Appendix to: Can Politicians Say That? What Shapes Public Responses to Speech Scandals

Preregistered Report: *Journal of Experimental Political Science*

Appendix Figures

Figure A.1: Photos for vignette

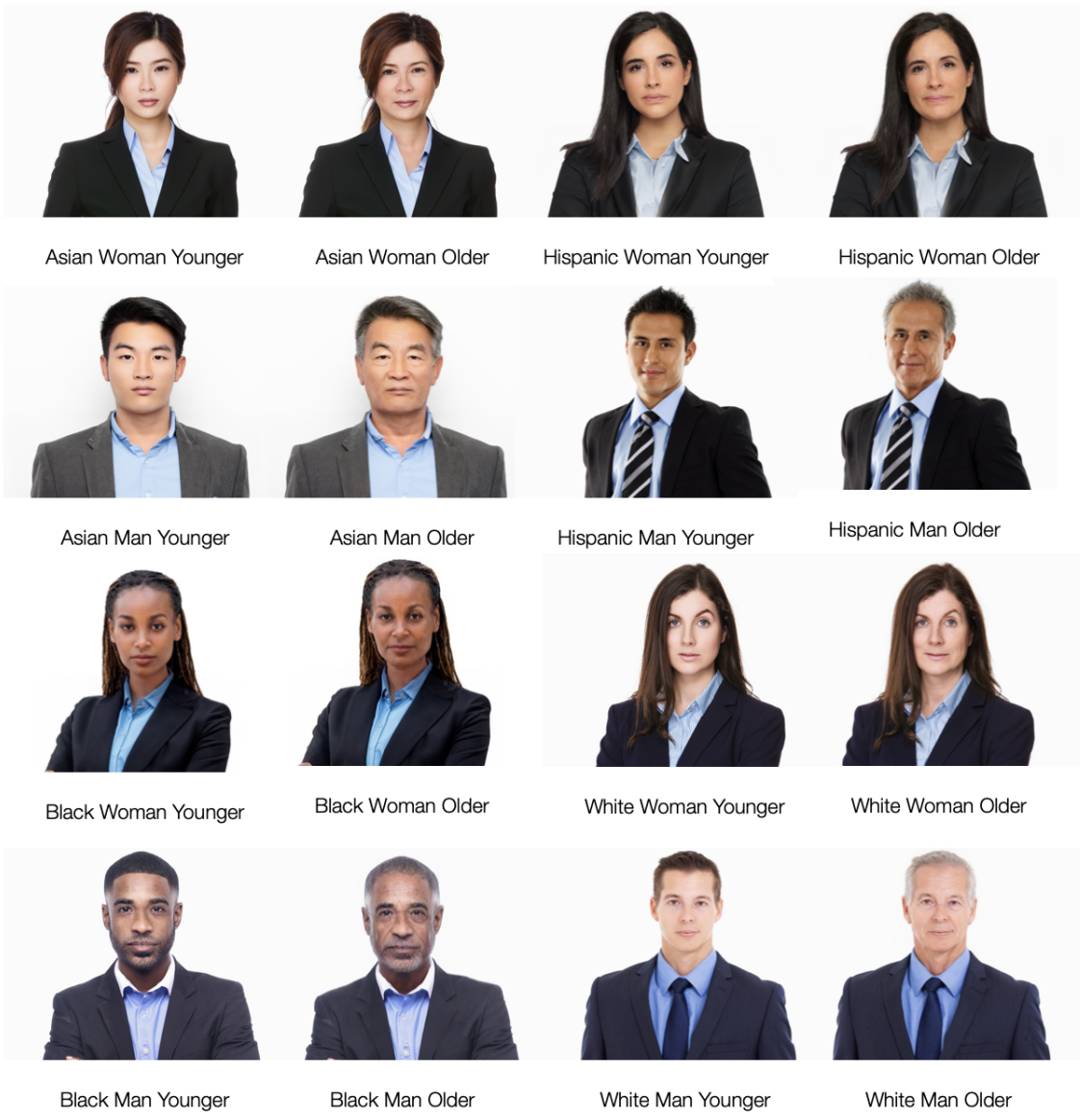
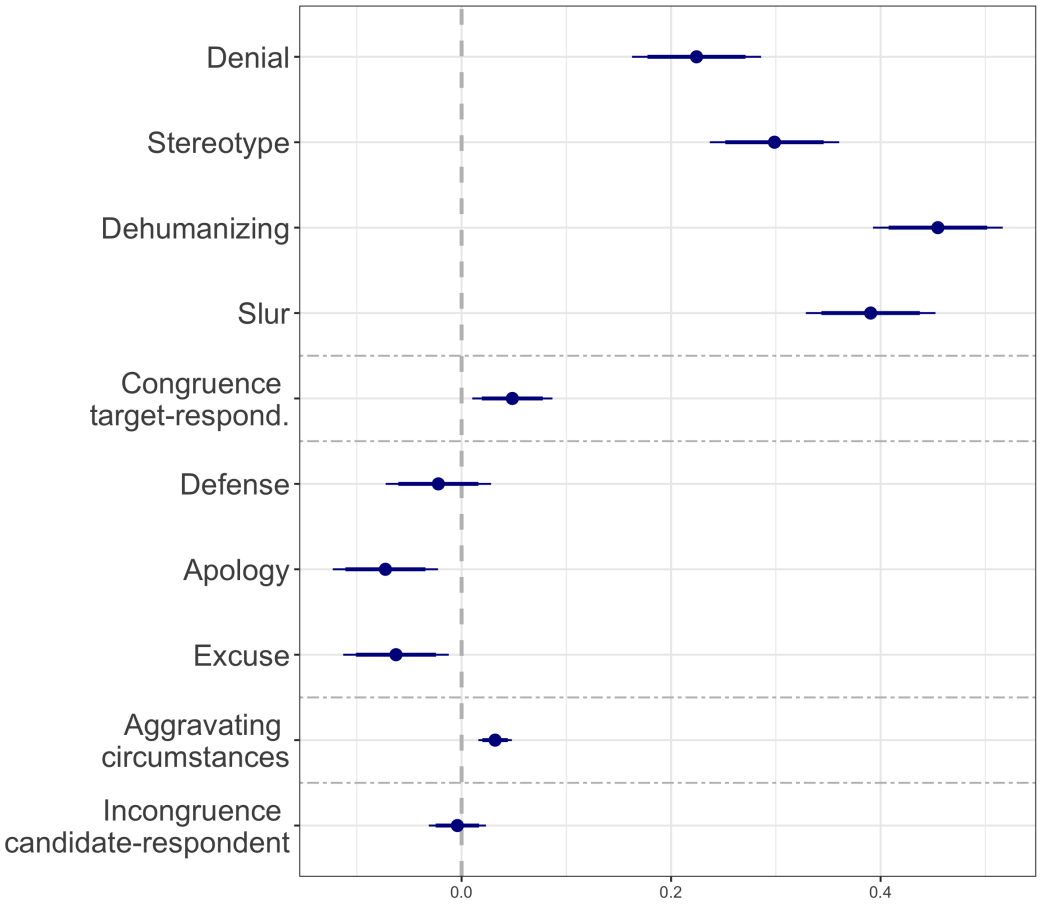
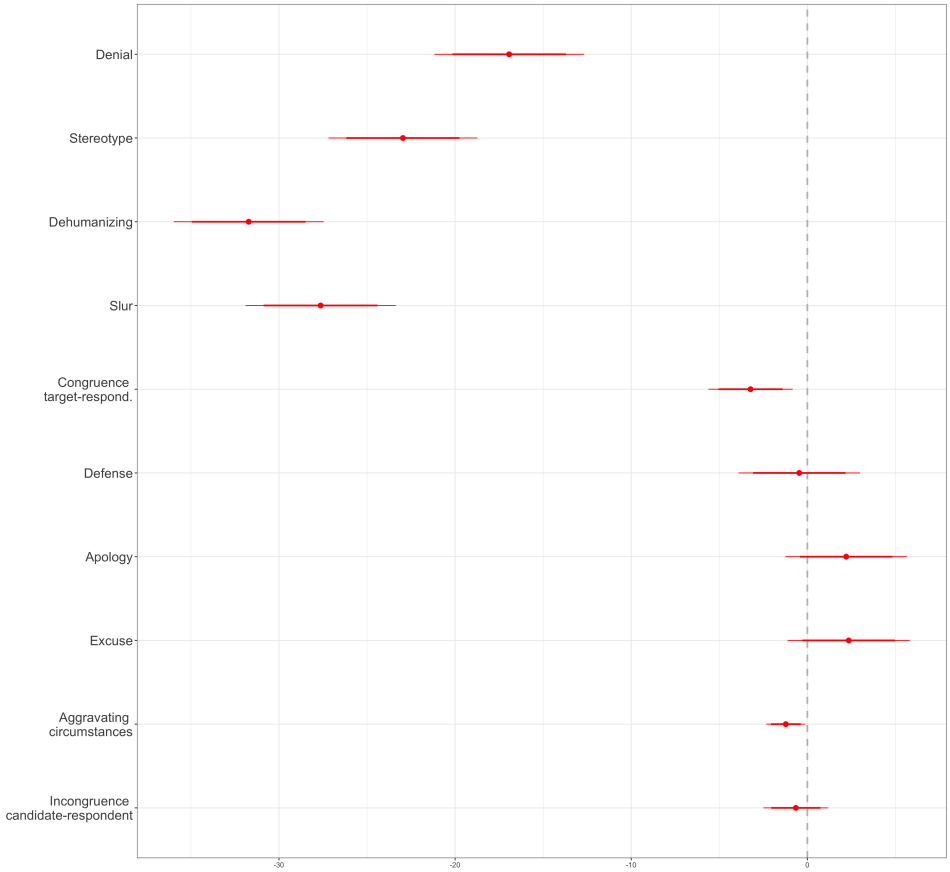


