# Consent

**Consent for a Research Study**

**Study Title**: Perspectives on Media and Politics

**Principal Investigators:** Kaylyn Jackson Schiff, Purdue University and Yale University; Daniel S. Schiff, Purdue University; Natalia S. Bueno, Emory University

**Funding Sources:** Purdue University and Emory University

***Introduction and Study Overview***

Thank you for your interest in our research study on media and politics. This study is conducted in collaboration with Purdue University and Emory University.

We would like to tell you everything you need to think about before you decide whether or not to join the study. It is entirely your choice. If you decide to take part, you can change your mind later on and withdraw from the research study.

The purpose of this study is to learn about popular perspectives on media and politics. The study is funded by Purdue University and Emory University. This study will take about 3-5 minutes to complete.

If you join, you will be asked to read a story or watch a short video of a real event involving a politician, provide your reactions, and then answer a few demographic questions about yourself. As this study is an experiment, participants will view different versions of the politician statements and stories or videos. Some information may be withheld to avoid

biasing the results of the study. At the end, additional information about the purpose and goals of the study will be provided.

The risks due to participation in this study are minimum, no greater than everyday life, however you may find some of the information presented to be offensive, and you may stop at any time.

The benefits of participation are that you can share your opinions on media and politics, and you may also gain media literacy skills.

Study records can be opened by court order. They also may be provided in response to a subpoena or a request for the production of documents. Certain offices and people other than the researchers may look at study records. Government agencies and Purdue and Emory employees overseeing proper study conduct may look at your study records. At Emory, these offices include the Office for Human Research Protections, the Emory Institutional Review Board, and the Emory Office of Research Compliance. At Purdue, these offices include the Purdue Institutional Review Board and other departments at Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight. Study funders may also look at your study records. Purdue and Emory will keep any research records we create private to the extent we are required to do so by law. Your anonymous survey response records will be kept by the researchers at Purdue University and Emory University on password-protected computers and platforms for the duration of the study. We will not collect your name, and no facts that might point to you will appear when we present this study or publish its results.

We will disclose your information when required to do so by law in the case of reporting child abuse or elder abuse, in addition to subpoenas or court orders.

***Contact Information***

If you have questions about this study, your part in it, your rights as a research participant, or if you have questions, concerns, complaints about the research, or need to report an issue or adverse reaction, you may contact the following:

Kaylyn Jackson Schiff, Purdue University and Yale University: schiffk@purdue.edu

Daniel S. Schiff, Purdue University: dschiff@purdue.edu

Natalia S. Bueno, Emory University: natalia.bueno@emory.edu

Emory Institutional Review Board: 404-712-0720 or toll-free at 877-503-9797 or by email at irb@emory.edu

Purdue Human Research Protection Program: 765-494-5942 or by email at irb@purdue.edu

***Consent***

By checking the box below, you acknowledge the information above and consent to participate in the survey.

○ I acknowledge that I have read and consent to the information above

## Prolific ID

What is your Prolific ID?
*Please note that this response should auto-fill with the correct ID*

${e://Field/PROLIFIC_PID}

## Pre-Treatment

Before we proceed, we have a question about how you're feeling.

Recent research on decision making shows that choices are affected by context. Differences in how people feel, their

previous knowledge and experiment, and their environment can affect choices. To help us understand how people make decisions, we are interested in information about you. Specifically, we are interested in whether you actually take the time to read the directions: if not, some results may not tell us very much about decision making in the real world. To show that you have read the instructions, please ignore the question about how you are feeling and instead check only the “none of the above” option as your answer. Thank you very much.

Please check all words that describe how you are currently feeling.

- [ ] Interested
- [ ] Distressed
- [ ] Excited
- [ ] Upset
- [ ] Strong
- [ ] Guilty
- [ ] Scared
- [ ] Hostile
- [ ] Enthusiastic
- [ ] Proud
- [ ] Irritable
- [ ] Alert
- [ ] Ashamed
- [ ] Inspired
- [ ] Nervous

- [ ] Determined
- [ ] Attentive
- [ ] Jittery
- [ ] Active
- [ ] Afraid
- [ ] None of the above

Choose the group listed below that best captures what you consider yourself to be.

