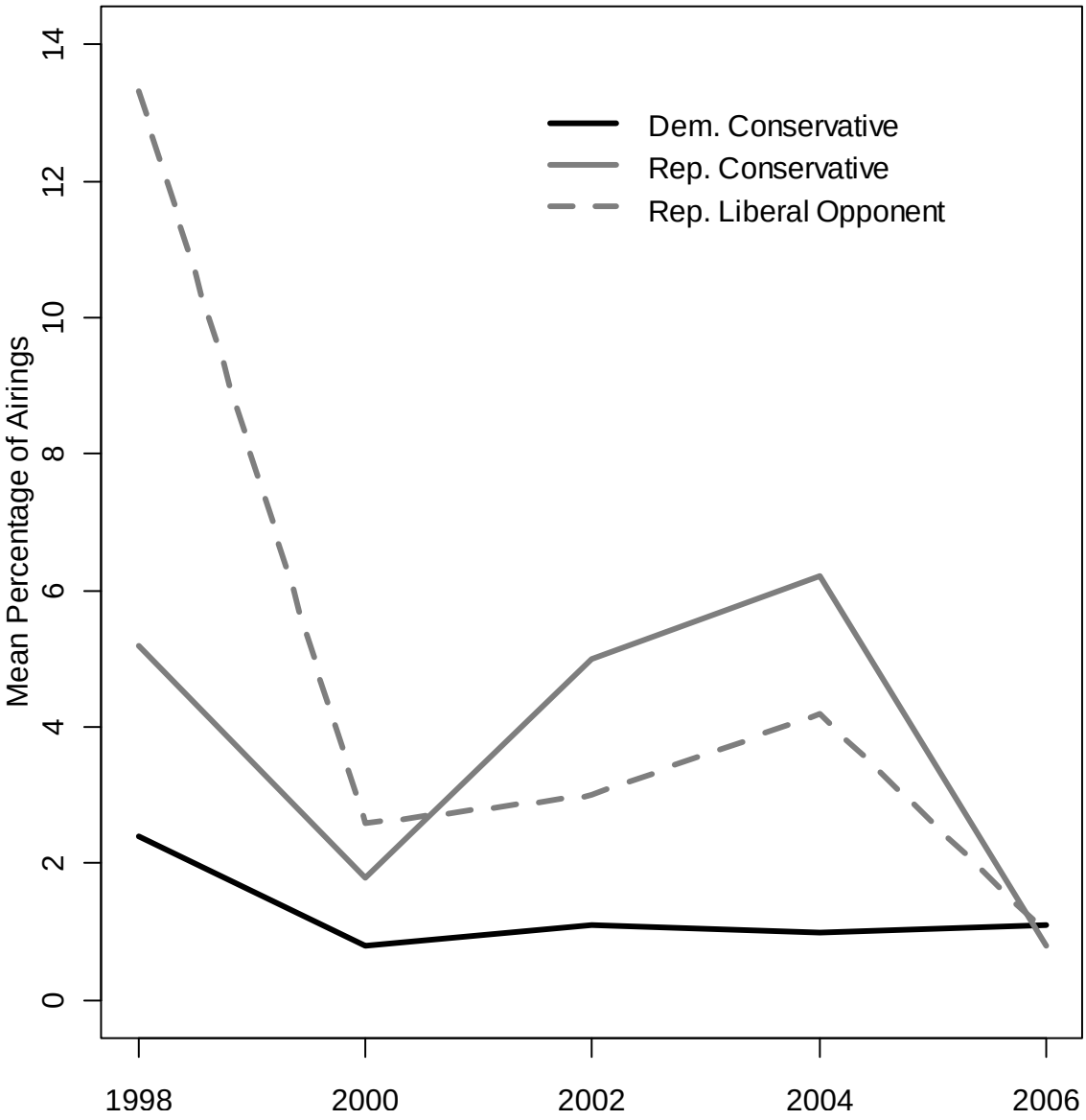
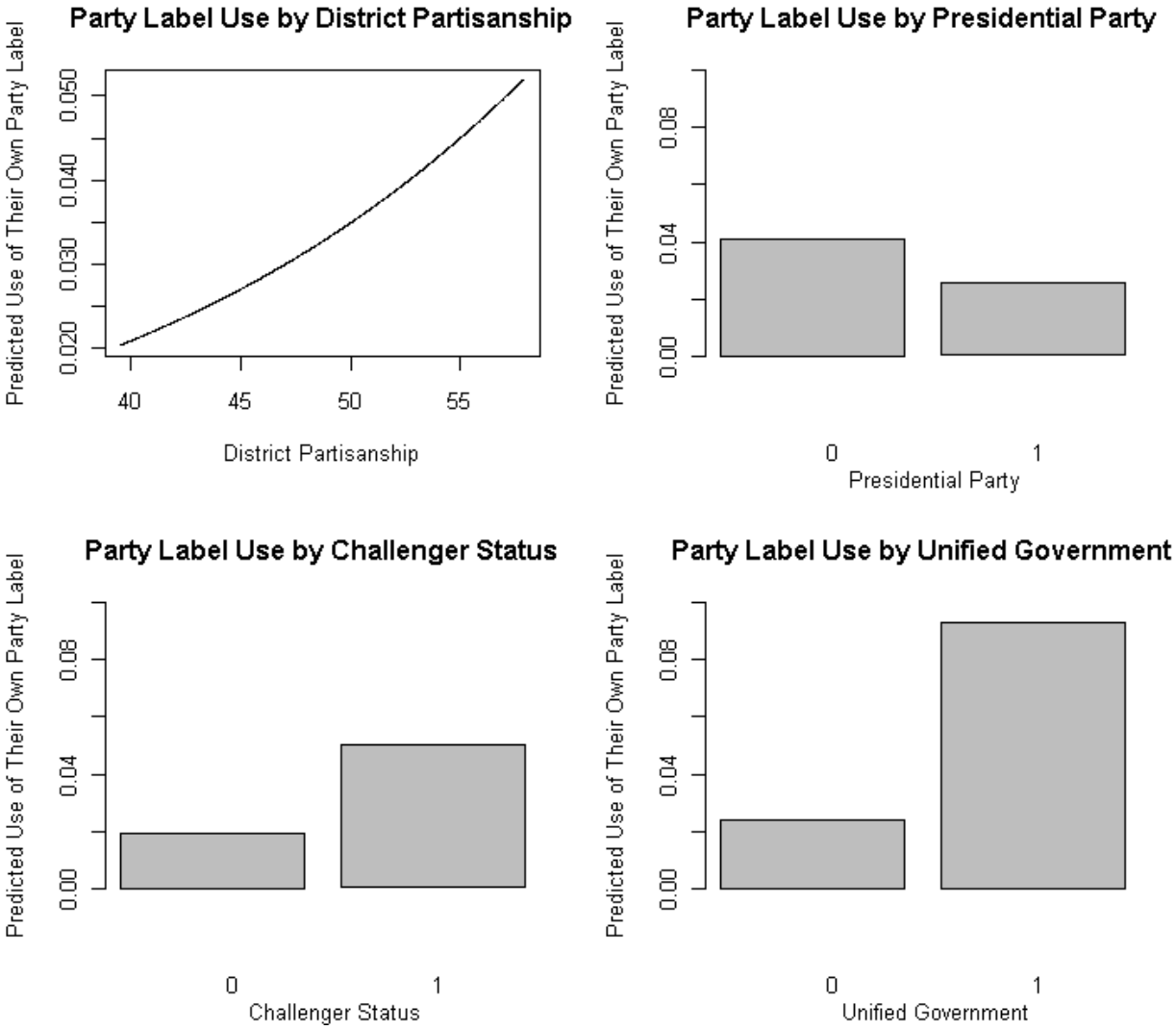


Figure 4
The Substantive Impact of Key Independent Variables on Candidate Use of Party Brand Labels



Appendix

Given that not every candidate airs TV ads, it is possible that studies using data on the content of candidates' campaign advertising to make inferences about campaign strategy in congressional races are subject to selection bias. Indeed, the specter of selection bias looms large in the background of much work on the content of candidates' campaign communications, and calls into question the validity of not only the present project, but of several other prominent studies on campaign strategy in congressional elections. A number of researchers have used data on campaign advertising in congressional races, from the Wisconsin Advertising Project and other sources, to explore the strategic considerations that congressional candidates make concerning the content of their campaign messages (Sides 2006, 2007; Spiliotes and Vavreck 2002; Sulkin 2009, 2011; Sulkin and Swigger 2008; Vavreck 2001). To my knowledge, however, only two studies note that there is any reason at all to be concerned about selection bias when using ad data to study campaign strategy in congressional races (Henderson 2012a; Tessin 2005). Only one of these studies (Tessin 2005) addresses the concern empirically, employing Tobit models that include controls for competitiveness and fundraising in the model specification.

Druckman and colleagues (2009) present evidence to the effect that advertising data is biased in certain key ways. In their determination, competitive and open-seat races are over-represented in the data on campaign advertising in congressional elections. They therefore make a pitch for using data on the content of candidates' websites to study campaign strategy, arguing that it is more representative of congressional races in terms of competitiveness and open seat status. In all of my models I control for both competitiveness and open seat status, which should help to alleviate concerns about selection bias (Tessin 2005).

I also address concerns about bias more directly through the use of Heckman selection models. My first step in doing so was to merge my dataset with Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin's

(2009) sample. Here I use only the data from 2002 and 2004. Although not a census of every candidate running for either the House or Senate, the Druckman et al. (2009) website data are admittedly more representative of the entire population of candidates running for Congress in those years, at least in terms of competitiveness. While not without biases of their own, these data afford me the opportunity to examine whether selection bias is a problem in studies that employ advertising data to study candidate strategy and, if so, whether it affects the conclusions that are drawn.

Table A in the Appendix presents estimates from a sample selection model predicting whether a candidate aired any TV ads in the first stage equation and the proportion of ads that mention their party's label in the outcome equation. I use logged fundraising by the candidate to predict whether he or she aired any TV ads. This variable does not appear in the outcome equation, and serves to aid in model identification. Before delving into estimates from these two equations, however, it is important to note that the estimate of rho generated from the model, which provides an indicator for whether the use of a sample selection model is necessary, is not statistically significant. I am therefore unable to reject the null hypothesis that rho is equal to zero, thereby providing no evidence at all in favor of the Heckman approach over simpler modeling strategies. Moreover, although some of the variables that are statistically significant in the models detailed in the paper appear to have no effect, it is possible that this discrepancy is a function of the loss of statistical power that resulted from trimming down my sample to include data from just two years. The variable that is significant in the outcome model (an indicator for Senate races) is correctly signed. The main take-away from the estimates displayed in Table A, however, is that rho is not statistically distinguishable from zero, thereby calling into question the necessity of sample selection models. This is true regardless of what particular complement of variables from the outcome equation are also included in the selection equation.

As I note above, the Druckman et al. (2009) data are from a sample of candidates in 2002 and 2004. Thus, while their data are closer to the population of interest than are my advertising data, at least in terms of the breakdown between competitive and non-competitive race, they are not altogether free from bias (see footnote nine in their APSR article). It is for this reason that I collected data on every major-party candidate running for congress in 2008. I combined data from the Swing State Project on the two party vote for president in 2004 in every state and district, fundraising data from the FEC, competitiveness ratings from the Cook Political Report (generously made available by Professor James Campbell), and the 2008 WiscAds data, as well as data from other sources, to examine whether selection bias is an issue. The Wisconsin Advertising Project collected data from every media market in the U.S. in 2008. When coupled with a census of every partisan candidate running for either a House or Senate seat in that same year, these data provide a more complete test of the proposition that selection bias is influencing my results (and, by extension, the results of many other studies of campaign strategy that use ad data in their investigations). In all, my new 2008 dataset includes 881 observations, 356 of which are uncensored.

The results from a Heckman selection model estimated using these data are displayed in Table B in the Appendix. Once again, rho is not statistically significant, thereby providing additional evidence *against* the use of selection models. Thus, even after taking into account any potential selection effects, the results of the outcome model are largely consistent with the findings that I highlight in the paper. Incumbents, for instance, air a lower proportion of ads featuring their party's brand label on average, while those running in districts that are more favorable in terms of their partisan composition air a higher proportion. I therefore conclude, based on the fact that rho is not statistically significant in either of the sample selection models and the similarity between the results of the outcome models and the results presented in the paper, that selection bias is not a grave concern.

Table A. Personal and Environmental Predictors of the Use of Partisan Symbols in Political Advertising in 2002 and 2004
(Heckman Selection Model)

	Selection Equation (Aired Ads: 0/1)	Outcome Equation (Prop. of Airings)
District Partisanship	-0.010	-0.00001
(Candidate's Party)	(0.007)	(0.0008)
Competitiveness	0.353**	0.003
	(0.080)	(0.006)
Open Seat	0.072	0.032*
	(0.234)	(0.018)
Senate	0.086	-0.027**
	(0.170)	(0.012)
Incumbent	-0.270	-0.016
	(0.188)	(0.014)
Democrat	0.095	0.0007
	(0.140)	(0.012)
Year 2004	-0.060	-0.006
	(0.142)	(0.012)
Logged Fundraising	0.316**	---
	(0.054)	
Constant	-3.714**	0.052
	(0.697)	(0.039)
Arctangent of Rho=	-0.206	
	(0.159)	
N=	425, 218 Uncensored	

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.

Table B. Personal and Environmental Predictors of the Use of Partisan Symbols in Political Advertising in 2008
(Heckman Selection Model)

	Selection Equation (Aired Ads: 0/1)	Outcome Equation (Prop. of Airings)
District Partisanship	-0.023**	0.003**
(Candidate's Party)	(0.005)	(0.0009)
Competitiveness	0.798**	-0.013
	(0.084)	(0.009)
Open Seat	0.669**	0.050**
	(0.218)	(0.023)
Senate	0.840**	-0.030
	(0.217)	(0.022)
Incumbent	0.222	-0.042**
	(0.145)	(0.019)
Democrat	0.047	0.026
	(0.105)	(0.016)
Logged Fundraising	0.166**	---
	(0.026)	
Constant	-1.746**	0.090
	(0.321)	(0.050)
Arctangent of Rho=	0.005	
	(0.121)	
N=	881, 356 Uncensored	

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.

Table C. Personal and Environmental Predictors of the Use of Partisan Symbols in Political Advertising, 1998-2008
(Quasi-Binomial Models with Year × Incumbent Interactions)

	Democrats		Republicans	
	Favored Candidate	Opposing Candidate	Favored Candidate	Opposing Candidate
District Partisanship	0.072**	0.009	0.037*	0.030
(Candidate's Party)	(0.016)	(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.019)
Competitiveness	-0.047	0.295**	-0.045	0.239*
	(0.110)	(0.129)	(0.122)	(0.133)
Open Seat	-0.844**	-0.605**	-0.651*	-0.830**
	(0.287)	(0.294)	(0.351)	(0.392)
Senate	-0.156	-0.078	-0.028	-0.646**
	(0.218)	(0.220)	(0.257)	(0.256)
Incumbent	-1.654*	-1.648	-0.855	2.689
	(0.968)	(1.883)	(0.647)	(1.817)
Year 2000	-0.512	0.773	-1.141	0.978
	(0.564)	(0.789)	(0.725)	(2.016)
Year 2000 × Incumbent	0.336	-0.131	-2.560	-2.354
	(1.406)	(2.393)	(2.730)	(2.176)
Year 2002	0.271	1.634**	-1.542**	2.650
	(0.538)	(0.756)	(0.746)	(1.824)
Year 2002 × Incumbent	0.976	-0.903	-0.313	-3.882**
	(1.105)	(2.179)	(1.222)	(1.946)
Year 2004	1.700**	1.052	0.195	2.665
	(0.484)	(0.794)	(0.541)	(1.824)
Year 2004 × Incumbent	-1.237	1.886	-0.259	-4.460**
	(1.147)	(1.968)	(0.783)	(1.994)
Year 2006	0.697	0.659	0.478	-12.737
	(0.654)	(1.118)	(0.804)	(1222.359)
Year 2006 × Incumbent	1.276	2.005	0.944	-3.232
	(1.345)	(2.402)	(1.033)	(1706.235)
Year 2008	-0.521	0.907	-1.322**	2.130
	(0.476)	(0.721)	(0.619)	(1.820)
Year 2008 × Incumbent	1.388	1.669	0.132	-2.603
	(1.052)	(1.915)	(0.796)	(1.854)
Constant	-6.077**	-5.383**	-4.162**	-7.692**
	(0.991)	(1.141)	(0.958)	(1.993)
N=	743	743	763	763

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.
The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each candidate's advertising featuring partisan symbols.

Table D. Personal and Environmental Predictors of Democrats' Use of Partisan Symbols in their Political Advertising, 1998-2008
(Quasi-Binomial Model with District Partisanship × Incumbent Interaction)

District Partisanship	0.080**
(Candidate's Party)	(0.019)
Competitiveness	-0.063
	(0.112)
Open Seat	-0.715**
	(0.277)
Senate	-0.231
	(0.212)
Incumbent	1.672
	(1.699)
DistPart × Incumbent	-0.060*
	(0.035)
Year 2000	-0.479
	(0.517)
Year 2002	0.518
	(0.464)
Year 2004	1.484**
	(0.435)
Year 2006	0.969*
	(0.572)
Year 2008	-0.255
	(0.427)
Constant	-6.487**
	(1.051)
N=	743

**p<.05; *p<.10. Standard errors in parentheses.
The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each candidate's advertising featuring his or her own party label.

Chapter 3. An Incomplete Failure: The Roosevelt Purge and Mass Support for Responsible Party Government

The president plays a major role in defining his party's collective image or "brand name" (Lee 2008), and is often thought to bear "a particular responsibility for…preserving the recognizable meaning of the party label" (Whittington and Carpenter 2003, 500). Recent scholarship has argued that President Franklin D. Roosevelt's attempted "purge" of conservative members of the Democratic Party was done to protect the informational value of the Democratic brand (Grynaviski 2010).[15] Reflecting his belief that the American party system ought to be made more responsible, Roosevelt campaigned against select conservatives within his own party during the 1938 primaries (Burns 1956; Dunn 2010; Fainsod 1948; Milkis 1999). Outwardly, at least, FDR hoped that his intervention in these races would hasten a reorganization of the major parties along ideological lines (Burns 1963; Dunn 2010; Milkis 1999; Savage 1991).

Roosevelt is generally believed to have failed in this endeavor. The key conservative Southern Democrats targeted by FDR's purge campaign easily won re-nomination to Congress. Moreover, in the aftermath of the attempted purge the two major parties would continue to play host to a wide array of ideological perspectives, with conservative Southern Democrats and liberal Western Republicans remaining on the political scene for years to come (Dunn 2010). As J.B. Shannon notes, Roosevelt's attempt at remaking a "political party in the form of political philosophy" (1939, 296) was unsuccessful. The triumph of conservative Democrats in the 1938

[15] More than 60 years ago, Merle Fainsod appears to have interpreted FDR's campaign to rid the Democratic Party of its most conservative elements in much the same way as Grynaviski (2010). Fainsod wrote that "Behind [the purge] was a conception of party responsibility which made the leadership as embodied in President Roosevelt the arbiter of party orthodoxy" (1948, 234; see also Freidel 1965). Quotes from Roosevelt himself would seem to support this view of the president's motives in launching the purge, as he is reported as having said the following: "I believe...that it is my duty as head of the Democratic party to see to it that my party remains the truly liberal party in the political life of America" (qtd. in Rosenman 1941, XXXVIII).

primaries alone would later prompt historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. to call the campaign "an almost complete failure" (qtd. in Price and Boskin 1966, see also Lowi 1985, Riker 1953, and Herring 1940).

Others, such as E.E. Schattschneider (1942; see also Price and Boskin 1966), viewed FDR's efforts, to varying degrees, as a success, and credited the purge with laying the foundation for a more liberal Democratic party (Dunn 2010; Savage 1991). Those who have argued that the purge succeeded on some levels have nevertheless been unable to marshal a great deal of evidence in support of their claims. The impact of the purge on public opinion toward the president's position, that is, that the parties should represent distinct ideological viewpoints, therefore remains unclear.

In this paper, I explore the effects of FDR's purge campaign on Americans' opinions regarding the structure of the two major political parties, and examine the extent to which presidents are able to shape the ideological character of their parties. Employing under-utilized public opinion data from this time period I weigh in on a number of the longstanding controversies that have surrounded the purge. Contrary to most accounts of this episode, I argue that FDR's efforts likely did have an impact on mass attitudes toward the idea of responsible party government.[16] Specifically, I hypothesize that FDR neutralized opposition to ideological parties in states where he campaigned the most. Those who bore witness to the campaign were caught between their resentment of FDR's intervention in local matters and their overall positive evaluations of the president himself, and subject to counterarguments from the senators targeted by the purge. I forward the argument that, as a results of such cross-pressures, survey respondents from those states wherein Roosevelt waged his most concerted efforts at persuasion grew more ambivalent about the prospect of a reorganization of the two major political parties that would place liberals in one party and conservatives in the other.

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[16] Throughout this chapter I will use the labels "programmatic," "ideological," and "responsible" interchangeably when describing this particular arrangement of the parties.

Scholarly investigations of the purge episode have largely employed evidence from the historical record in their efforts to assess the long-term impact of Roosevelt's actions on the nature and health of the American party system (Dunn 2010; Grynaviski 2010; Lowi 1985; Milkis 1993, 1999; Savage 1991). Missing from previous examinations of FDR's efforts has been any attempt to explore the effects of the campaign on public opinion, beyond speculations based on vote returns from the primaries (Shannon 1939). I contend, however, that the purge may have had important effects on popular perceptions of the parties. To test my hypothesis, I exploit the leverage afforded by the fortuitous timing of two Gallup surveys, coupled with the targeted nature of FDR's campaign, to assess the effect of the purge on its intended targets. Roosevelt did not campaign, or at least did not campaign seriously, against conservative Democrats in all states, but rather he strategically targeted which members of Congress he would go after. Using public opinion data collected just prior to and immediately following FDR's campaign, I identify the effect of FDR's efforts on support for programmatic political parties among those who lived in states that were targeted by the campaign.

I begin by providing an overview of FDR's purge campaign and detailing the ways in which existing scholarship serves to guide the present inquiry. I then turn to a detailed analysis of survey data collected by Gallup (AIPO) in April and September of 1938. Finally, I explore the ways in which my findings speak to the emerging literature on party brands (Grynaviski 2010; Snyder and Ting 2002) and the continuing debate over the effects of presidential rhetoric on public opinion (e.g., Edwards 2003; Kernell 1997). In doing so, I join a growing number of scholars who have sought to combine behavioral and historical analyses to good effect, often fundamentally changing our collective understanding of political development in the American context (see Schickler 2013).

Re-Evaluating the Effects of FDR's Purge

Frustrated by continued resistance to key pieces of New Deal legislation from conservative members of his own party, Roosevelt resolved to intervene in select Democratic primaries on behalf of liberal candidates (Milkis 1993). FDR was convinced that, in the wake of his victory in the 1936 presidential election, conservative Democrats were out of step with voters (Grynaviski 2010). Thus, emboldened by what he saw as a resounding mandate for liberal policies from the American public, Roosevelt, over the objections of some of his closest advisors, promised to take part in the upcoming primaries in "instances where there may be a clear issue between candidates for a Democratic nomination" (qtd. in Riker 1953) regarding the liberal principles articulated in the 1936 Democratic Party platform. To this end FDR formed an "elimination committee" dedicated to the task of purging conservatives from the Democratic Party (Milkis 1993).

FDR waged his campaign to fashion a more liberal Democratic Party by taking his message of party responsibility straight to the voters. Rather than work through the party organization, as Woodrow Wilson had done in his own attempt at clarifying the Democratic "brand," FDR appealed to the court of public opinion directly—a move that is widely believed by many commentators to have been a mistake (Burns 1956; Dunn 2010; Milkis 1993). During a "fireside chat" on June 24th, 1938, Roosevelt outlined his intention to intervene in the upcoming primaries in support of liberal candidates. Here he articulated his hope that those who were taking part in the primaries would "consider the fundamental principles for which his or her party is on record. That makes for a healthy choice between the candidates of the opposing parties on election day in November." He continued by saying that "An election cannot give a country a firm sense of direction if it has two or more national parties which merely have different names but are as alike in their principles and aims as peas in the same pod" (qtd. in Grynaviski 2010, 196). After this announcement FDR embarked upon a series of campaign stops designed to secure the nomination of pro-New Deal Democrats

and clear the way for a more liberal Democratic Party (Dunn 2010; Grynaviski 2010; Milkis 1993, 1999; Riker 1953).

Roosevelt "threw every ounce of the administration's political weight...into local campaigns in an effort to purge his foes" (Burns 1956, 377). Though there is some disagreement among historians as to the particular states in which Roosevelt was "serious" about campaigning against conservative Democrats, most have identified five states—Kentucky, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Georgia, and Maryland—as his primary targets (Burns 1956; Dunn 2010; Key 1964; Price and Boskin 1966; Riker 1953; Savage 1991). There were other campaign stops, to be sure, but it was in these five states that the president made a concerted effort to "purge" conservative Democrats or protect pro-New Deal incumbents against insurgents on the right.[17] Moreover, it was in speeches and press conferences in these states that Roosevelt most directly sought to connect his endorsement of liberal Democrats with the idea of party responsibility (see Rosenman 1941).

Among the more notable early campaign stops on his "purge" tour were Kentucky and Oklahoma—defensive actions on the president's part calculated to drum up support for pro-New Deal incumbents facing primary challenges from more conservative elements of the party. Unlike his appearances during some of his very first campaign stops, which had members of the press wondering if he was going to make good on his promise to take a stand in the Democratic primaries, FDR "pulled no punches" in Kentucky (Burns 1956, 361), where in a pair of campaign stops he highlighted the need for senators who hold "a national point of view." Roosevelt also spoke more directly of the advantages of responsible parties, remarking that: "We in this country operate principally through what we call the party system. We so operate because we believe that party system eliminates a large part of the confusion which would result from a complete lack of party

[17] Careful examination of *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Vol. 7* (Rosenman 1941) reveals that, in all but one of his public appearances in the five targeted states under examination here, FDR addressed the issue of party responsibility in some fashion.

leadership" (qtd. in Rosenman 1941). In Oklahoma, FDR also addressed to the ideological questions that he believed were at stake in the primaries, and underscored his position that primary voters in the state needed to nominate New Deal liberals to the Democratic ticket (Dunn 2010). His efforts in these states appear to have worked, as his favored candidate in both races succeeded in gaining the party's nomination.

"Emboldened by his successes" in Kentucky and Oklahoma, Roosevelt steered his purge campaign Southward and toward "his number-one target, the doughty and influential Senator Walter George of Georgia" (Burns 1956, 362). In Georgia, Roosevelt made a number of statements in support of responsible party government. In one such statement FDR argued that "To carry out my responsibility as President it is clear that there should be cooperation between members of my own party and myself. That is one of the essentials of a party form of government" (Fainsod 1948, 324). Then in South Carolina, after initially keeping his distance from the primary contest, Roosevelt stepped into the arena—just two days prior to the August 30 primary in the state. As he had done in Georgia, FDR argued that the two candidates vying for the Democratic nomination represented "entirely different political schools of thought" (qtd. in Dunn 2010, 187).

Following his appearances in the Deep South, Roosevelt once again turned his attention to a border state and "stumped intensively in Maryland for two days" against the conservative Senator Tydings in early September (Burns 1956, 363). His stop in Maryland was to be the last on his purge tour. FDR began his campaign in the state by highlighting a *New York Post* editorial that railed against Senator Tydings. Roosevelt read the piece aloud to reporters and endorsed its contents. The article responded to criticisms of Roosevelt's intervention in "local" matters, supporting the president's campaign on the grounds that the continued existence of conservative Democrats might cause great confusion among voters. Indeed, the defense of Roosevelt's actions offered by the editorial argued that the president, as the titular head of his party, ought to be permitted to

determine its ideological character and direction (Milkis 1999). Later, while stumping in Maryland in support of the pro-New Deal candidate, FDR continued to justify his intervention, arguing that "Any man—any political party—has a right to be honestly [liberal or conservative]. But the Nation cannot stand for the confusion of having him pretend to be one and act like the other" (Grynaviski 2010, 202).