Figure A.2: Average marginal component effects (AMCEs) for each prediction

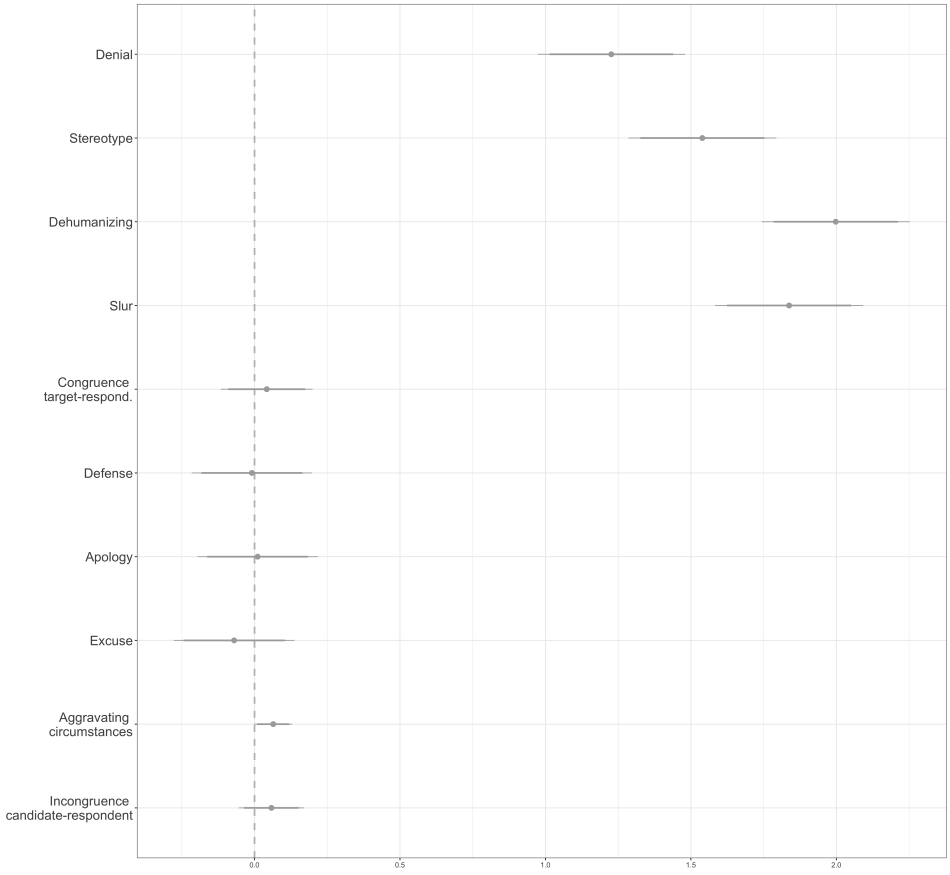


Note: Displays AMCEs of effects of each variable, in the same models where MMs are calculated in Figure 3, with 95% and 99% confidence intervals. The reference category is in each case "no speech controversy," "incongruent," "no comment" "no aggravating circumstances," "some congruent factor".

Figure A.3: Average marginal component effects for alternative dependent variables, by prediction



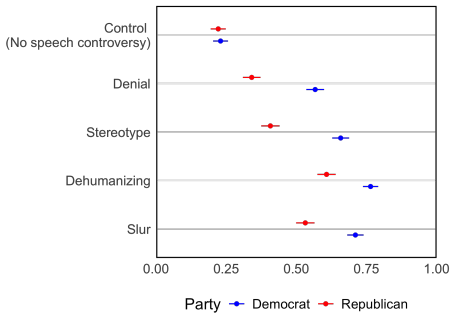
(A) Feeling thermometer toward candidate (on 0-100 scale)



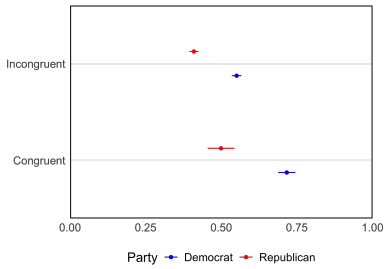
(B) Scale of objectionableness of behavior (on 1-7 scale)

Note: Displays AMCEs of effects on alternative DVs, with 95% and 99% confidence intervals.

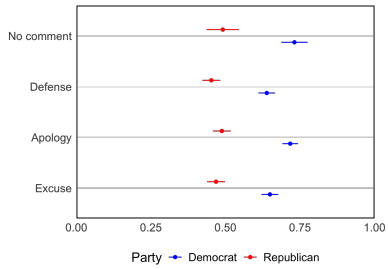
Figure A.4: By party subgroups: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would never consider voting for this candidate"



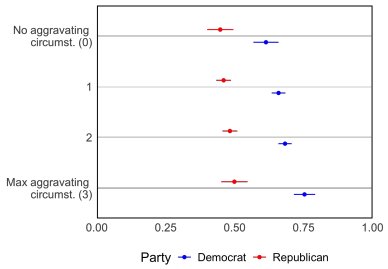
(A) Pred. 1a: Nature of original remarks (severity)



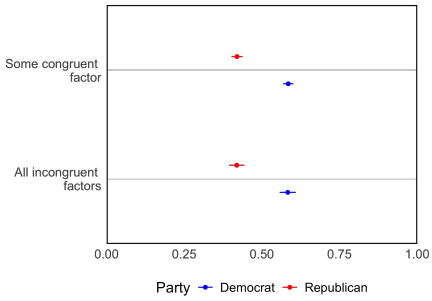
(B) Pred. 1b: Nature of original remarks (target) (congruence with respondent)



(C) Pred. 2: Politician's response

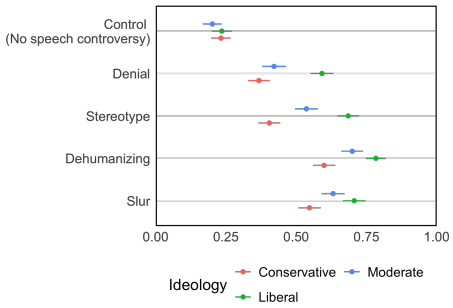


(D) Pred. 3: Context

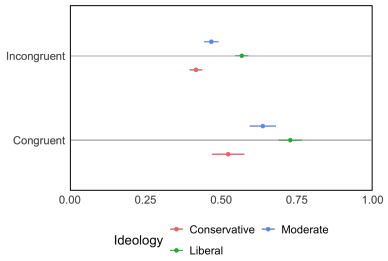


(E) Pred. 4: Politician's background traits (incongruence with respondent)

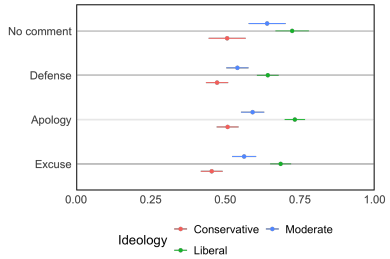
Figure A.5: By ideology subgroups: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would never consider voting for this candidate"



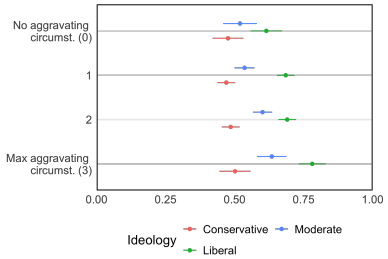
(A) Pred. 1a: Nature of original remarks (severity)