- ○ White
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ Hispanic or Latino/a
- ○ Asian
- ○ Other Race or Ethnicity

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ○ Less than high school degree
- ○ High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
- ○ Some college but no degree
- ○ Associate degree in college (2-year)
- ○ Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
- ○ Master's degree
- ○ Doctoral degree
- ○ Professional degree (JD, MD)

Now, we would like to get a sense of your general preferences.

Most modern theories of decision-making recognize that decisions do not take place in a vacuum. Individual preferences and knowledge, along with situational variables can greatly impact the decision process. To demonstrate that you read this much, just go ahead and select both red and green among the alternatives below, no matter what your favorite color is. Yes, ignore the question below and select both of those options.

What is your favorite color?

- [ ] White
- [ ] Black
- [ ] Red
- [ ] Pink
- [ ] Green
- [ ] Blue

**Todd-R-Video**

10

A news report has come out showing the following video clip of Republican politician Todd Akin.

Please watch the following video clip.

**Republican Todd Akin Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**

0:00 / 0:12

**Todd-R-Text**

10

A news report has come out with the following story excerpt about Republican politician Todd Akin.

Please read the excerpt below.

**Republican Todd Akin Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**

Moderator: What about in the case of rape? Should [abortion] be legal or not?

Akin: It seems to me first of all from what I understand from doctors, that's really rare. If it's a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down.

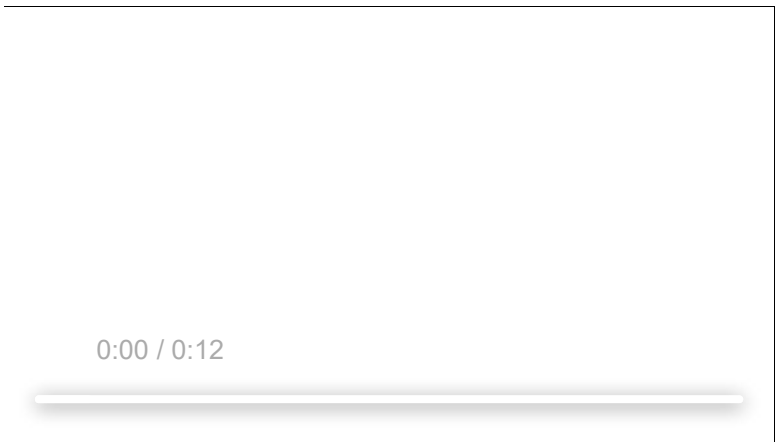
**Tim-R-Video**

10

A news report has come out showing the following video clip of Republican politician Tim James.

Please watch the following video clip.

**Republican Tim James Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**




**Tim-R-Text**

10

A news report has come out with the following story excerpt about Republican politician Tim James.

Please read the excerpt below.

**Republican Tim James Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**

Tim James said, "Politicians make us give driver's license exams in 12 languages. This is Alabama. We speak English. If you want to live here, learn it! We're only giving that test in English."

**Jesse-D-Video**

10

A news report has come out showing the following video clip of Democrat politician Jesse Jackson.

Please watch the following video clip.

**Democrat Jesse Jackson Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**

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0:00 / 0:09

**Jesse-D-Text**

10

A news report has come out with the following story excerpt about Democrat politician Jesse Jackson.

Please read the excerpt below.

**Democrat Jesse Jackson Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**

Jesse Jackson said, "See, Barack [Obama] been, um, talking down to black people on this faith based [initiative]... I wanna cut his n*ts off."

**John-D-Video**

10

A news report has come out showing the following video clip of Democrat politician John Murtha.

Please watch the following video clip.

## Democrat John Murtha Accused of Making Offensive Remarks

0:00 / 0:13

## John-D-Text

10

A news report has come out with the following story excerpt about Democrat politician John Murtha.

Please read the excerpt below.

