THE EFFECTS OF PARTISANSHIP AND CANDIDATE EMOTIONALITY ON VOTER PREFERENCE*

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ABSTRACT

In an experiment, Republican and Democratic participants viewed a video clip of an ostensible congressional candidate labeled as Republican, Democratic, or not given a party label delivering the same speech in an emotionally expressive or unexpressive manner. When the candidate was labeled a Democrat, he was rated more positively by Democratic participants; when labeled a Republican, he was preferred by Republicans. When party label was not provided, the emotionally expressive candidate was preferred; however, when either party label was provided, the unemotional candidate was preferred. These findings underscore the importance of partisanship cues and suggest that in the absence of such influential cues as partisanship, less prominent factors such as emotional expressiveness carry greater influence.

Political scholars and pollsters generally agree that public interest in and aware-ness of political issues are woefully low (e.g., Bennett, 1986). For example, a public opinion survey in New Jersey found that only one third of adults surveyed

could name either the state's U.S. senators (The Star-Ledger/Eagleton Poll, 1998). Discourse on the subject of public political awareness/ignorance has hinged less on the extent of voters' knowledge than on the ability of voters to make rational decisions with minimal information (Sniderman, 1993). In the absence of comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the issues, it is likely that other factors will play a significant role in determining voting behaviors. In the present study, we examined the influence of two such factors, partisanship and candidate emotionality, in determining voter preferences for a hypothetical political candidate.

Despite references to a decline in the importance of political parties in the United States (Greenberg & Page, 1997; Wattenberg, 1996), partisanship still appears to play a significant role in the evaluation of political candidates (Bartels, 2000; Cowden & McDermott, 2000; Miller, 1991; Rahn, 1993). The concepts of stereotyping and inference have been invoked to investigate the influence of partisanship on candidate evaluation (Conover & Feldman, 1989; Hurwitz, 1984; Iyengar, 1990; Ottati, 1990; Rahn, 1993; Rahn & Cramer, 1996; Riggle, Ottati, Wyer, Kuklinski, & Schwarz, 1992). As with stereotypes, using party as a basis for judgment may simplify a complex social environment. As most elections are conducted in political environments that are ambiguous at best and conflicting at worst (Conover & Feldman, 1989), political parties may function as cues from which voters can infer other information about candidates.

Although numerous naturalistic studies attest to the importance of candidate partisanship in determining voter preferences, few investigators have manipulated partisanship cues experimentally. Such manipulations are important for examining the effects of partisanship unfettered by other factors typically present in naturalistic studies. For example, in "real-world" politics, it is rare to find candidates from opposing parties who are otherwise undifferentiable. In the present study, then, we examined whether individuals of different parties evaluate the same candidate differently depending upon whether the candidate was given a Democrat or Republican label.

Besides partisanship, a number of other factors have been shown to be important in determining candidate evaluations, including candidate personality traits (Caprara, Barbaranelli, & Zimbardo, 2002; Jones & Hudson, 1996; Funk, 1999; Rahn et al., 1990), voters' political sophistication (e.g., Lodge & Hamill, 1986; Pierce, 1993), voter ambivalence (e.g., Lavine, 2001), candidate image (e.g., Riggle, Ottati, Wyer, Kuklinski, & Schwarz, 1992; Rosenberg, Kahn, & Tran, 1991; Trent, Short-Thompson, Mongeau, Nusz, & Trent, 2001), and voters' emotions toward the candidate (e.g., Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982; Isbell & Ottati, 2002; Marcus & MacKuen, 1993; Redlawsk, 2002). One variable that has received little attention to date is *candidate* emotionality (Glaser & Salovey, 1998). Indeed, this parallels the lack of attention to *target* as opposed to observer affect in the affect and social judgment literature (see Chaiken, Wood, & Eagly, 1996, for a comprehensive review).

The small number of studies of candidate emotionality come from two main perspectives (Glaser & Salovey, 1998; Marcus, 2000). The first has focused on candidate emotions as part of a more enduring set of personality characteristics. Such studies typically have taken a more psychoanalytic approach, obtaining data from case studies of important political leaders (e.g., George & George, 1998; Volkan, Itkowitz, & Dod, 1997). Some recent studies have utilized more modern conceptualizations of personality. For example, Caprara and colleagues (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Consiglio, Picconi, & Zimbardo, 2003) applied the five-factor model of personality to Italian politicians and found them to be higher in Energy, Agreeableness, and Social Desirability but similar in other dimensions including Emotional Stability to the general public.

The second line of research has focused more on candidate emotional display/ behavior, obtaining data from the effects of different displays on voter/observer perceptions and judgments. For example, Patterson, Churchill, Burger, and Powell (1992) found that voters could perceive differences in expressiveness between Reagan and Mondale in the U.S. Presidential election of 1984, and that voters were more favorable to Reagan's nonverbal expressions. Masters and his colleagues examined viewers' emotional responses to well-known politicians' specific facial displays of emotion (happiness/reassurance, anger/threat, and fear/ evasion) selected based on the integration of ethological and social psychological principles (Masters & Sullivan, 1989, 1993; Masters, Sullivan, Lanzetta, McHugo, & Englis, 1986; McHugo, Lanzetta, & Bush, 1991; McHugo, Lanzetta, Sullivan, Masters, & Englis, 1985; Sullivan & Masters, 1988). They found that viewers were able to reliably decode particular emotional displays by candidates (Masters & Sullivan, 1989; Masters et al., 1986). They also found evidence that displays could have a direct emotional impact on voters (measured by their self-report as well as their physiological responses) and could elicit changes in viewer's attitudes toward politicians (McHugo et al., 1985, 1991; Masters & Sullivan, 1993; Sullivan & Masters, 1988).