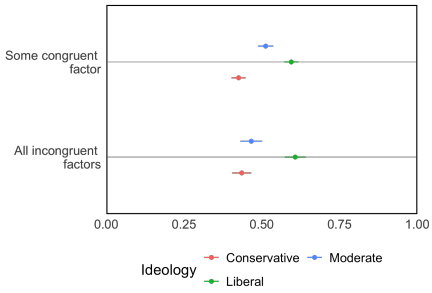
(B) Pred. 1b: Nature of original remarks (target) (congruence with respondent)



(C) Pred. 2: Politician's response

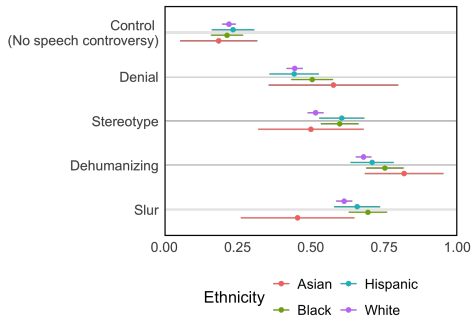


(D) Pred. 3: Context

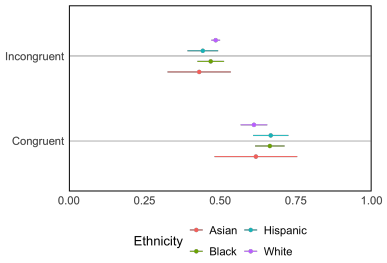


(E) Pred. 4: Politician's background traits (incongruence with respondent)

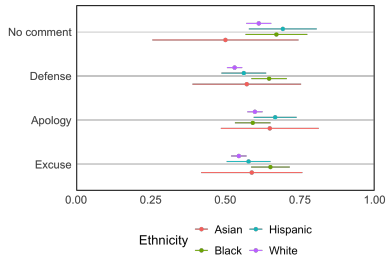
Figure A.6: By racial subgroups: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would never consider voting for this candidate"



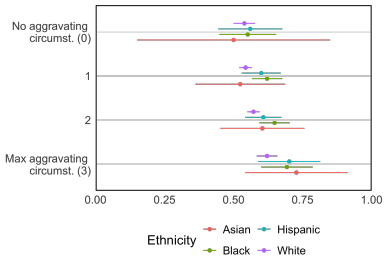
(A) Pred. 1a: Nature of original remarks (severity)



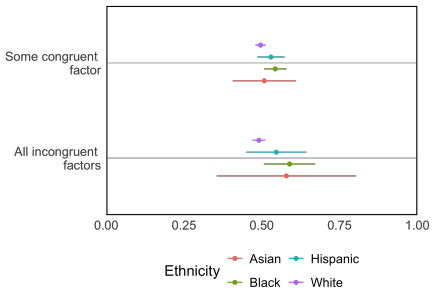
(B) Pred. 1b: Nature of original remarks (target) (congruence with respondent)



(C) Pred. 2: Politician's response

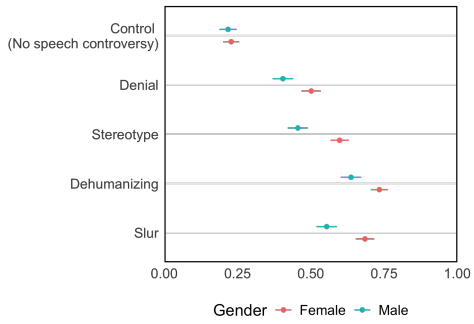


(D) Pred. 3: Context

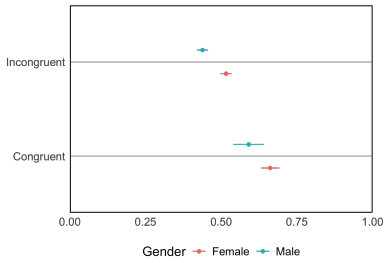


(E) Pred. 4: Politician's background traits (incongruence with respondent)

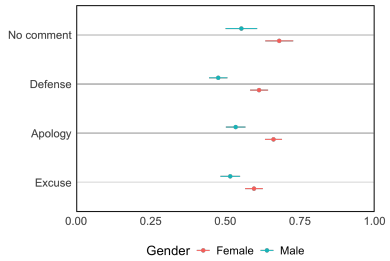
Figure A.7: By gender subgroups: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would never consider voting for this candidate"



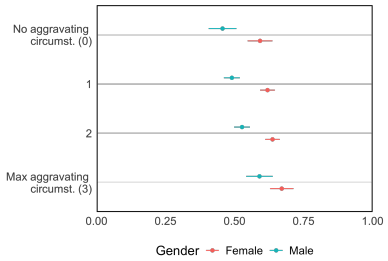
(A) Pred. 1a: Nature of original remarks (severity)



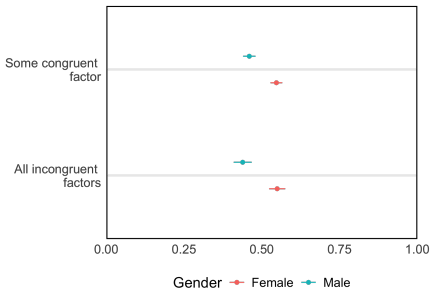
(B) Pred. 1b: Nature of original remarks (target) (congruence with respondent)



(C) Pred. 2: Politician's response

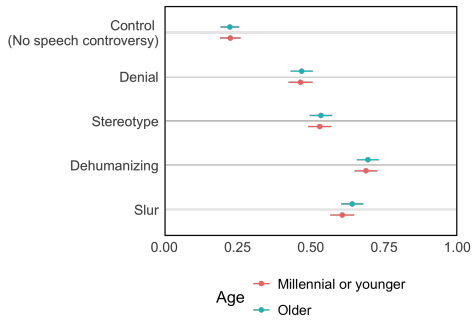


(D) Pred. 3: Context

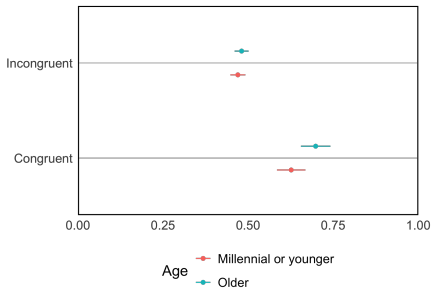


(E) Pred. 4: Politician's background traits (incongruence with respondent)