**Democrat John Murtha Accused of Making Offensive Remarks**

John Murtha said, "There is no question that Western Pennsylvania is a racist area, and when I say racist area, I mean older people are hesitant. They are slow in seeing change, real change."

**IU_video**

10

Now, please read the politician's response to the news report carefully before moving on.

**${e://Field/politician} Responds That Story is False and Misleading, People Should Be Skeptical**

In response to the recent allegations, ${e://Field/politician_party} asserted that the story is false and misleading. He claimed that the video is a deepfake, a computer-edited video that uses fake audio and images.

When asked about the incident, he said that it's well known that there's a lot of misleading information, so people should be skeptical about what they hear.

${e://Field/last_name} stated that "You can't know what's true these days with so much misinformation out there."

**IU_text**

10

Now, please read the politician's response to the news report carefully before moving on.

## ${e://Field/politician} Responds That Story is False and Misleading, People Should Be Skeptical

In response to the recent allegations, ${e://Field/politician_party} asserted that the story is false and misleading. He claimed that the story is not based on true information.

When asked about the incident, he said that it's well known that there's a lot of misleading information, so people should be skeptical about what they hear.

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**OR_video**

Now, please read the politician's response to the news report carefully before moving on.

## ${e://Field/politician} Responds That Story is False and Misleading, Attack by Opponent

In response to the recent
allegations, ${e://Field/politician_party} asserted that the story is false and misleading. He claimed that the video is a deepfake, a computer-edited video that uses fake audio and images.

When asked about the incident, he said that the story is an attack by the opposition, and that people should not pay attention to it.

${e://Field/last_name} stated that "My opponent would say anything to hurt me, but my supporters know who's really on their side."

**OR_text**

Now, please read the politician's response to the news report carefully before moving on.

## ${e://Field/politician} Responds That Story is False and Misleading, Attack by Opponent

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When asked about the incident, he said that the story is an attack by the opposition, and that people should not pay attention to it.

${e://Field/last_name} stated that "My opponent would say anything to hurt me, but my supporters know who's really on their side."

## Outcome Questions

**Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:**

I **believe the story** about the politician.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree

- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

I think that the story about the politician **is true.**

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

**Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:**

I would **support the politician**.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

I would **defend the politician** against critics.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

I would **vote for the politician**.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

I would **donate to the politician**.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

**Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:**

I **trust the media**.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

I believe that the **media reports the news fairly**.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Don't know either way
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

## Media and Technological Literacy

Now we'd like to ask a few general questions about the media.

Which of the following news outlets does NOT primarily depend on advertising for financial support?

- Fox News
- PBS
- New York Times
- USA Today
- Don't know

Which of the following is typically responsible for writing a press release?

- A reporter for a news organization
- A producer for a news organization
- A lawyer for a news aggregator
- A spokesperson for an organization
- Don't know

How are most of the individual decisions about what news stories to show people on Facebook made?

- At random
- By computer analysis of what stories might interest you
- By editors and journalists that work for news outlets
- By editors and journalists that work for Facebook
- Don't know

Computer algorithms can now be used to create ultra-realistic fake video content. How much had you heard about this before today?

- ○ A great deal
- ○ A lot
- ○ A moderate amount
- ○ A little
- ○ None at all

## Demographics

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent?

- ○ Strong Democrat
- ○ Democrat
- ○ Lean Democrat
- ○ Independent
- ○ Lean Republican
- ○ Republican
- ○ Strong Republican

What is your current annual household income before taxes?

- ○ Less than $14,999
- ○ $15,000 to $19,999
- ○ $20,000 to $24,999
- ○ $25,000 to $29,999
- ○ $30,000 to $34,999
- ○ $35,000 to $39,999
- ○ $40,000 to $44,999
- ○ $45,000 to $49,999
- ○ $50,000 to $54,999
- ○ $55,000 to $59,999
- ○ $60,000 to $64,999
- ○ $65,000 to $69,999
- ○ $70,000 to $74,999
- ○ $75,000 to $79,999
- ○ $80,000 to $84,999
- ○ $85,000 to $89,999
- ○ $90,000 to $94,999
- ○ $95,000 to $99,999
- ○ $100,000 to $124,999
- ○ $125,000 to $149,999
- ○ $150,000 to $174,999
- ○ $175,000 to $199,999
- ○ $200,000 to $249,999
- ○ $250,000 and above
- ○ Prefer not to answer

In which region of the United States do you live?