Several studies of candidate emotionality have suggested that partisanship and prior attitudes may interact with candidate emotionality in influencing candidate evaluations. Masters et al. (1986) examined the interaction of viewers' prior attitudes with candidate emotional displays. They found that participants who supported Reagan were more likely than Reagan opponents to report and exhibit emotional reactions and, in some cases, changes in facial muscle activity consistent with Reagan's emotional displays (McHugo et al., 1985, 1991). Prior attitudes had the most influence on verbal reports; the influence of prior attitudes on psychophysiological responses appeared to depend on the expressive style of the politician and the cultural context (Masters & Sullivan, 1989).

In another study demonstrating the interaction of prior attitudes with candidate emotionality, Shields and MacDowell (1987) examined television commentators' descriptions of the emotions displayed by George H. W. Bush and Geraldine Ferraro in the 1984 U.S. vice-presidential debates and found that

"the value of [candidate] emotionality . . . lies in the [ideological] eye of the beholder" (p. 87). Ferraro's emotions were described in positive terms (e.g., cool, collected) by liberal commentators, but in more negative terms (e.g., annoyed, hostile) by conservative commentators. Bush's emotions on the other hand, were described positively by conservative observers (e.g., relaxed, enthusiastic) and negatively by liberal observers (e.g., whiny, defensive).

Finally, in a study designed to examine specifically the interaction of partisanship and candidate emotionality, Wiegman (1985) asked Socialist or Liberal Dutch citizens to watch either a Socialist or Liberal leader of the Dutch parliament giving the same speech in either an "emotional" or a "rational" manner. Wiegman found that people who watched a leader of their own party liked the leader more and showed greater attitude change. With respect to emotionality, Wiegman found that the members of both political parties judged the emotional politician as less credible and convincing than the "rational" politician, regardless of party of the subject or politician.

Because these previous studies of the interaction of partisanship/prior attitudes and candidate emotionality focused on known political leaders, the same candidate could not be randomly assigned to a particular political party. Further, these studies could not include a condition in which the leader's party was not given. Thus, conclusions about the role of emotionality are limited to the specific exemplars and conditions under which the party is known. In the present study, we extended the findings of previous studies by utilizing a hypothetical political candidate who was identical across party conditions, and by including a no-party label condition in addition to the two major political parties.

In the present study, then, our aims were twofold. First, we tested the strength of partisanship in a highly controlled manner by manipulating the party label given to the same hypothetical candidate. We predicted that when participants' own party identification matched the candidate's label, they would evaluate him more positively than when he was described as affiliated with a different political party. Second, we explored the interaction between partisanship and candidate emotionality in determining voter preferences for a hypothetical political candidate.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 208 undergraduates from an East Coast private and a large Midwestern public university recruited from introductory psychology classes or through flyers posted around campus. Participants received either course credit or $5.00 for volunteering. Participants who listed their home countries as other than the United States, were not American citizens, listed their political party as something other than "Democrat" or "Republican," or did not identify or correctly recall the hypothetical candidate's political party when so designated were

excluded from all analyses, yielding 166 participants (76 females, 90 males). They were about equally divided between Democrats and Republicans (51% and 49% respectively).

Design

The study design was a 2×3×2 between-subjects factorial in which self-identified Republican and Democratic participants viewed a candidate who was labeled as Republican, Democrat, or not labeled at all, and who expressed considerable emotion or acted in a more reserved way. Participants' party identification was based on self-report. Party label of the candidate (Republican, Democrat, or No Label) was assigned randomly prior to the start of the experiment and was stated explicitly once before the video clip was shown and once in the questionnaire that followed the video clip. Emotionality of the candidate (Emotional or Unemotional) was also assigned randomly prior to the start of the experiment.

Materials

Video Clips

We created two video clips depicting a putative political candidate named "Mike Harris" running for the United States Congress in an unspecified state. The candidate was portrayed by an actor whose hair was grayed at the temples and who dressed in a suit and tie. He was shown at a podium in front of a blue background. In both clips, the content of the hypothetical candidate's speech was identical; however, in the emotional version, the candidate displayed a range of emotions, while in the unemotional version, he was more reserved. In the emotional clip, the actor varied his speech patterns, spoke more intensely, and facially displayed emotions that complemented the content of his speech. For example, when talking about "drug-related gang wars and slayings," the actor expressed anger, and when discussing "the education of our children," he expressed hope and compassion. In the more reserved version, the actor spoke in measured tones, showing few emotional expressions or behaviors when reading the speech. However, although the actor showed little emotional expressiveness in the reserved version, he was coached to appear realistic and not robotic. The video clips were approximately 3.5 minutes long.