In spite of these efforts, in Maryland and elsewhere, Roosevelt-supported candidates were bested at the polls in Georgia, South Carolina, and Maryland. An article in the September 26th, 1938 issue of *TIME* magazine, for instance, declared FDR's efforts to have been "a bust" in the wake of the stunning third-place finish of his favored candidate in the Georgia primary. In addition, the failed campaign against conservative Democrats is commonly thought to have had a number of other deleterious consequences for FDR and the Democratic Party (see Key 1964; Schickler 2013). Perhaps most importantly, the perceived failure of the purge is believed to have convinced Roosevelt to abandon his efforts at building a national, programmatic Democratic party (Milkis 1993, 1999), and dissuaded future presidents from taking similar measures to purify their parties. Reminded by their advisors of FDR's failure, Presidents Kennedy and Johnson ultimately decided against undertaking anything resembling a purge, in spite of their own problems with dissident elements within their own party (Milkis 1999).[18]

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[18]Through the party apparatus, Truman engaged in a purge of his own, as the Democratic National Committee (DNC) ultimately ousted five Southern Democrats from the party's ranks in the summer of 1949. Truman was careful, however, not to make public statements expressing his displeasure with the Dixiecrats (Savage 1997). Eisenhower, too, is believed to have contemplated undertaking an effort to reshape the Republican Party to more closely resemble the presidential program (Seligman 1966). Nixon seems to have considered something like a purge as well. It would be some time, however, before party activists would succeed in pushing the parties in a more ideological direction through the primary process (Milkis 1984; see also Dunn 2010). While political parties may be resurgent along a number of different dimensions, even recent years have seen presidents refusing to undertake efforts at purifying the ideological character of their parties. Presidents have been reluctant to back ideologically "pure" candidates over more moderate opponents in primary contests. George W. Bush, for instance, backed Arlen Specter over Pat Toomey in

Faced with continued resistance to key elements of his New Deal program from within the Democratic Party, and his seeming inability to purge dissident members in the primaries, most observers argue that Roosevelt turned to unilateral executive action in the pursuit of his liberal initiatives (Milkis 1993, 1999). Roosevelt's reliance on governing through administration, rather than the party apparatus, is in turn credited with setting the stage for what Lowi (1985) called the "plebiscitary presidency," and giving rise to an era of candidate-centered politics that would relegate parties to the periphery in the coming years (Milkis 1993, 1999; Seligman 1966).

The long-term effects of Roosevelt's purge on the American party system have received a great deal of scholarly attention (Dunn 2010; Lowi 1985; Milkis 1993, 1999), while its immediate effects on public opinion—the proximate target of the campaign—have gone largely unexamined. The electoral success of conservative Democrats in the primaries seems to have been enough for observers such as E. Pendleton Herring to declare that "the purge failed both as a disciplinary measure and as a device for clarifying opinion" (1940, 222). What little work has sought to gauge Americans' reactions to FDR's campaign has found the purge to have been extremely unpopular (Price and Boskin 1966).

Much of this research, however, has focused exclusively on Americans' attitudes toward the purge itself. As such, these studies did not consider whether FDR was able to move public opinion with respect to the need for more "responsible" parties. I argue, however, that this is one key benchmark by which we should gauge the success of his plan, as Roosevelt presented the public with a vision of an American party system comprised of two distinctive parties organized along ideological lines—one for liberals, and the other for conservatives (Milkis 1999). And while there has been much dispute over the true motives behind FDR's attempted purge (Burns 1963; Dunn 2010;

2004, while in 2008 Barack Obama backed Specter (after his switch to the Democratic Party) over his primary opponent Joe Sestak.

Grynaviski 2010; Milkis 1993; Savage 1991), at least on the campaign trail Roosevelt's stated aim was to prevent the two great parties from becoming "merely Tweedledum and Tweedledee" (qtd, in Milkis 1993, 94).

I expect to find that the purge did have an effect on mass attitudes toward the idea of more responsible parties, particularly since Roosevelt waged much of his campaign for more responsible parties in a part of the country where he could count on a great deal of public support.[19] In spite of the overwhelming support that Roosevelt enjoyed throughout the South, it is there where his efforts to purge Democratic members of the conservative coalition "went awry" according to most historians (Freidel 1965, 2). Looking at the returns from the Democratic primaries in which Roosevelt attempted to intervene, such a conclusion seems wholly warranted (though see Shannon 1939). It strains credulity to conclude, however, that a wildly popular president like Roosevelt, after taking a stand on the need for more programmatic political parties, nevertheless had absolutely no impact on mass attitudes toward the party system. Rather, it seems more likely that FDR's commitment to party responsibility, short-lived though it was (Milkis 1999), helped to shape public opinion with respect to the parties, if only in those locales where he presented the strongest case for party reform. Others have found that elite actors can affect popular perceptions of institutions such as the Court (Caldeira 1987) and the parties (Cavari 2009). Spurred on by such findings, in this paper I re-examine the episode that Schattschneider described as "one of the greatest experimental tests of the nature of the American party system ever made" (1942, 163). In doing so, I explore its effects on mass support for the idea of responsible parties—a topic that has, surprisingly, received very little attention from party scholars (though see Dennis 1966).

FDR's Campaign for Greater Party Responsibility and the Survey Response

[19] In the summer of 1938, 67 percent of southerners approved of the job that FDR was doing as president. Roosevelt was particularly beloved in Georgia, "where almost three-quarters of the people supported their president" (Dunn 2010, 153; Shannon 1939).

Kernell notes that Roosevelt's "interest in public opinion was motivated by a need to anticipate and, when possible, to neutralize the representatives of interested publics who might oppose his programs" (1997, 24). Subsequent scholarly investigations of the effects of presidential leadership on public opinion, however, have found that the chief executive is rarely effective in moving poll numbers (see Edwards 2003). Responding to this seeming disconnect, a number of revised theories of presidential opinion leadership have surfaced of late. These theories emphasize the conditional, even localized, nature of the president's ability to affect changes in mass opinion (see Cameron and Park 2011; Cavari 2009; Cohen 2010; Cohen and Powell 2005; Rottinghaus 2009; Tedin, Rottinghaus, and Rodgers 2011).

Recent work in this vein suggests that one reason why it has proven so difficult to assess the impact of presidential rhetoric on public opinion is that other elite actors often mobilize in opposition to the president's position, thereby making it appear as if the president had very little impact on mass attitudes. After all, as they note, presidents often "go public" in a crowded information environment, studded with opposing voices.

Presidents are also strategic about the circumstances in which they try to influence mass opinion, frequently entering into the fray in situations where they face stiff opposition or certain counter-mobilization from other political actors. The "contested opinion" theory that Cameron and Park (2011) forward, then, suggests that presidents often times may have actually done worse had they not made an attempt to sway the public. In this way, "contested opinion" theories of presidential opinion leadership share much in common with the literature on campaign spending by congressional incumbents, as many such studies have uncovered a negative relationship between campaign expenditures and vote share. It seems highly unlikely that spending actually *causes* candidates to do worse at the polls. Rather, the oft-encountered negative correlation between spending and vote share is the result of strategic calculations on the part of endangered incumbents,

who may have lost the race (or lost by an even greater margin) had they not poured money into the campaign. Much the same is true of presidents who address the public in the hopes of swaying opinion in an environment that is rife with conflicting views.

FDR argued his case for more responsible political parties before the court of public opinion in just such a contested atmosphere. He faced an uphill battle in convincing a public long accustomed to a decentralized party system that a radical reorganization of the political parties along ideological lines was necessary. Moreover, the targets of Roosevelt's purge were not content to let their president accuse them of not being team players, and fought back against FDR's efforts; each of the conservative Democrats marked for purging made a number of speeches denouncing FDR's involvement in the primary campaigns and defending their claims to the Democratic label (Dunn 2010; Savage 1991). Even in an area of the country where Roosevelt was highly popular, then, support for the idea of more programmatic parties may not have increased *per se*. Instead, FDR may have succeeded only in neutralizing opposition to proposals to reorganize the parties along ideological lines rather than in creating support for his position. The purge campaign therefore represents something of a critical case (see Flyvbjerg 2006) for theories of presidential opinion leadership that focus on the differential effect of the president's public pronouncements on the electorate.

Following this line of reasoning, I contend that Roosevelt's campaign is unlikely to have moved survey respondents to outright adopt the president's position on the need to restructure the party system. Instead, I expect that the purge increased the propensity for survey respondents in those states that FDR targeted in his campaign to register "no opinion" on the matter. As Berinsky writes in *Silent Voices* (2004), "The balance of the volume and salience of elite discourse on a particular issue can greatly influence the ability of citizens to form coherent judgments on political matters." "Where elite rhetoric gives strong expression to interpretations on all sides of a given

controversy," he continues, "no particular set of predispositions will be advantaged over any other" (28-29; see also Alvarez and Brehm 2002, 60). The end result, in situations like the ones that Berinsky describes, is that survey respondents who are subject to such cross-pressures are more likely to hold competing considerations on the issue at hand (policy or otherwise), thereby pushing them towards a state of ambivalence and increasing the incidence of "don't know " and "no opinion" responses to survey items (see Treier and Hillygus 2009). This is precisely the pattern that I expect to find here: respondents in states targeted by the purge campaign likely grew more ambivalent about the prospect of reorganizing the party system along ideological lines. The tensions created by exposure to messages from competing political elites during the purge campaign, coupled with the cross-pressures arising from their support for the president generally, and their countervailing resentment of his intervention in local primaries, pulled respondents in targeted states in different directions, thereby reducing their ability to take a position on the issue.

Recent theoretical work on presidential opinion leadership serves to guide the present investigation into the effects of FDR's purge on public opinion in another respect. That is, consistent with the view that presidents may meet with more success by "going local" than they otherwise might by "going public" on a broader scale (Cohen 2010), it seems likely that survey respondents in the five states in which FDR campaigned most vigorously should have moved in the president's direction. While early studies of presidential opinion leadership examined changes *in aggregate opinion*, there is reason to believe that presidents may be more effective at swaying public attitudes toward their position among select subparts of the population. As Tedin, Rottinghaus, and Rodgers observe, "Looking at the sample as a whole makes the questionable assumption that it is the public in general rather than certain groups that are most affected by White House efforts to persuade" (2011, 507).

After describing the data and methods employed in this study in greater detail, I therefore examine the possibility that FDR's purge had a differential effect on public opinion. In the conclusion to his study of public opinion during the "Court Packing" episode, Caldeira questions whether Roosevelt had a greater effect among "his loyalists and in parts of the nation more sympathetic to the New Deal" (1987, 1150). Previous investigations of the purge, and other similar episodes where FDR attempted to change popular attitudes regarding the structure and organization of core political institutions, did not investigate the prospect that opinion toward such reforms might differ among segments of the population (though see Price and Boskin 1966). What follows, therefore, is an in-depth investigation of whether FDR succeeded in moving opinion among particular subsets of the populace. While at first blush it may appear as though "Roosevelt's campaigning had no significant effect" (Riker 1953, 291), closer examination may reveal that the purge had a differential impact on the public, removing opposition to a reorganization of the party system in America that would place liberals in one party and conservatives in another.

Data and Methods

In an effort to examine the short-term effects of Roosevelt's purge on mass support for more programmatic political parties, I turn to a pair of polls conducted by Gallup (AIPO) in April and September of 1938.[20] Each survey asked respondents whether or not they thought that the time had come to "give up our present political parties and have two new ones: One for Conservatives, the other for Liberals."[21] Though hardly ideal, this measure does have a number of virtues, chief

[20] Descriptive statistics are displayed in Table A in the Appendix, which shows the mean and standard deviation of many key demographic and attitudinal variables employed in the models as controls. There are some minor differences between the pre-purge and the post-purge samples. Respondents from the post-purge survey, for instance, exhibited higher mean levels of identification with a particular ideology, support for FDR, and urbanicity. Overall, however, the two groups of respondents look very similar.

[21] One possible objection to the use of this question to gauge public attitudes toward the idea of responsible political parties is that the meanings of the terms "liberal" and "conservative" were very much contested during this time period, as Hoover and other political adversaries of the president often sought to reclaim

among them being that it was asked on multiple surveys throughout this time period, all of which used the same question wording.[22] This measure likely represents a remarkably conservative estimate of Americans' support for more programmatic parties, as it asks respondents about whether they would support a proposal to create two entirely new parties. As one early study pointed out, "voters identify with existing parties," and are surely reluctant to give them up no matter what their feelings might be about the existence of both liberal and conservative elements within the same party (Smith and Davis 1947, 239). Since I am examining change in Americans' attitudes toward the party, however, baseline support for responsible parties matters somewhat less in this formulation.

This measure only taps one dimension of the responsible-party model: ideological homogeneity. Proponents of the "doctrine of responsible party government" also highlight centralized leadership and disciplined behavior, in addition to ideological homogeneity, as aspects of the responsible party ideal (see Dennis 1966; Grynaviski 2010).[23] Recent work on party ideological brand names, though, underscores the importance of this particular component of the responsible-party model for voter competence. According to such accounts, ideologically homogenous parties are thought to reduce uncertainty about the policy preferences of individual candidates and

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these labels and press them into service in the pursuit of their own goals. There is cause to believe, however, that by the time of the purge the public had come to understand such terms in light of Roosevelt's preferred interpretation (see, in particular, Green 1987, Ch. 5; Schickler 2013). After 1935 Roosevelt ramped up his use of ideological rhetoric, and as the public became increasingly aware of the crisis looming in Europe, they began to see politics in terms of the "traditional European 'left to right' linear spectrum" which was bounded by conservativism on one end and liberalism on the other (Green 1987, 133).

[22] Indeed, contrary to the idea that FDR's focus on party responsibility during the campaign prompted Gallup to ask survey respondents about whether they wanted to form new, more ideological, parties, Gallup asked the same question on two previous surveys, one administered in May of 1936 and the other conducted in August of 1937.

[23] To be sure, the "ideal of responsible parties" is certainly not without its critics (see, most prominently, Turner 1951). In this chapter, I remain agnostic about the desirability, or even the practicality, of such an arrangement of the political parties.

encourage "correct" voting (Grynaviski 2010; Levendusky 2009), thereby making this component alone worthy of some study.

In addition to this measure of popular support for more programmatic parties, the Gallup data contain a number of other variables that might serve as important predictors of Americans' attitudes toward the party system. These include measures of support for FDR, a rough proxy for ideology, intended congressional vote choice in 1938, as well as a variety of demographic predictors that I use primarily to deal with any potential biases created by quota sampling (Berinsky 2006). Unfortunately, a measure of party identification is not available in both surveys, and was only asked in the September survey. However, congressional vote choice, which is available at both time points, is highly correlated with party identification, and likely serves to capture the same underlying attitudes.[24] Schickler (2013) employs the same strategy in recent work utilizing the early Gallup surveys.

I estimated a series of multinomial logistic regressions in analyzing these data.[25] The first part of my analysis examines the correlates of support for more responsible parties both before and after the purge campaign. The second part takes advantage of the timing of the two surveys to explore the effects of Roosevelt's campaign on public support for more programmatic parties. Gallup asked respondents about the prospect of a reorganization of the parties that would place conservatives in one party and liberals in another in two consecutive surveys—one administered several months before FDR's announcement of the purge, and one conducted two months after the fireside chat in which he revealed his plans to intervene in select Democratic primaries and just after key 1938

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[24] For instance, the tetrachoric correlation between Republican identification and intention to vote for the GOP candidate for Congress in 1938 is .97. Nearly 91 percent of Republican identifiers registered their intention to cast their ballot for the GOP candidate, while 92 percent of Democrats similarly indicated that they would be voting for their party's nominee in the upcoming general elections.

[25] There is no evidence that any of the models violate the Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives (IIA) assumption (Long and Freese 2006; see also Dow and Endersby 2004).

Democratic congressional primaries and the close of Roosevelt's campaign. The fortuitous timing of these surveys affords a degree of causal leverage in identifying the impact of the purge on public opinion.

I therefore employ a nonlinear difference-in-differences approach (Athey and Imbens 2006; Hanmer 2009; Puhani 2008), using a dataset constructed by pooling the two Gallup surveys conducted before and after the purge episode. Although this method is most frequently encountered as an application of panel data, here I use pooled cross-sectional data on individuals to make inferences about the effects of FDR's purge on mass support for programmatic parties. This approach has been used to good effect in previous studies to examine the impact of different electoral laws on voter turnout (Hanmer 2009) and the impact of presidential rhetoric on public opinion (Cavari forthcoming). With this setup, the treatment group consists of respondents from the five states in which FDR seriously campaigned against conservative Democrats, carrying with him a message of party responsibility.[26] In addition to the treatment indicator, the model also includes a time dummy that switches on for observations obtained after Roosevelt undertook his purge campaign, an interaction term that multiplies the two, plus the controls described above.

Results

Before moving on to examine the effects of FDR's purge on public opinion and the correlates of support for more responsible parties, it is worth examining some aggregate patterns over this time period in the percentage of respondents answering "yes" to the question of whether two new parties—one for liberals and the other for conservatives—should be formed to take the place of the existing parties. The available surveys demonstrate that support for a reorganization of

[26] Unfortunately, Gallup did not ask respondents whether they had gone to see FDR speak when he visited their state or if they had read about his campaign stop in the media. It is likely, however, that the president received a significant amount of local news coverage when he stopped in those states that he targeted. As Cohen and Powell, note, "Local news coverage of presidential trips also tends to be highly visible. It often garners front-page and lead-story status in the local and regional press, and may persist in the news for days" (2005, 15).

the parties along ideological lines never garnered a great deal of public support. As Figure 1 shows, just over 20 percent of those surveyed registered their endorsement of such reforms in April of 1938. In the survey conducted in August of 1938—after the fireside chat in which Roosevelt outlined his plans to intervene in the primaries—support for more programmatic parties in the months after the purge announcement dropped to below 15 percent of those surveyed.[27] At the same time, "no" responses to the question increased by nearly ten percent. The percentage of those answering "no opinion" stayed about the same.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

The plot displayed in Figure 2 helps to put these figures in context. In 1936, thirty percent of those surveyed by the Gallup organization replied "yes" to the question of whether they thought that two new parties should be made that would group liberals and conservatives together. It is important to note, however, that this question was asked without a "no opinion" response option. In August of 1937 this same question was asked again, only this time with a third response category. The percentage of those indicating their support for such a reorganization of the parties declined precipitously in August of 1937, with roughly one-fifth of those surveyed answering "yes" to this particular question. This figure would remain essentially unchanged until the first survey after Roosevelt's purge campaign, when support for the creation of new liberal and conservative political parties plummeted to fifteen percent. It would remain at roughly the same (low) level the next time the public was asked about a wholesale reorganization of the party system just prior to Harry Truman's well-documented struggles with the Dixiecrats (Savage 1997; see also Smith and Davis 1947). At first blush, then, it would seem that FDR's campaign to mold the Democratic Party into the party of liberalism actually *decreased* support for reforming the party system along such lines.

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[27]All frequencies were weighted using a set of "raking" weights created using phone ownership, gender, 4-category region, and race (see Berinsky and Schickler 2011 for more details).

Though opinion clearly shifted around the purge announcement, the actual effect of the campaign remains opaque.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

It is well worth investigating, in the cross-sectional case, the bases of popular support for more responsible parties (see Dennis 1966). The multinomial logistic regression models displayed in Table 1 offer a look at key correlates of respondents' attitudes towards the party system both before and after the purge campaign. The first two columns contain coefficients from a model estimated with data from the pre-purge survey, while the latter two present estimates from a model constructed using the post-purge survey only. A number of revealing differences, as well as some reassuring similarities, emerge between the two models. Those who espouse an ideology (either conservative or liberal), for instance, are more likely to want to see the parties reorganized along ideological lines. They are also less likely to answer "no opinion" to the question of whether the parties should be made more programmatic.[28] This pattern appears in both time periods. Substantively the effect of ideology is quite large; having an ideology increases the predicted probability of expressing support for reforming the party system by .47 before the purge and by .20 after the purge campaign.[29] This should not be surprising given how the ideology question was asked in both surveys, as Gallup queried respondents about which party they would join (the liberal party or the conservative party) if two new ones were created to replace the existing Republican and Democratic parties.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Expressing support for a third party candidate in the upcoming mid-term elections increases the likelihood of answering either "yes" or "no opinion" to the question of whether the parties

[28] The reference category in all instances is a "no" response to the question of whether the respondent would like to see two new parties formed—one for liberals and another for conservatives.
[29] All other variables were held at their means. The predicted probabilities in this chapter were calculated using the SPost suite of commands for Stata (Long and Freese 2006).

should be reorganized along ideological lines. Consistent with the results of previous studies (Atkeson and Rapoport 2003), women are more likely than men to register a "no opinion" response as well. Democratic vote intention, employed here as a proxy for Democratic partisanship, serves to drive up support for more programmatic parties prior to the purge campaign (increasing the predicted probability by .05), but is not significant in the model estimated using survey data collected after Roosevelt's intervention in the Democratic primaries. Recent work on presidential opinion leadership suggests that the president has a greater impact on the issue positions of co-partisans than he does on the public-at-large (Cohen 2010; Cavari forthcoming). Here, however, Democratic support for a reorganization of the parties along the lines of the responsible-party ideal appears to have dissolved after Roosevelt waded into local primary contests to back liberal candidates for the U.S. Senate.

This finding also contrasts with the only existing work on the correlates of support for the responsible party model, as Dennis (1966) found that strong partisans were more likely to back the creation of programmatic political parties than were independents. Relatedly, Price and Boskin's (1966) study of public attitudes toward the purge itself reported that Democrats were more likely than either Republicans or Independents to support Roosevelt's actions. It is not possible, however, to rule out that differences in measurement may explain the existence of such divergent findings.

The opposite pattern of results obtains when looking at the impact of presidential approval. Support for FDR has no effect on respondents' attitudes toward the party system in the period before FDR's purge, but becomes a significant predictor after the campaign, increasing the predicted probability of supporting a reorganization of the parties along ideological lines by .08. This pattern lends credence to work by Lowi (1985) and Milkis (1993, 1999) that credits the personal leadership style that Roosevelt brought to the office with ushering in a new era of candidate-centered politics in America. Even though FDR's stated aim in undertaking the purge was to remake the parties along

ideological lines, his short-term commitment to party responsibility has been blamed for eroding the role of the parties in American electoral politics. Regardless of his intentions, that support for FDR had an effect on attitudes toward the party system after the purge, but pro-Democratic sentiments did not, suggests that FDR served very much as a "personal" president rather than a party leader during this episode. This finding also lends support to statements made by James Farley, Roosevelt's top political advisor, in the years following the purge. Farley seems to have believed that by intervening in local matters Roosevelt effectively widened the split within the Democratic Party between its liberal and conservative elements (Key 1964).

However, as I argue above, it is likely that FDR was able to convince those who were exposed to the purge campaign of the need for more responsible parties. The nonlinear difference-in-differences models displayed in Table 2 address this possibility. The dataset used in estimating these models was constructed by pooling respondents from both the pre- and post-purge Gallup polls. In terms of specification, the models shown in Table 2 are nearly identical to those described above with the exception of the inclusion of an indicator assigned to respondents of the five states in which Roosevelt concentrated his efforts at toppling conservative Democrats, a post-purge indicator, and an interaction term that multiplies the two.

It is this interaction term that captures the effect of the campaign on respondents' attitudes toward the idea of responsible party government after controlling for 1) the mean difference in the probability of supporting (or having no opinion about) the proposed restructuring of the parties between those in campaign states and those in non-campaign states, 2) the mean change in the overall probability of supporting a reorganization of the parties (or registering no opinion on the issue), and 3) a host of other potential confounders (see Hanmer 2009).[30]

[30] In addition, as Hanmer (2009) notes, any application of the difference-in-differences approach must make two key identifying assumptions: 1) other than the included controls, there are no factors influencing the

The first two columns in Table 2 display results from a model estimated using the full pooled dataset. Many of the predictors in the model perform in much the same way as they did in the models in Table 1. That is, after controlling for a number of other factors, those who registered their intention to vote for a third party candidate for Congress were more likely to support a reorganization of the party system. Those who espoused a particular ideology were likewise more apt to want to see the creation of more programmatic political parties, as having an ideology increases the predicted probability of support for responsible parties by .33.

In the full sample, the sign on the interaction term—which, once again, represents the effect of the campaign—is positive across the board, but is only statistically significant with respect to the No Opinion/No comparison. Those who resided in campaign states were more likely to answer "no opinion" when queried about a restructuring of the party system that would put all conservatives in one party and all liberals in another than they were to register their opposition to such a plan. Substantively, being from one of the five states that saw the most concerted effort by FDR to restructure the party system in the post-purge time period increases the predicted probability of registering "no opinion" by .07.[31]

That is, exposure to Roosevelt's campaign actually seems to have made respondents less certain of their own views on the need for more responsible parties, even though the purge campaign ostensibly provided them with the opportunity to think about proposals to make the parties more ideological in nature. What this finding may indicate is that Roosevelt succeeded in

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treatment and control groups; and 2) the composition of the two groups remains unchanged over the time period under observation. While I cannot be certain that both assumptions are wholly justified, I submit that the models that I present do control for a wide range of potential confounders. The second assumption is perhaps made somewhat tenuous by the fact that my data do not come from a true panel of the same respondents interviewed at multiple points in time and are rather comprised of repeated cross-sections. I would add, however, that Hanmer (2009) used Current Population Surveys, which are cross-sectional, in much the same manner as I do here in his study of the effect of voter registration reforms on turnout.

[31] See Puhani (2008) on the substantive interpretation of interaction terms in nonlinear difference-in-differences models.

neutralizing opposition, but was not quite able to mobilize support for the idea of responsible parties. As Cameron and Park note, in situations where opposition has already mobilized against his position "the president's efforts may not fully offset those of his opponents" (2011, 447). The results displayed in the first two columns of Table 2 help to underscore Cameron and Park's observations and suggest that the president's campaign was enough to still opposition to the idea of responsible parties. It appears that Roosevelt's campaign succeeded in making those who bore witness to his efforts at reshaping the party system ambivalent about proposals to make the parties more programmatic.

The control group employed in the model estimated using the full pooled dataset—the first model reported in Table 2—may not provide the best comparison for the treatment group, however. Careful selection of comparison cases is essential when making inferences using the difference-in-differences approach. Following Hanmer (2009), it is worth reducing the comparison group to only individuals in states that are similar to the states in which Roosevelt campaigned most vigorously during the summer of 1938. The control group of individuals from states other than the ones in which Roosevelt concentrated his campaign efforts, is heterogeneous, and even includes respondents from New York—Roosevelt's home state. Since Roosevelt's main targets during the purge campaign were conservative Democrats in the South and Southwest, it makes sense to use respondents from other states in that geographic region that were not directly exposed to Roosevelt's attempts at persuasion.

The aggregate response pattern to the question of whether new, more ideological parties should be formed is displayed in Figure 3, and is broken out by treatment and control groups in both the pre and post-purge surveys. All descriptives have been weighted using the raking weights developed and supplied by Berinsky and Schickler (2011). Figure 3 shows that "no" responses in the treated group declined in the post-purge period, while the percentage of those registering that they

had "no opinion" increased. At the same time, the percentage of those in the control group (labeled "Other South" in the figure) voicing their opposition to the proposed restructuring of the political parties increased. Support for more responsible parties declined among the control group—those whose only exposure to the purge campaign was the fireside chat in which FDR outlined his plan to intervene in select Democratic primaries. "No opinion" responses also dropped, which is more in keeping with the idea that statements from elites such as the president generally help to inform the public. According to these aggregate patterns, then, Roosevelt was unable to garner any support for his position by "going public," but may have neutralized opposition to the creation of programmatic parties by "going local."

[Insert Figure 3 here]

The second pair of columns in Table 2 display estimates from a model estimated using only data from respondents living in the South or Southwest.[32] Once again I focus on the effect of the campaign, as captured by the interaction term. Respondents from campaign states in the post-purge survey are more likely to have answered "no opinion" to the question of whether the party system should be restructured than they were to register opposition to any such proposal.

The results shown in Table 2 again indicate that respondents who were exposed to the campaign were more likely to support the idea of responsible parties than they were to oppose the creation of more ideological parties. As before, however, the coefficient is positive but does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance.

In substantive terms, living in a targeted state in the post-purge period increases the predicted probability of having no opinion by .17 and decreases the predicted probability of opposing the idea of responsible parties by .20. Though quite modest when compared to the effect

[32] Gallup defined the following states as belonging to this region: North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. I have added Maryland to this group. As a robustness check I included respondents from Arizona, New Mexico, Delaware, and Missouri to the comparison group. My results do not change with this addition.

of holding a particular ideology, it is clear that Roosevelt's efforts were not entirely in vain, and certainly did not "backfire" as others have long suggested (Lowi 1985). Instead, it appears that, consistent with Cameron and Park's (2011) observations, FDR may have done considerably worse had he not relied upon his personal appeal in targeted states in his attempt to liberalize the Democratic Party.