- ○ Northeast
- ○ Midwest
- ○ South
- ○ West

**Debrief**

**Thank you for taking this survey.**

The information provided to you about the politician is part of a study on fake news and "deepfakes," or digitally altered video, and the impacts that they have on trust in politics and the media. While the video or story presented to you about the politician is real, the reply by the politician was created by a team of researchers and therefore does not represent an actual statement made by the politician.

To learn more about how to identify fake news stories and fake videos, see the following resources from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and the MIT Media Lab Detect DeepFakes Project:

https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/11174

https://www.media.mit.edu/projects/detect-fakes/overview

**Please read the information below, answer the question, and then proceed to the next page to be redirected back to Prolific.**

**RESEARCH PARTICIPANT POST-SESSION CONSENT FORM**

The Liar's Dividend: Can Politicians Use Misinformation to Evade Accountability?

Principal Investigators: Kaylyn Jackson Schiff, Purdue University and Yale University; Daniel S. Schiff, Purdue University; Natalia S. Bueno, Emory University

Department of Political Science

Purdue University

Thank you for participating in this study. This study involved deception. This means that we did not provide you with the complete description of the purpose of the study and some of the methods or instruments used had a different purpose than how we described them. Deception is used in research when knowledge of the purpose of the study or certain aspects of the study may bias participant responses. Deception involves either false information—a "cover story" -- or omission of certain information. The purpose of this form is to explain the true purpose of the study and/or provide information that had been omitted. You also will be asked permission to use the information we obtained from you during your participation.

You were told that a politician made an allegation of misinformation after a scandal when in fact they did not and instead apologized. Our research actually focuses on whether politicians can use misinformation to avoid accountability for scandals.

To try and obtain unbiased or natural reactions, we had to give you some false information at the beginning of the study. Again, we told you that a politician made an allegation of misinformation after a scandal when in reality they actually apologized. While the scandal we presented is real, the politician response was crafted by the research team.

This was necessary for us to better understand how the problem of increased misinformation may enable an environment in which politicians can avoid accountability for misdeeds by "crying wolf" about misinformation. When designing this study, we took care to minimize any possible risks or discomforts that might be related to the deception.

Now that you understand the true nature of our study, you have the chance to refuse the use of the data we collected from you for research purposes. You are free to ask us not to use your data in our study analysis. If you decline to let us use your data, you will still receive the compensation just as you would if we use your data in our analysis. This is entirely voluntary, but we hope to analyze as much data as possible to better understand the problem of misinformation.

Because this experiment is ongoing, we request that you not share the true nature and purpose of this experiment with others who might potentially participate in our study.

**Who can I contact if I have questions about the study?**

If you have questions, comments or concerns about this research project, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact:

Kaylyn Jackson Schiff, Purdue University and Yale University: schiffk@purdue.edu

Daniel S. Schiff, Purdue University: dschiff@purdue.edu

Natalia S. Bueno, Emory University: natalia.bueno@emory.edu

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study, have concerns about the treatment of research participants, or need to report an issue or adverse reaction, please call the Human Research Protection Program at (765) 494-5942, email (irb@purdue.edu) or write to:

Human Research Protection Program - Purdue University

Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032

155 S. Grant St.,

West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

You can also contact the Emory Institutional Review Board at 404-712-0720 or toll-free at 877-503-9797 or by email at irb@emory.edu.

**Documentation of Informed Consent**

I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study more fully explained, including the need for and use of deception.

- ○ Yes, I give my permission for the researchers to use my data
- ○ No, I do not give my permission for the researchers to use my data. Please discard the data you obtained from me.

Are you sure? This means that your data will not be used by the researchers.

- ○ I give my permission for the researchers to use my data
- ○ I do not give my permission for the researchers to use my data. Please discard the data you obtained from me.

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