The substantive content of the candidate's speech was designed to be as politically neutral (neither liberal nor conservative) as possible. Drafts of the candidate's speech were reviewed by ten independent raters chosen to represent a range of political ideologies. Sentences construed by one or more reviewers as championing one party or ideology over another were removed or revised to be neutral. The final speech included the candidate's qualifications, some words of national pride, and nonpartisan comments on the issues of economy, crime, and education.

Candidate Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ)

The CEQ consisted of three sections. In the first section, participants were asked to rate the candidate on 22 emotion and trait adjectives along 7-point Likert scales. Examples of the emotion adjectives included "compassionate," "angry," and "happy"; examples of traits included "reliable," "intersting," and "dignified." In the second section, participants were asked to rate along 7-point Likert scales how much they liked the candidate, and how likely they would be to vote for the candidate. Participants were asked to recall the candidate's party, in the labeled conditions, or to guess the candidate's party, in the unlabeled condition. The final section requested demogrpahic and political affiliation informaiton including age, gender, citizenship, and political party identification (Republican, Democrat, or Other). All questionnaires were titled according to party condition. For the labeled Republican condition, the title was "Mike Harris: Conservative Republican Running for U.S. Congress." For the labeled Democrat condition, "Mike Harris; Liberal Democrat Running for U.S. Congress." The No Label condition was titled "Mike Harris; Candidate for U.S. Congress."

Procedure

Each participant sat facing a central video screen with one to ten participants scheduled for each session. Those assigned to the labeled Republican condition were told that they would be watching a "Conservative Republican running for Congress"; those assigned to the labeled Democrat condition were told they would be watching a "Liberal Democrat running for Congress"; and those assigned to the No Label condition were told that they would be watching "A political candidate running for Congress." All participants were informed that they would fill out a questionnaire after watching the video. Participants then watched either the emotional or unemotional video clip and completed the appropriate questionnaire.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses and Manipulation Check

Based on the results of a principal components analysis (PCA) of the 22 trait and emotion adjectives, we created two composite variables: compassion/emotionality and competence. The two variables were created by reverse scoring negatively loading items and then taking a mean of the items loading highly on each factor. The compassion/emotionality factor included the items caring, compassionate, sensitive, passionate, sympathetic, emotional, hopeful, happy, empathic, and cold (reverse-scored). Competence included the items credible, reliable, appealing, dignified, competent, honest, flaky (reverse-scored), interesting, and irrational (reverse-scored). A third factor consisting of only two items (sad and angry) was

not retained. The compassion/emotionality and competence scales both showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's alphas = .91 and .88, respectively).

To assess the effectiveness of the emotionality manipulation, we compared participants' ratings of the composite compassion/emotionality measure following the emotional and unemotional video clips. Participants who viewed the emotional video judged the candidate to be significantly more compassionate/emotional than participants who viewed the candidate in the unemotional video (M's = 4.64 and 3.95, SD's = 1.11 and 1.02, respectively; $F(1, 165) = 17.28$, $p < .0001$). The effect size was moderate ($r = .31$).[1]

Overall Analyses

We conducted a series of 2 (participant party) × 3 (candidate party label: Democrat, Republican, No Label) × 2 (candidate emotionality: emotional versus unemotional) analyses of variance (ANOVAs).[2] Participant gender was included as an additional independent variable in all analyses; however, because there was no systematic pattern of gender effects, we collapsed across gender in the presentation of results. Dependent variables included likelihood of voting for the candidate (voting), degree of liking for the candidate (liking), and perceived competence of the candidate (competence composite variable). As predicted, we found a significant interaction of subject party by candidate party for voting, liking, and competence (p's < .0001), and a significant effect of candidate party label by candidate emotionality for voting ($p < .05$) and trends toward significant effects of candidate party by candidate emotionality for liking and competence. We found no significant main effects for subject party, candidate party label or candidate emotionality for voting, liking, or competence (F's < 2.19, p's = ns) and no significant three-way interactions between subject party, candidate party, and candidate emotionality for any dependent variables (F's < 1.57, p's = ns). We elaborate on significant effects in the sections below.

The Effects of Partisanship Cues on Candidate Evaluations

Partisanship effects were examined using a 2 (candidate party: Republican or Democrat) × 2 (participant party: Republican or Democrat) ANOVA for each dependent variable. As expected, the candidate was evaluated more positively by

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[1] Throughout the article, effect sizes were calculated using the formula $r = \text{sqrt}\ (F/(F + df_{error}))$ or $r = \text{sqrt}\ (t^2/(t^2 + df))$ with .10 considered a small effect, .30, moderate, and .50, a large effect (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991).

[2] Recognizing that the dependent variables were correlated, the data could have been analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). However, given that, theoretically, the dependent variables are expected to be intercorrelated, and our aim was to show a consistent pattern of effects across similar dependent variables, there does not appear to be a clear advantage in using a MANOVA approach.

participants whose party matched the candidate's label than by those whose party did not match the candidate's label. As shown in Figure 1, when the candidate was labeled as a Democrat, he was more likely to be voted for, better liked, and perceived as more competent by Democrats than by Republicans. When the candidate was labeled as a Republican, he was more likely to be voted for, better liked, and perceived as more competent by Republicans than by Democrats. (For the participant party identification by candidate party label interaction, F's (1, 107) = 33.20, 8.02, and 10.31, for voting, liking, and competence, respectively, p's < .01). Effect sizes were large for voting ($r = .49$), and moderate for liking and perceived competence (r's = .26 and .30, respectively). Follow-up paired comparisons indicated significant differences between Democratic and Republican participants viewing a Democratic candidate (t's(51) = 3.83 and 2.26, p's < .05 for voting and competence, respectively; t(51) = 1.88, p < .07 for liking). Again, effect sizes were large for voting ($r = .47$), and moderate for liking and perceived competence (r's = .30 and .25, respectively). Paired comparisons also indicated significant differences between Democratic and Republican participants viewing a Republican candidate (t's(53) = 4.33, 2.23, and 2.14, respectively, p's < .05 for voting, liking, and competence). Effect sizes were similar to those for the Democratic candidate (r's = .51, .29, .28, respectively).