As an additional robustness check I conducted a placebo test, capitalizing on the fact that Gallup asked whether respondents supported the creation of more ideological parties on several surveys from 1936 to 1938. In doing so, I pooled respondents from a survey conducted in August of 1937 (the "pre-purge" survey in this placebo test) with those from a survey conducted in April of 1938 (the "post-purge" survey). I then estimated a multinomial logit model similar in specification to the ones displayed in Table 2. The survey administered in August of 1937 did not ask respondents about their vote intentions in the 1938 congressional elections. I therefore cannot control for vote choice. Otherwise the model specification is the same, and controls for a wide range of potential confounds. Importantly, the model also includes indicators for 1) whether the respondent resided in a state that was targeted by Roosevelt's purge, 2) the survey in which the respondent was interviewed, and 3) an interaction term that multiplies the two. Recall that it is this interaction term that I earlier argued captures the effect of FDR's campaign on public opinion toward the idea of ideologically-oriented political parties. Here, however, there should be no effect of being in a targeted state during the "post-purge" period, as FDR had yet to embark upon his campaign. This is precisely what the results shown in Table 3 reveal, as the interaction term is not statistically significant.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Numerous other predictors of support for the creation of more ideological political parties work much as they did in previous models. Reassuringly, those who espouse a particular ideology,

for instance, are more likely to want such an arrangement of the parties and, at the same time, are less likely to register "no opinion" on the matter. Consistent with the model estimates discussed above, women are more apt to have no opinion about whether new, ideology-based parties should be created, while Southerners are less likely to want to see a restructuring of the party system. Taken together, the results of this placebo test suggest that the interaction terms in the main models are capturing the effects of the purge campaign on mass attitudes toward responsible party government.

As one final robustness check I estimated a series of models predicting the proportion of each states' respondents answering either "yes," "no," or "no opinion" to the question of whether two new parties should be formed, one for liberals and another for conservatives. Since the dependent variable in each case is a proportion, I employ binomial and quasi-binomial models (quasi-binomial models are used so as to correct for the possibility that the dependent variable may be overdispersed). Independent variables in the model include an indicator for whether the survey was conducted after the purge announcement, an indicator for whether the state was targeted by the purge campaign, and an interaction term multiplying the two. As before, it is this interaction term that I argue captures the effect of the campaign on public opinion toward the idea of responsible parties. Estimates from these models are displayed in Table 4. Regardless of which model is employed (binomial or quasi-binomial), the results are the same: FDR's campaign increased the likelihood that respondents within states targeted by the campaign would report having no opinion on the matter. At the same time the campaign decreased opposition toward a restructuring of the party system along ideological lines.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Discussion and Conclusions

In an effort to demonstrate that party leaders care about the extent to which rank and file members in government espouse the same ideology, Grynaviski argued that "Roosevelt's

intervention on behalf of liberal candidates should…be understood as a rational attempt by a party leader to protect his organization's valuable brand name" (2010, 205). Though novel, Grynaviski's reinterpretation of the purge nevertheless arrives at the same conclusions about the effects of FDR's efforts that many others have come to embrace: the campaign failed to move public opinion with respect to the need for greater party responsibility. Looking at the results of the primaries in which Roosevelt intervened, it is difficult to argue with this understanding of events. Existing analyses of public opinion polls from the time period likewise support the view that the purge was a wholesale disaster for Roosevelt, as most Americans appear to have opposed FDR's intervention in the primaries (Price and Boskin 1966).

Here, though, I offer evidence in support of the view that Roosevelt succeeded in removing opposition to the idea of responsible parties. As such, I lend some much-needed empirical backing to Schattschneider's (1942) account of the episode. This study therefore represents the first real attempt in over three decades to use the available survey data to speak to the scholarly debate that has long accompanied treatments of this pivotal event.

In what has undoubtedly been the most thorough, sustained investigation into the effects of Roosevelt's purge on the American party system, Sidney Milkis argues that "this test of responsible party government transformed the Democratic party into a way station on the road to administrative government—that is, a more centralized and bureaucratic form of democracy that focused on the presidency and executive agencies for the formulation, the enactment, and the execution of public policy" (Milkis 1993, 301). Coupled with further administrative reforms, such as the Executive Reorganization Act of 1939, FDR's push to reconstitute the Democratic Party is often credited with hastening the end of the existing party system rooted in local interests and robust grassroots organizations and touching off a long period of party decline in America (Milkis 1993, 1999).

"Paradoxically," Milkis writes, "the incipient formation of a more national and programmatic party politics during the New Deal made party politics less important" (1993, 99).

I am not prepared to dispute the broad sweep of these conclusions here. I submit, however, that it is possible that the *perceived* failure of FDR's efforts at protecting his party's ideological brand name, in and of itself, was enough to set in motion the chain of events that Milkis (1993; 1999) describes. Had future presidents undertaken similar such attempts at disciplining wayward members of their own party, serving as party leaders, the road to the current arrangement of the parties that has received so much attention in recent years, with the two major parties sorting along ideological lines, might have been considerably shorter (see Dunn 2010).

Much as the linkage between economic views and racial attitudes at the mass level *preceded* elite movement on these issues (Schickler 2013), so too does it appear that the seeds of a wholesale realignment of the two major political parties along ideological lines were sown well before the contemporary period of party polarization. Schickler argues that the "alignment between New Deal economic liberalism and racial liberalism" (2013, 89) that occurred in the late 1930s provided political elites with a ready-made constituency (and powerful rationale) for adopting the positions that they did in the tumultuous 60s. Here, however, I show that elite rhetoric moved public opinion on the need for more ideologically consistent political parties. Such movement at the mass level made realignment along ideological lines a viable proposition for strategic politicians in the decades to come. The overall thrust of this argument mimics Schickler's (2013) in that we both pin the origins of transformative events in American politics to the New Deal era.

In addition, the findings presented here speak to a number of other debates in the discipline. The responsible party government model has witnessed something of a renaissance of late, as much of the recent work on party ideological brand names stresses the benefits of programmatic political parties for both voters and candidates (see Snyder and Ting 2002). Scholarship on party brand

names has argued that, for all the vitriol that has accompanied discussions of how polarized American politics has become, there is a silver lining: partisan ideological polarization at the elite level helps voters learn "what goes with what" and promotes "correct" voting (Grynaviski 2010; Levendusky 2009; Snyder and Ting 2002). Insofar as voter competence is deemed to be a desirable quality, one route to achieve such a goal is through the development of political parties that are ideologically distinct.

Existing scholarship has characterized the growing ideological homogeneity of the parties that has been witnessed over the last few decades as a positive development, at least from the perspective of voter competence (Levendusky 2009), but has not endeavored to determine whether the voters themselves desire such an arrangement of the party system. Indeed, remarkably few studies have asked Americans about their views on what the party system should look like, leaving Dennis' early study (1966) as perhaps the only dedicated exploration of the determinants of Americans' attitudes toward programmatic political parties.[33] Those that have done so only examined the impact of a few predictors of Americans' attitudes toward party reform—and only in a single state at one point in time (Dennis 1966).[34] Usually these predictors are stable demographic or attitudinal characteristics of the respondent (Dennis 1966; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002; Price and Boskin 1966). Missing from such studies is any indication of whether elites, like the president, can shape opinion with respect to the party system (though see Caldeira 1987 for a look at opinion

[33] Using the same data that I employ here, one other study (Smith and Davis 1947) described the publics' willingness to support the creation of political parties organized along ideological lines. Absent from their analysis, however, is any attempt to explain the observed patterns of support for a new arrangement of the parties based on ideological distinctions. Moreover, this early study made no effort whatsoever to contend with the problems known to accompany data collected using quota-controlled sampling methods (see Berinsky 2006).

[34] Dennis' (1966) study was conducted in 1964 using a Wisconsin-only sample.

toward the structure of the Court). Here I present evidence to suggest that Americans' preferences concerning the organization and structure of institutions can be shaped by elites.

This study offers one additional contribution to the literature. For some time scholars have endeavored to evaluate whether presidents are able to sway public opinion through their public pronouncements. Several studies have found that efforts at "going public" have little effect on mass opinion (Edwards 2003). In response, more recent work has focused on detailing the limits of presidential opinion leadership (Rottinghaus 2009) and highlighting the conditions under which the president can have an effect (Cameron and Park 2011; Cavari 2009, forthcoming; Cohen 2009; Cohen and Powell 2005; Tedin, Rottinghaus, and Rodgers 2011). With this study I demonstrate that, consistent with the theoretical advancements offered by Cameron and Park (2011), Roosevelt encountered far greater success in "going local" than he did by taking to the airwaves with his fireside chat announcing the purge—a classic example of "going public" (Kernell 1997). Work tracing the evolution of presidential opinion leadership strategies (Cohen 2009) suggests that as the news environment grew more fragmented, presidents have increasingly taken to the use of localized strategies. Even during an era when media choices were quite limited, with a highly popular president, the purge incident examined here teaches that "going local" appears to have been a far more efficacious strategy in terms of shaping public opinion toward the idea of responsible parties. This suggests, much as Rottinghaus (2009) has shown, that it matters *how* the president goes about trying to sway popular opinion. The findings presented in this study dovetail nicely with these recent theoretical developments, and at the same time underscore the important role that presidents can play in shaping the ideological character of their parties.

Table 1
Factors Predicting Support for the Creation of More Ideological Parties

	Pre-Purge (April 1938)		Post-Purge (September 1938)	
	No Opinion/No	Yes/No	No Opinion/No	Yes/No
Support for FDR	-0.230	-0.226	0.089	0.734**
	(0.171)	(0.188)	(0.130)	(0.130)
Ideology	-0.564**	3.064**	-1.415**	1.656**
	(0.152)	(0.199)	(0.172)	(0.150)
Intend to Vote Democrat	0.500**	0.553**	-0.149	0.245
	(0.163)	(0.184)	(0.161)	(0.181)
Intend to Vote 3rd Party	0.787**	1.101**	0.681**	0.711**
	(0.136)	(0.175)	(0.187)	(0.133)
Urban	0.200	0.100	-0.214	0.227
	(0.150)	(0.210)	(0.143)	(0.198)
South	-0.351	-0.454	0.033	-0.174
	(0.193)	(0.259)	(0.321)	(0.279)
Female	0.773**	0.099	0.343**	0.054
	(0.127)	(0.134)	(0.120)	(0.137)
Age	0.006*	0.006	0.004	0.003
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.006)
Black	0.535	0.332	0.748**	-0.342
	(0.442)	(0.426)	(0.334)	(0.473)
Professional	0.144	0.166	-0.317	0.069
	(0.173)	(0.150)	(0.195)	(0.227)
Intercept	-1.768**	-3.446**	-1.407**	-3.298**
	(0.242)	(0.326)	(0.372)	(0.406)
n =	2,686		2,488	
Log Likelihood =	-2,142.50		-1,876.43	
χ^2 (32) =	2,379.47**		829.24**	

**p<0.05, *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial logistic regression estimates. Clustered standard errors are in parentheses.

Both models also include controls for socioeconomic status, as captured by indicators for whether the respondent owned a phone or a car, and a series of indicators constructed from interviewer assessments of each respondent's "social class" (full models are available upon request).

The dependent variable is constructed from respondents' answers to the following question: "Do you think the time has come to give up our present political parties and have two new ones: One for Conservatives, the other for Liberals?"

Table 2
The Effects of Roosevelt's Purge on Mass Support for More Ideological Parties: Nonlinear Difference-in-Differences Estimates

	Full Dataset		Southern and Southwestern Respondents Only	
	No Opinion/No	Yes/No	No Opinion/No	Yes/No
Targeted State	-0.842**	-0.237	-0.761**	-0.113
	(0.295)	(0.275)	(0.339)	(0.360)
Post-Purge	-0.252**	-0.948**	-0.207	-1.468**
	(0.082)	(0.084)	(0.351)	(0.422)
Targeted State × Purge	1.318**	0.511	1.173**	0.639
	(0.362)	(0.379)	(0.466)	(0.528)
Support for FDR	0.094	0.297**	-0.068	0.289
	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.240)	(0.272)
Ideology	-1.013**	2.516**	-1.187**	3.212**
	(0.091)	(0.110)	(0.291)	(0.378)
Intend to Vote Democrat	0.063	0.064	-0.104	-0.361
	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.322)	(0.363)
Intend to Vote 3rd Party	0.649**	0.807**	0.871**	0.511
	(0.100)	(0.104)	(0.322)	(0.420)
Urban	-0.008	0.106	0.115	-0.208
	(0.086)	(0.089)	(0.259)	(0.322)
South	-0.075	-0.284*	-0.285	-0.306
	(0.135)	(0.154)	(0.220)	(0.271)
Female	0.596**	0.079	0.337	0.225
	(0.080)	(0.089)	(0.244)	(0.293)
Age	0.004	0.004	-0.003	0.014
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.010)
Black	0.586**	0.015	0.544	-0.095
	(0.221)	(0.284)	(0.687)	(1.321)
Professional	-0.045	0.092	-0.285	0.332
	(0.120)	(0.107)	(0.409)	(0.396)
Intercept	-1.456**	-2.862**	-1.531**	-3.807**
	(0.195)	(0.220)	(0.623)	(0.840)
n =	5,174		710	
Log Likelihood =	-4,071.11		-482.61	
χ^2 (38) =	1,533.53**		232.95**	

**p<0.05, *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial logistic regression estimates.

Both models also include controls for socioeconomic status, as captured by indicators for whether the respondent owned a phone or a car, and a series of indicators constructed from interviewer assessments of each respondent's "social class" (full models are available upon request).

The dependent variable is constructed from respondents' answers to the following question: "Do you think the time has come to give up our present political parties and have two new ones: One for Conservatives, the other for Liberals?"

Table 3
Placebo Test: Nonlinear Difference-in-Differences Estimates
(Pooled Data from the August 1937 and April 1938 Gallup Surveys)

	No Opinion/No	Yes/No
Targeted State	-0.238	0.081
	(0.231)	(0.270)
Post-Purge	-18.50	1.996
	(379.57)	(0.144)
Targeted State × Purge	0.090	0.028
	(1569.24)	(0.474)
Support for FDR	0.173	-0.229**
	(0.119)	(0.105)
Ideology	-1.027**	5.262**
	(0.130)	(0.170)
Urban	-0.148	-0.049
	(0.119)	(0.115)
South	-0.307*	-0.527**
	(0.163)	(0.170)
Female	0.718**	0.171
	(0.110)	(0.110)
Age	-0.005	0.008**
	(0.004)	(0.004)
Black	1.116**	0.925**
	(0.293)	(0.375)
Professional	-0.360	-0.064
	(0.225)	(0.147)
Intercept	-0.640**	-5.447**
	(0.270)	(0.305)
n =	4,601	
Log Likelihood =	-2,361.91	
χ^2 (34) =	3,625.47**	

**p<0.05, *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial logistic regression estimates.

Both models also include controls for socioeconomic status, as captured by indicators for whether the respondent owned a phone or a car, and a series of indicators constructed from interviewer assessments of each respondent's "social class" (full models are available upon request).

The dependent variable is constructed from respondents' answers to the following question: "Do you think the time has come to give up our present political parties and have two new ones: One for Conservatives, the other for Liberals?"

Table 4
State-Level Analysis of the Effects of Roosevelt's Purge on Mass Support for More Ideological Parties

	Binomial			Quasi-Binomial		
	No Opinion	Yes	No	No Opinion	Yes	No
Targeted State	-0.661**	-0.489**	0.731**	-0.661	-0.489	0.731**
	(0.232)	(0.207)	(0.169)	(0.416)	(0.333)	(0.283)
Post-Purge	-0.122*	-0.548**	0.440**	-0.122	-0.548**	0.440**
	(0.065)	(0.067)	(0.054)	(0.116)	(0.108)	(0.090)
Targeted State × Purge	1.011**	0.343	-0.913**	1.011*	0.343	-0.913**
	(0.295)	(0.310)	(0.235)	(0.529)	(0.498)	(0.392)
Intercept	-1.310**	-1.161	0.197**	-1.310**	-1.161**	0.197**
	(0.295)	(0.043)	(0.037)	(0.080)	(0.069)	(0.061)
n =	96	96	96	96	96	96
AIC=	620.24	591.2	662.08	---	---	---

**p<0.05, *p<.10.

The dependent variable in each model is the proportion of each states' respondents answering either "Yes," "No," or "No Opinion" to the following question: "Do you think the time has come to give up our present political parties and have two new ones: One for Conservatives, the other for Liberals?"

Figure 1

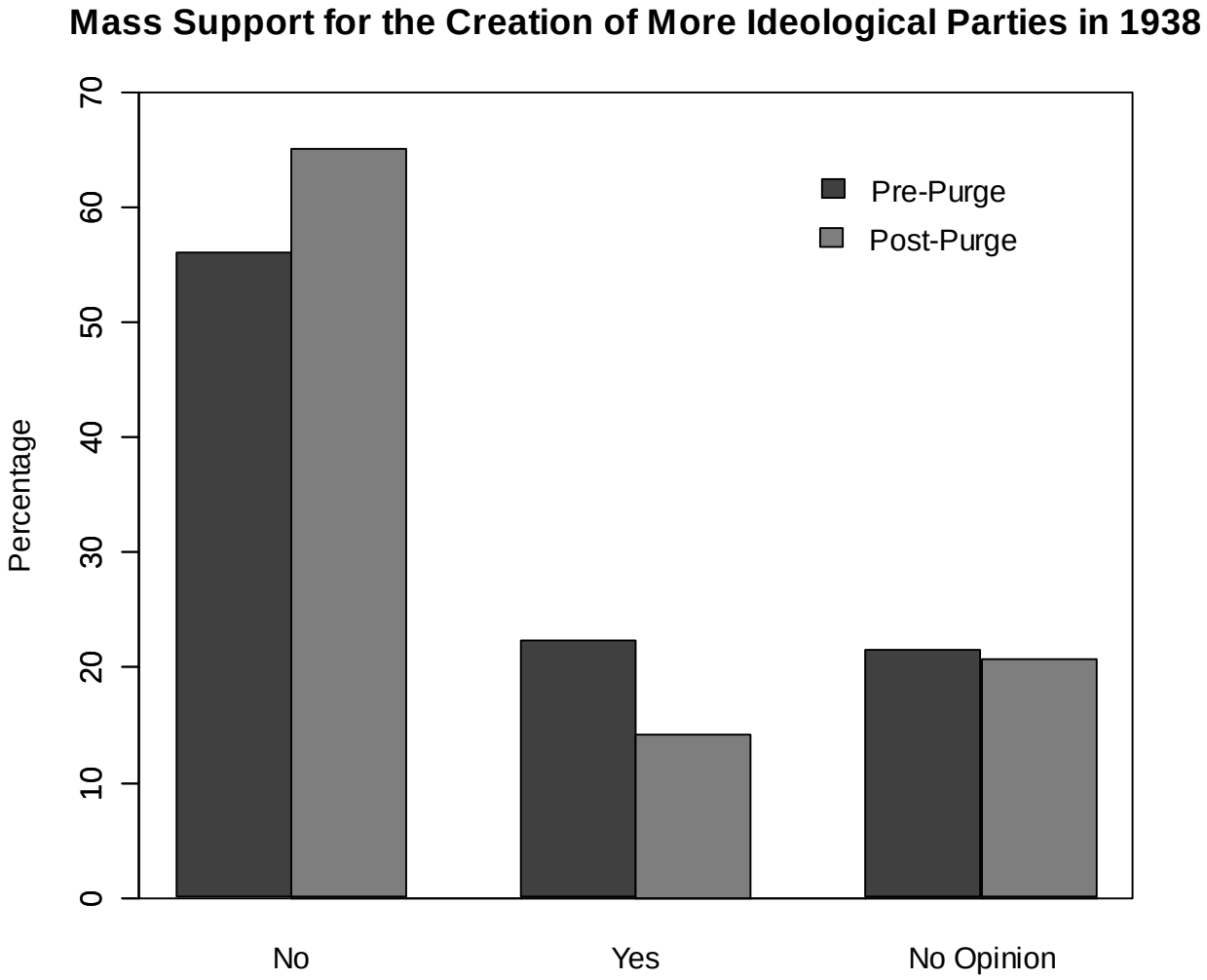
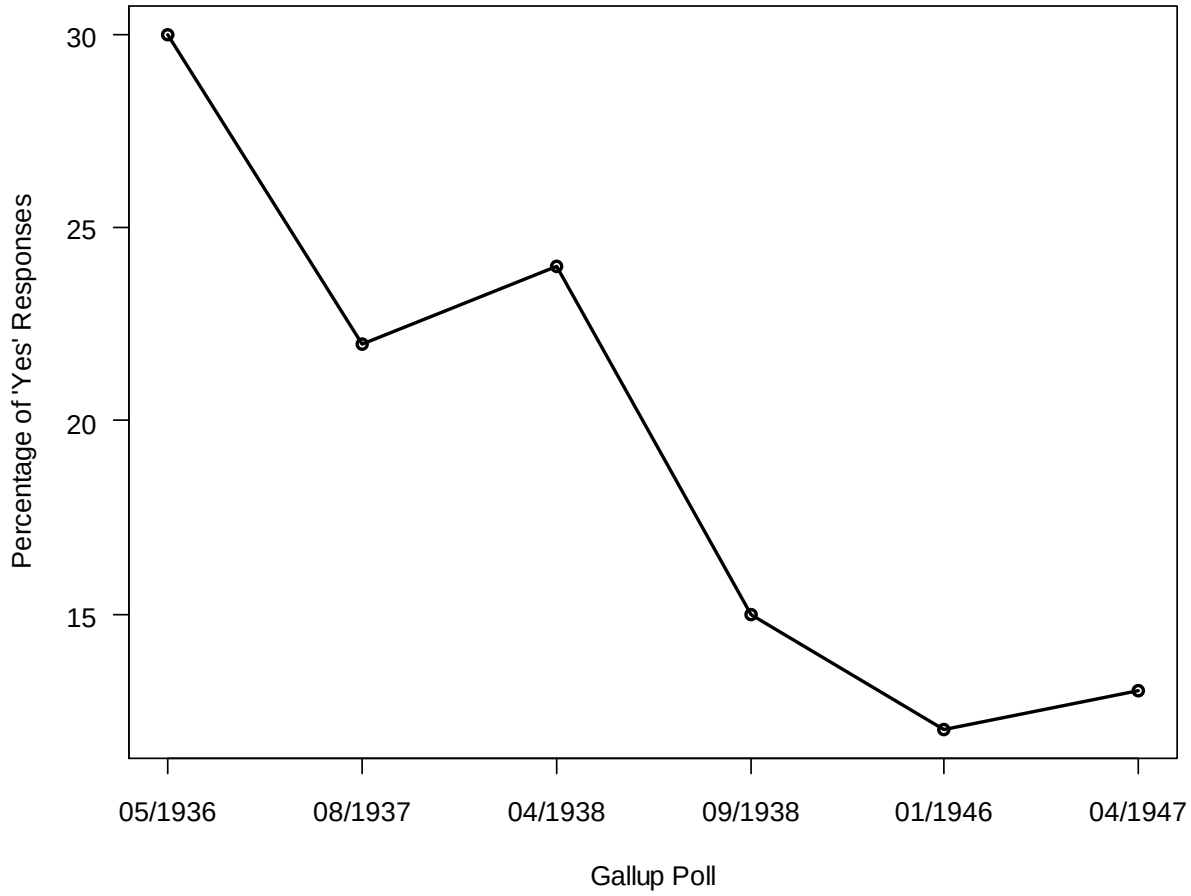

Mass Support for the Creation of More Ideological Parties in 1938
Percentage
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
Pre-Purge
Post-Purge
No
Yes
No Opinion

Figure 2

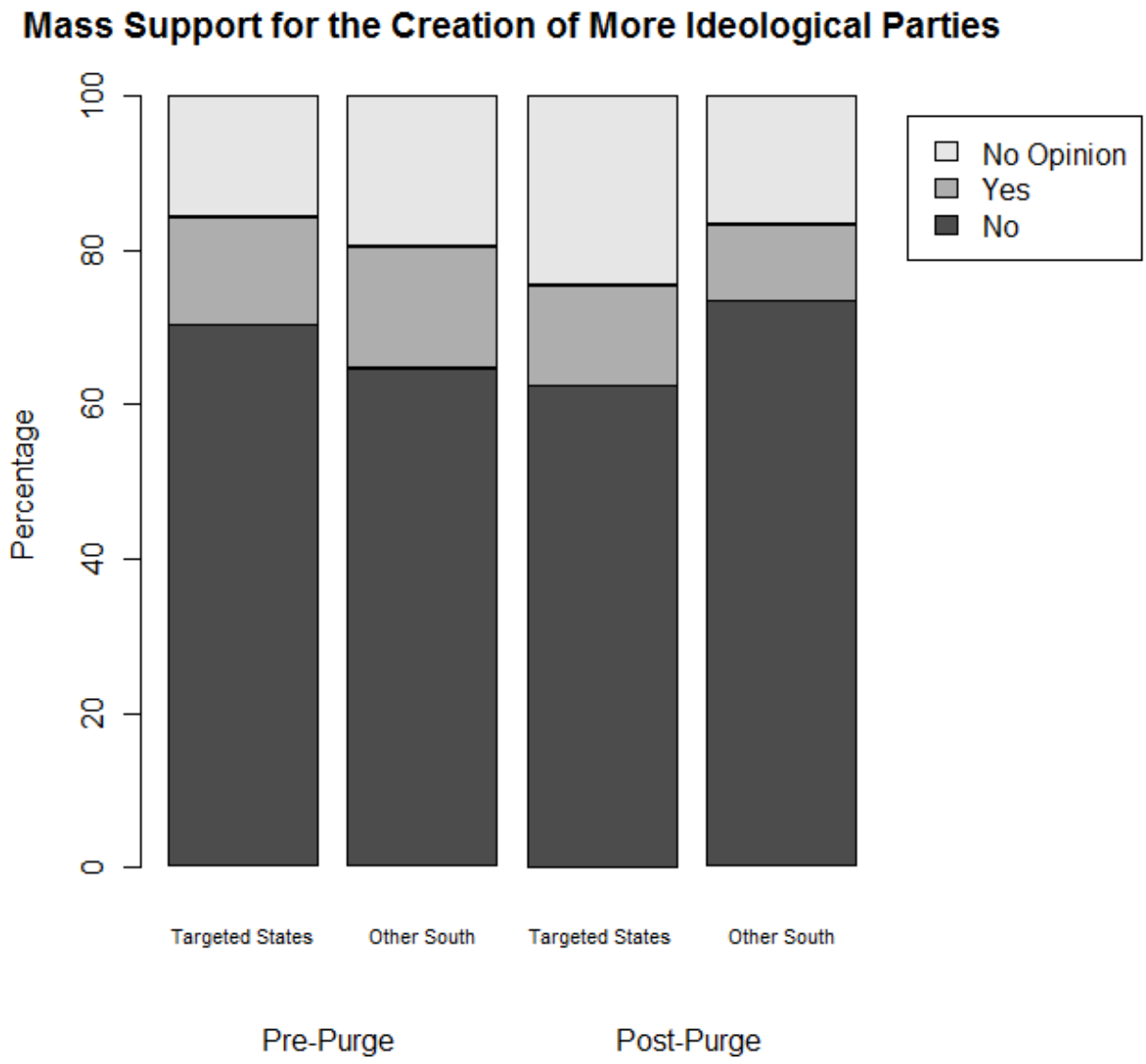
Support for More Ideological Political Parties by the Mass Public, 1936-1947



Notes:
Gallup asked respondents the following question: “Do you think the time has come to give up our present political parties and have two new ones--one for conservatives and one for liberals?”

The question as it was asked on the May 1936 survey did not include a “No Opinion” response option. The full dataset was also unavailable for this year.