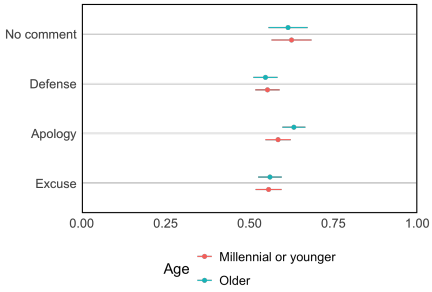
Figure A.8: By age subgroups: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would never consider voting for this candidate"



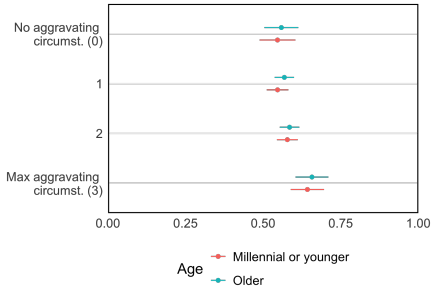
(A) Pred. 1a: Nature of original remarks (severity)



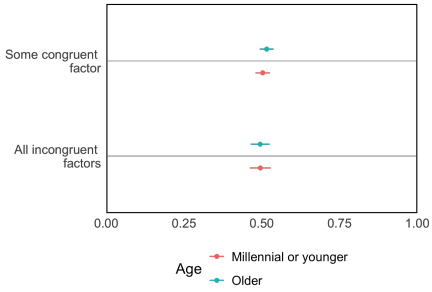
(B) Pred. 1b: Nature of original remarks (target) (congruence with respondent)



(C) Pred. 2: Politician's response

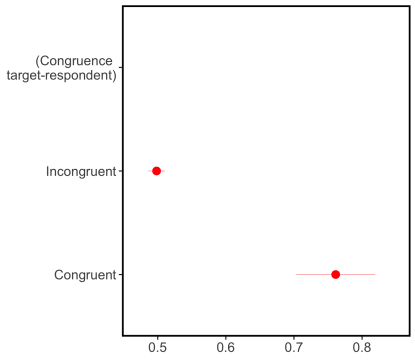


(D) Pred. 3: Context

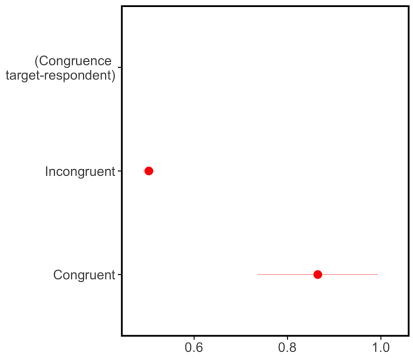


(E) Pred. 4: Politician's background traits (incongruence with respondent)

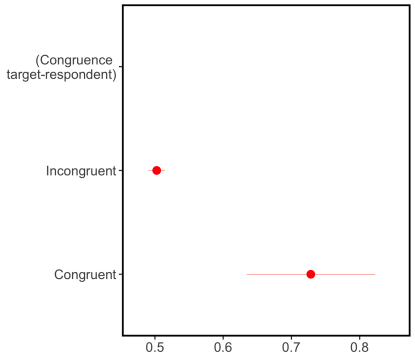
Figure A.9: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would NEVER consider voting for this candidate" by type of target-respondent congruence



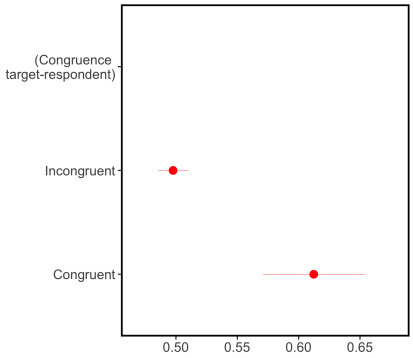
(A) Congruence in race



(B) Congruence in religion

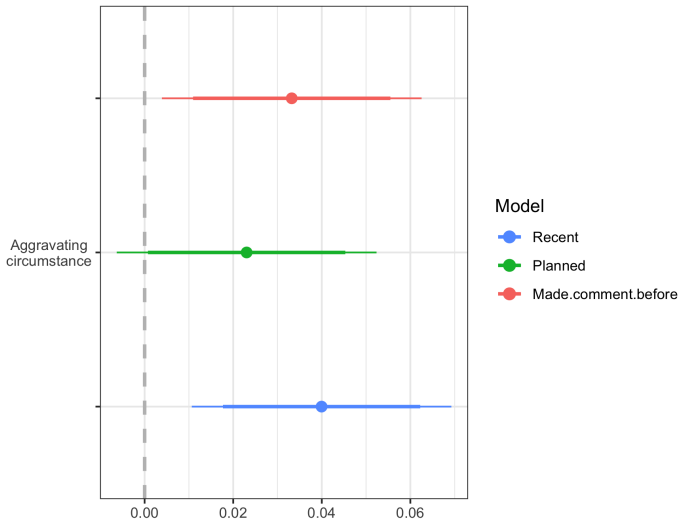


(C) Congruence in sexual orientation



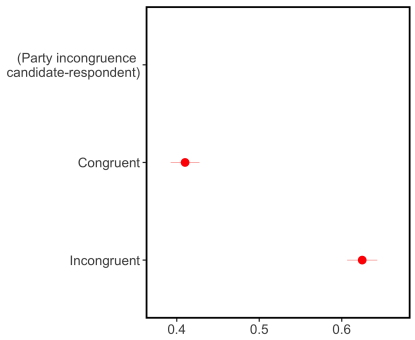
(D) Congruence in gender

Figure A.10: AMCEs for different type of aggravating factor

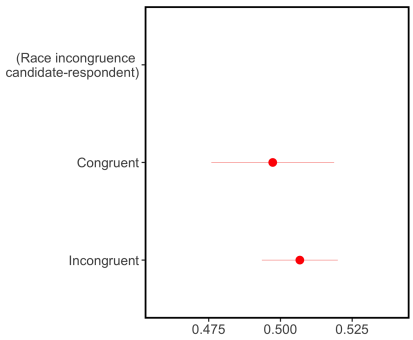


Note: Displays AMCEs of effects for each aggravating factor, with 95% and 99% confidence intervals.