Republicans were somewhat more polarized in their preferences, being significantly more likely to vote for (t(49) = 4.47, p < .001), like (t(49) = 3.72, p < .001), and perceive competent (t(49) = 3.59, p < .005) a Republican candidate compared to a Democratic candidate, whereas Democrats were more likely to vote for (t(55) = 3.02, p < .005), but not like (t(55) = 0.54) or perceive as more competent (t(55) = 0.75) a Democratic over a Republican candidate (p's = ns). Effect sizes were large for Republican participants for voting, liking, and perceived competence (r's = .54, .47, .46 respectively), whereas effects were moderate for voting, and small for liking and perceived competence for Democratic participants (r's = .38, .07, .10, respectively).

The Combined Effects of Partisanship and Candidate Emotionality Cues on Candidate Evaluations

In order to facilitate interpretation of the findings, tests of candidate emotionality by partisanship interactions were explored by creating match, mismatch, and no label conditions. The match condition included cases in which participants viewed a candidate of their own party (Democratic participants viewed a candidate labeled Democrat, Republican participants viewed a candidate labeled Republican); "mismatch" included participants who viewed a candidate of a different party (Democratic participants viewed a candidate labeled Republican, Republican participants viewed a candidate labeled Democrat); "no label" consisted of Democratic and Republican participants who viewed a candidate with no party label. A series of 3 (match, mismatch, no label) ×
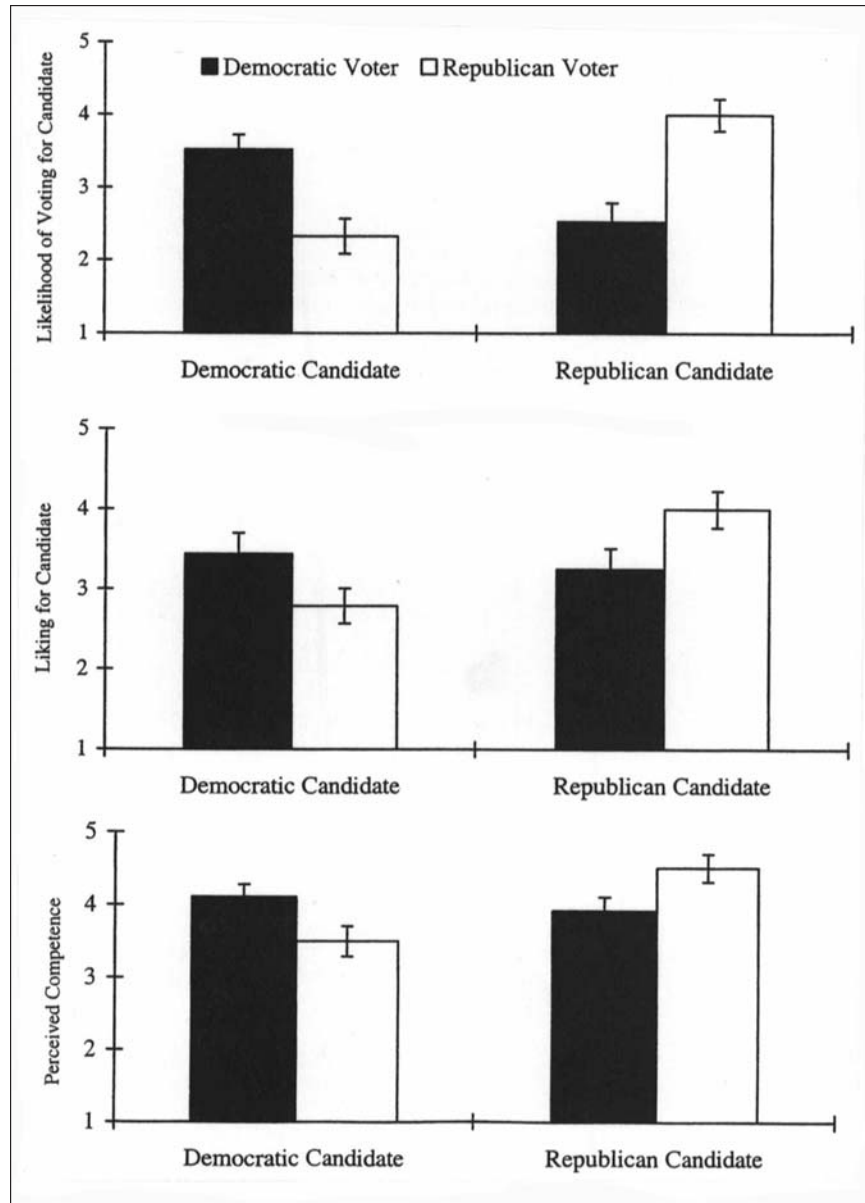
Figure 1. Likelihood of voting for (top panel), liking for (middle panel),
and perceived competence of (bottom panel) a candidate labeled
as a Democrat or a Republican by Democratic and Republican
participants. The scale range was 1 (low) to 7 (high).
Error bars indicate standard errors.