Figure 3


Mass Support for the Creation of More Ideological Parties
Percentage
0
20
40
60
80
100
No Opinion
Yes
No
Targeted States
Other South
Targeted States
Other South
Pre-Purge
Post-Purge

Appendix
Table A
The Distribution of Sample Demographics by Survey
(Means with Standard Deviations in Parentheses Below)

	Pre-Purge (April 1938)	Post-Purge (August 1938)
Support for FDR	0.45	0.53
	(0.50)	(0.50)
Ideology	0.43	0.55
	(0.49)	(0.50)
Urban	0.55	0.62
	(0.50)	(0.49)
South	0.13	0.12
	(0.33)	(0.32)
Female	0.33	0.33
	(0.47)	(0.47)
Age	40.03	39.80
	(13.65)	(13.63)
Black	0.02	0.03
	(0.15)	(0.16)
Professional	0.22	0.20
	(0.42)	(0.40)
Owns a Car	0.57	0.57
	(0.49)	(0.49)
Owns a Phone	0.53	0.53
	(0.50)	(0.49)

Chapter 4. Evasive Maneuvers: The Effect of Party Distancing on Candidate Placement, Turnout, and the Vote

Recent congressional elections have been characterized by dramatic partisan swings. In 2006, the Democratic Party won a sweeping victory at the polls, and succeeded in taking control of the House for the first time in a dozen years. The presidential election of 2008 represented a continuation of this pro-Democratic trend, with the Democrats expanding their control of both the House and the Senate (Burden and Wichowsky 2010; Jones 2009). The parties' electoral fortunes were reversed just two short years later, as the Republicans staged an impressive comeback in the 2010 midterm elections.[35] In spite of pre-election speculations that public dissatisfaction with the way that things were being run in Washington would result in an across-the-board anti-incumbent backlash, Election Day 2010 taught the Democrats a painful lesson: "the cry to throw the rascals out has generally identified the rascals in party terms" (Stokes 1975, 183).

Many believe that there is precious little that individual members of Congress can do to insulate themselves against the kinds of partisan tides that have marked the last few elections. Mayhew, for instance, writes that "All in all, the rational way for marginal congressmen to deal with national trends is to ignore them, to treat them as acts of God over which they can exercise no control" (1974, 32).

So it may be in vain that members of Congress attempt to mitigate the electoral effects of voters' evaluations of their party's collective reputation or "brand name." Krehbiel (1998) observes that members often distance themselves from their parties rhetorically (see also Coleman 1999; Franklin 1991; Groeling 2010; Grose and Middlemass 2010; Harbridge 2010; Henderson 2012b; McGhee 2008). Citing evidence from candidates' televised campaign ads, he argues that members of Congress tout their independence on the campaign trail in an effort to gain some measure of

[35] As Engstrom (2012) points out, even though partisan swings like those seen in 2006, 2008, and 2010 seem dramatic, such shifts pale in comparison to those regularly witnessed throughout the 19th century.

distance from their party. In addition to trumpeting their independence from the national parties, candidates who are concerned about the toll of belonging to an unpopular political party have at their disposal a wide array of techniques for gaining some measure of separation from their parties. They can lay claim to having a record of bipartisanship and independence in Congress (Harbridge 2010; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011), support policy positions traditionally associated with a different political party (Arceneaux 2008; Henderson 2012b; Pietryka and Boydstun 2012), use ideological labels more commonly associated with a different party (Franklin 1991), or eschew any connection whatsoever to their party's label (see Chapter 2) and leadership (Grose and Middlemass 2010; Schoenberger 1969).

In 1994, the year of the Republican Revolution, many Democrats ran for Congress by running *against* President Clinton and other party leaders, and conveniently omitted any reference to their partisan affiliation in their televised campaign ads. At the same time, congressional Democrats could be seen trumpeting their record of bipartisanship in the run-up to the election. Most recently, in the run-up to the 2010 midterm Democratic political strategist Paul Begala was quoted as saying that "Some years you ride the wave, and other years you paddle your canoe. Democrats, they've got to paddle like hell. So what you do when you're paddling is, as the Republicans seek to nationalize, you localize and personalize" (qtd. in Rucker 2010).

The use of this particular rhetorical strategy does not appear to be limited to Democratic candidates. Just two years after the Contract with America and their subsequent takeover of the House, Republican candidates likewise distanced themselves from their party. They did so by downplaying their connections to Newt Gingrich and highlighting their ability to work with the Democratic president.[36] A decade later, in 2006, Republican members of Congress once again

[36] Even presidential candidates have, on occasion, sought to distance themselves from their parties. Clinton, for instance, spoke out against his own party in 1992, and used his political ads to present himself as a "new

sought to gain some distance from the national party and its presumptive leader, President George W. Bush. The story was much the same in 2008, as Republican candidates continued to run away from the GOP's tarnished public image in their televised advertising (Harbridge 2010).

Left unanswered by existing treatments of candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their parties is whether those who do so reap any kind of electoral reward for their efforts. An answer to this question "is not possible," Krehbiel maintains, "due to the absence of a direct measure of distancing" (1998, 223). The limited evidence offered for distancing mostly makes passing references to candidates' televised political advertising to demonstrate that distancing is widespread in congressional campaigns. However, absent a more systematic treatment of candidates' TV ads, many previous studies about the prevalence of distancing strategies and speculate as to their effect on the electorate have been forced to argue from anecdote. As a result, scholars do not know how successful the distancing strategy is, or even how frequently it is used.

I employ detailed information on televised political advertising in 2004 and 2006 from the Wisconsin Advertising Project (WiscAds) to explore the incidence of party distancing. These data are coupled with survey data from the 2004 UW/BYU panel survey and the 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES). This allows me to examine whether exposure to advertising that attempts to distance the favored candidate from her political party affects where survey respondents place candidates relative to their parties and whether distancing helps or hurts in the electoral arena. It is possible that distancing may aid candidates in attracting votes, but it could also backfire. Spatial models of voting (Downs 1957; see also Adams 2001; Adams and Merrill 2003;

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kind of Democrat" (Just et al. 1996). His reelection campaign in 1996 emphasized “Republican” issues such as welfare reform, the Defense of Marriage Act, and crime. Conservative icon Ronald Reagan's attempts to use his status as "The Great Communicator" to distance himself from his conservative credentials in 1980 have likewise been credited with aiding him in his victory over Carter in 1980. Even though a majority of Americans placed Reagan to the right of their own positions across a wide variety of issues, Reagan appears to have been able to moderate his image enough in the minds of independents and disaffected Democrats without losing his Republican base (Sundquist 1983).

Adams, Dow, and Merrill 2006; Lacy and Burden 1999) provide a rationale for why distancing may hurt at the polls by alienating candidates' co-partisans in the electorate.

I supplement these individual-level analyses by examining decisions of members of Congress to endorse or not endorse their parties' presidential nominees. Investigation of whether members endorsed their party's eventual nominee for president prior to the conventions reveals whether a particular form of distancing--attempts at gaining separation from the party's national standard-bearer--paid off in their own elections. Following Schoenberger (1969), I argue that presidential endorsements are yet another indicator of candidates' willingness to attach themselves to their parties. Using the Cohen et al. (2008) data, I examine the impact of endorsements on incumbents' share of the two party vote in presidential election years over the period from 1980 to 2004. This time frame expands what was possible with the WiscAds data and allows for greater generalization to other election years.

In the next two sections of the paper I detail how existing work on candidate positioning serves to motivate the present study. After that I describe the data and methods that I employ in the paper before going on to explore the effects of candidate distancing. Finally, I close with a discussion of some future directions that research on candidates' rhetorical strategies might take.

The Impact of Party Distancing

There is tangential evidence suggesting that distancing helps in the electoral arena. While no study to my knowledge has examined the incidence and impact of distancing as I conceive of it, several studies exploring the effects of similar candidate strategies are particularly instructive. Schoenberger's (1969) early work, for instance, wherein he compared the electoral fortunes of congressional Republicans who endorsed their party's presidential nominee in 1964 (the highly unpopular Barry Goldwater) to those who withheld their support from Goldwater, suggests that distancing can be effective in insulating candidates from partisan electoral tides.

A recent experimental study by Harbridge and Malhotra (2011), however, indicates that the opposite may, in fact, be true. They found that members of Congress who display a record of bipartisanship are evaluated less favorably by their co-partisans in the electorate than are legislators who toe the party line. Consistent with Harbridge and Malhotra's (2011) results, Arceneaux (2008) likewise found that candidates who adopt a policy position that is at odds with their party's traditional stance are punished for doing so, losing support among their party's rank-and-file, *but only when the issue in question is highly salient* (see also Pietryka and Boydstun 2012) . Although neither Harbridge and Malhotra nor Arceneaux (2008) explore the electoral effects of bipartisanship, their findings suggest that distancing may push candidates' co-partisans in the electorate to cast their ballots for another candidate or, more likely, to stay home altogether on Election Day (cf. Rahn 1993; Henderson 2012b).

These recent findings comport well with key insights from work on spatial voting. Downs (1957) argues, for instance, that future-oriented extremists may choose to abstain from voting if the parties or candidates are too similar. In doing so, extremists "are willing to let the worse party win today in order to keep the better party from moving towards the center, so that in future elections it will be closer to them. Then when it does win, its victory is more valuable in their eyes." Rational extremists, according to Downs, "will abstain if the party nearest them moves toward its opponent, *even if it does not become ideologically identical with the latter*" (1957, 119, emphasis mine).

Following the logic articulated by Downs (1957), it seems possible that candidates' attempts at distancing themselves rhetorically from their parties may push partisans to stay home rather than turn out to the polls. Such a scenario seems especially likely during mid-term elections, as Plane and Gershtenson (2004) found that citizen alienation (as opposed to indifference) is the primary source of abstention in non-presidential years. Although distancing may indeed succeed in differentiating candidates from their parties, the trade-off in lost votes due to abstention might well prove to have

disastrous electoral consequences. Recent unified models of turnout and vote choice likewise underscore the risks associated with distancing strategies. Adams and Merrill (2003; see also Adams 2001), for instance, argue that candidates' positions on policy matters do little to change voters' candidate preferences, owing largely to the existence of standing decisions about the political parties (party identification), but may affect the turnout decisions of their co-partisans in the electorate. If partisans are prepared to abstain from voting if they find that neither candidate is sufficiently appealing, strategic candidates have an incentive to play to their partisan base. Proponents of the "base-mobilization" theory (Adams and Merrill 2003; Peress 2011) argue that candidates can prevent their co-partisans from staying home on Election Day by positioning themselves away from the ideological center. Candidates might also expect to pay a "flip-flop" penalty for distancing that is entirely separate from any losses that they incur for the positions that they ultimately adopt (see Burden 2004 for a review; cf. Karol 2009). Thus, the literature on spatial voting provides a rationale for why distancing may hurt candidates in the electoral arena by alienating partisans and encouraging abstention among likely supporters.

There is, however, yet another possibility. Voters may view candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their parties as little more than "cheap talk." Under such a scenario distancing should have little impact on voters' placements of the candidates relative to the two major political parties, or on their decisions about whom to vote for provided that they decide to turn out to vote at all. Kiewiet and McCubbins note that "Even though it may be possible to do so, it is difficult and expensive for members [of Congress] to stake out a great deal of distance between the policies they espouse and those associated with their party" (1991, 40). As Coleman (1999) shows, though, even campaign expenditures are not enough to buy incumbent members of Congress any measure of distance from their parties (see also McGhee 2008). Challengers, apparently, are more successful in employing campaign resources to set themselves apart from their parties. At the same

time, incumbent spending may help to tie challengers back to their party label. If Coleman's observations generalize beyond the particular electoral context that formed the basis for his study (he examined the influence of candidate spending in 1996) it seems likely that distancing may have no effect whatsoever on the voting public, neither helping nor hurting candidates in the electoral arena.

Measurement Issues in the Study of Distancing

Previous studies have employed a variety of methods to gauge the impact of a range of distancing activities, both on the campaign trail and during the governing period. In the experiment that Harbridge and Malhotra (2011) conducted, subjects were exposed to information about a representative's *actual* voting record. One experimental condition study provided participants with information on a member's voting history from 2007--a year in which the member in question displayed a high degree of party-line voting in Congress. The other condition informed subjects about that same member's record during the previous year, when he brought a more bipartisan approach to the office, often voting with members of the opposing party. Arceneaux (2008) likewise attempted to gauge the impact of distancing on partisans' approval of candidates using an experiment. Rather than use real members of Congress who changed their voting behavior, though, Arceneaux used a fictional congressional candidate in his experiment, manipulating the party label of the candidate, his position on a particular issue, and the salience of that issue (see also Pietryka and Boydstun 2012).

The experimental approach holds a number of virtues, not the least of which is a high degree of causal leverage. There are also shortcomings to such a tack. For instance, the experimental manipulation employed in Harbridge and Malhotra's study asked study participants evaluate a member of Congress who changed his voting behavior. As they go on to note, it is unusual for members of Congress to alter dramatically their voting behavior from one year to the next. Instead,

members do what they can to separate themselves from their parties *rhetorically*, employing TV ads and other communication mediums in an effort to achieve some measure of distance from their party label. Voters are unlikely to believe that all of the statements that legislators make when they are campaigning will translate automatically into voting behavior on the floor of Congress.

Moreover, in Harbridge and Malhotra's (2011) study, subjects were presented with a member of Congress who did not represent them. Even though this was done in an effort to isolate the effects of bipartisanship, there is cause to believe that this treatment may overstate the negative impact of "working across the aisle" on constituents' opinions of their representative. Fenno's (1975) work, in particular, teaches that constituents often evaluate their own member of Congress more favorably than they do Congress as a whole. They may therefore be more willing to forgive their representative (or senator) for distancing than they would be any other member of Congress. Constituents might also possess enough information about their own member of Congress to be immune to such appeals (Harbridge and Malhotra 2011, 503). Under either scenario, candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their parties are likely to have little impact at all on voters. The same critique is relevant to the study that Arceneaux (2008) conducted, as his use of fictional candidates to evaluate the impact that issue trespassing has on voters' willingness to support a particular candidate may not generalize to the realm of real-world politics (see also Pietryka and Boydstun 2012).

Observational studies have suffered from measurement issues as well. Coleman, for instance, uses data on candidate spending as a proxy for distancing (see also McGhee 2008). While money undoubtedly does "provide a means for candidates to divorce themselves from the stereotypes and images associated with their political parties," there is a great deal of slippage between the amount that a candidate spends over the course of the campaign and the extent to which she explicitly attempts to gain a measure of separation from her party (Coleman 1999, 339). Candidates use their

campaign war chests to communicate a variety of messages to voters. Some portion of candidates' overall expenditures may be devoted to efforts at setting themselves apart from their parties while other monies are spent cultivating other aspects of their public image, including the opposite strategy of greater partisanship. Absent a measure of what kinds of messages that candidates used their campaign resources to send to voters, total spending is but a rough approximation of what they *could* have devoted to distancing themselves from their party.

Campaigns are also simply more costly to run in some districts than they are in others, as it requires a great deal of resources to wage a serious campaign in districts that are served by media markets in which air time is expensive. Most measures of campaign spending, however, fail to take such disparities into account, and are forced to assume that a dollar spent in one district buys the same ability to communicate with the voting public as it does in another (Jones and Jorgensen 2012). Nevertheless, if distancing strategies are as ubiquitous as Krehbiel's (1998) treatment of the topic seems to suggest, then campaign spending might be a reasonable stand-in for a more direct measure of the content of candidates' communications. Only systematic analysis of the messages that candidates send to the electorate, however, will reveal whether campaign spending is an accurate measure of distancing.

Finally, Schoenberger's (1969) examination of the effect of endorsing Goldwater prior to the Republican convention on members' electoral fortunes in 1964 is perhaps a less clear test of the efficacy of distancing strategies than it might at first appear. He compares the vote for Republican members of Congress who endorsed the GOP's eventual presidential nominee to the vote for those who did not endorse him. The problem is that, as Anderson (2013) points out, there are a number of factors that predict whether a member of Congress endorses any presidential candidate, many of which are related to their electoral safety. Simply put, members whose seats are less secure are less likely to endorse any candidate for president. The decision of whether to endorse the party's

nominee is therefore not as appropriate as a measure of distancing as it otherwise might seem at first blush. Schoenberger himself notes that those who did not endorse a candidate for president in 1964 are a "behaviorally heterogeneous" group (1969: 517). It is therefore difficult to disentangle whether members who refused to endorse Goldwater did so out of a desire to distance themselves from their party, or so that they could focus more narrowly on their own campaigns (see Anderson 2013: 64). That is to say that those who refuse to endorse a candidate for president may be doing so for reasons unrelated to their beliefs about how their party affiliation is likely to affect them at the polls.

If members of Congress who do not endorse anyone in the primaries are less likely to represent safe districts, then it is probable that Schoenberger's comparison actually understates the impact of being identified with the party's leader on the vote in congressional races. Under such a scenario it is remarkable that he found any effects at all. Nevertheless, as I go on to note below, I believe a clearer test of the proposition that members' attempts at gaining distance from the party by refusing to endorse its presidential nominee would involve comparing the electoral fortunes of those who stood behind the party's eventual candidate to the vote garnered by those who endorsed someone else. Doing so should alleviate concerns over whether those who endorsed a presidential candidate in the run-up to the convention are comparable to those who did not endorse anyone at all.

The Data

In contrast to previous studies, here I employ a direct measure of distancing drawn from the content of candidates' televised campaign ads in 2004 and 2006. I begin by describing the 2006 data, as they are less familiar to the scholarly community. The Wisconsin Advertising Project's data collection efforts were limited in 2006, and provide a look at ads aired by candidates in nine media markets in the East and Midwest. These include Champaign (IL), Chicago, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Madison (WI), Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Philadelphia. In all, 47 congressional

candidates purchased airtime in these markets during the general election, airing a combined total of 87,774 airings. No fewer than 404 unique advertisements were created for use in the markets included in the 2006 data. Each unique ad was coded for whether the favored candidate made an effort at achieving some distance from her party. For each ad, coders were instructed to pay attention to "things such as references to being an 'independent voice,' testimonials to the effect that the candidate 'votes for what he believes in, not just for the party,' and attempts at gaining separation from party leadership (e.g., the president or party leaders in Congress)."

According to this coding scheme, the coders identified 40 ads as featuring an attempt by the favored candidate to gain a measure of separation from her political party.[37] Another four ads contained rhetoric that would have categorized them as distancing ads, but they were aired by independent candidate Tammy Lee, who ran in Minnesota's fifth congressional district. Thus, just over 10 percent of all unique advertisements aired in the nine media markets under examination here were classified as "distancing" ads. Many such ads saw very little airtime, however, and less than 10 percent of all airings during the campaign included an attempt at distancing by the favored candidate. These figures call into question the picture that Krehbiel (1998) paints of distancing as a prominent campaign strategy among candidates for the U.S. Congress. Indeed, instead of distancing, nearly nine percent of all airings in 2006 actually featured the favored candidates' party label. So candidates were as likely to embrace their parties as they were to distance themselves from them. That such a small percentage of ads in the dataset contained an attempt at distancing also casts some doubt on the ability of proxies like campaign spending to capture the effects of distancing strategies on the electorate.

Given that 2006 was such a banner year for Democratic candidates, it is surprising that half of the candidates who attempted to distance themselves from their parties in their campaign ads

[37] Inter-coder agreement on this measure of distancing was 80.6 percent.

were Democrats. Dan Seals, for instance, a Democrat who challenged incumbent Representative Mark Kirk in Illinois' 10th congressional district, aired an ad in which he promised voters that he would not "blindly follow any party or president." Similarly, then-Representative Sherrod Brown, a Democrat, created and aired a TV advertisement proclaiming his support for a "tighter border, and a balanced budget amendment" in challenging incumbent Republican Senator Mike DeWine in Ohio. In that same ad Brown went on to say that he "stood up to the president of his own party to protect American jobs"--a reference to his time in the House during Clinton's tenure in office.

Predictably, a number of Republicans also tried to differentiate themselves from their party. Former Representative Deborah Pryce (R-OH) ran an ad featuring Senator John McCain (R-AZ), in which the senator (and self-described "maverick") praised Pryce for rising above the "partisan bickering to do what's right for America and for Ohio." McCain continued by characterizing Pryce as "an independent principled leader." Pryce went on to win against her general election challenger by a razor-thin margin, only to retire from Congress prior to the 2008 elections. Fellow Ohio Republican Pat Tiberi also sought to highlight his independence from the GOP, proclaiming in one ad that he "always thinks from his heart, no matter what the issue is, even if it's disagreeing with his own party." Other Republicans clung to some aspects of their party's brand, while distancing themselves from others. In his unsuccessful campaign to represent Minnesota in the U.S. Senate, Mark Kennedy aired an ad entitled "Crossing Party Lines" in which he proclaimed that he was "a Republican on issues like taxing and spending," but "crossed party lines" to oppose Bush on education and the environment. He went on to boast that "over half the Democrats in Congress" had sponsored one of his bills. In all, 20 of the 47 candidates who aired ads in the nine media markets covered by the 2006 WiscAds dataset engaged in an attempt at distancing themselves from their party.

In addition to detailed content analysis of each unique advertisement (or "creative"), the WiscAds dataset also contains comprehensive information about which media market each ad was run in as well as the name of the television program during which it aired. When coupled with survey data on individuals' television viewing habits and the media market in which they reside, it is possible to create individual-level measures of exposure to ads in which the favored candidate attempted to gain some distance from her party's brand. Fortunately, the 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (Ansolabehere 2006) included measures of both, and queried respondents about how often they watch six different types of programs: news magazine shows (such as "60 Minutes" or "Dateline"), late night TV shows (such as "Late Night with David Letterman" and Jay Leno), entertainment shows (such as Entertainment Tonight or Access Hollywood), early local news, late local news, and the national evening news.

Using these survey items I was able to construct measures of exposure to candidates' attempts at distancing. I first multiplied the number of distancing ads aired on each type of show in each media market by the television viewing patterns of respondents within those markets.[38] After summing these six values I logged the resulting quantity. This is commonly done in studies employing ads data to account for diminishing marginal returns to advertising (see Franz and Ridout 2007).[39] This results in a single measure of logged ad exposure. By repeating this process separately for respondents' exposure to distancing attempts by Republican and Democratic candidates for the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate, as well as measures of total advertising by party and race, I created a total of eight different advertising measures. These measures are described more fully in Table 1

[Insert Table 1 here]

[38] For more on this "shows-based" measure of individual-level exposure to political advertising see Freedman and Goldstein (1999).

[39] Prior to logging this measure I added one so as to account for respondents with zero exposure.

There are several advantages to this approach. As Franz and Ridout (2007) explain, this particular measurement strategy takes into account variation in television viewing patterns across individuals as well as variation across media markets with respect to the number of ads aired. The result is that heavy television watchers living in markets where few ads are aired have low levels of exposure to candidates' televised messages, as do light television watchers in media markets that are positively deluged with advertising. In addition, this approach also helps to alleviate some concerns about endogeneity that might confound attempts at gauging the impact of distancing strategies on electoral outcomes. As is the case with campaign spending (see Jacobson 2004), it could be that candidates who face more difficult races air more ads in which they attempt to gain some distance from their parties. A simple indicator for whether a candidate engaged in such a strategy, or even a measure of the total number of airings that featured an attempt at distancing might only serve to capture each candidate's expectations about the likely closeness of her race. By contrast, using a measure that captures survey respondents' *exposure* to candidates' efforts at separating themselves from their parties helps to mitigate concerns about endogeneity, since exposure to distancing varies depending on factors -- namely individuals' television-watching habits -- that are not directly related to candidates' strategic considerations.

The inclusion of good survey items tapping respondents' media usage is only one reason that the 2006 CCES is an attractive dataset for testing the effects of distancing.[40] Because data collection on candidates' advertising in 2006 was limited to only nine media markets in the East and Midwest, large samples are needed within each media market to have enough cases to analyze. Most political surveys, such as the American National Election Study (ANES), are administered to, at most, a few thousand individuals. As a result, with conventional surveys it is difficult to say much about the

[40] Detailed media use measures were not included on the survey instrument that the CCES administered in 2008.

effects of even statewide phenomena on voters, let alone the impact of factors that vary at the media market level. The 2006 CCES, by contrast, surveyed 36,500 individuals. Even after reducing that number down to just those respondents from the nine media markets covered by the WiscAds data, and further to those who resided in districts or states that were targeted by advertising, I am still left with sizeable samples of respondents.[41]

What is more, the 2006 CCES asked respondents to place House and Senate candidates on the same left to right ideological spectrum as the two major political parties, thereby permitting an assessment of the efficacy of candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their parties. If such efforts were successful, we might expect to see survey respondents placing Republican candidates to the left of the national party and Democratic candidates to the right as a function of exposure to distancing ads. In order to test whether exposure to candidates' attempts at distancing "work" in this respect, I created a dichotomous measure that takes a value of one if a survey respondent placed the Democratic candidate to the right of her political party or the GOP candidate to the left of the national Republican Party.[42] Note that, while candidates who highlight the differences between themselves and their parties in their campaign communications may have roll call voting records that would place them either to the left or right of their party's median, the measurement strategy employed here helps to ensure that the effects of distancing on respondents' perceptions are based on their level of exposure to candidates' appeals rather than the incumbent's legislative record itself.

The 2006 CCES also permits a test of the potential effects of distancing on turnout, and in particular, the effects of distancing on *partisans'* decisions about whether to bother going to the polls on Election Day. Midterm elections are ideally suited to testing the impact of distancing by congressional candidates on voter turnout. In midterm years the calculus of voting is different than

[41] In total, 3,867 respondents from the CCES could be matched to the media markets covered by the 2006 Wisconsin Advertising Project data.
[42] This approach is inspired by Levendusky's (2009) measure of voters' assessments of the parties' relative positions.

it is in presidential elections when many "peripheral voters" are brought to the polls by the excitement generated during the presidential campaign. Non-presidential years thereby afford a clearer view of the turnout effects of distancing strategies given that there is likely to be greater variation in reported turnout in such years. Even though the 2006 CCES included a validated measure of turnout, I use self-reported vote choice and turnout, as the vote history data that was matched to the CCES was incomplete. For instance, at the time that the 2006 CCES was conducted, Wisconsin did not have a voter file, thereby making it impossible to match any of the respondents from one of the media markets examined here to their voting history. One possible consequence of the decision to use self-reports is that the effects of national forces on vote choice may be systematically understated (see Wright 1990). As a result, though, this study likely represents a conservative look at the effects of candidate distancing on turnout and vote choice.

In addition, I also employ advertising data from the Wisconsin Advertising Project on U.S. Senate races in 2004 coupled with survey data from final two waves of the 2004 UW/BYU panel survey.[43] The 2004 ads dataset is far more comprehensive than the 2006 edition, covering the top 100 media markets in the country, or 319,044 airings in Senate races across the country. Although it would have been prohibitively labor-intensive to re-code the 2004 ads dataset, it includes a measure that gets at the kinds of rhetorical strategies that I consider to constitute distancing. 2004 is the only year in which WiscAds used a pair of coding items that speak to candidates' attempts at distancing themselves rhetorically from their parties. Coders with the Wisconsin Advertising Project in 2004 were instructed to note whether an ad described the favored candidate as either "independent" or "bipartisan."

[43] The second wave took place in early September while the third was conducted the day after the election.

Of the 40 unique ads in 2006 that were coded as containing an attempt to distance the favored candidate from her political party, 16 employed the "independent" label in doing so, while 10 labeled the candidate as being a "bipartisan." Surprisingly, these labels were not used in conjunction with each other in 2006.[44] Well over half of the ads that were coded as "distancing" ads in the 2006 data, then, used these adjectives explicitly. Other means of rhetorically separating a candidate from her party in 2006 often involved attempts at trespassing on policy issues typically thought to be "owned" by the opposite party (see Arceneaux 2008; Pietryka and Boydstun 2012).

Thus, even though the coding items included in the 2004 Ads data do not capture every aspect of what might be thought of as "distancing," they do provide another look at the phenomenon, and when paired with survey data, provide another window through which to observe the effects of distancing rhetoric on electoral behavior. The use of a panel dataset also affords a degree of causal leverage in determining whether distancing strategies worked for the candidates who employed them. The 2004 UW/BYU panel survey has been described in-depth elsewhere (see Franz and Ridout 2007), and so I will refrain from detailing its contents. Like the 2006 CCES, though, the 2004 UW/BYU survey included a number of media use measures. This allowed me to construct individualized exposure measures to ads that used adjectives like "independent" or "bipartisan" to describe the favored candidate. The 2004 UW/BYU survey also asked respondents about how favorable (or unfavorable) their opinions of the Senate candidates were. Favorability items were not included in the 2006 CCES survey. The earlier data therefore provide a degree of comparability with the results of other studies (Harbridge and Malhotra 2011) that used such items in assessing the impact of distancing strategies on candidates' electoral fortunes. I employ data from

[44] The 2004 data display a similar lack of overlap, as only 539 individual airings used both "independent" and "bipartisan" to describe the favored candidate; this figure represents less than five percent of all airings that identified the favored candidate as an "independent" and just over 12 percent of airings that used the "bipartisan" label.

the second and third waves of this survey, respectively collected in September and November of 2004.

