Consent

Emory University

Consent for a Research Study

Study Title: Perspectives on Media and Politics

Principal Investigator: Kaylyn Jackson Schiff, Emory Department of Political Science

Funding Source: Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology

Introduction and Study Overview

Thank you for your interest in our research study on media and politics. 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 Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology. 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 that you may find some of the information presented to be offensive.

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 Emory employees overseeing proper study conduct may look at your study records. These offices include the Office for Human Research Protections, the Emory Institutional Review Board, and the Emory Office of Research Compliance. Study funders may also look at your study records. Emory will keep any research records we create private to the extent we are required to do so by law. A study number rather than your name will be used on study records wherever possible. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not 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 or complaints about the research you may contact the following:

Kaylyn Jackson Schiff, Principal Investigator: 404-727-6572

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

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-Text

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-Text

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-Text

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-Text

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_text

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

${e://Field/politician_1} Responds That Story is False and Misleading, People Should Be Skeptical

In response to the recent allegations, ${e://Field/politician_party_1} 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.

${e://Field/last_name_1} stated that "You can’t know what’s true these days with so much misinformation out there."

Fact Checking

A non-partisan fact-checking organization has weighed in on the story and the politician's response to it.

Please read the statement by the fact-checking organization carefully before moving on.

Fact Check:

${e://Field/politician_party_1} was recently accused of making offensive comments but disputes the truthfulness of the story.

We find evidence that ${e://Field/politician_party_1} did make the comments as originally reported.

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

I think that the **politician's remarks**, as reported in the news story, **were offensive**.

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

Extra IU Everyone

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following:

It's hard to know what's true these days.

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

Extra IU Treatment

I **believe the politician's response** that the news story is false.

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

To what extent did the **politician's response** that the story was false **affect your support for the politician**?

- ○ Strongly decreased my support
- ○ Decreased my support
- ○ Did not change my support
- ○ Increased my support
- ○ Strongly increased my support

I would **share the politician's response** with family and friends.

- ○ No - because I don't support it
- ○ No - although I support it
- ○ Yes - but not because I support it
- ○ Yes - because I support it

Extra FC Treatment

I **believe the fact-checking organization's statement** that the news story is true.

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

To what extent did the **fact-checking organization's statement** that the story was true **affect your support for the politician**?

- ○ Strongly decreased my support
- ○ Decreased my support
- ○ Did not change my support
- ○ Increased my support
- ○ Strongly increased my support

OR Introduction

Now, we are going to ask you about a **different news story**, regarding a **different politician**.

For the sake of comparison, the story is presented in a similar way.

Todd-R-Text 2

Another news report has come out, this time about Republican politician Todd Akin.

Please read an excerpt from the news story below.

Republican Todd Akin Criticized for Insensitive Comments

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.

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Please read an excerpt from the news story below.

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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."

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Another news report has come out, this time about Democrat politician Jesse Jackson.

Please read an excerpt from the news story below.

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John-D-Text 2

Another news report has come out, this time about Democrat politician John Murtha.

Please read an excerpt from the news story below.

Democrat John Murtha Criticized for Insensitive Comments

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."

OR_text

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

Claiming Attack by Opponent, ${e://Field/politician_2} Says Report is Fake

${e://Field/politician_party_2} claimed that the recent news story about him is not true, and is merely an attempt to mislead people.

${e://Field/last_name_2} said that "My opponent would say anything to hurt me, but my supporters know who's really on their side."

He added that the story is an attack by the opposition, and that people should not pay attention to it.

Outcome Questions for OR

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

I think that the **politician's remarks**, as reported in the news story, **were offensive**.

- ○ 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

Extra Covariates

How **concerned** are you, if at all, about **made-up news** and information?

- ○ Not at all concerned

- ○ Slightly concerned
- ○ Concerned
- ○ Very concerned

How **confident** are you in your own ability to **recognize news that is made up**?

- ○ Not at all confident
- ○ Slightly confident
- ○ Confident
- ○ Very confident

How big of a **problem** do you think "**cancel culture**" is in the U.S. today?

- ○ Not a problem
- ○ A minor problem
- ○ A problem
- ○ A major problem

Do you agree or disagree that **people should be more careful with language** to avoiding offending other people?

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

Which most closely matches your view? When a **public figure makes an offensive statement**, they should be:

- ○ Given a second chance
- ○ Held accountable

Exploratory Outcomes

How often can you **trust the government** to do what is right?

- ○ Almost none of the time
- ○ Some of the time
- ○ Most of the time
- ○ Almost always

How often can you **trust** the information you get from **political leaders and public officials**?

- ○ Almost none of the time
- ○ Some of the time
- ○ Most of the time
- ○ Almost always

How often can you **trust other people**?

- ○ Almost none of the time
- ○ Some of the time
- ○ Most of the time
- ○ Almost always

How often can you **trust ${e://Field/opp_party}**?

- ○ Almost none of the time
- ○ Some of the time
- ○ Most of the time
- ○ Almost always

Debrief

Thank you for taking this survey.

The information provided to you about the politician is part of a study on "fake news" and the impacts that it has on trust in politics and the media. While the 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, see the following resource from the International Federation of Library Associations:

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

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