2 (candidate emotionality) ANOVAs were then conducted—one for each dependent variable.

As shown in Figure 2, we found interactions between the participant-candidate match variable (match, mismatch, no label) and candidate emotionality for voting ($F(2, 165) = 3.60$, $p < .05$), liking ($F(2, 165) = 2.08$, $p < .13$), and competence ($F(2, 165) = 2.38$, $p < .10$), although only the effect for voting was statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. In the "match" and "mismatch" conditions, the *unemotional* candidate was preferred to the emotional candidate. However, in the "no label" condition, the *emotional* candidate was preferred. Follow-up tests indicated that differences between the emotional and unemotional conditions were significant for voting and perceived candidate competence in the mismatch group (t's$(50) = 2.17$ and 2.21, respectively; p's $< .05$).[3] Effect sizes were moderate (r's $= .29$ and $.30$ for voting and perceived competence, respectively).

We then collapsed "match" and "mismatch" cells into a "party label present" cell, which we compared to the "party label absent" (or "no label") cell in a series of 2 (label present/absent) × 2 (candidate emotionality) follow-up ANOVAs. Significant interaction effects were followed up with pairwise *t*-tests. As shown in Figure 3, we found interactions between party label presence and candidate emotionality for voting ($F(1, 165) = 5.55$, $p < .05$), liking ($F(1, 165) = 3.79$, $p < .06$), and perceived candidate competence ($F(1, 165) = 3.09$, $p < .08$). When a party label was *not* given, participants were more likely to vote for, like, and perceive as competent an emotional candidate than an unemotional candidate. When a party label *was* provided, however, the reverse held; participants were more likely to vote for and perceive as more competent the *unemotional* candidate. Again, the effects for voting were significant, but the effects for liking and competence only trended toward significance. Effect sizes for the interaction were small to moderate (r's $= .18$, $.15$, $.14$ for voting, liking, and perceived competence, respectively). Follow-up tests indicated a significant difference between the emotional and unemotional conditions for the label-present cell for voting ($t(106) = 2.09$, $p < .05$) and a borderline difference for the label-present cell for competence ($t(106)$ 1.78, $p < .08$). Again, effect sizes were small to moderate (r's $= .20$ and $.17$, respectively). No significant differences emerged in follow-up tests for the no label condition.

DISCUSSION

In the present study, we examined the effects of partisanship cues and candidate emotionality on voter preference. As predicted, giving a different party label to the same hypothetical candidate reading the same speech resulted in differences in likelihood of voting for the candidate, liking for the candidate, and judgments of