Finally, in turning to the influence of distancing on the incumbent's share of the two-party vote in congressional elections, I employ a dataset compiled by Cohen and colleagues (2008) on pre-convention endorsements of presidential hopefuls, using only the subset of the data comprised of endorsements by members of Congress. Inspired by Schoenberger (1969), I consider a member of Congress to have distanced herself from her party if she did not endorse the party's eventual nominee for president, instead endorsing another candidate prior to the convention.[45] As I explain above, I only examine election results from members who made some kind of endorsement so as to avoid the selection issues that might otherwise taint comparisons between the electoral fortunes of those who endorsed the party's presidential nominee and those who did not make any endorsement at all. Before delving into the results from this aggregate analysis, though, I use the 2006 data to examine whether distancing "worked" in the sense that candidates were able to separate themselves from their parties' ideologies in the minds of the voters (see also Franklin 1991).

The implications that this line of inquiry holds for the study of congressional elections are profound. It is generally accepted that party-line voting in Congress has been on the rise over the last several decades as the parties have polarized. There is evidence suggesting, however, that party unity is an electoral liability for members of Congress (Carson et al. 2010). If partisanship, much like ideological extremity (Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan 2002), is detrimental to members' chances of securing reelection, then why is it that they continue to vote with their parties at a very high rate? An

[45] Conversely, endorsing a candidate other than the eventual nominee might be a sign of *greater* loyalty to the party. A Republican member of Congress who endorsed Santorum in 2012 would not have been distancing at all. Similarly, a Democrat who endorsed Hillary in 2008 might actually have been perceived as a more loyal member of the party than a member who endorsed Obama the outsider. I address this particular criticism later in the chapter by applying Schoenberger's (1969) analytic strategy to more recent elections. The conclusions that I draw remain unchanged.

answer to this puzzle may lie in candidates' efforts on the campaign trail to downplay their connections with a particular political party, portraying themselves as moderates or bipartisan in their approach to the office, even if their voting behavior belies this particular image (Henderson 2012b). After all, campaign activity has often been found to trump institutional factors in shaping voters' views of their elected officials (Franklin 1991).

Did Distancing Work?

I begin my investigation of the effects of distancing by examining how the strategy affected survey respondents' placements of the candidates relative to their parties. Table 1 presents the results from four logistic regression models predicting whether the respondent placed Democratic candidates (in both House and Senate races) to the right of their party and Republican candidates (again, in all contests for Congress) to the left of the national party. In addition to my key independent variable--exposure to ads in which the favored candidate attempted to gain some distance from her party--the models control for a host of other potential confounds, including partisanship, ideology, and political interest, as well as the usual demographics.[46] The models also

[46] Distancing is a heterogeneous concept in my formulation, and ads were classified as containing an attempt at distancing the favored candidate from her party if they employed adjectives such as "independent" and "bipartisan." There is also a policy dimension to many candidates' efforts at distancing (e.g., Henderson 2012), and my measure includes policy-focused appeals as well. Previous studies, however, have typically focused on one aspect such as bipartisanship (Harbridge and Malhotra 2011) or policy distancing (Arceneaux 2008; Henderson 2012). In an effort to rule out the possibility that the decision to incorporate several distinct rhetorical strategies into a single measure of distancing, and to link the results from my examination of the effects of distancing in 2006 with my analysis of Senate contests in 2004 (a year in which the Wisconsin Advertising Project coded ads for references to "bipartisan" and "independent"), I re-estimated the models shown in Tables 1 through 4 using exposure to "bipartisan" or "independent" ads in place of the more expansive measure of distancing. The conclusions drawn from these models differ little from the analyses that are reported in the chapter with one notable exception. As the results displayed in Table A of the Appendix demonstrate, using exposure to ads that refer to the favored candidate as "independent" as a measure of distancing replicates the constellation of results shown in Table 2, while a measure that employs references to "bipartisanship" as a key indicator for what constitutes an attempt at distancing produces a somewhat different picture. That is, exposure to ads that use the adjective "independent" to describe the favored candidate is a statistically significant predictor. "Bipartisan" advertising, by contrast, has no effect. Reassuringly, the coefficient is signed in the same direction. This is the only instance in which the particular measure of distancing that I employ matters for the conclusions that are drawn.

include a measure of exposure to ads aired by the opposing candidate in the race. This is done so as to account for the possible countervailing influence of ads aired by the opposing candidate or outside groups, many of which likely sought to connect the favored candidate with her party's brand during the campaign (see Coleman 1999; McGhee 2008).

[Insert Table 2 about here]

The first column in Table 2 presents results from a logistic regression model predicting whether the Democratic candidate for the U.S. House was placed to the right of the national Democratic Party. Distancing does seem to have worked for congressional Democrats. Greater exposure to distancing messages increased the likelihood of placing the Democratic candidate to the right of the national Democratic Party. Moving the exposure variable from zero to one standard deviation above its mean (while holding all other variables at their means) increases the predicted probability that a respondent placed the Democratic candidate for the U.S. House to the right of her party by eight percent, moving the predicted probability from 0.65 to 0.70.[47] Working against the effects of distancing on respondents' placement of Democratic House candidates are the ads aired by their Republican opponents, many of which were presumably dedicated to connecting Democrats with the national Democratic Party.

Republican candidates for the U.S. House seem to have been unsuccessful in convincing members of the electorate that they were more liberal than their party, as exposure to distancing messages has no effect on respondents' placement of the GOP candidate. Ideological conservatives were less likely to place the Republican candidate for the U.S. House to the left of the national party, while those who exhibited greater degrees of political interest were more apt to do so.

[47] The predicted probabilities in this chapter were calculated using the SPost suite of commands for Stata (Long and Freese 2006).

Other results are perhaps even more counter-intuitive, as exposure to ads from the Republican candidate's Democratic opponent actually appears to have driven up the likelihood of placing the GOP contender to the left of the Republican Party. Interestingly, ideological conservatives were more likely to place the Democratic candidate for the U.S. House to the right of the Democratic Party. This might be a classic "projection" effect. Those with higher levels of political interest, by contrast, were less likely to do so. Republican incumbents were more likely to be identified as being more liberal than the GOP, a result that might reflect the nature of the Democratic wave in the 2006 midterms. Conversely, Democratic incumbents appear to have been unable to gain any separation from the Democratic Party in the minds of voters.

These findings are indeed curious. Even though the Republicans controlled both houses of Congress, as well as the presidency, prior to the elections, it appears that GOP incumbents succeeded in convincing members of the electorate that they were less conservative than the national Republican Party. This feat is even more remarkable given that, in the Congresses before the 2006 mid-term elections, "Republicans voted together on party unity roll calls" a stunning "93 percent of the time--the highest levels in a century" (Grynaviski 2010, 184). Democratic incumbents, on the other hand, were unable to gain any distance from their party on the campaign trail.

Grynaviski's (2010) discussion of the 2006 campaign, and in particular of the Democratic Party's efforts at presenting the American public with an alternative to Republican rule, may provide an explanation as to why this may be so. As Grynaviski details, Democrats took a page from the Republicans' playbook in 2006 and presented the public with a national party platform--the *New Direction for America*--that tied members to the Democratic brand. This platform detailed six issues ("Six for '06") to which party leaders were committing its nominees should the party be successful in taking control of Congress. Thus, "the Democrats were acting in the manner of a responsible opposition party--being steadfast in their resistance to ruling-party programs that they opposed and

advancing an alternative vision of the direction of government come election time" (Grynaviski 2010, 186). It appears that Democratic leaders succeeded in connecting its members to the national party, which in turn limited their ability to distance themselves from the party's program on the campaign trail.

Turning now to contests for the U.S. Senate in 2006, the third column in Table 2 reports estimates from a model predicting placement of the Democratic contender. Few predictors in the model are statistically significant. Distancing, however, again seems to have helped Democratic candidates for the U.S. Senate gain some separation from their party, as exposure to televised campaign ads that attempted to differentiate the favored candidate from the national party increased the likelihood of placing the Democratic candidate to the right of her party. In addition, exposure to the (logged) total number of ads aired in the race by the Democratic candidates' opponent actually served to increase the likelihood that respondents would believe the Democrat to be more conservative than the Democratic Party as a whole. While distancing had no effect on how CCES respondents positioned Republican candidates for the U.S. House relative to the national party, candidates running for the Senate under the Republican banner actually seem to have been hurt by their attempts to distance themselves from the GOP. Higher levels of exposure to ads that rhetorically distanced the Republican candidate from the Republican Party decreased the predicted probability of placing the Republican candidate to the left of the national GOP by 38 percent after moving this variable from its minimum to one standard deviation above its mean (decreasing the predicted probability from 0.35 to 0.21). Advertising aired by their Democratic opponents also diminished the ability of Republican candidates to distance themselves from their party, as exposure to such ads decreased the likelihood that a respondent would consider the GOP contender to be more liberal than the Republican Party. It remains to be seen whether this result reflects a general asymmetry between the parties or whether it is unique to the 2006 electoral context.

The Electoral Impact of Distancing

Individual-Level Results from the 2006 CCES

Distancing appears to help candidates set themselves apart from their party. But as the above analysis demonstrates, Democrats were the only ones who succeeded in doing so in 2006. Yet it could be Republicans who have the last laugh. It is possible that distancing represents something of a double-edged sword for candidates. While distancing might "work" in the sense that members of the electorate may perceive candidates who engage in distancing strategies as being less conservative or less liberal than they do the national parties, spatial theories also suggest that partisans in the electorate punish candidates for distancing by staying home on Election Day. The estimates shown in Table 3 address this possibility, and present the results of a pair of multinomial probit models predicting vote choice and abstention in 2006.[48] I begin by analyzing only respondents who identified as Republicans or Independents, then turn to Democrats and Independents in the following table. The two leftmost columns in the table present results from a model predicting voting behavior in House races, while the two rightmost columns present estimates from a model predicting vote choice and abstention in Senate races in 2006. The base category in both models is voting for the Republican candidate in the race. The vast majority of Republican identifiers in the sample voted for the Republican in both contests--a fact that is consistent with work by Adams and others that melds spatial theories of candidate competition with insights from behavioral research (e.g., Adams 2001; Adams and Merrill 2003).

[Insert Table 3 here]

The model estimates show that those who expressed higher levels of interest in politics were less likely to abstain from voting in either race. Those who were more conservative were likewise

[48] Multinomial probit is commonly employed in testing unified models of vote choice and turnout (see Lacy and Burden 1999), as its use relies on fewer assumptions than does multinomial logit. In particular, multinomial probit permits violations of the Independence of Irrelevant Alternatives (IIA) assumption.

less apt to vote for Democratic candidates across the board. Republican and Independent members of the electorate who approved of the job that George W. Bush was doing as president were less likely to vote for the Democratic candidate in both House and Senate races, and less likely to abstain from voting in Senate contests.

Not surprisingly, those who identified with the Republican Party, no matter how weakly, were, relative to the reference category (pure Independents), less likely to abstain from voting. More favorable evaluations of the national economy are negatively associated with either voting for the Democratic candidate or abstaining from voting altogether in congressional elections. Respondents were also less likely to vote Democratic or stay home on Election Day when the Republican candidate for the U.S. House was the incumbent, while incumbency status had no effect on the vote in Senate contests.

Distancing appears to have helped Republican House candidates, as exposure to ads that attempted to distance the Republican candidate from the national GOP drove down the likelihood that Republican or Independent identifiers in the electorate would defect in the 2006 U.S. House elections, casting their ballots for the Democratic contender. Moving exposure to distancing ads from the variable's minimum to one standard deviation above its mean decreased the predicted probability of defection by 25 percent. This result is not robust to the inclusion of controls for other possible confounds, however, as the addition of a pair of dummy variables capturing whether there was a concurrent senatorial or gubernatorial contest in the state effectively washes away the significance of this effect (results not shown). Exposure to campaign ads from the Democrat in the race also decreased the likelihood of voting Democratic. Although this result might seem odd at first blush, particularly given recent work on the persuasive impact of political advertising (e.g., Franz and Ridout 2007; Huber and Arceneaux 2007), it is important to remember that the respondents included in this analysis are Republicans or Independents. Seeing ads aired by the Democratic

candidate in the race probably just serve to remind them of the things that they dislike about Democrats. Much as is the case with campaign spending by incumbents, though, which has been shown repeatedly to be negatively associated with the incumbent's share of the two-party vote share, candidates who are in tight races may air more ads, thereby increasing the likelihood of ad exposure at the individual level.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Table 4 explores the effect of distancing on turnout and vote choice in 2006 among Democratic and Independent identifiers. Table 4 displays estimates from a pair of multinomial probit models that are identical in specification to the ones detailed above in Table 3. The results from these models permit an examination of how distancing strategies affect the electoral fortunes of Democratic candidates and speak to whether congressional candidates can expect to pay a penalty for distancing themselves from their party.

Once again, exposure to ads aired by the Democratic candidate's Republican opponent decrease the likelihood that Democratic or Independent identifiers in the electorate will cast their ballot for the GOP candidate while at the same time decreasing the likelihood of abstention. Exposure to ads attempting to distance the Democratic candidate from the national party appears to have no effect whatsoever on the likelihood of defection or abstention in either House or Senate races among Democratic and Independent identifiers in the electorate.

Most other variables behave largely the same way as they did in the analyses described above. Incumbency status, for instance, decreases the likelihood of defection in U.S. House races, and the likelihood of abstention in both House and Senate contests. Higher levels of presidential approval are associated with a greater likelihood of voting for the Republican candidate or abstaining altogether from voting among rank-and-file Democrats and Independents, even after controlling for strength of partisanship and a host of other potential confounds. Political interest drives down the

likelihood of either defection or abstention across the board. Unsurprisingly, greater degrees of conservatism are a positive, significant predictor of voting for the Republican candidate relative to the reference category (voting for the Democratic candidate). Thus far, the available evidence points to distancing strategies "working" in some respects, but not others. That is, while Democratic candidates were able to use distancing rhetoric to convince members of the electorate that they were more conservative than the national Democratic Party, there is little to suggest that distancing has any effect on the vote, at least in 2006.

The results of congressional elections are influenced by more than just how the candidates present themselves to the electorate, though, as it may be difficult for many candidates, and in particular incumbents, to convince voters that they hold policy positions that are distinct from those of their party or are otherwise not to be held responsible for their party's record (Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991). Party loyalty in Congress, for instance, has been shown to affect members' success at the polls. As Carson et al. (2010) demonstrate, incumbent members of Congress are often punished for being too partisan. In exploring the impact of both legislators' actual behavior in Congress side-by-side with the effects of their rhetoric on the campaign trail, I reduced the dataset down to only those respondents who hailed from districts in which the sitting incumbent was seeking reelection. I then went on to estimate a pair of multinomial probit models nearly identical in specification to the ones described above with one important exception: the addition of a variable tapping the degree to which the incumbent voted with his or her party in Congress.

[Insert Table 5 here]

Several results are worthy of note. Greater degrees of conservatism decreased the likelihood of voting for the Democratic candidate and effected a corresponding increase in the likelihood of abstention in races in which the Democratic incumbent is on the ballot. Party identification works as expected, as does political interest, which drove down the likelihood of abstention in all non-open

seat races. More importantly, though, incumbents' efforts at distancing had no impact on voters' willingness to abstain from voting in races in which the incumbent member of Congress was a Republican. Distancing by Democratic incumbents, on the other hand, increased the likelihood of abstention among members of the electorate, increasing the likelihood of staying home on Election Day. Varying the distancing measure from zero to one standard deviation above its mean raises the predicted probability of abstention from 0.14 to 0.27. This is the only instance in which distancing encourages voters to stay home on Election Day. Of particular interest is the effect of party line voting in Congress on vote choice in congressional elections. It appears that only Republican incumbents were affected by their loyalty to the party on roll call votes; CCES respondents were more likely to vote for the Democratic challenger in 2006 when faced with a Republican incumbent with a high party unity score. It should be acknowledged, however, that the effect of incumbents' party unity scores is only marginally significant ($p<0.10$). The standard errors around this coefficient estimate are perhaps optimistically small as well, as this measure does not vary within districts. This result is also not robust to the inclusion of additional controls for whether there was a concurrent senatorial or gubernatorial contest in the state (results not shown). The most important take-away from the results displayed in Table 5 is that, when rhetoric on the campaign trail is pitted against voting behavior as an explanation for survey respondents' decisions about which candidate to support at the polls, the content of members' campaign communications appears to be a more robust predictor (see Franklin 1991 for a similar set of results).

Individual-Level Results from the 2004 UW/BYU Panel Survey

While at this point it seems fairly certain that distancing strategies are a boon to candidates in many races, or at worst have no effect on voters' decisions about which party's candidate to support and whether to go to the polls at all, it is useful to back up and examine its effects on candidate favorability. I believe this to be the first study to examine the impact of distancing on vote choice

and turnout. Previous work has examined the effect of distancing on experimental subjects' evaluations of candidates (Arceneaux 2008; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011; Pietryka and Boydstun 2012). In an effort to confront these earlier findings on equal grounds I used the 2004 UW/BYU panel survey to examine the effect of distancing on favorability toward the candidates running for the U.S. Senate in that same year. Table 6 displays ordered logistic regression estimates from a pair of models predicting candidate favorability.

[Insert Table 6 about here]

As has been the case with vote choice and turnout, the results shown in Table 6 demonstrate that exposure to candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their party exhibit an impact on candidate favorability, driving up candidate evaluations. This effect, once again, appears to be limited to Democratic candidates, as distancing has no effect on favorability toward Republicans. Unlike previous models, which were estimated separately for Democratic and Republican identifiers, the models detailed in Table 6 were estimated using all respondents.[49] Splitting the sample by party identification and re-estimating the models produces somewhat different results. Republicans who engaged in distancing rhetoric in their campaign advertising actually appear to have gained support among their own co-partisans in the electorate (see Table B in the Appendix). Ads aired by the favored candidate's opponent, however, drive down evaluations across the board regardless of whether the sample is split on party identification. Incumbent status aids in fostering greater levels of favorability in the full sample for Republican and Democratic candidates alike (but has no effect in the models estimated using dataset that are cut-down along partisan lines). Once again the key take-away from the results displayed in Table 6 is that distancing, where significant, only serves to aid candidates in their quest for (re)election.

[49] I do so for the sake of comparison with Harbridge and Malhotra's (2011) results.

As an additional robustness check I also examined the effect of candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their parties rhetorically using data from the 2004 UW/BYU panel survey coupled with the 2004 WiscAds data. Doing so forces me to use a more conservative measure of distancing (see Footnote 11 above) that combines exposure to ads that used descriptors such as "independent" or "bipartisan" to describe the favored candidate. As a panel study, the use of this particular dataset also affords a degree of causal leverage with which to evaluate the effect of distancing strategies on the vote. Due to the difficulties that I encountered in matching respondents from the 2004 UW/BYU panel survey to particular congressional districts I only examine the impact of distancing in Senate races. My analytic strategy remains the same. I therefore estimated a pair of multinomial probit models predicting defection and abstention among partisans in such contests that are nearly identical in specification to those detailed above. One conspicuous exception stands out as worthy of comment, however, as I am now able to control for intended vote choice in the previous (September) wave. Its inclusion allows me to identify the effect of distancing off of changes in vote choice.

[Insert Table 7 here]

Not surprisingly, intended vote choice two months prior to the election stands out as a robust predictor of both abstention and vote choice. Most other variables perform much as they did in previous analyses. Of particular interest is the effect of exposure to advertising aired by Democrats' Republican opponents, which increases the likelihood of defection among Democratic and Independent identifiers. As before, distancing only seems to have any when employed by Democratic candidates, and once again, only serves to *stave off* defections to the Republican side among Democrats and Independents.

Aggregate Election Results

Lastly, I examine the impact of party distancing on incumbents' share of the two-party vote from 1980-2004 using a different measure of distancing: whether a member of Congress endorsed someone other than her party's eventual nominee for president. This measure is similar to that utilized by Schoenberger (1969) in his early investigation of candidate strategy. Rather than comparing the electoral fortunes of those members of Congress who endorsed their party's presidential nominee to the performance of *all* those who did not, I limit my analysis to just those members who made an endorsement. In doing so, I believe that I avoid the difficulties that stem from the fact that members of Congress avoid endorsing candidates for president for a variety of reasons (see Anderson 2013).

[Insert Table 8 about here]

Table 8 reports estimates from an OLS model predicting members' share of the two-party vote in presidential election years. The model specification differs from those employed in the above analyses, and includes measures of candidate spending (by both the incumbent and challenger), ideological distance from the presidential nominee, the incumbent's share of the vote in the previous election, and whether the incumbent faced a quality challenger.[50] I also include controls for party, whether the incumbent's district was reapportioned, freshman status, and year fixed-effects. Crucially, the model also includes an indicator for whether a member of Congress endorsed the eventual presidential nominee, the share of the two-party presidential vote garnered by the incumbent's party in the concurrent election, and an interaction term multiplying the two.

A number of results are reassuring, and on their face speak to the validity of the model. The presence of a quality challenger is associated with lower vote shares, as is the natural log of both

[50] Several of these variables require some explanation, none more so than my measure of members' ideological distance from their party's eventual nominee. Following Cohen et. al (2008), I used expert ratings (from David Karol) of the ideological placement of each party's nominee for president and calculated the distance between such ratings and members' NOMINATE score. Cohen et al. (2008) performed a similar calculation, taking into account the absolute value of the difference between the ideology of the presidential hopeful endorsed by a member of Congress and the members' ideological position.

incumbent and challenger spending. Not surprisingly, election outcomes are highly autoregressive. The incumbent's share of the two-party vote in the previous elections is a positive and highly statistically significant predictor of the vote. Democrats, on average, performed better at the polls--a result which may have something to do with the fact that Democrats have long performed very well in the kind of low turnout districts that James Campbell (1996) labeled the "cheap seats." This particular result also comports well with Jacobson's (1991) theory that voters prefer Democrats in the congressional arena to handle domestic spending. Members running in districts that had been reapportioned did markedly worse than those whose districts did not change.

Members of Congress who endorsed their party's eventual nominee for president won a lower share of the two-party vote than their fellow legislators who endorsed another candidate who did not win the party's nomination. Endorsing the party's choice for president decreases the incumbent's share of the two-party vote by three percent. As a constituent part of a multiplicative interaction term, however, this estimate reflects the effect of endorsing the party's eventual presidential nominee when her party's share of the two-party vote for president is zero--a value that is implausible, if not impossible, under normal circumstances.

[Insert Figure 1 here]

The plot shown in Figure 1 therefore displays the marginal effect of endorsing the eventual nominee on the incumbent's share of the two-party vote over the range of presidential vote share. It is not until the share of the two-party vote for the incumbent's party dips below fifty percent or so that endorsing the eventual nominee becomes an electoral liability. Even so, the marginal effect of having endorsed the party's presidential candidate is not statistically significant throughout this range, owing perhaps to the fact that many candidates who are worried about their electoral prospects refuse to endorse any candidate at all for president. The figure does suggest, however, that

distancing, that is, endorsing a different candidate for president, can be a boon to members of Congress facing re-election.

My estimate of the effect of distancing is likely a conservative one, as many of those who refused to endorse any candidate at all in the presidential race may have done so in an effort to distance themselves from *anyone* vying to become the figurehead for the party (Anderson 2013). To address this possibility I estimated a pair of difference-in-differences models that compare the electoral fortunes of incumbents who endorsed a candidate for president to those who did not. I estimated two separate models. The first compares the 1984 and 1988 elections, while the second affords a look at congressional elections in 1996 and 2000. Although it is not significant in the model estimated using data from the earlier (1984-1988) time period, endorsing a candidate for president drives down members' share of the two party vote in both models. District composition helps to temper this effect, however, as their party's share of the vote for president (a measure that is often employed as a proxy for district partisanship) moderates the negative impact of candidate endorsement (see Table C in the Appendix). In districts where the eventual presidential nominee selected by members' party performed well, endorsing a candidate actually helped at the polls. These results largely comport with the estimates displayed in Table 8.

Discussion and Conclusion

Previous studies have encountered a number of difficulties in testing the electoral effects of candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their party, chief among them being the absence of a direct measure of distancing. As a result, perhaps, research in this area has yet to come to a consensus as to whether distancing helps or hurts candidates at the polls. Existing work therefore supports a wide variety of conclusions. Studies have found, for instance, that candidates' efforts at downplaying their connections to the national party both aid in overcoming the negative effects of partisan tides (Schoenberger 1969) *and* erode support among their copartisans in the electorate, at

least under some conditions (Arceneaux 2008; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011). In this paper I set out to reconcile these disparate findings using several different measures of distancing, including a measure of exposure to televised campaign ads in which the favored candidate attempts to separate herself from her party.

With this measure I went on to examine the prevalence of distancing strategies in candidates' televised advertising, as well as the effects of distancing on individuals' placements of the candidates relative to their parties and on the willingness of partisans in the electorate to abstain from voting, presumably in an effort to punish candidates who run away from the party. I found that, contrary to the picture that Krehbiel (1998) paints, attempts at distancing by candidates are relatively uncommon in comparison with the other kinds of messages that they might convey over the airwaves. My results were somewhat mixed with respect to the electoral impact of distancing, but generally support the conclusion that distancing actually helps candidates at the polls or, at worst, has no effect on their electoral fortunes. This in and of itself is something of a victory, as previous studies have often encountered great difficulties in connecting particular campaign messages with outcomes at the level of the individual voter (Sides 2007; Sides and Karch 2008). In only two instances did I find any evidence that distancing has deleterious consequences for those candidates who engaged in such a rhetorical strategy. CCES respondents who were exposed to "distancing" ads aired by Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate in 2006 were less likely to be place that candidate to the left of the national GOP. Distancing attempts by Democratic House incumbents also appear to have driven those exposed to such efforts to abstain from voting in 2006. In many other arenas distancing helped candidates to stave off defections to the other party's candidate, convinced voters that they were more liberal or more conservative than the national parties, boosted their favorability ratings, and increased these candidates' share of the two-party vote in presidential election years.

On balance, however, Democratic candidates appear to have been far more effective in distancing themselves from the national Democratic party without suffering any repercussions from Democratic identifiers in the electorate. Distancing did little to aid Republican candidates in their quest for elected office, as they only benefitted from such a strategy in one instance. Exposure to distancing efforts by Republican candidates for the U.S. House in 2006 drove down the likelihood of voting Democratic among Republican and Independent identifiers. Otherwise, distancing had no effect on the vote for Republican candidates.

I believe that this particular constellation of results signals the importance of context in assessing the impact of candidates' rhetorical strategies on the electorate. The effect of distancing differed depending on which party's candidate engaged in such efforts. It seems likely that national factors may explain the differential effect of distancing with respect to the two parties' candidates, as the Republicans enjoyed unified control of both the legislative and executive branches going in to both the 2004 and 2006 elections. Thus, it makes a great deal of sense that Republicans would find it difficult to distance themselves from the national GOP. Further confirmation of this interpretation of the results detailed in this study comes with reference to the impact that Republican legislators' records of party support in Congress had on their electoral prospects in 2006. In the 2006 mid-terms, Democratic incumbents' party unity scores were unrelated to the vote, while party-line voting by Republicans was associated with votes for their (Democratic) challenger. Thus, even though I initially characterized distancing as a way for candidates to avoid being hurt at the polls by virtue of their association with a damaged party brand name, distancing appears to be more feasible when employed by members of the "out" party. Rightly or wrongly, candidates from the party that does not control the reins of power in government are perhaps able to make a more credible claim to "independence" than are those from the "in" party. My results, then, would suggest that partisan tides, of the kind witnessed in 2006, 2008, and 2010 are built not only upon the relative

attractiveness of a particular party label, but also on the strategic actions of out-party candidates who are able to stake out a position that is distinctive enough from that of their party to pick up votes in swing districts.

This study is hardly the first, though, to recognize the importance of institutional structure as a determinant of candidates' behavior. Periods of unified government have often been linked to changes in candidates' strategic calculations regarding the use of partisan rhetoric and symbols on the campaign trail, as well as shifts in the voting behavior of those already holding a seat in Congress (Groeling 2010; Lynch and Madonna forthcoming; Chapter 2, this volume). The Democrats enjoyed a fair degree of success in distancing themselves from the national Democratic Party. In different years, however, perhaps ones in which Republican candidates are believed to have held an advantage going in to the election, these findings might very well be reversed. In moving forward, then, future research on distancing should explore the effects of this rhetorical strategy in other elections and take into account other salient characteristics of the campaigns.