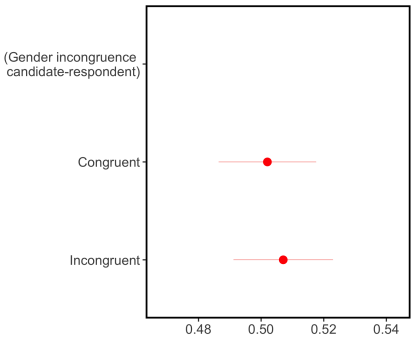
Figure A.11: Marginal means (MMs) of the probability of answering "I would NEVER consider voting for this candidate" by type of respondent-politician incongruence



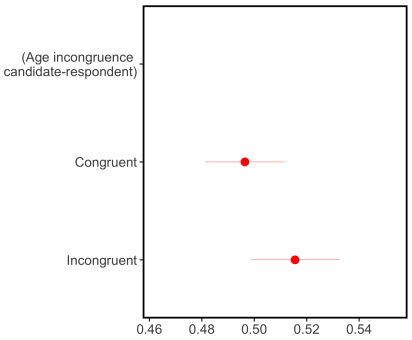
(A) Incongruence in party



(B) Incongruence in race



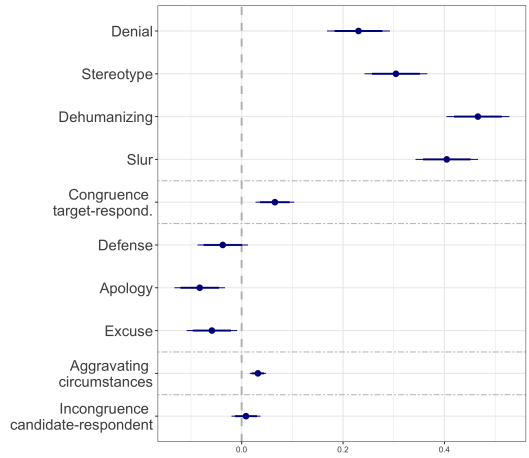
(C) Incongruence in gender



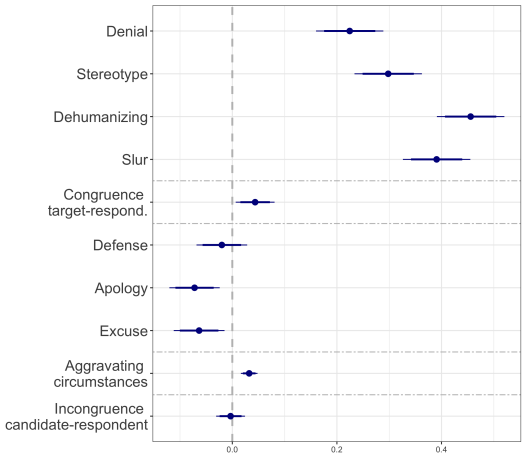
(D) Incongruence in age

Note: In Panels A-D, we will **boldface** variables for which the difference with the reference category is statistically significant, calculated as an AMCE (q <.05). The reference category is "congruent."

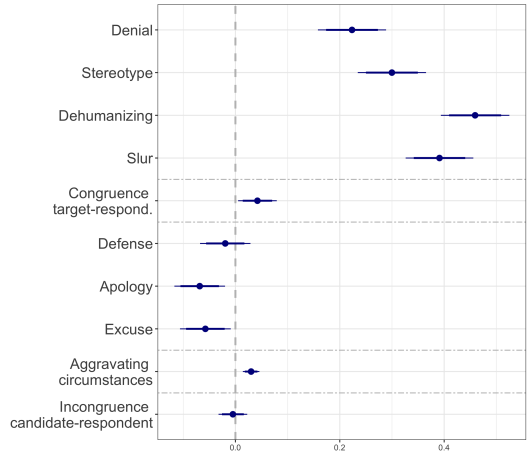
Figure A.12: Average marginal component effects (AMCEs) for each prediction under different scenarios