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[3] Although effects for liking appear greater than those for competence, means for competence showed smaller standard deviations.
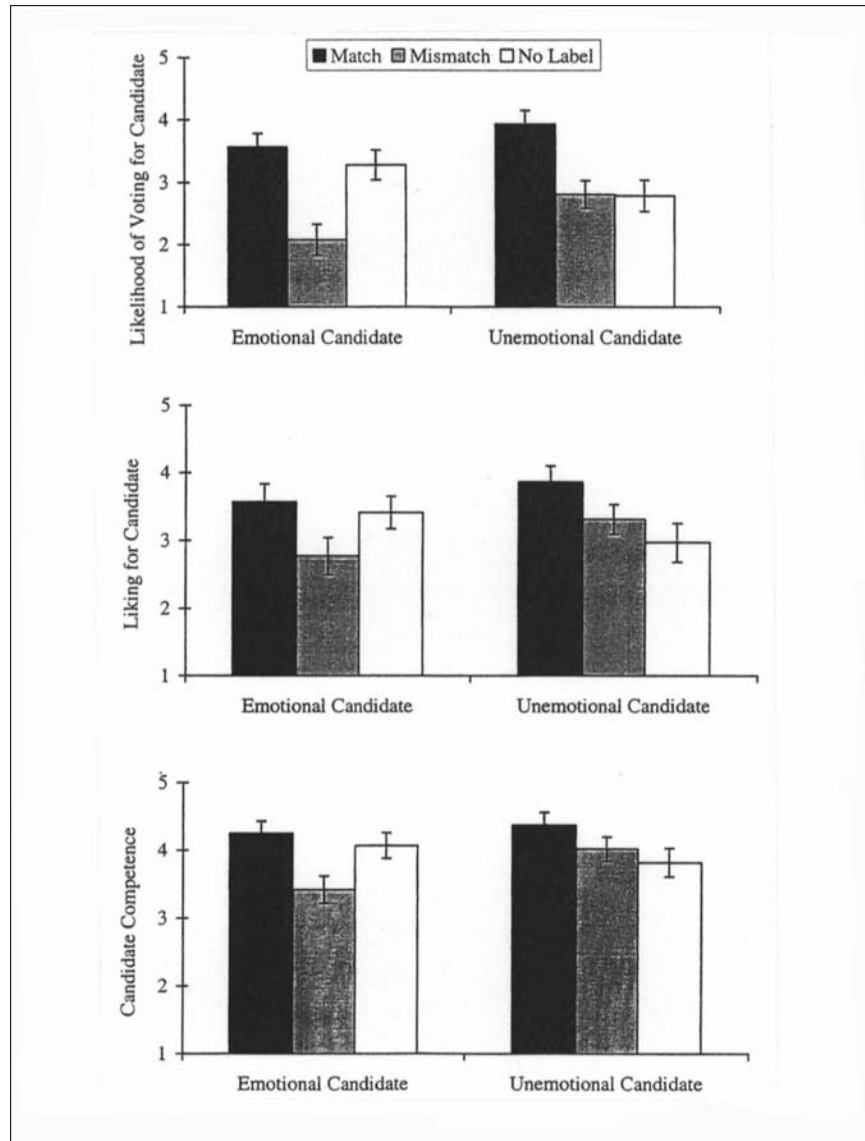
Figure 2. Likelihood of voting for (top panel), liking for (middle panel), and perceived competence of (bottom panel) the candidate for two video emotionality conditions by participants whose own party matched the candidate's party label (match), participants whose party was the opposite of the candidate's party label (mismatch), and participants who watched a candidate who was not given a party label (no label). Scale range was 1 (low) to 7 (high). Error bars indicate standard errors.
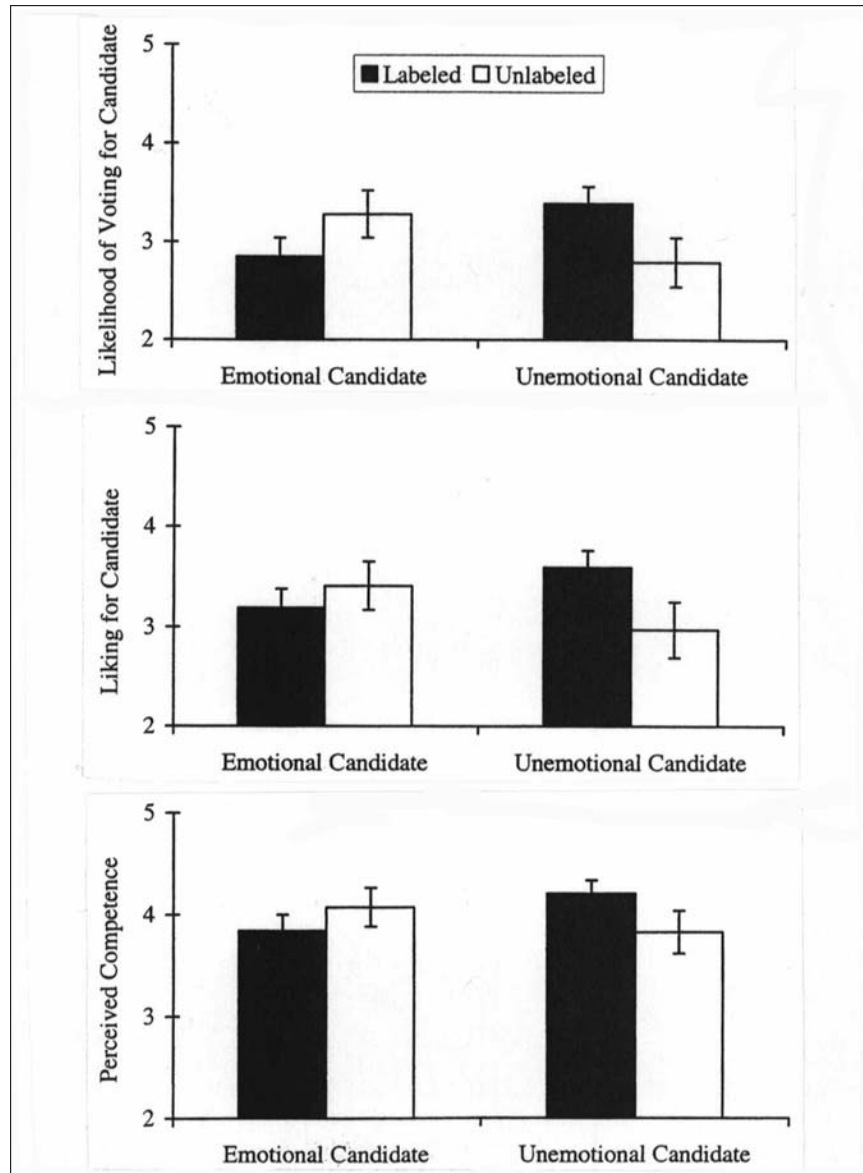
Figure 3. Likelihood of voting for (top panel), liking for (middle panel),
and perceived competence of (bottom panel) the candidate for two video
emotionality conditions by participants who watched a candidate
with a label (label) and participants who watched a candidate who
was not given a party label (no label). Scale range was 1 (low) to 7 (high).
Error bars indicate standard errors.

candidate competence as a function of participants' party identification. Effect sizes for partisanship were large for voting, and moderate for liking and perceived competence. Although the candidate was presented identically in each condition, except for the label provided by the experimenter, the participants of both parties, especially Republicans, gave higher evaluations for the candidate labeled as belonging to their own party than they did for the candidate labeled as belonging to the opposing party.