Lastly, I believe that additional scholarship is necessary to determine exactly why recent experimental studies of the effects of "distancing" differ from recent observational work on the subject. Experimental investigations have uncovered evidence that bipartisanship in Congress or expressing support for policies that are not typically associated with their parties has a negative impact on candidates' chances at the polls (Arceneaux 2008; Harbridge and Malhotra 2011), while observational studies have found no such relationship (see also Henderson 2012b). In many ways this mixture of seemingly divergent findings is reminiscent of the debate over the effects of negative advertising on turnout (Freedman and Goldstein 1999), as the strongest evidence in favor of negativity's deleterious effects came from experimental studies (e.g., Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995). Only recently have these conflicting results been reconciled theoretically as well as empirically with the insight that negativity only demobilizes certain voters at a key point in the campaign: after

they have decided to support a particular candidate but before they are able to implement that choice by casting a ballot (Krupnikov 2011). I examined the effects of distancing conditional on a number of other factors, including, crucially, the partisan identity of the person on the receiving end of candidates' messages. Although I present evidence from panel data on individuals' reactions to candidates' efforts at gaining separation from their parties, there is much to be done in looking at how the effectiveness of various rhetorical strategies may vary over the course of the campaign.

Table 1. Description of Advertising Variables Used

Logged Distancing Ads	Logged Total Ads
Republicans running for the U.S. House	Republicans running for the U.S. House
Democrats running for the U.S. House	Democrats running for the U.S. House
Republicans running for the U.S. Senate	Republicans running for the U.S. Senate
Democrats running for the U.S. Senate	Democrats running for the U.S. Senate

Table 2. The Influence of Distancing on Respondents' Placement of the Candidates Relative to Their Parties in 2006

	Democratic House Candidate	Republican House Candidate	Democratic Senate Candidate	Republican Senate Candidate
Distancing (favored candidate)	0.165**	0.057	0.344**	-0.482**
	(0.047)	(0.051)	(0.059)	(0.085)
Total advertising (opponent)	-0.192**	0.053*	0.067**	-0.081**
	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Party ID (Republican)	0.035	0.031	0.010	0.032
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.029)
Ideology (conservative)	0.006**	-0.009**	-0.0002	-0.006**
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Political Interest	-0.200**	0.174*	-0.237**	0.022
	(0.081)	(0.090)	(0.076)	(0.079)
Female	0.193*	-0.332**	-0.036	-0.137
	(0.091)	(0.098)	(0.086)	(0.091)
Married	0.028	-0.225**	-0.042	0.046
	(0.097)	(0.105)	(0.092)	(0.096)
Black	0.043	-1.046**	-0.198	0.111
	(0.137)	(0.190)	(0.131)	(0.136)
Age	-0.036*	0.038**	-0.0005	0.005
	(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Age squared	0.0003	-0.0003	-0.00003	0.00001
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	-0.937**	1.182**	0.024	0.286**
	(0.096)	(0.102)	(0.090)	(0.095)
Constant	2.110**	-2.897**	0.565	-0.623
	(0.455)	(0.502)	(0.424)	(0.448)
Number of cases	2530	2530	2530	2530
Log pseudolikelihood	-1552.34	-1348.73	-1676.01	-1547.92

** $p<0.05$; * $p<0.1$. Cell entries are logistic regression estimates. The dependent variable is a dichotomous indicator coded one if the respondent placed the Democratic (Republican) candidate to the right (left) of the national party on a seven-point scale, and zero otherwise.

Table 3. The Effect of Distancing on Turnout and Vote Choice in 2006
(Republican and Independent Respondents Only)

	House		Senate	
Variable	Vote Democratic	Abstain/ 3rd Party	Vote Democratic	Abstain/ 3rd Party
Distancing (favored candidate)	-0.160*	-0.038	-0.173	0.135
	(0.092)	(0.080)	(0.164)	(0.155)
Total advertising (opponent)	-0.080*	-0.046	0.063	0.006
	(0.042)	(0.040)	(0.044)	(0.050)
Strong Republican	-0.193	-1.074**	-0.258	-0.788**
	(0.292)	(0.287)	(0.301)	(0.347)
Weak Republican	-0.351	-0.733**	-0.154	-0.589**
	(0.250)	(0.248)	(0.256)	(0.296)
Lean Republican	-0.525*	-0.822**	-0.768**	-0.557*
	(0.284)	(0.278)	(0.299)	(0.333)
Female	0.141	0.115	-0.281	-0.518**
	(0.177)	(0.164)	(0.196)	(0.219)
Education	0.102*	-0.052	0.069	-0.194**
	(0.062)	(0.061)	(0.065)	(0.080)
Ideology (conservative)	-0.022**	-0.002	-0.035**	-0.011*
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.006)
Political interest (very much interested)	-0.220	-0.517**	-0.014	-0.623**
	(0.155)	(0.145)	(0.163)	(0.169)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	-0.623**	-0.101	-0.801**	-0.441**
	(0.108)	(0.108)	(0.110)	(0.132)
Economic evaluations (much better)	-0.411**	-0.324**	-0.305**	-0.271**
	(0.097)	(0.096)	(0.101)	(0.116)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	-1.319**	-1.053**	-0.265	0.076
	(0.174)	(0.160)	(0.193)	(0.210)
Black	0.501	0.601	0.308	0.448
	(0.390)	(0.373)	(0.413)	(0.445)
Age	0.038	0.001	0.026	-0.057
	(0.036)	(0.033)	(0.038)	(0.041)
Age squared	-0.0003	-0.00006	-0.0003	0.0004
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Intercept	3.424**	3.435**	4.378**	6.236**
	(0.975)	(0.896)	(1.058)	(1.122)
Number of cases	987		931	
Log pseudolikelihood	-604.82		-441.48	

**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial probit estimates. The reference category is vote Republican.

Table 4. The Effect of Distancing on Turnout and Vote Choice in 2006
(Democratic and Independent Respondents Only)

	House		Senate	
Variable	Vote Republican	Abstain/ 3rd Party	Vote Republican	Abstain/ 3rd Party
Distancing (favored candidate)	-0.047	0.109	0.116	0.002
	(0.106)	(0.075)	(0.191)	(0.165)
Total advertising (opponent)	-0.141**	-0.089**	-0.058	0.017
	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.066)	(0.044)
Strong Democratic	-1.145**	-1.201**	-2.122**	-1.306**
	(0.240)	(0.221)	(0.388)	(0.261)
Weak Democratic	-0.590**	-0.611**	-1.176**	-0.682**
	(0.226)	(0.209)	(0.271)	(0.242)
Lean Democratic	-0.823**	-0.745**	-1.095**	-0.901**
	(0.241)	(0.221)	(0.298)	(0.269)
Female	-0.024	0.122	0.413*	0.042
	(0.160)	(0.147)	(0.241)	(0.180)
Education	-0.087	-0.158	0.060	-0.328**
	(0.061)	(0.056)	(0.082)	(0.072)
Ideology (conservative)	0.012**	0.005	0.015**	0.0007
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Political interest (very much interested)	-0.270*	-0.590**	-0.439**	-0.731**
	(0.138)	(0.117)	(0.171)	(0.129)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	0.778**	0.588**	0.834**	0.546**
	(0.123)	(0.120)	(0.139)	(0.136)
Economic evaluations (much better)	0.107	0.046	0.147	0.004
	(0.089)	(0.081)	(0.123)	(0.100)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	-1.549**	-0.593**	0.122	-0.032**
	(0.193)	(0.150)	(0.228)	(0.177)
Black	-0.168	-0.252	-0.424	0.092
	(0.248)	(0.214)	(0.324)	(0.237)
Age	-0.050*	-0.080**	-0.035	-0.059*
	(0.030)	(0.025)	(0.042)	(0.030)
Age squared	0.0004	-0.0006**	0.0002	0.0004
	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0005)	(0.0003)
Intercept	0.439	2.875**	-1.666	2.822**
	(0.809)	(0.705)	(1.091)	(0.823)
Number of cases	1241		1197	
Log pseudolikelihood	-706.14		-434.48	

**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial probit estimates. The reference category is vote Democratic.

Table 5. The Effect of Distancing on Turnout and Vote Choice in 2006
(Non-Open Seat House Races Only)

	Democratic Incumbent		Republican Incumbent	
Variable	Vote Republican	Abstain/ 3rd Party	Vote Democratic	Abstain/ 3rd Party
Distancing (incumbent)	-0.055	0.388**	-0.171	0.064
	(0.134)	(0.175)	(0.130)	(0.130)
Total advertising (challenger)	0.193**	-0.323**	0.088**	0.039
	(0.095)	(0.140)	(0.037)	(0.040)
Seven-point party ID (Republican)	0.222**	0.193	-0.293**	-0.184**
	(0.074)	(0.065)	(0.056)	(0.063)
Female	-0.187	0.075	-0.017	0.169
	(0.219)	(0.189)	(0.160)	(0.175)
Education	-0.150*	-0.128*	0.078**	-0.059
	(0.082)	(0.069)	(0.058)	(0.065)
Political interest (very much interested)	0.178	-0.404**	0.230*	-0.407**
	(0.212)	(0.151)	(0.137)	(0.137)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	0.764**	0.425**	-0.781**	-0.105
	(0.137)	(0.129)	(0.117)	(0.121)
Economic evaluations (much better)	0.134	0.186*	-0.226**	-0.302**
	(0.122)	(0.104)	(0.090)	(0.097)
Incumbent's party unity score	0.004	0.008	0.024*	-0.019
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.013)
Black	-0.504	-0.548**	-0.179	-0.136
	(0.387)	(0.266)	(0.413)	(0.346)
Age	-0.105**	-0.080**	0.024	-0.037
	(0.042)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Age squared	0.0009**	0.0006*	-0.0002	0.0002
	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)
Intercept	-3.038	0.260	0.043	5.389**
	(1.629)	(1.389)	(1.389)	(1.492)
Number of cases	790		1041	
Log pseudolikelihood	-423.93		-610.67	

**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial probit estimates.

Table 6. The Influence of Distancing on Candidate Favorability in the 2004 Senate Elections

Variable	Democratic Senate Candidate	Republican Senate Candidate
Distancing (favored candidate)	0.091*	0.052
	(0.050)	(0.053)
Total advertising (opponent)	-0.121**	-0.061*
	(0.037)	(0.035)
Married	-0.005	0.005
	(0.166)	(0.160)
Candidate favorability in the previous wave	1.280**	1.258**
	(0.095)	(0.091)
Δ Party ID (more Republican)	-0.134*	0.222**
	(0.081)	(0.083)
Female	0.114	0.034
	(0.160)	(0.157)
Education	-0.022	0.035
	(0.041)	(0.039)
Ideology (conservative)	-0.202	0.237**
	(0.124)	(0.118)
Δ political interest (more interested)	0.027	-0.198*
	(0.116)	(0.110)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	-0.644**	0.539**
	(0.101)	(0.100)
Economic evaluations (much better)	-0.032	-0.085
	(0.116)	(0.115)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	0.349*	0.492**
	(0.198)	(0.192)
Black	-0.335	0.110
	(0.466)	(0.411)
Age	0.006	0.006
	(0.005)	(0.005)
Age squared	0.0000006	0.0000006
	(0.0000005)	(0.0000005)
Cutpoint 1	-0.971	3.440
	(0.612)	(0.523)
Cutpoint 2	0.649	4.837
	(0.605)	(0.533)
Cutpoint 3	2.282	6.267
	(0.605)	(0.553)
Cutpoint 4	4.394	8.593
	(0.634)	(0.606)
Number of cases	625	641
Log likelihood	-730.76	-769.53

**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are ordered logistic regression estimates.

Table 7. The Effect of Distancing on Turnout and Vote Choice in the 2004 Senate Elections

	Democratic and Independent Respondents		Republican and Independent Respondents	
Variable	Vote Republican	Abstain/ 3rd Party	Vote Democratic	Abstain/ 3rd Party
Distancing (favored candidate)	-0.247*	-0.002	-0.184	-0.113
	(0.126)	(0.099)	(0.136)	(0.113)
Total advertising (opponent)	0.228**	0.063	0.072	0.003
	(0.095)	(0.073)	(0.075)	(0.066)
Intended vote choice in previous wave (certain GOP vote)	0.983**	0.390**	-0.810**	-0.512**
	(0.143)	(0.128)	(0.125)	(0.122)
Δ Party ID (more Republican)	0.760**	0.108	-0.315*	-0.356**
	(0.218)	(0.194)	(0.162)	(0.155)
Female	-0.227	-0.245	-0.094	0.151
	(0.355)	(0.307)	(0.332)	(0.296)
Education	-0.010	-0.049	-0.115	-0.101
	(0.088)	(0.078)	(0.087)	(0.080)
Ideology (conservative)	0.748**	0.547**	-0.470*	0.060
	(0.263)	(0.235)	(0.255)	(0.258)
Δ political interest (more interested)	0.627**	-0.027	-0.157	-0.364
	(0.303)	(0.231)	(0.253)	(0.240)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	-0.400	0.154	-0.422*	-0.146
	(0.277)	(0.209)	(0.217)	(0.205)
Economic evaluations (much better)	0.560*	0.226	0.043	0.225
	(0.293)	(0.223)	(0.217)	(0.217)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	-1.499**	0.376	0.220	-0.042
	(0.377)	(0.371)	(0.408)	(0.356)
Black	-1.373	-0.764	-0.135	0.369
	(0.865)	(0.819)	(1.020)	(0.949)
Age	0.019	-0.020**	0.014	0.022
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.061)
Age squared	0.000002	0.000002**	0.000001	-0.0003
	(0.677)	(0.000001)	(0.000002)	(0.0006)
Intercept	-6.553	-2.877**	3.447	0.490
	(1.323)	(0.977)	(1.156)	(1.712)
Number of cases	314		312	
Log pseudolikelihood	-148.11		-162.63	

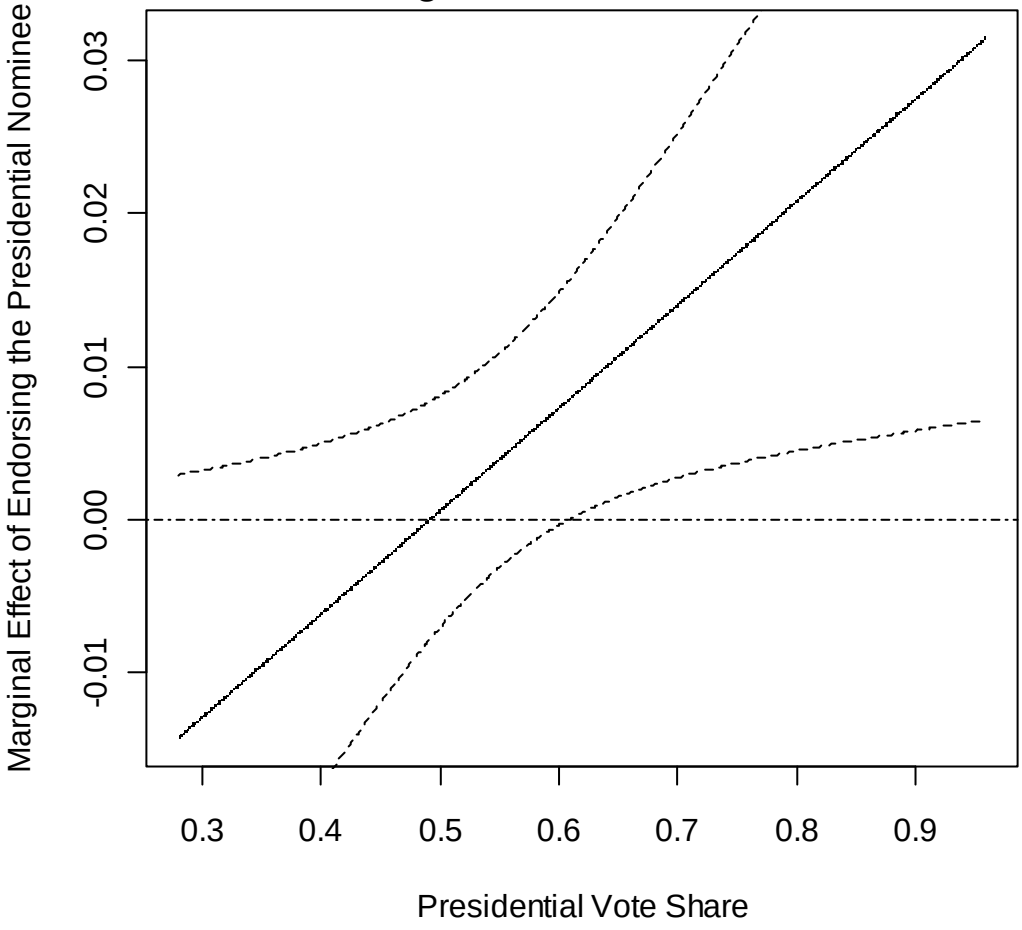
**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are multinomial probit estimates.

Table 8.
Predictors of Incumbents' Share of the Two-Party Vote in U.S. House Elections Among Those Endorsing a Candidate for President, 1980-2004

Variable	Coeff.	(S.E.)
Quality challenger	-0.010**	(0.005)
Natural log of incumbent spending	-0.014**	(0.003)
Natural log of challenger spending	-0.005**	(0.001)
Candidate's share of the two-party vote in the previous election	0.407**	(0.028)
Democrat	0.016**	(0.004)
Redistricted	-0.022**	(0.007)
Freshman status	0.009	(0.006)
Ideological distance from presidential nominee	0.020**	(0.007)
Year	0.001**	(0.0003)
Endorsed eventual presidential nominee	-0.033*	(0.018)
Party's share of the two-party presidential vote	0.278**	(0.025)
Presidential vote × presidential endorsement	0.067**	(0.033)
Intercept	-0.909	(0.651)
Number of cases	624	
Adjusted R^2	0.75	

**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are OLS estimates.
The dataset consists of incumbent members of the U.S. House who endorsed a member of their party for president before the conventions.

Figure 1
The Impact of Endorsing the Presidential Nominee on Congressional Vote Share



Appendix

Table A. The Effect of Distancing by Republican Candidates for the U.S. House on Turnout and Vote Choice in 2006
(Republican and Independent Respondents Only)

	Independent		Bipartisan	
Variable	Vote Democratic	Abstain/ 3rd Party	Vote Democratic	Abstain/ 3rd Party
Distancing (favored candidate)	-0.180*	-0.102	-0.301	-0.153
	(0.106)	(0.095)	(0.224)	(0.202)
Total advertising (opponent)	-0.083**	-0.037	-0.098**	-0.047
	(0.042)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.037)
Strong Republican	-0.175	-1.064**	-0.167	-1.061**
	(0.292)	(0.286)	(0.291)	(0.287)
Weak Republican	-0.324	-0.728**	-0.325	-0.726**
	(0.249)	(0.247)	(0.249)	(0.248)
Female	0.143	0.115	0.147	0.117
	(0.176)	(0.165)	(0.175)	(0.164)
Education	0.102*	-0.051	0.101*	-0.052
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.061)
Ideology (conservative)	-0.022**	-0.002	-0.022**	-0.002
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Political interest (very much interested)	-0.221	-0.516**	-0.231	-0.519**
	(0.155)	(0.145)	(0.155)	(0.145)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	-0.629**	-0.108	-0.625**	-0.105
	(0.108)	(0.108)	(0.108)	(0.108)
Economic evaluations (much better)	-0.409**	-0.321**	-0.412**	-0.323**
	(0.097)	(0.096)	(0.097)	(0.096)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	-1.350**	-1.086**	-1.306**	-1.057**
	(0.178)	(0.163)	(0.174)	(0.160)
Black	0.472	0.577	0.491	0.589
	(0.390)	(0.373)	(0.389)	(0.373)
Age	0.037	0.001	0.037	0.0004
	(0.036)	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.033)
Age squared	-0.0003	-0.00006	-0.0003	-0.00006
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0003)
Intercept	3.428**	3.452**	3.440**	3.469**
	(0.974)	(0.896)	(0.973)	(0.898)
Number of cases	987		987	
Log pseudolikelihood	-604.80		-605.43	

**$p<0.05$; *$p<.10$. Cell entries are multinomial probit estimates. The reference category is vote Republican.

Table B. The Influence of Distancing on Candidate Favorability in the 2004 Senate Elections (Candidate's Co-Partisans in the Electorate)

Variable	Democratic Senate Candidate	Republican Senate Candidate
Distancing (favored candidate)	0.227**	0.164**
	(0.079)	(0.075)
Total advertising (opponent)	-0.188**	-0.099**
	(0.056)	(0.047)
Married	0.179	-0.050
	(0.248)	(0.242)
Candidate favorability in the previous wave	1.659**	1.398**
	(0.172)	(0.133)
Δ Party ID (more Republican)	-0.394**	0.145
	(0.137)	(0.110)
Female	-0.058	-0.044
	(0.238)	(0.221)
Education	0.008	0.080
	(0.062)	(0.056)
Ideology (conservative)	-0.376**	0.036
	(0.180)	(0.180)
Δ political interest (more interested)	-0.090	0.219
	(0.174)	(0.164)
Presidential approval (strongly approve)	-0.169	0.414**
	(0.166)	(0.153)
Economic evaluations (much better)	-0.140	-0.199
	(0.180)	(0.160)
Favored candidate is the incumbent	0.042	-0.050
	(0.302)	(0.261)
Black	-0.596	0.597
	(0.559)	(0.728)
Age	0.003	-0.002
	(0.042)	(0.007)
Age squared	0.00006	0.0000002
	(0.0004)	(0.0000007)
Cutpoint 1	0.438	2.378
	(1.305)	(0.852)
Cutpoint 2	1.467	3.583
	(1.288)	(0.848)
Cutpoint 3	3.719	4.883
	(1.281)	(0.859)
Cutpoint 4	5.982	7.454
	(1.323)	(0.920)
Number of cases	328	337
Log likelihood	-315.74	-371.57

**p<0.05; *p<.10. Cell entries are ordered logistic regression estimates.

Table C. Predictors of Changes in Incumbents' Share of the Two-Party Vote in U.S. House Elections Among All Incumbents
(Difference-in-Differences Estimates)

	1984-1988	1996-2000
Quality challenger	-1.899**	-0.259
	(0.809)	(0.692)
Natural log of incumbent spending	-3.373**	-2.567**
	(0.652)	(0.751)
Natural log of challenger spending	-0.540**	-0.677**
	(0.090)	(0.113)
Endorsed a candidate for president	-2.204	-6.748**
	(2.476)	(2.545)
Party's share of the two-party presidential vote	0.477**	0.115*
	(0.066)	(0.066)
Presidential vote × presidential endorsement	0.070	0.157**
	(0.045)	(0.044)
Intercept	88.519**	100.167
	(8.966)	(10.392)
Number of cases	546	486
Within R^2	0.42	0.39
Between R^2	0.58	0.67
Overall R^2	0.57	0.63

Chapter 5. The "L" Word: Anti-Liberal Campaign Rhetoric, Self-Identified Ideology, and the Electoral Fortunes of Democratic Candidates

The continued polarization of partisan elites has engendered a considerable amount of hand-wringing among political observers of all stripes. However, a growing number of political scientists have begun to highlight the positive aspects of elite polarization. Increased ideological divisions among partisan elites have led to a corresponding shift in the mass electorate, with Democratic identifiers becoming more liberal over time and their Republican counterparts becoming more conservative (Hetherington 2001). As the electorate has sorted along ideological lines, attitudinal consistency has increased. Voters are now thought to be able to participate more effectively in the political process (Levendusky 2009).

Ideological sorting among the mass public has been asymmetric, however. While Republicans have taken to the conservative label with some alacrity, Democrats have been slower to embrace the liberal moniker. Moreover, the percentage of Democratic identifiers who profess to be conservatives has shown little sign of abating over the last four decades. Thus, while most Republicans are now sorted--a status that has been associated with greater degrees of voter competence--Democratic identifiers in the electorate have lagged behind. As a result, Democrats are perhaps less able to make sense of the political world, even one in which ideological divisions between the two parties are quite pronounced (though see Hussey 2012).

The uneven nature of partisan sorting has been linked to Republican efforts at making "liberal" a dirty word (Eisinger, Veenstra, and Koehn 2007; Kenix 2005; Schiffer 2000; cf. Carmines and Berkman 1994; Fleishman 1986, 529). While this explanation is certainly appealing, lacking measures of the content of political elites' communications with the public, researchers have yet to offer a direct test of the relationship between anti-liberal rhetoric and Democratic identifiers' reluctance to adopt the liberal label. In this study I rectify this shortcoming using the 2004

UW/BYU panel survey coupled with information on the content of televised campaign advertising from the Wisconsin Advertising Project. With these data I examine the relationship between anti-liberal rhetoric on the campaign trail and Democrats' ideological self-identification.

Numerous studies have shown that ideological self-identification is quite resistant to change (Finkel 1989; Fleishman 1986; Levitin and Miller 1979). Self-identified ideology may derive from "long-standing predispositions acquired during childhood" (Fleishman 1986, 539) or might depend on which party controls the reins of power in key government institutions (Zschirnt 2011). Consequently, exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric may not convince Democrats to outright abandon their ideological identity in the short term. Such appeals may, however, influence the electorate's evaluations of Democratic candidates--the proximate targets of Republican efforts at damaging the liberal label (see also Finkel 1989). Many in the press documented the Republicans' use of this particular strategy throughout the 2004 campaign (for a review see Todd 2006), leading to widespread speculation that the "L-word" was at least partly responsible for Democrats' poor showing at the polls in November. After testing the effects of anti-liberal rhetoric on self-identified ideology, I therefore go on to investigate whether exposure to ads tagging John Kerry--the Democratic presidential nominee--or Democratic senatorial candidates as "liberals" had any impact on voters' evaluations of Democratic candidates in 2004.

I find that anti-liberal campaign rhetoric had a modest effect on self-identified ideology, pushing even liberal identifiers in the June wave of the survey to embrace the conservative label in the September wave of the UW/BYU study. Importantly, this effect only obtains for those who both experienced greater levels of exposure to ads disparaging the liberal label *and* became more interested in politics. There is little evidence to support that ads connecting Kerry with the term had any impact on the outcome of that race. Democratic Senate candidates, however, appear to have

been hurt by such appeals, as exposure to ads disparaging the liberal label effectively drove down support for Democrats in that contest.

Anti-Liberal Campaign Rhetoric and Affect Toward the Liberal Label

There are at least three pathways through which Americans come to identify with a particular ideological label (Ellis and Stimson 2007; see also Claasen, Tucker, and Smith 2013). The most obvious pathway to the formation of an ideological identity is through policy positions. Many Americans have a general understanding of the left-right ideological continuum, and are able to locate their views on such a scale. Democrats who identify as conservatives often do hold policy positions that are rightward-leaning (Carmines and Berkman 1994; Sundquist 1983). *Operationally*, to use Ellis and Stimson's (2007; 2012) term, most Americans are liberals who desire government intervention in many facets of everyday life.

Symbolically, however, a majority of Americans claim identification with the conservative label. They may do so for reasons that are wholly unrelated to politics. Those who associate the term with religious meanings may self-identify as conservatives out of a fondness for the label developed in a context that is, at least on its face, removed from the political realm. "Still others," they go on to write, "acquire from the dominant frames of elite political discourse" an affinity for the conservative label (Ellison and Stimson 2007, 3). And as I argue here, Americans come to prefer the conservative moniker out of a disdain for its opposite: the liberal label. This disdain has been fostered through calculated efforts on the part of the GOP to imbue the term with negative associations.

Since at least the early 1980s the "relative esteem" of the liberal label has been in decline, as "Republicans under Reagan's inspiration turned the word into a derogatory term" (Schiffer 2000, 298; Sundquist 1986; see also Jarvis 2005, 7).[51] For their part, Democrats have refused to defend the

[51] Some have pinned the origins of the decline in the relative esteem with which the liberal label is held to the 1964 presidential campaign (Donaldson 2003). Most scholars, however, focus on the Reagan era as the time

label, often avoiding the term altogether when on the campaign trail (Jarvis 2005; Schiffer 2000). This is a relatively recent development. During the 1932 presidential campaign, for instance, both President Hoover and his challenger, Franklin Roosevelt, claimed to be liberals. And although FDR would later go on to redefine the term to suit his New Deal agenda (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, 223), Democrats and Republicans alike would continue to spar over the label for some time after that fateful contest (Green 1987). Subsequent Democratic presidential hopefuls, including Truman, Stevenson, and Kennedy, would follow in FDR's footsteps, employing the liberal label in a positive way, and associating the term with "loyal constituencies, electoral victory, cherished ideals, and even sound economic policies" (Jarvis 2005, 7).