(A) Observations weighted to be representative of state legislators



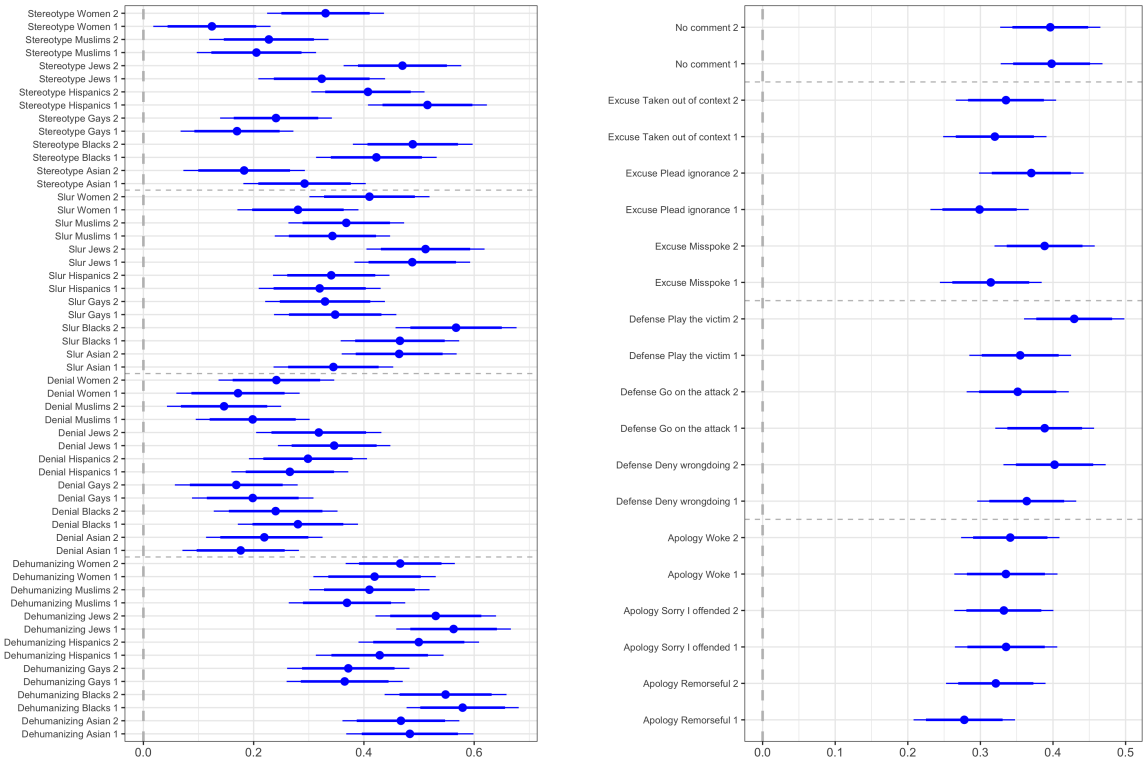
(B) Observations weighted for "low expected rule out" scenario



(C) Observations weighted for "high expected rule out" scenario

Note: Displays AMCEs of effects of each variable under each scenario, with 95% and 99% confidence intervals. The reference category is in each case "no speech controversy," "incongruent," "no comment" "no aggravating circumstances," "some congruent factor".

Figure A.13: AMCEs for alternative variables within each composite



(A) Pred. 1a: Nature of original remarks (severity) (B) Pred. 2: Politician's response

Note: Displays AMCEs of effects for disaggregated variables, with 95% and 99% confidence intervals. For Pred. 1a, see quotes in Appendix Table A.2. For Pred. 2, see sub-types and quotes in Appendix Table A.3.

Appendix Tables

Table A.1: Criteria, attributes, and predictions

	Criteria	**Attributes**	**Predicted Least support**
Content	Nature of original remarks	Severity of statement -Slur -Dehumanizing language -Stereotype -Denial of discrimination -No speech controversy	Slur
		Target of statement -Racial minorities (Blacks, Hispanics, Asian Ams.) -Religious minorities (Jews, Muslims) -Gays -Women	Voter "congruence" with target
	Politician's response	Offered excuse Offered apology Offered defense Offered no comment	Offered excuse
Situation	Context	Timeframe of statement -Recently (yesterday) -Not Recently (5 years ago)	More aggravating factors (recently, planned, has made such a comment before)
		Degree of spontaneity -Planned -Unplanned	
		Past behavior -Has made such a comment before -First time has made such a comment	
	Politician's background traits	Race -White -Non-white	Voter "incongruence" with politician's background traits
		Gender -Man -Woman	
		Age -Younger (about 40) -Older (about 60)	
		Political party -Republican -Democrat	

Table A.2: Insensitive remarks quotes

	Identity	**Quote 1**	**Quote 2**
Slurs	Blacks	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of n**gers."	"Life would be better without so many n**gers around."
	Hispanics	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of w**backs."	"Life would be better without so many w**backs around."
	Asian-Americans	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of c**nks."	"Life would be better without so many c**nks around."
	Jews	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of k**es."	"Life would be better without so many k**es around."
	Muslims	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of t**elheads."	"Life would be better without so many t**elheads around."
	Gays	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of f**gots."	"Life would be better without so many f**gots around."
	Women	"It's hard, I have to deal with lots of b**ches."	"Life would be better without so many b**ches around."
Stereotypes	Blacks	"Blacks are lazy. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that Blacks are criminals."
	Hispanics	"Hispanics are dirty. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that Hispanics are illegals."
	Asian-Americans	"Asian-Americans are stuck-up. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that Asian-Americans are socially awkward."
	Jews	"Jews are money-obsessed. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that Jews are untrustworthy."
	Muslims	"Muslims are violent. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that Muslims are extremists."
	Gays	"Gays are flamboyant. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that gays are prosmiscuous."
	Women	"Women are too emotional. That's just stating a fact."	"Everyone knows that women are irrational."
Dehumanizing language	All Groups	"[Group name] aren't like other people. They're rats."	"[Group name] remind me more of dogs than people."
Denial of discrimination	All groups	"[Group name] don't face discrimination anymore. That's obvious."	"It's crazy for anyone to think that [Group name] face discrimination these days."