This study suggests that *at least* when issue information is ambiguous, and the candidate does not have name recognition, party label is a crucial factor in determining voters' judgments. These findings provide experimental evidence to corroborate data from large, national studies, theory, and a small number of experimental studies (Bartels, 2000; Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960; Conover & Feldman, 1986, 1989; Cowden & McDermott, 2000; Lodge & Hamill, 1986; Lodge et al., 1989; Miller, 1991; Ottati, 1990; Rahn, 1993; Rahn, Aldrich, Borgida, & Sullivan, 1990; Riggle et al., 1992; Wiegman, 1985) attesting to the importance of partisanship in candidate evaluations. These studies suggest that in complex, comparative situations, party label acts as a shortcut, or heuristic, for making evaluations (Chaiken, 1987; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). As the candidate in the present study was not only hypothetical, but gave a politically "neutral" speech, these results suggest that party label provides a top-down or schema-driven guide in ambiguous political situations (cf. Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Fiske & Pavelchak, 1986). These types of situations may be quite common in local, state, and even congressional elections in which little may be known about a particular candidate. In fact, party label was shown to play a key role in voters' inferences about candidates' issue positions before the 1976 presidential election (Conover & Feldman, 1989). Specifically, inferences based on party about Jimmy Carter increased from before the Democratic convention when he was relatively unknown, to after the Convention, when Carter was "clearly labeled as a Democrat if not *the* Democrat." From this, Conover and Feldman conclude that "even relatively unknown candidates are eventually perceived as specific instances of an important category—members of a political party" (p. 937).

Other factors, such as the media, may enhance ambiguity as well as the use of political parties as cues or heuristics. For example, Rahn and Cramer (1996) found that television, in particular (compared to written materials), may activate partisan stereotypes for sophisticated voters but not for unsophisticated voters. Further, activation of partisan stereotypes undermined voters' use of policy stance information in determining candidate evaluations. Thus, activation of partisan stereotypes made voters more likely to use "top-down" processing in evaluating candidates. By introducing our hypothetical candidate with a party label, we likely activated partisan stereotypes, or even simple ingroup favoritism, potentially explaining why the same candidate giving the same speech could have been evaluated differently by Democrats and Republicans depending on a randomly assigned party label.

Besides functioning as a cue eliciting top-down evaluations, partisanship may also lead to biased processing of a candidate's issue positions. Ottati and colleagues (Ottati, 2001; Ottati, Wyer, Deiger, & Houston, 2002) outlined a number of potential psychological mechanisms underlying the influence of partisanship on issue processing. These included: selective exposure, selective encoding, biased interpretation, biased inference, selective retrieval, or biased weighting of candidate issue positions. Although a small number of studies have examined the influence of some of these processes (e.g., biased encoding, biased weighting of issue positions, biased inferences; Conover & Feldman, 1989; Lodge & Hamill, 1986; Rahn & Cramer, 1996), more research into specific processes that may mediate the influence of partisanship on candidate evaluations will help to elucidate under which conditions and in which individuals partisanship will be most influential.

We also obtained intriguing interactions between candidate emotionality and party label presence vs. absence. Specifically, we found that when a candidate's party affiliation was not specified, participants preferred the more emotional candidate. This effect was reversed when a candidate was given any party label. Regardless of whether the candidate's party label matched the participant's, participants preferred the unemotional candidate. Effect sizes for candidate emotionality were moderate.

Similar to our experimental findings, in a more naturalistic study of actual political leaders, Wiegman (1985) found that people who watched a leader of their own party liked him more and showed greater attitude change after watching him. Although Wiegman did not include a condition with no party label, consistent with the label-present condition of our study, Wiegman found that members of both political parties judged the emotional politician as less credible, less convincing, and weaker in his arguments than the "rational" politician, regardless of whether or not the politician's party matched their own. Our study indicated that the effects of emotionality are reversed when candidate party is not evident. Thus, we find, in a highly controlled, experimental setting, that candidate emotionality is causally related to evaluations. Wiegman's more naturalistic study suggests that this is the case because emotional politicians are judged to be less credible, less convincing, and weaker (less rational) in their arguments.

An interaction between the presence of a party label and other candidate characteristics on candidate evaluations has been seen in at least two other studies. Rahn (1993) found that when party labels were provided, voters made "theory-driven" judgments, ignoring data (e.g., issue information), and based their candidate evaluations mainly on top-down processing (e.g., partisan stereotypes), even in the face of inconsistent issue information. However, when no party label was provided, evaluations became much more "data-driven"; voters based their evaluations mainly on the candidates' issue positions. Further, in a study even more similar to our own, Riggle and colleagues (1992) found that when participants were given no information about a candidate's party or political

views, they were more likely to believe that candidates that they rated as more physically attractive were trustworthy, likable, competent, and possessed leadership abilities. However, when party label and information about the candidate's voting record were also provided, candidate evaluations were not significantly affected by attractiveness. In fact, although the difference was not significant, participants preferred an unattractive candidate when party and voting record were known. Perhaps in the absence of "cognitive" information like party labels or voting records, voters prefer a more attractive candidate with a more interesting personality (e.g., more emotional); however, when presented with such "substantive" information as party label or voting records, voters do not need to judge the candidate on "feeling" factors, and thus prefer that such information be restricted.