Goldwater's questioning of Democrats' use of the word in 1964, however, coupled with Johnson's unwillingness to defend the term rhetorically, would set the stage for an all-out assault on the liberal label by conservatives. As Sharon Jarvis (2005; see also Todd 2006) documents, from 1980 onward Republicans began to use the term with great frequency during presidential campaigns, while it all but disappeared from the Democrats' lexicon over this same time period. Without competition from Democrats, Republican elites were free to shape "the popularly accepted meanings of the label" (Green 1987, 3). Consistent with the "indexing hypothesis" (Bennett 1990), the news media subsequently adopted the negative framing that Republican elites' associated with the liberal label. It should come as little surprise, then, that recent scholarship has found that "liberal" has increasingly been used in conjunction with negative attributes as reported in the news, while, at the same time, the "conservative" label is often pitched in a positive light (Kenix 2005; see also Watts et al. 1999).

[Insert Table 1 about here]

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period during which the liberal label was enlisted in Republican efforts at branding Democratic candidates with it in an attempt to gain an electoral advantage.

Table 1 provides some initial evidence about the asymmetry in label usage (drawing on television campaign advertising data that are described in more detail later). The descriptive statistics displayed illustrate the extent to which Republicans have been permitted to re-define the word without any resistance from Democrats, and detail the prevalence of the "L word" strategy in the 2004 contest. In that campaign, the Democratic camp did not air a single ad associating John Kerry with the liberal label. Similarly, in down-ballot contests for the House and Senate only 0.1 percent of Democratic candidates' airings used the word liberal to describe the favored candidate. No ads sponsored by the Democratic Party or its interest group allies employed the liberal label in characterizing the Democratic candidates. By contrast, 3.5 percent of Republican candidates' airings--and 22.6 percent of all airings that were coordinated with the GOP--described their Democratic opponent as being a "liberal." Over a fifth of all TV spots that the Bush campaign coordinated with the national GOP sought to associate Kerry with the liberal label. Somewhat curiously, however, GOP-leaning interest groups were less active in employing anti-liberal campaign rhetoric against John Kerry than they were in congressional races, wherein more than 20 percent of all airings sponsored by interest groups allied with the Republican Party made some attempt to connect the Democrat in the race with the liberal label. Taken together, these figures speak to the prevalence of Republicans' use of the "L word" strategy, and Democrats' utter refusal to defend the term.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Some Democrats even went so far as to adopt the conservative label in their televised campaign advertising in 2004. As the statistic displayed in Table 2 show, Democratic congressional candidates employed the term to describe themselves in one percent of all airings. Although one percent may not seem like much in the abstract, it is important to recall that Democrats described themselves as "liberal" in only one-tenth of a percent of all airings. Even some of the ads sponsored by the Democratic Party itself attempted to paint the favored (Democratic) candidate with the

conservative moniker. Republicans used the conservative label in nearly one fifth of all airings sponsored by the candidates themselves, and in 11 percent of those airings that were coordinated with the party.

[Insert Table 3 here]

And in spite of talk that Democrats, eager to avoid the baggage associated with the liberal label, have increasingly taken to re-branding themselves as "progressives," there is little evidence that Democratic candidates used the term in 2004, at least not in their televised political advertising. Less than one percent of Kerry's airings mentioned the progressive label (see Table 3). Little more than one percent of the airings that he coordinated with the Democratic Party used the term, while just four-tenths of a percent of all candidate-sponsored airings broadcast by Democratic candidates for the U.S. Congress referred to the favored candidate as a "progressive." This reluctance on the part of Democratic candidates to embrace any ideological label may help to explain why many Americans are hesitant to apply the liberal label to their own political persona and are unfamiliar with the progressive label altogether (Carroll 2006).

It should come as little surprise, given this one-sided flow of information, that "liberal" came to take on a whole new set of meanings. Jarvis' in-depth analysis of how the word was used by Republicans throughout the 1980s and 1990s suggests that "the *liberal* label is constituted as being heavily ideological and is seen as being synonymous with moral weakness and excess." Although much was made of the GOP's use of the liberal epithet throughout the 2004 presidential contest, the 1998 mid-term elections actually saw a much more concerted effort on the part of Republican candidates at branding their Democratic opponents with the "L word" (Chapter 2, this volume). Presumably this was done in an attempt to connect Democrats with the Monica Lewinsky scandal given the images of moral weakness that are now associated with the liberal label. The Republicans appear to have been successful in connecting the Democrats with liberalism in the minds of the

general public, at least during the campaigns. An investigation of the frequency with which the terms "liberal" and "Democrat" were used in conjunction with each other in search terms in the United States using Google Trends reveals that search activity containing the phrase "liberal Democrat" spiked in October and November of campaign years, reaching peaks in 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2012.

The word is now "also associated with a lack of restraint and an excessive generosity" (Jarvis 2005, 177). In addition, Republicans have worked hard to connect the term with elitism and an overriding concern with policy and the belief that government is the answer to many of society's ills. The liberal label is therefore portrayed as being "part of the problem" (Jarvis 2005, 186). There is also a group basis to many of the attacks that have been led against the label, as its use now conjures up images of "minorities, the poor, the homeless, and gays," all of which purportedly benefit from the excesses of "big government" (Jarvis 2005, 181-182). Insofar as individuals come to understand ideological labels (and the "liberal" label in particular) in terms of groups and issues (Green 1987; Conover and Feldman 1981), Republican efforts directed at connecting liberals with certain downtrodden groups may also alter the particular constellation of interests that the label is believed to represent (see also Ellis and Stimson 2007).

One possible consequence of this redefinition of the liberal label is that affect toward the label has declined among the general public. While self-identified ideology admits of both affective and cognitive (or issue-based) dimensions (Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991, Ch. 6; cf. Conover and Feldman 1981), it is the affective component that is most likely to exhibit change (Cover and Feldman 1981; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991, Ch. 6; Zschirnt 2011). As political labels appeal to the emotions and can "evoke responses that are neither analytical nor rational" (Green 1987, 2), anti-liberal campaign rhetoric may influence self-identified ideology by lowering liberal affect. Since conservative self-identification is largely a product of negative affect toward liberals (Conover and Feldman 1981), Republican efforts at making liberal a dirty word should push the electorate in a

conservative direction. As an image-laden medium that is loaded with content calculated to appeal to viewers' emotions (Brader 2006), television advertising would appear to be an effective vehicle for generating negative affect toward liberals by priming individuals to think about the set of associations surrounding the label developed through the above-described efforts that Republicans undertook to redefine the word.

The impact of liberal affect on ideological identity has been shown to be conditioned by a number of other factors, however. As Zschirnt concludes, "the relative salience of...affinities toward ideological labels is contingent upon the extent to which proponents of the ideologies associated with them are able to wield power and control the political agenda" (2011, 698). In a year like 2004, then, with the Republicans firmly in control of the White House and both chambers of Congress, affect toward conservatives might prove to be a more important determinant of self-identified ideology than liberal affect. Thus, anti-liberal campaign rhetoric may not necessarily precipitate changes in self-identified ideology, even if it does engender more negative feelings toward liberals.

Another possibility is that campaign advertising geared at connecting Democratic candidates with the liberal label has a differential impact on Democratic identifiers in the electorate, influencing only those who number among the most politically engaged. A longstanding finding in the literature on self-identified ideology is that those who pay attention to politics are more likely than the less politically aware to update their ideological identity in the face of changes in the information environment (Finkel 1989; Fleishman 1986; Hillygus and Shields 2008; cf. Zaller 1992). It is unclear, however, whether exposure to Republican attempts at making the liberal label a "dirty word" is likely to have a differential effect on those who are the most interested in politics when it comes to candidate evaluations. There is substantial evidence to suggest that voters form judgments about candidates in accordance with "on-line" models of information processing. According to "impression-driven" theories of candidate evaluation, voters often update their beliefs about a

particular candidate in response to new information even as the distinct pieces of information upon which such judgments are based fail to become encoded into memory (Lodge, McGraw, and Stroh 1989; Lodge, Steenbergen, and Brau 1995). Ideological identity may require a more memory-based approach to information evaluation as voters sort through various campaign stimuli and reassess how they think of themselves in ideological terms. It therefore could be the case that increased attention to what is going on in politics over the course of the campaign serves as a catalyst for voters to actually *remember* specific pieces of information rather than simply evaluating the candidates in light of the messages they received prior to being surveyed.

Lacking direct measures of exposure to campaign messages, earlier investigations into the determinants of self-identified ideology argued that increases in political interest result in greater exposure to campaign rhetoric that, in turn, can precipitate changes in ideological identification (Finkel 1989, 341). The sequence that Finkel describes may hold for many forms of campaign stimuli (see, for instance, Druckman 2004), but not necessarily for televised political advertising. TV ads, as Patterson and McClure (1976) famously noted, seek out individuals as they sit in front of their televisions to be entertained. Individuals in the same media market who are watching the same television program at the same time see the same complement of campaign ads, regardless of whether they have an interest in politics or not.

To be sure, the majority of televised campaign ads are aired during news programs--shows that are certain to attract those who number among the most engaged politically (Ridout et al. 2012). And those who are uninterested might skip advertising leaving the room or using digital video recorders.[52] It is likely, then, that there is a rough correlation between political interest and exposure to televised campaign advertising. Candidates are strategic about the particular messages that they

[52] Given the time frame of my study (the 2004 election), the avoidance of televised campaign ads through the use of digital video recording devices (DVRs) is somewhat less of a worry than it might be if I were using more contemporary data. According to a study conducted by the Leichtman Research Group, only four percent of U.S. Households owned a DVR device in 2004.

send to voters in their campaign spots (Tessin 2005; Vavreck 2001), and are more likely to turn to ideological rhetoric in years that they believe to be favorable to their party (Chapter 2, this volume). Having a keen interest in politics is therefore no guarantee that one will be exposed to anti-liberal rhetoric through TV advertising. Those who are interested in politics, but live in a media market that does not receive any television advertising, watch shows during which no ads are aired, or see ads that are devoid of ideological rhetoric are unlikely to update their ideological perceptions. Likewise, absent an interest in politics, or at the very least an interest in the present campaign, mere exposure to televised campaign ads seems unlikely to promote the reception of campaign messages. It is therefore the nexus of interest and exposure that matters. Those who become more interested in politics over the course of the campaign *and* are exposed to ads containing anti-liberal rhetoric being perhaps the most likely to update their ideological identity.

It seems unlikely that Republican candidates and their surrogates (the GOP and its interest group allies) sought to connect their Democratic opponents with the liberal label on the campaign trail with the immediate goal of changing the ideological composition of the electorate. Rather, they sought to pin the label to Democrats for the purpose of winning elections. Branding a candidate with a "bad" label evokes "certain negative attitudes currently inhering in the label" (Green 1987, 4). As Leege and colleagues note, "by attaching negative groups and issues to a rival party, politicians can create anxiety among those who feel that their party no longer respects members like them" (2002, 261; see also Green 1987). Anxiety, in turn, promotes defection among those who otherwise might be inclined to support a particular party's candidates (Leege et al 2002; see also Edelman 1988). There has long been speculation that Republicans' use of the liberal epithet when referring to John Kerry and other Democratic candidates in 2004 cost them votes in 2004 (see Todd 2006). In this study I explore this possibility.

The following section describes the data and methods that I employ throughout the rest of the paper. I then go on to investigate the hypothesized interactive effects of political interest and exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric on self-identified ideology among Democratic identifiers. Next, I examine the impact of exposure to TV ads disparaging the liberal label on favorability toward Kerry and other Democratic candidates, as well as vote intention and vote choice in a variety of elected offices. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of how my findings contribute to the existing literature on the connection between elite rhetoric and the mass electorate.

Data and Methods

To investigate the effects of anti-liberal campaign rhetoric I turn to a three-wave panel survey conducted by the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy (CSED) at Brigham Young University and the Center for the Study of Politics and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The survey was administered in June, September, and November of 2004, although some questions were not asked on all three waves. The study was sampled from the U.S. voting age population, and includes and oversample of individuals in battleground Senate and presidential states. Because of competitive state oversampling (and panel attrition), all analyses are weighted using the supplied sample weights.[53]

I pair this dataset with detailed content analysis of televised political advertising in 2004 from the Wisconsin Advertising Project (WiscAds). Coders for the project were asked to indicate whether an advertisement used the word "liberal" to characterize the opposing candidate. In addition to content analysis of each unique advertisement (or "creative") aired in the top 100 media markets in 2004, the WiscAds data also contain comprehensive information about which media market each ad was run in as well as the name of the television program during which it aired. Coupled with survey

[53] More details about the survey are available on the web at http://csp.polisci.wisc.edu/BYU_UW . See also Franz and Ridout (2007).

data on individuals' television viewing habits and the media market in which they reside, it is possible to create to create an individual-level measure of exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric.

Fortunately, the 2004 UW/BYU panel study included measures of both, querying respondents about how many days in the prior week they watched a number of different programs, including talk shows (such as "The Oprah Winfrey Show"), game shows (such as "Wheel of Fortune," and "Jeopardy!"), early local news, late local news, the national evening news, and all other shows.[54] Using these survey items I was able to construct measures of exposure to ads portraying the liberal label in a negative light by first multiplying the number of such ads aired on each type of show in each media market by the television viewing patterns of respondents within those markets. After summing these seven values I logged the resulting quantity, as is commonly done in studies employing ads data, so as to account for the possibility that there may be diminishing marginal returns to advertising (see Franz and Ridout 2007; Chapter 2, this volume).[55] In all models I employ two versions of this variable: a starting value and a measure of change in exposure between the waves of the survey.

One particular advantage to this approach is that it helps to alleviate concerns about endogeneity that might otherwise plague efforts at exploring the impact of anti-liberal campaign rhetoric. Because exposure to anti-liberal rhetoric in televised campaign ads varies according to factors (such as individuals' television-viewing patterns) that are not directly related to elites' strategic considerations, the measure employed here neatly sidesteps some of the worries associated with the fact that candidates and other political elites make calculated decisions regarding the content of their TV ads (Franz and Ridout 2007).

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[54] For more details on this "shows-based" measure of exposure to televised political advertising see Freedman and Goldstein (1999).

[55] Prior to logging this measure I added one so as to account for respondents with zero exposure.

I use this measure of exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric to predict changes in self-identified ideology among Democratic identifiers and leaners as well as changes in support for Democratic candidates. To be sure, Republicans use the liberal epithet to win votes, not change how members of the electorate think of themselves in ideological terms. Insofar as ideology is a strong predictor of vote choice, my focus on self-identified ideology is far from just academic curiosity, as campaign strategists may also hope to shape individuals' ideological identities as a means of precipitating defections or abstentions among their opponents' likely supporters.

Exposure to ads that associate Democrats with the liberal label may not change vote intention or vote choice outright, particularly in presidential contests in which candidate ideology is but one of many possible considerations that might go into voters' decisions at the polls. Rather, campaign ads branding Democrats with the liberal label may have an indirect effect on the vote by lowering favorability toward Democratic candidates (see Franz and Ridout 2007). I therefore gauge support for Democratic candidates with several different dependent variables, including: favorability toward Kerry, favorability toward the Democratic Senate candidate, presidential vote intention, Senate vote intention, presidential vote choice, and Senate vote choice.

In addition to my measure of exposure to campaign ads featuring the "L word," I include a multiplicative term in the model predicting self-identified ideology that captures the hypothesized interactive relationship between changes in political interest and changes in exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric. I control for party identification, ideology, and political interest in all models. Following Finkel (1989, 1993), I also employ differenced measures of partisan identification, candidate favorability, and political interest. All models include lagged dependent variables as predictors as well (Franz and Ridout 2007). More details about how each variable is constructed can be found in the Appendix.

Results

I begin my exploration of the effects of anti-liberal campaign rhetoric with a model predicting self-identified ideology among Democratic identifiers. Unfortunately, the UW/BYU survey only asked respondents about how they describe themselves in ideological terms on two surveys (the June wave and the September wave). I am therefore unable to examine changes in self-identified ideology throughout the heart of the campaign. The availability of detailed measures of exposure to campaign ads featuring ideological rhetoric, however, nevertheless makes the analysis of change over even a single time period a worthwhile endeavor.

[Insert Table 4 about here]

Table 4 displays multinomial logistic regression estimates of the determinants of ideological self-identity, with liberal identification being the base category. One intriguing result to emerge from the model is that, consistent with Levendusky's (2009) argument, changes in party identification are associated with changes in ideology. Specifically, those who became more Democratic over the course of the campaign exhibited movement toward liberal self-identification. The results shown in Table 4 also indicate that, in isolation, exposure to ads disparaging the liberal label has little effect on changes in self-identified ideology. Neither the initial level of exposure to anti-liberal ads nor the change in advertising exposure is a significant predictor of conservative self-identification. The same is true of political interest, as neither the initial value of political interest nor changes in political interest are related to changes in self-identified ideology. There is only exception: those who became more interested in the campaign between the first two waves of the study were less likely to report having no ideology in the second wave of the survey. Increases in exposure to ads employing the liberal label as a negative epithet are, however, drive up the likelihood of reporting no ideology in the second time period. Although the fact that few respondents indicated that they held no ideology whatsoever cautions against reading a great deal into this particular result, it is consistent with recent work on the subject by Treier and Hillygus (2009), who found that cross-pressured individuals, that

is, those who are liberal on some issues and conservative on still others, were more likely to say "Don't Know" in response to standard questions about ideology.

The interaction term multiplying changes in political interest with changes in exposure to anti-liberal campaign ads, however, is a statistically significant (p <0.1) predictor of conservative self-identification.[56] As hypothesized, the effect of changes in exposure to TV campaign ads disparaging the liberal label is conditional upon changes in political interest. As the plot displayed in Figure 1 shows, for those who identified as a liberal in the first wave of the survey, a one standard deviation increase in either ads or political interest has no impact on the predicted probability of reporting conservative identification on the second survey. A one standard deviation increase in both, conversely, results in a modest increase in the predicted probability of switching from liberal self-identification to conservative self-identification. As is to be expected, this effect is more dramatic among those who identified as moderates in the first survey. At the margins, then, it appears that increases in exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric, coupled with increases in political interest, produce modest changes in self-identified ideology. A reasonable increase of one standard deviation raises the probability of identifying as a conservative by about four percentage points.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Although movement toward conservatism among Democrats might indirectly translate into electoral gains for the Republicans, it is important to examine whether exposure to campaign ads associating Democratic candidates with the liberal label had a more immediate impact on support for John Kerry and Democratic Senate hopefuls. The ordered logistic regression estimates shown in Table 5 begin to address this possibility, displaying results from a pair of models predicting favorability toward John Kerry in 2004. As is to be expected, favorability toward Kerry is highly

[56] Even after including a series of time-invariant controls in the model (gender, race, age, education, and a dummy for South), the interaction term remains statistically significant (p<.05). Model estimates available upon request.

autoregressive. Favorability toward the Democratic presidential nominee in wave one is a significant predictor of favorability in wave two, and favorability toward Kerry in wave two is strongly associated with favorability in wave three. As one would expect, Democratic identification is also significantly related to Kerry favorability.

[Insert Table 5 here]

Political interest is only related to favorability toward John Kerry in wave 3. Both the level of political interest in the September wave and the change in political interest between the September and November waves of the survey are positively associated with favorability ratings. Exposure to anti-liberal campaign ads, however, has no effect, even though other research shows that total exposure to ads aired by the Bush campaign influenced favorability toward Kerry (Franz and Ridout 2007). Intriguingly, liberal self-identification in June (wave one) drives up support for Kerry in September (wave two), but liberal self-identification in wave two is not related to Kerry favorability in the post-election wave.

In spite of the prominent role that political interest played in moderating the effect of exposure to anti-liberal rhetoric on self-identified ideology, the inclusion of a interaction term multiplying changes in ad exposure with changes in political interest has no discernible effect, as this interaction term is not statistically significant (results not shown). To me, this indicates that exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric exerts a direct impact on candidate favorability and vote choice, but only plays an indirect role in shaping identification with a particular ideological label.[57]

The results displayed in Table 6 examine other measures of support for John Kerry in 2004. Specifically, the table shows estimates from an ordered logit model predicting intended vote choice in September (wave two) and from a logit model predicting vote choice in November. As with

[57] I initially included multiplicative interaction terms in all of the models in the paper. Their inclusion, however, did not improve the fit of any of the models. For the sake of parsimony, a political interest × exposure to anti-liberal campaign ads interaction was therefore omitted from the model specification in all future analyses.

favorability toward Kerry, intended vote choice in the June wave is a significant predictor of vote intention in September, and vote intention in September (wave two) is associated with respondents' final decision at the polls. Partisan identification and changes in partisan identification are also associated with electoral support for John Kerry, as is Kerry favorability. Once again, however, neither political interest nor exposure to ads linking Democrats with the liberal label has any effect on vote choice in the presidential contest.

[Insert Table 6 about here]

Only in contests for the U.S. Senate does exposure to anti-liberal campaign ads appear to have any impact. Estimates from a pair of ordered logistic regressions predicting favorability toward Democratic Senate candidates are displayed in Table 7. Even after controlling for a number of factors, such as partisanship and lagged favorability toward the Democrat in the race, exposure to ads connecting the Democratic candidate with the liberal label appears to drive down support for Democratic Senate hopefuls. In substantive terms, moving exposure to anti-liberal campaign ads in the June wave from one standard deviation below the variable's mean to one standard deviation above its mean decreases the predicted probability of having a "very favorable" opinion of the Democratic Senate candidate by 36 percent for a self-identified moderate, holding all other variables at their means. The same calculation yields an 18 percent decrease in the predicted probability of having a "somewhat favorable" opinion of the Democratic Senate candidate. As is to be expected, partisan identification likewise serves to predict favorability toward the Democratic Senate candidate. Ideology and political interest, however, have no effect.

[Insert Table 7 about here]

Turning to other indicators of support for Democratic candidates, the first column in Table 8 displays ordered logistic regression estimates from a model predicting vote intention in the September wave of the survey. Not surprisingly, reported vote intention in the first wave of the

survey is a significant predictor of vote intention in wave two, as is favorability toward the Democratic Senate candidate and changes in favorability toward the Democratic contender for the U.S. Senate. Party identification and changes in party identification likewise have an effect on intended vote choice, as Democratic identifiers are more likely to express their support for their party's nominee. In contrast to the results from previous models, ideology has an impact here, with liberal and moderate identifiers being more likely (than conservatives--the reference category in the model) to register their intention to vote for the Democratic candidate in the race for the U.S. Senate.

[Insert Table 8 here]

As with favorability toward the Democratic Senate candidate, exposure to campaign ads connecting Democrats with the liberal label decreases the likelihood that an individual votes for (or registers his or her intention to vote for) the Democrat in the race. Exposure to ads containing anti-liberal campaign rhetoric at the time of the first survey (the June wave) is a significant predictor of vote intention in September, and effectively drives down support for the Democratic Senate candidate. Moving from one standard deviation below the mean level of ad exposure at wave one to one standard deviation above the variable's mean reduces the predicted probability that a self-identified moderate is "certain" about voting for the Democrat in the race from .31 to .21 and increases the predicted probability of being uncertain about which candidate he or she is voting for from .12 to .16.

The second column in Table 8 displays logistic regression estimates from a model predicting vote choice in November. As is to be expected, many of the same factors that are associated with intended vote choice in September are also significant predictors of vote choice in November. There are, however, some noteworthy exceptions to this general trend. For instance, political interest at wave two (the September wave) predicts vote choice, whereas it is not a significant predictor of vote

intention in the previous time period. And while both favorability toward the Democratic Senate candidate in June and changes in favorability between wave one and wave two are associated with vote intention in the first model, only changes in favorability between wave two and wave three have any effect on vote choice. Change in exposure to ads linking the Democratic candidate with the "L word" is significant in the second model displayed in Table 8, and serves to drive down the likelihood of voting for the Democrat in the race. All else equal, moving the differenced measure of exposure to ads featuring anti-liberal campaign rhetoric from one standard deviation below the variable's mean to one standard deviation above its mean decreases the predicted probability that a self-identified moderate will vote for the Democratic Senate candidate by more than 23 percent. Even among self-identified liberals, the same degree of change decreases the predicted probability of voting for the Democratic Senate candidate from 0.69 to 0.53.

As a robustness check I took advantage of the panel structure of the data to examine the effect of exposure to anti-liberal campaign ads on favorability toward John Kerry and Democratic Senate candidates--two items which were measured in all three waves of the 2004 UW/BYU panel survey. Table 9 presents estimates from a pair of random effects models.[58] I employ random effects so as to permit the inclusion of several demographic controls that would otherwise drop out of the models if I were to use the more commonly encountered fixed effects estimator. Reassuringly, my results with respect to the effect of exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric on the electoral fortunes of Democratic candidates remain the same: greater levels of exposure to ads that use "liberal" in a negative way have no effect on favorability toward the Democratic presidential nominee, but drive down evaluations of Democrats contending for a Senate seat.

[Insert Table 9 about here]

[58] Note that this analysis treats favorability (with five categories) as if it were a continuous measure. In future work I hope to employ mixed Markov latent class models (sometimes referred to as "mover-stayer" models) to examine changes in favorability (and vote intention) over time (see Clarke and McCutcheon 2009).

Discussion and Conclusions

Scholars have long speculated that the ideological turn that American politics took in the early 1980s at the elite level should have translated into a commensurate shift in the mass electorate. The "salience hypothesis," however, received little empirical support in the literature (Finkel 1989; Fleishman 1986). There are several reasons why this may have been the case. As Schiffer (2000) notes, early investigations likely were conducted before the mass electorate had had a chance to take note of and react to the increasingly ideological character of elite political discourse.

In this study I provide an additional explanation. Previous studies have, almost without exception, relied on measures of political interest or political knowledge in their efforts at capturing the effects of exposure to campaign rhetoric (Finkel 1989; Fleishman 1986; Schiffer 2000). As anyone living in California or any other so-called "blackout state" in a presidential year can attest, however, interest and knowledge alone are not enough. Rather, one must be exposed to TV ads and other facets of the campaign in order for elites' appeals to have much of an impact above and beyond what filters through the news media. To be sure, elements of the campaign are targeted toward particular geographic constituencies, but the content of politicians' communications with the electorate is carefully selected as well, and reflects the political environment in which they must campaign (Vavreck 2001; Chapter 2, this volume). Even in geographic regions that typically see much of the presidential campaign, then, exposure to ideological rhetoric is contingent upon the availability of such messages in the information environment. As I demonstrate in this study, those who become more interested in what is going on in politics throughout the course of the campaign *and* witness more television ads featuring ideological rhetoric are likely to be influenced by elite messages regarding ideological labels, but only in the model predicting ideological self-

identification.[59] The one-sided nature of ideological discourse in recent years, however, with Republican candidates and their surrogates working to disparage the liberal label without any resistance from Democrats, has not only increased the salience of ideology at the mass level, but has also helped to change the attractiveness of the liberal label itself.

Throughout the 2004 campaign, many in the popular press (see Todd 2006 for a review) predicted that John Kerry would be hurt at the polls as a result of Republicans' efforts at labeling him a liberal. But there is no evidence to suggest that exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric through TV ads had any direct impact on the electoral fortunes of the Democratic presidential nominee in 2004. Democratic Senate candidates did not fare quite as well, and proved unable to weather assaults on the liberal label from the GOP and its interest group allies to the same extent as Kerry. Why this is so is unclear, although I strongly suspect that it has to do with the fact that the electorate typically has more information about presidential candidates, leaving ideological labels as but one of many different possible considerations upon which they might base their decision at the polls. Senate elections, by contrast, are not as salient during presidential years, and may permit negative attitudes associated with such labels to have a greater impact upon being connected with a particular candidate.

Indeed, perhaps this study's greatest contribution to the existing literature is that it tests some of the key assumptions inherent in work on political labels (Green 1987; Jarvis 2005). The premise of many such works is that, since politicians fight over the meaning of labels such as "liberal," "conservative," or in earlier times, "communist" or "individualist," that words and symbols matter for the practice of politics in the United States. As Sharon Jarvis writes, "the relative strength

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[59] Of course, those living in "blackout" states do have opportunities to encounter the messages contained in candidates' televised campaign ads if they are picked up by local or national media outlets (Fowler and Ridout 2009; Ridout and Smith 2008). The use of "free media' by the candidates likely reduces the clarity of my "treatment," thereby making the impact of ads alone more difficult to detect. In light of such observations it is even more remarkable that exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric through TV ads has any impact at all on individuals' self-identified ideology or vote choice.

and connotations of names, labels, and brands play an important role in how people come to understand institutions as well as their places in any given society" (2005, 20). This view is intuitively appealing. Until now, however, the connection between the attractiveness of a given political label and particular electoral outcomes has been opaque. That the Republicans have been free to define the liberal label in their own way provides an opportunity to examine the power of labels to shape the political landscape and determine which parties' candidates emerge as victors on Election Day. The present study also provides direct evidence in support of one of the three "pathways" to a particular ideological self-identification highlighted by Ellis and Stimson (2007, 2012). Where previously there had been widespread speculation regarding the impact of anti-liberal campaign rhetoric, here I provide some degree of empirical backing.

