Pre-Analysis Plan

Anand Edward Sokhey and Paul A. Djupe[1]

5-4-18

Title: The 2018 Pre-Midterm Study

Overview: We contracted with *Qualtrics* to administer a survey to a nation-wide sample of 1,500 adults (18+) in early May, 2018. The survey contains various demographic and political batteries, and several embedded survey experiments (described below). In the instrument, we asked individuals a variety of questions – these include, among other things – items on: gun policy, feelings towards opposing partisans, willingness to grant civil liberties to others, religious beliefs and behaviors, and interpersonal discussion networks.

Embedded Survey Experiments:

1) **Support for gun control.**

Motivation: Given the (ongoing) national conversation surrounding gun control (most recently reignited in the wake of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas shooting), we consider whether priming certain religious considerations can move individuals' responses to gun policy/control items.

Description/Manipulation: We variously prime short batteries of religion primes drawn from the literature before presenting respondents with 7 questions on support for gun control/policies (each of these have Likert oppose/support options). The religious primes ask respondents to report agreement (also a Likert scale) with a range of items: inclusive values, exclusive values, religious attendance, the presence of evil in the world, the prosperity gospel, and a control (what state do they live in).

Hypotheses: Being primed to think about religious values before gun policy will make responses to the gun policy items more extreme.

i. Religious liberals receiving the religious primes will respond with more anti-gun responses; religious conservatives receiving the religious primes will respond with more pro-gun responses.
ii. Positions on gun control will be conditioned by adoption of the primed concepts, presenting as more extreme for those who have internalized the religious element (this entails an interaction between priming and adoption of the concept).

[1] Anand Edward Sokhey is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado at Boulder (anand.sokhey@colroado.edu). Paul A. Djupe is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Denison University (djupe@colorado.edu).

2) **Partisan Tolerance and Social Priming**

Motivation: In an era of affective polarization, we question whether dynamics of political tolerance apply to partisan out-groups (vs. more typical disliked groups in society – e.g., "Communists"). We also question whether such dynamics are subject to our interpersonal networks – that is, if we think about our core networks, does that change how we see partisan outgroups and make tolerance judgments?

Description/Manipulation: We vary the placement of three sets of items: 1) feeling thermometers towards groups/individuals (FT), 2) a brief network battery asking individuals to report on up to 3 people with whom they have political conversations (Network), and 3) a series of questions asking individuals if their partisan out-group (Republicans for self-identified Democrats; Democrats for self-identified Republicans; randomly assigned between these two for self-identified Independents) is threatening, and should be allowed to engage in certain activities in their community. This battery also includes a "sober-second thought" component (e.g., Gibson 1998; Peffley et al. 2001) to get at the pliability of attitudes towards groups (SST).

We randomize the placement of these three sets of items, to create three conditions (to which respondents are randomly assigned):

- FTs → SST → Network
- FTs → Network → SST
- Network → FTs → SST

Hypotheses: We suspect that the ordering of these sets of items should matter.

i. Sober-second thought results: Democrats/Republicans should become more supportive of extending the outgroup rights/liberties when they are forced to think about their in-group being in the same circumstance; they should become less supportive of extending the outgroup rights/liberties when they are forced to think about the costs of doing so.

ii. These dynamics should be conditioned by whether respondents are forced to first think about their interpersonal networks, and more specifically, by the composition of those networks.
    a. Individuals in homogeneous networks who are asked to think about their networks before getting the partisan tolerance items (FTs and SST items) should be less supportive of extending rights to the outgroup, and more resistant to persuasion from the sober-second thought scenarios.
    b. Individuals in heterogeneous networks who are asked to think about their networks before getting the partisan tolerance items (FTs and SST items) should be more supportive of extending rights to the outgroup, and less resistant to persuasion from the sober-second thought scenarios.

References

Gibson, James. 1998. "A Sober Second Thought: An Experiment in Persuading Russians to Tolerate." *American Journal of Political Science*. 42(3): 819-850.

Peffley, Mark, Pia Knigge and Jon Hurwitz. 2001. "A Multiple Values Model of Political Tolerance." *Political Research Quarterly*. 54(2): 379-406.