Our candidate emotionality by partisanship findings are consistent with previous studies in which perceptions of candidate facial or emotional displays were moderated by the prior attitudes and party affiliation of the voter (McHugo et al., 1985, 1991; Shields & MacDowell, 1987). Results also parallel emerging studies of emotionality as a component of personality. For example, Caprara et al. (2003) found that personality profiles of Italian politicians varied by party orientation. Center right (more conservative) politicians showed greater Energy and Conscientiousness than center left (more liberal) politicians.

However, although our finding that participants preferred the emotional candidate when party label was not evident is consistent with previous studies, it may have limited application to "real-world" politics, where it is rare for candidates to be presented without a known party affiliation. It is possible that emotionality may play a bigger role in presidential elections where personality looms larger, and party labels are less important. One possible implication of these findings, then, is that candidate emotionality is especially important when voters evaluate candidates of the same party, as in primary elections and party nominations. In primaries, party affiliation is superfluous because voters are choosing one candidate among several from the same political party. Thus, it is unlikely that top-down or schema-driven processing related to party label would influence voter preference and behavior. Another possible application of these findings is in the case of municipal elections. In these elections, too, voters may be less influenced and candidates less strongly affiliated with particular political parties. Future investigations should further examine the potentially important role of emotionality in influencing people's evaluations of different candidates from the same political party and in municipal elections.

Differences between the emotional and unemotional condition were most pronounced for the "Mismatch" condition, in which participant party label did not match candidate party label. Perhaps when a member of the opposing party is portrayed as emotional, the candidate comes across as overzealous or manipulative or even hysterical. This may matter less when the candidate is from one's own party. Thus, in television advertisements for a general election

where information regarding the candidate's stand on specific issues is lacking or not apparent and party affiliation may be used as a cue, an unemotional candidate may be preferred because the advertisements are likely targeting audiences containing at least equal numbers of viewers from both parties. Showing an emotional advertisement might only appeal to viewers from the same party, whereas an unemotional advertisement might be more likely to appeal to the ignorant, undecided voters—those most likely to sway elections in the current political environment. This may matter less when the candidate is from one's own party.

Recent anecdotal evidence supports the importance of candidate emotionality. It is widely agreed that George W. Bush's easy-going personality was an asset in his contests with Albert Gore and John Kerry, both regarded as relatively "wooden." Additionally, Bush's reputed "steely determination" and well-placed anger and compassion in the face of the September 11 terrorist attacks appear to have enhanced his ratings, at least temporarily. Interestingly, candidate emotionality appears to continue to be a topic of explicit consideration in political analysis. For example, Ohio Republican Senator George Voinovich was recently derided for being "weepy" by hard-right members of his own party after he bucked President Bush. Voinovich acknowledged, "My emotions are a little closer to the surface than maybe they should be" (Kirkpatrick, 2005).

Although our findings complement those in the literature, there are several limitations to this study. First, the emotionality by party label effects were weaker than the partisanship effects, with some only bordering on statistical significance. However, we believe these suggestive findings are important and should spur future research in this area. Further, the strength of these effects relative to the influence of partisanship may not reflect a limitation of the study as much as a real difference in the power of these constructs to influence political decisions. Second, participants in the present study were college undergraduates. Results may not generalize to older or to less educated voters. However, that we found significant partisanship and candidate emotionality effects among educated voters who one might expect to be less influenced by heuristics suggests that the findings might be even stronger among adults in the general population. Future research might examine partisanship/labeling by candidate emotionality interactions in a more representative sample. Finally, in the present study, we conceptualized emotionality as a single construct encompassing greater emotional arousal, greater intensity of emotions, and a greater range of affective displays. As such, it is difficult to assess the specific dimensions of emotionality or types of affective display (e.g., anger, happiness) that have the most influence on voter perceptions, and to link results to theories of the neural and physiological underpinnings of emotion and cognition (e.g., Cacioppo, Berntson, Larsen, Poehlmann, & Ito, 1999; Damasio, 1994; LeDoux, 1996). Future studies might examine the interactive influences of partisanship with specific dimensions of emotionality or specific types of emotional displays. Also important will be work examining resonance between voter and candidate emotions (e.g., Roseman, Abelson, & Ewing, 1986),

and the synthesis of basic theories of emotions and cognition from neuroscience with research on political behavior and preferences.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, we confirmed experimentally the importance of partisanship in influencing candidate evaluations under relatively ambiguous conditions. As voters must often make evaluations under conditions of ambiguity, whether due to a candidate's lack of name recognition, or the deliberate vagueness of political rhetoric, these results may be applicable to many real-world political situations. Despite evidence of the decline of political parties in the United States, we found that even reasonably educated voters are swayed by a candidate's party label under politically ambiguous conditions. In this study, we also examined the effects of candidate emotionality on political judgments. Our findings showed that voters prefer a candidate with more emotionality when the candidate's party is unknown, but prefer a more reserved candidate when they know the candidate's party. These findings suggest that in situations in which political party is not known or not relevant (e.g., primary elections), other factors such as emotionality may influence voters' decisions significantly.

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