But there is still much to be done, as the present study is limited in a number of key ways. Televised campaign ads are an important part of the modern campaign, but individuals become acquainted with political discourse through many other outlets. The struggle to define the opposing party's candidates is played out every day on cable news shows, and an overburdened press corps at times permits a particular party's preferred definition of a label to be disseminated without filter or commentary (Bennett 1990). The media also provide their own commentary and changing usages of ideological labels (Eisinger, Veenstra, and Koehn 2007; Kenix 2005). Only further research into how political labels are employed in such contexts, coupled with accurate and reliable measures of individuals' attentiveness to these types of communications, can provide a more complete picture of the conditions under which particular forms of political rhetoric can have an impact.

Also left unexamined is the impact of the "conservative" label on the electoral success of Democratic and Republican candidates alike. Consistent with Jarvis' (2005) observations, I find that "conservative" is frequently portrayed in a positive light. Even Democrats have employed the term to describe their candidacy, effectively reinforcing the idea that liberalism is an association that is to

be avoided at all costs. One can hardly blame individual Democrats for doing so. As "a term that resides in the country's mind as the evil twin of *conservatism*," the liberal label is indeed an electoral liability for some Democrats. Exposure to anti-liberal rhetoric sends Democratic identifiers in the mass electorate running toward the label's political opposite, and hurts Democratic candidates running for the U.S. Senate. It remains to be seen, however, whether candidates who describe themselves as conservatives, or variants thereof (George W. Bush's use of "compassionate conservative" for instance), benefit from their association with the more popular label.

Table 1. The Percentage of All Airings in 2004 Featuring the Liberal Label, by Ad Sponsor

Sponsor	Democratic Presidential Ads	Democratic Senate and House Ads	Republican Presidential Ads	Republican Senate and House Ads
Candidate	0 %	0.1%	1.3%	3.5%
Party	0	0	4.1	16.4
Interest Group	0	0	1.4	20.9
Coordinated/Hybrid	0	0	20.7	22.6

Table 2. The Percentage of All Airings in 2004 Featuring the Conservative Label, by Ad Sponsor

Sponsor	Democratic Presidential Ads	Democratic Senate and House Ads	Republican Presidential Ads	Republican Senate and House Ads
Candidate	0 %	1.0%	0%	19.9%
Party	0	0.2	0	0.6
Interest Group	0	0	0	11.0
Coordinated/Hybrid	0	0	0	0

Table 3. The Percentage of All Airings in 2004 Featuring the Progressive Label, by Ad Sponsor

Sponsor	Democratic Presidential Ads	Democratic Senate and House Ads	Republican Presidential Ads	Republican Senate and House Ads
Candidate	0.9 %	0.4%	0%	0%
Party	0	0	0	0
Interest Group	0	0	0	0
Coordinated/Hybrid	1.2	0	0	0

Table 4. Predicting Changes in Self-Identified Ideology among Democratic Identifiers and Leaners

	Moderate	Conservative	No Ideology
Moderate (Wave 1)	2.428**	2.764**	1.495
	(0.414)	(0.479)	(1.011)
Conservative (Wave 1)	2.447**	4.964**	2.043**
	(0.566)	(0.588)	(1.004)
No Ideology (Wave 1)	1.488**	1.797**	3.894**
	(0.747)	(0.774)	(1.008)
Strength of Party ID (Wave 1)	-0.298	-0.043	-0.811
	(0.238)	(0.255)	(0.522)
Δ Party ID (Wave 1 to Wave 2)	-0.463**	-0.720**	-0.471**
	(0.186)	(0.219)	(0.222)
Exposure to Anti-Liberal Ads (Wave 1)	0.087	0.023	0.255
	(0.107)	(0.145)	(0.175)
Δ Anti-Liberal Ads (Wave 1 to Wave 2)	0.055	0.109	0.574**
	(0.108)	(0.180)	(0.280)
Political Interest (Wave 1)	-0.059	-0.179	-0.548
	(0.222)	(0.276)	(0.369)
Δ Political Interest (Wave 1 to Wave 2)	0.052	0.435	-0.871*
	(0.199)	(0.324)	(0.485)
Δ Pol. Interest × Δ Anti-Liberal Ads	0.035	0.266*	-0.699**
	(0.118)	(0.159)	(0.268)
Constant	-0.348	$-2.215^{0.102}$	-0.312
	(1.023)	(1.353)	(2.371)
Number of cases		578	
Chi-square		253.02	
Probability > chi-square		0.000	

** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$. Cell entries are multinomial logistic regression estimates. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. The base category is Liberal.

Table 5. Predicting Changes in Favorability Toward John Kerry

	Wave 1-2	Wave 2-3
Kerry Favorability	1.366**	1.317**
	(0.096)	(0.152)
Liberal	0.798**	0.477
	(0.231)	(0.299)
Moderate	0.345*	0.367
	(0.196)	(0.269)
No Ideology	0.584	-0.907
	(0.636)	(0.635)
Party ID	0.359**	0.270**
	(0.044)	(0.096)
Δ Party ID	0.350**	0.272**
	(0.122)	(0.126)
Exposure to Anti-Liberal Ads	-0.047	0.034
	(0.048)	(0.063)
Δ Anti-Liberal Ads	-0.031	-0.010
	(0.057)	(0.067)
Political Interest	0.092	0.325**
	(0.104)	(0.131)
Δ Political Interest	0.035	0.321**
	(0.123)	(0.159)
Cutpoint 1	3.732	4.051
	(0.496)	(0.642)
Cutpoint 2	5.795	5.757
	(0.513)	(0.684)
Cutpoint 3	6.360	6.068
	(0.541)	(0.676)
Cutpoint 4	8.932	9.016
	(0.617)	(0.802)
Number of cases	1262	892
Chi-square	515.65	273.77
Probability > chi-square	0.000	0.000

** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$. Cell entries are ordered logistic regression estimates. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table 6. Predicting Changes in Vote Intention and Vote Choice in the 2004 Presidential Contest

	Presidential Vote Intention (Wave 2)[a]	Presidential Vote Choice (Wave 3)[b]
Kerry Vote Intention	0.801**	0.856**
	(0.076)	(0.145)
Kerry Favorability	0.804**	1.063**
	(0.118)	(0.259)
Δ Kerry Favorability	0.816**	0.869**
	(0.124)	(0.240)
Liberal	0.211	0.841
	(0.320)	(0.752)
Moderate	0.471*	0.608
	(0.285)	(0.599)
No Ideology	0.536	0.654
	(0.598)	(0.609)
Party ID	0.366**	0.387**
	(0.071)	(0.138)
Δ Party ID	0.624**	0.618**
	(0.120)	(0.175)
Exposure to Anti-Liberal Ads	0.026	0.102
	(0.068)	(0.195)
Δ Anti-Liberal Ads	0.085	-0.182
	(0.077)	(0.184)
Political Interest	0.106	0.232
	(0.145)	(0.312)
Δ Political Interest	0.014	-0.279
	(0.136)	(0.359)
Constant	---	-9.068**
		(1.767)
Cutpoint 1	6.184	---
	(0.732)	
Cutpoint 2	7.629	---
	(0.765)	
Cutpoint 3	7.900	---
	(0.762)	
Cutpoint 4	8.562	---
	(0.768)	
Cutpoint 5	9.016	---
	(0.771)	
Cutpoint 6	10.087	---
	(0.840)	
Number of cases	1262	806
Chi-square	505.41	175.53
Probability > chi-square	0.000	0.000

** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

[a] Cell entries are ordered logistic regression estimates. [b] Cell entries are logistic regression estimates.

Table 7. Predicting Changes in Favorability Toward Democratic Senate Candidates

	Wave 1-2	Wave 2-3
Democratic Sen. Cand. Favorability	1.859**	1.432**
	(0.142)	(0.136)
Liberal	0.221	0.527
	(0.263)	(0.329)
Moderate	0.147	0.228
	(0.204)	(0.246)
No Ideology	0.781**	3.080**
	(0.369)	(0.794)
Party ID	0.192**	0.309**
	(0.052)	(0.060)
Δ Party ID	0.042	0.317**
	(0.090)	(0.088)
Exposure to Anti-Liberal Ads	-0.133**	-0.252**
	(0.054)	(0.064)
Δ Anti-Liberal Ads	-0.108[0.101]	-0.097
	(0.066)	(0.062)
Political Interest	-0.074	0.010
	(0.108)	(0.124)
Δ Political Interest	0.212	-0.101
	(0.157)	(0.168)
Cutpoint 1	2.231	1.919
	(0.580)	(0.664)
Cutpoint 2	3.791	3.576
	(0.617)	(0.662)
Cutpoint 3	6.340	5.447
	(0.685)	(0.714)
Cutpoint 4	8.736	7.451
	(0.779)	(0.798)
Number of cases	831	690
Chi-square	259.29	224.50
Probability > chi-square	0.000	0.000

** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$. Cell entries are ordered logistic regression estimates. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table 8. Predicting Changes in Vote Intention and Vote Choice in the 2004 U.S. Senate Race

	Senate Vote Intention (Wave 2)[a]	Senate Vote Choice (Wave 3)[b]
Senate Vote Intention	0.715**	0.716**
	(0.081)	(0.106)
Dem. Sen. Candidate Favorability	0.989**	0.192
	(0.183)	(0.249)
Δ Dem. Sen. Candidate Favorability	0.916**	0.663**
	(0.162)	(0.206)
Liberal	0.716*	0.804*
	(0.422)	(0.477)
Moderate	0.928**	0.760*
	(0.300)	(0.423)
No Ideology	-0.227	-1.009
	(0.537)	(0.978)
Party ID	0.399**	0.445**
	(0.072)	(0.096)
Δ Party ID	0.537**	0.278**
	(0.144)	(0.174)
Exposure to Anti-Liberal Ads	-0.150*	0.073
	(0.084)	(0.135)
Δ Anti-Liberal Ads	-0.107	-0.188*
	(0.093)	(0.111)
Political Interest	-0.129	0.435*
	(0.157)	(0.223)
Δ Political Interest	-0.031	0.022
	(0.159)	(0.257)
Constant	---	-7.107**
		(1.198)
Cutpoint 1	5.282	---
	(0.959)	
Cutpoint 2	6.589	---
	(0.988)	
Cutpoint 3	6.808	---
	(0.990)	
Cutpoint 4	7.610	---
	(1.009)	
Cutpoint 5	7.815	---
	(1.016)	
Cutpoint 6	9.553	---
	(1.121)	
N	724	627
Chi-square	333.29	188.69
Probability > chi-square	0.000	0.000

** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$. Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

[a] Cell entries are ordered logistic regression estimates. [b] Cell entries are logistic regression estimates.

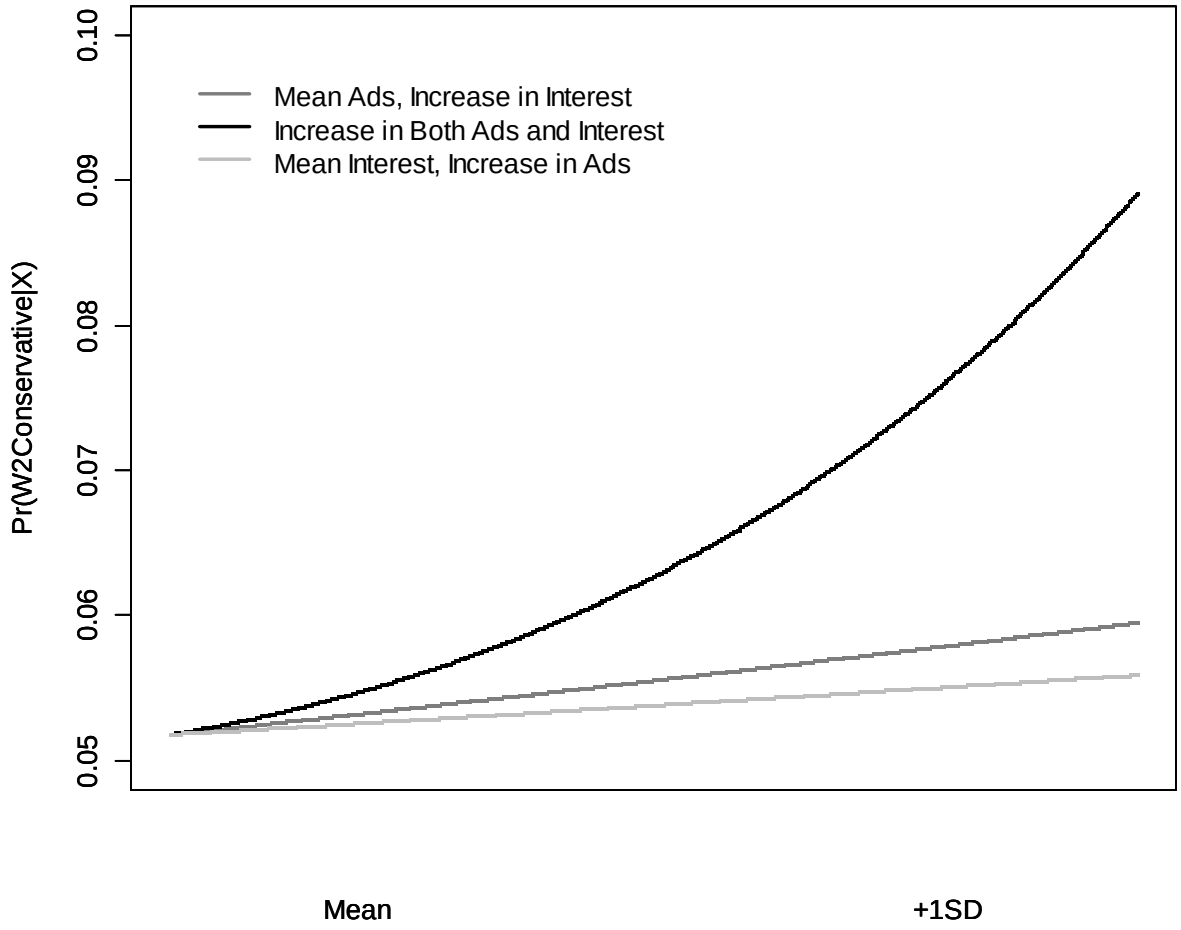
Table 9. Predicting Changes in Favorability Toward John Kerry and Democratic Senate Candidates (Random Effects Models)

	Kerry Favorability	Democratic Senate Candidate Favorability
Liberal (Wave 1)	0.837**	0.420**
	(0.067)	(0.061)
No Ideology (Wave 1)	0.471**	0.098
	(0.135)	(0.110)
Moderate (Wave 1)	0.530**	0.304**
	(0.055)	(0.052)
Party ID	0.314**	0.143**
	(0.012)	(0.010)
Political Interest (Wave 1)	-0.031**	-0.007
	(0.015)	(0.016)
Black	0.270**	0.058
	(0.095)	(0.103)
South	-0.127**	-0.082
	(0.052)	(0.064)
Female	-0.008	0.162**
	(0.042)	(0.042)
Exposure to Anti-Liberal Ads	0.013	-0.034**
	(0.009)	(0.010)
Age	0.0004	0.003**
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Education	0.015	0.015
	(0.011)	(0.011)
Constant	1.404**	2.364**
	(0.113)	(0.118)
N	4724	3386
Within R^2	0.012	0.002
Between R^2	0.479	0.227
Overall R^2	0.467	0.203

** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Wave fixed effects are included but not reported.

Figure 1

Changes in Ideological Self-Identification, Anti-Liberal Campaign Rhetoric, and Political Interest among Liberals



Appendix

2004 UW/BYU Panel Study

Presidential vote intention (Wave 1 and 2)--1=Bush (Very certain), 2=Bush (Might change), 3=Lean toward Bush, 4=Undecided, 5= Lean toward Kerry, 6=Kerry (Might change), 7=Kerry (Very certain)

Presidential vote choice (Wave 3)--0=Bush, 1=Kerry, other=missing

Senate vote intention (Wave 1 and 2)--1=Republican (Very certain), 2=Republican (Might change), 3=Lean toward the Republican, 4=Undecided, 5= Lean toward the Democrat, 6=Democrat (Might change), 7=Democrat (Very certain)

Senate vote choice (Wave 3)--0=Republican candidate, 1=Democratic candidate, other=missing

Democratic Senate candidate favorability (Wave 1, 2, and 3)--"Is your opinion of [Democratic Senate candidate] very favorable...very favorable?" Ranges from 1 (very unfavorable) to 5 (very favorable)

Kerry favorability (Wave 1, 2, and 3)--"Is your opinion of Kerry very favorable...very unfavorable?" Ranges from 1 (very unfavorable) to 5 (very favorable)

Moderate (Wave 1 and 2)--A dummy variable constructed from the question "Do you consider yourself generally liberal, moderate, or conservative?" 0=liberal, conservative, or no ideology, 1=moderate

Conservative (Wave 1 and 2)--A dummy variable constructed from the question "Do you consider yourself generally liberal, moderate, or conservative?" 0=liberal, moderate, or no ideology, 1=conservative

No ideology (Wave 1 and 2)--A dummy variable constructed from the question "Do you consider yourself generally liberal, moderate, or conservative?" 0=liberal, moderate, or conservative, 1=no ideology

Party identification (Wave 1, 2, and 3)--1=strong Republican, 2=weak Republican, 3=lean Republican, 4=independent, 5=lean Democrat, 6=weak Democrat, 7=strong Democrat

Political interest (Wave 1, 2, and 3)--"Generally, how much attention do you pay to what's going on in government?" 1=none, 2=very little, 3=some, 4=quite a bit, 5=a great deal

Conclusion

Until now, the study of party brands has been dominated by students of political institutions. It should come as little surprise, then, that the focus of most scholarly inquiries as to the influence of political brands in American politics has been trained on how institutional factors shape the recognizable meaning of the party labels. Much attention has been given to how the roll call records of its members in Congress serve to mold each party's public reputation (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005; Grynaviski 2010; Woon and Pope 2008). And there is some evidence that voters learn about what the parties stand for from observing what transpires in Congress (see Levendusky 2009 for a review). Missing from these accounts is any indication of *how* voters learn about congressional action (see Sellers 2010 for an important exception). To be sure, some highly motivated individuals tune in to CSPAN on a regular basis to see Congress at work. Media coverage of key votes also may influence voters' beliefs about what policies the parties support. For most Americans, however, campaigns are the primary source through which they receive information about the parties and candidates. In spite of this fact, measures of campaign activity are conspicuously absent from most work on party brands.

By contrast, in this dissertation I focus almost exclusively on how elites employ party brand labels, and other symbols associated with the parties, in their communications with the public. I do so because, as Sharon Jarvis notes, "Citizens come to know politics through discourse" (2005, 42; see also Edelman 1977). Jarvis and I both start from this same basic premise. After establishing that politicians are strategic about their use of partisan rhetoric, though, I also go on to connect the "supply side" of partisan cues with a variety of outcomes at the level of the individual voter. This is a crucial linkage that has heretofore been absent from existing accounts. Even those who have been attentive to how candidates and other political elites use political labels have been forced to argue from historical examples that labels matter for the practice of politics (Green 1987). Still others have

been left to conclude that brand labels are an important area of inquiry because elites fight over their meaning (Jarvis 2005). My work here improves upon these earlier efforts in some respects by attending to how, once again borrowing from Vavreck (2001), the "reasoning voter" reacts to the "strategic candidate."

Left out, however, is much of a sense of how institutions serve to shape the content of candidates' campaign communications. As I demonstrate in Chapter 2, periods of divided government change the strategic calculus for candidates with regard to their use of party labels and other partisan symbols. Higher party unity scores are also *negatively* correlated with incumbents' use of partisan symbols in their campaign advertising. In another essay (Chapter 4), I pit sitting members' party unity scores against exposure to distancing rhetoric as an explanation for voters' decisions at the polls, and find campaign messages to be the more robust predictor of voter behavior. Although tentative, these findings reinforce the lessons of earlier work on candidate strategy (Franklin 1991). My results diverge from previous treatments of candidate strategy in some respects, however, as I also find some evidence to suggest that members of the "in" party (the Republicans in 2006) were hurt by high degrees of party-line voting, thereby suggesting that the majority party's brand name is, at least in part, determined by its record of legislative achievement. Nevertheless, future research would be well-advised to pay closer attention to institutional factors, and explicitly connect the different levels of analysis that I merely bridge with my focus on the campaign. An analysis of how congressional action translates into the pictures of the political parties that voters have in their heads would be of great value, and permit a more direct test of prominent party government theories.

One possible avenue of pursuit for future work on how voters develop their views of the political parties would involve taking up the mantle from an earlier literature on party images (Trilling 1976). Party images afford a look at the "top of the head" judgments about the parties held

by members of the electorate at a given point in time. Even though recent surveys have reduced the battery of questions meant to tap voters' images of the two major parties down to a series of simple like/dislike evaluations, earlier datasets feature numerous open-ended items from which it might be possible to see what factors give rise to certain images of the parties. Some of these studies even asked questions about the kinds of things that come to mind when voters think about the parties over a series of surveys, the most prominent being the 1956-1960 ANES panel. With such data it might be possible to catch a glimpse at the process by which voters update their beliefs about the parties and what kinds of events bear on the parties' reputations.

Further research should also be dedicated to the various nuances of how political elites talk about political brand labels. Throughout the essays that comprise this dissertation I concentrate on the use and impact of certain key words. As others have observed (Jarvis 2005; Sides 2007; Shaw 2006), however, context matters when assessing the effects of the different campaign messages that voters encounter prior to casting their ballots. One arena in which this seems to be especially true is with respect to the influence of "owned" issues on election outcomes. It may be the case that, as Shaw (2006) notes, candidates can successfully "trespass" on another party's issues provided that they are able to reframe them in a way that speaks to their own party's traditional strengths. Clinton, for instance, was able to push an agenda that included an increased focus on crime, while George W. Bush successfully took on education reform. Likewise, the impact of certain key words or labels may be moderated by the context in which they are encountered. In the conclusion to her book, Jarvis (2005) speculates that candidates' use of party labels in negative TV spots may sharpen partisanship. As of yet, however, no one has emerged to test this hypothesis. It stands to reason that other contextual factors might similarly temper the effect of political labels on voter behavior.

Voters may react to political brand labels in vastly different ways as well. Just as the message matters, so too might the demographic or psychological profile of the receiver. As I show in Chapter

5, only Democratic identifiers who started to pay more attention to politics over the course of the campaign were responsive to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric, updating their ideological self-identity accordingly. Other labels might have similarly differential effects. Those who value bipartisanship or have positive feelings toward the "independent" label might be more likely to be influenced by candidates' attempts at distancing themselves from their political party. Who, exactly, is affected when candidates employ partisan labels and symbols in their campaign communications is sure to occupy the attentions of numerous future studies.

Additional scholarship also ought to explore how the meanings of brand labels evolve and change over time, or across political subdivisions, and whether their impact varies at the individual level as a result. The picture that I present here offers snapshots of the effects of political elites' strategic use of political brands and other symbols. And while I use both contemporary and historical sources of data in my efforts at ferreting out the influence of brand labels on voters, I am forced to assume that their meanings are fixed in the public consciousness within each period of observation and across space. Political labels are dynamic entities, however, the understandings of which can vary depending on a number of different factors. Elites continually attempt to redefine the language of politics in ways that they believe will further their agendas. The process of infusing labels with meaning--a process known as reification--is a continual one (Green 1987).

The approach that I take in this dissertation, however, is not well-suited to tracking changes in the popularly accepted meanings of political brand labels. Neither is it able to detect differences across states or congressional districts. For instance, the South long held on to its own distinctive brand of the Democratic Party, even as the national party moved in a direction diametrically opposed to the traditions and policy positions of its local affiliate (see Woon and Pope 2008 for a model of brand influence that accounts, in part, for the localized nature of political branding). County political parties also sometimes go to the additional trouble of drawing up and publicizing

political platforms that differ in some respects from that of the national parties. They do so when their party's candidates perform poorly at the polls on Election Day (Brown 2011). Detailed content analyses and historical inquiry are perhaps more up to the task of examining how brands take on different meanings across political time. Connecting the dynamics of political labels over the course of history with outcomes at the individual level is likely to prove difficult, as individual-level measures of exposure to campaign messages over long stretches of time are more or less nonexistent. For now, some division of labor in the field may be necessary on this front. Spatial variation in the meanings of political brand names might be a fruitful avenue for future research to pursue, but the approach runs the risk of moving too far afield from the focus of earlier work on party brands. Much of this early research sought to draw attention to the national political factors affecting congressional elections--a line of inquiry that had, with few exceptions, lain fallow since Stokes' (1975) work on the subject--and away from the candidate-centered tradition that took hold of the discipline in the early 1970s (Brady, D'Onofrio, and Fiorina 2000). History may reveal such a shift to have been a mistake, however, as it is an open question as to whether a focus on *localized* party brands would provide a better explanation for the observed patterns of party support than the current approach which credits the national political parties with being the prime mover (cf. Woon and Pope 2008).

Lurking in the background of much of the work that I present throughout this dissertation is also a story about representation. I present evidence to suggest that candidates' use of "distancing" rhetoric may be able to moderate their appearance in the eyes of the voters. Members of the "out-party," that is, the party that does not control the reins of power in government, are also rated more favorably by the electorate when they present themselves as "independent" or "bipartisan." Moreover, incumbents from the out-party are apparently unaffected by their record of support for their party in Congress, in spite of the fact that high degrees of partisanship are, on average, an

electoral liability (Carson et al. 2010). One possible consequence that might stem from this particular constellation of results is the cycle of so-called "leapfrog" representation that some have begun to note in recent years (Bafumi and Herron 2010), whereby relatively extreme legislators from one party are replaced by extremists from another party. Candidates' efforts at presenting themselves as moderates (see also Henderson 2012b) enable them to convince the public to ignore their party's collective record, provided that they are not from the majority party. Even as candidates' campaign communications appear to provide credible signals as to their legislative priorities (Sulkin 2009; 2011; Sulkin and Swigger 2008), other aspects of their "presentation of self" on the campaign trail seem to trump such cues when offered by members of the out-party.

The strategic use of party and ideological labels can also induce members of the mass electorate to support candidates that they otherwise might not, or adopt political identities that are in direct conflict with other elements of their being (see also Sniderman and Stiglitz 2012). For instance, Republican efforts at affixing the liberal label to their Democratic opponents succeeded in damaging Democratic candidates' prospects at the polls in contests for the U.S. Senate in 2004, over and above the effect of party ID and other demographics. Exposure to anti-liberal campaign rhetoric also precipitated a shift in how Democratic identifiers in the electorate characterize themselves in ideological terms. In turn, such changes might influence their behavior in other arenas, as conflicting identities may produce cross-pressures that increase the likelihood of abstention from the political arena (Green 1987; cf. Hussey 2012). Out-party candidates' use of distancing rhetoric also helped them to moderate their image among voters; partisan politicians who made use of labels such as "independent" or "bipartisan" to describe their candidacy were also rated more favorably by members of the electorate than those who did not.

Thus, although ideological labels can be informative in that they often function as shortcuts for candidates' positions across a wide variety of policies, they also admit of a sizable affective

component. As symbols that appeal to the passions as well as to the intellect (Green 1987), political brand labels can be used by strategic politicians to encourage citizens to vote against their interests in some cases. Racial cues have been shown to lead African Americans to adopt positions that are at odds with their most considered preferences (Kuklinski and Hurley 1994). Here I show that other cues function in much the same way under certain circumstances. Collectively, many of the findings that emerge from the essays that comprise this dissertation therefore help to sound yet another note of caution regarding the extent to which cue-taking leads citizens to rational or "correct" decisions at the polls.

My dissertation promotes a wholesale reevaluation of the ways in which we, as a discipline, think about party brands, and brings the literature into congress with work on consumer brands. I argue strenuously for a theoretical approach to the study of party brands that goes "beyond ideology." In addition to the ideological character of the parties, each party's brand name or reputation is likely shaped by a myriad of other factors, some of which are shown here to influence whether candidates employ party labels and other symbols associated with the parties in their campaign communications. I also conceptualize party labels as brand attributes of individual politicians as well as independent determinants of election outcomes, and present a view of the campaign that envisions the actions that the candidates engage in on the stump as a crucial moderator between national factors, such as the relative strength of each party' brand name, and local election results.

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