Table A.3: Politician's response quotes

Response Type	Sub-type	Quote 1	Quote 2
Apology	(A) Remorseful	"I'm sorry for my remark. It was hurtful, and I take full responsibility."	"I apologize for my comment. It was damaging, and there's no one to blame but me."
	(B) Woke	"I'm sorry for my remark. I'm reflecting on my privilege and receiving counseling to understand how I'm complicit in perpetuating bigoted power hierarchies."	"I apologize for my comment. I recognize my privilege, and I'm receiving therapy to help me appreciate the role I play in contributing to unfair inequities in society."
	(C) Sorry-I-offended	"I'm sorry if my remark offended anyone. That was never my intention."	"I apologize if anyone took offense to my comment. I never wanted that to happen."
Excuse	(A) Plead ignorance	"I didn't realize that my remark would cause offense, but in retrospect I can see that it did."	"I didn't know that my comment would offend anyone, but in hindsight I understand the impact it had."
	(B) Misspeak	"I didn't choose my words carefully, and I'll strive not to misspeak like this in the future."	"I was careless with my words, and I'll try not to misspeak like that going forward."
	(C) Taken out of context	"My remark was taken out of context, and it doesn't accurately represent what I was saying."	"My comment was taken out of context, and it distorts the point I was actually making."
Defense	(A) Deny wrongdoing	"I didn't do anything wrong. People are too sensitive, and I don't have anything to apologize for."	"Nothing I said was incorrect. Society should be less sensitive, and I don't need to say I'm sorry."
	(B) Play the victim	"I'm the real victim here. I'm being singled out for just expressing my opinion."	"If anyone's the victim, it's me. I'm the one who's being called out for simply saying what I think."
	(C) Go on the attack	"It looks like the language police are out again in full force again. I'll say what I want, when I want. I'll confront anyone who tries to stop me."	"Others want to police my language. But I'm not going to take it. I'm ready to push back hard and make others pay for a change."
No comment		"I have no comment at this time."	"I have nothing to say on that issue."

Table A.4: Names selected by politician´s background.

Gender	Name Group	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic
Male	Name 1	Thomas Wagner	Hung Chen	Jermaine Wood	Julio Perez
	Name 2	Richard Hoffman	Hung Wang	Jermaine Jackson	Alejandro Gonzalez
Female	Name 1	Mary Meyer	Wei Li	Lakisha Jackson	Guadalupe Rodriguez
	Name 2	Mary Ryan	Jian Li	Tamika Jackson	Guadalupe Garcia

This table provides selected names for each gender, name group, and ethnic category, drawn from the two most recognizable names in each cell (Crabtree et al., 2023).

Table A.5: Comparison with USA national values and balance of the covariates across the used sample and reported incompletes

Variable (Share)	USA Mean	Sample Mean	Mean Difference
Female	0.505	0.530	0.025
		(0.499)	[0.000]
Over 65	0.177	0.288	0.111
		(0.453)	[0.000]
White	0.753	0.734	-0.019
		(0.442)	[0.000]
Black	0.137	0.116	-0.021
		(0.320)	[0.000]
Asian	0.064	0.015	-0.049
		(0.124)	[0.000]
Hispanic	0.195	0.080	-0.115
		(0.272)	[0.000]
Democrat or Leans Democrat	0.490	0.414	-0.076
		(0.493)	[0.000]
College graduate	0.343	0.494	0.151
		(0.500)	[0.000]
Employed	0.604	0.535	-0.069
		(0.499)	[0.000]
Household Income ($)	114500	84033	-30467
		(80636)	[0.000]

Displays mean values of covariates among respondents and their difference with the control. Race/ethnicity are for each category alone. Pc income is in thousands of dollars. Note median household income is the population is estimated at 80,610. Source for gender, age, race, income, education is US Census (2024), for employment BLS (2024), and for share Democrat Center (2024). In parentheses, standard deviations for means and, in square brackets, p values for t-test on the differences in means between the used sample, incompletes, and population. Unfortunately, we lack information on those who started the survey but did not complete it.

Table A.6: Summary of IV coding

	Criteria	**Variable Coding**
Content	Nature of original remarks	severity: four dummy variables, one for each attribute level (slur, stereotype, dehumanizing language, denial of discrimination), with "no speech controversy" as the omitted category)
		target: 1 (0 otherwise) if the respondent is "congruent" with identity group of the target (same gender, race, religion, sexual orientation)
	Politician's response	response: three dummy variables, one for each attribute level (excuse, defense, apology), with "no comment" as the omitted category)
Situation	Context	context: number (0-3) of aggravating factors (remarks happened recently, words were planned, politician has made such a comment before)
	Politician's background traits	background: 1 (0 otherwise) if respondent has all "incongruent" traits with politician (race, gender, age, party ID)

Table A.7: AMCEs in main model, including covariates: coefficients, t statistic, and q-values

Variable	AMCE	t statistic	q-value
Denial	0.224	9.393	0.000
Stereotype	0.299	12.474	0.000
Dehumanizing	0.455	18.940	0.000
Slur	0.391	16.283	0.000
Congruence target-respond.	0.048	3.264	0.002
Defense	-0.022	-1.138	0.340
Apology	-0.073	-3.733	0.000
Excuse	-0.063	-3.206	0.003
Aggravating circumst.	0.032	5.163	0.000
Incongruence cand.-resp.	-0.004	-0.382	0.740
Women	0.065	6.683	0.000
Nonwhite	-0.007	-0.575	0.665
Age (cont.)	0.001	2.853	0.007
College grads.	-0.017	-1.685	0.141
Democrat (incl. leaners)	0.152	15.257	0.000
Region-South	0.021	1.514	0.186
Region-Midwest	0.006	0.390	0.740
Region-West	0.016	1.091	0.344
Income	0.000	0.327	0.743

DV Questions

- 1) If you had to make a choice without knowing more, would you ever consider voting for this candidate?
  - Yes, I MIGHT consider voting for this candidate.
  - No, I would NEVER consider voting for this candidate.
- 2) We would like to ask you to rate the candidate using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the candidate. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the candidate and that you don't care too much for the candidate. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the candidate."
  - 0-100
- 3) On a scale of 1 to 7, how objectionable do you think the candidate's behavior is in this case? (From 1 ("Not at all objectionable") to 7 ("The most objectionable I can imagine"))
  - 1-7

References

BLS. 2024. The employment situation - august 2024. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf.

Center, Pew Research. 2024. The partisanship and ideology of american voters - april 2024. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf.

Crabtree, Charles, Jae Yeon Kim, S Michael Gaddis, John B Holbein, Cameron Guage & William W Marx. 2023. Validated names for experimental studies on race and ethnicity. *Scientific Data* 10(1). 130.

US Census. 2024. Quick facts united states. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045222.