Projected Winning and Losing and Affective Polarization:

A Survey Experiment

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Abstract The increasing salience of electoral competition leads to higher levels of affective polarization. However, the reason for partisans' increased affective polarization during elections is still unclear based on existing studies. Focusing on the nature of elections, winning and losing, I argue that partisans' perceptions of their favored party's electoral chances during campaigns (i.e., whether their party's status is reassured or threatened in an electoral context) impact their degrees of affective polarization and induce different emotions toward general politics. By conducting a survey experiment at UC Davis, I find that partisans who received a losing message suggesting that their party's candidate is losing to the opposing party during campaigns become significantly more affectively polarized than those who received a pure election message, whereas those who received winning and tie messages do not. Partisans who received messages implying that their party's candidate is more likely to lose the election or is in a 50-50 tie with the opposing party's counterpart both only increase their favorability toward the in-party but do not have discernible effects on the change in feelings toward the out-party. I also find that both losing and tie messages induce partisans to have more negative emotions toward general politics. These findings suggest that the change in affective polarization in these two groups is more driven by one's in-party love rather than out-party hate, and that this increase in in-party favorability is not associated with positive but with negative emotions toward general politics.

Keywords: winning and losing, affective polarization, in-party love, out-party hate, survey experiment

1. Introduction

Affective polarization refers to the increasing impact of partisanship on interpersonal or intergroup affect evaluations (Gidron et al., 2020; Iyengar et al., 2019). Studies have shown that, in both the U.S. and comparative contexts, political campaigns and the salience of elections have a great influence on the change of inter-party animosity (Bassan-Nygate & Weiss, 2022; Hernandez et al., 2021; Sood & Iyengar, 2016). When elections are more salient, the level of affective polarization will be higher since voters are exposed to more visible party platforms, political conversation, and conflict during campaigns, thereby activating their partisan identities (Bassan-Nygate & Weiss, 2022; Hernandez et al., 2021; Sood & Iyengar, 2016). As Hernandez et al. (2021) note, these findings imply that "the very institution that lies at the core of liberal democracy (competitive free elections) becomes also a source of strain for democratic politics by promoting affective polarization (2)." However, the causal mechanism of why a partisan's affective polarization would increase during election campaigns is still unclear in existing studies. What features of elections would trigger a more strengthened partisan attachment that would, therefore, augment the difference between a partisan's favorability toward the own party and animosity toward the out-party? How exactly do individuals' partisan identities get activated during elections? Does electoral competition activate partisan identities by inducing people to favor or dislike their own party more? Answering these questions can help us better understand more about the nature of affective polarization and why it is inherent to democratic systems.

In this paper, I argue that partisans' perceptions of their favored party's electoral chances during campaigns (i.e., whether their party's status is reassured or threatened in an electoral context), operationalized as the marginal difference in projected vote share between one's in-party and out-party in my experiment, are an influential factor that causes an individual's change

in the degree of affective polarization. To be more specific, partisans' perceived chances of winning and losing an election derived from campaigns may alter their attitudes toward the in-party and the out-party. In addition to investigating the effect of partisans' perceived chances of winning and losing on their level of affective polarization, this paper also explores how anticipated electoral victory and defect impact partisans' emotions toward general politics. In order to test the mechanism, I conducted a survey experiment in November 2022 using undergraduate students at UC Davis. In the experiment, participants were randomly assigned to read vignettes that mentioned different electoral contexts of a hypothetical election: one party's candidate is substantially ahead over (i.e., winning), behind (i.e., losing), or in tie with the counterpart from the opposing party in an election poll. The control group read a vignette that only mentioned the election taking place without any additional poll information.

With this experimental design, I find that partisans who received a losing message suggesting that their party's candidate is losing to the opposing party during campaigns become significantly more affectively polarized than those who received a pure election message, whereas those who received winning and tie messages do not. Partisans who received messages implying that their party's candidate is more likely to lose the election or is in a 50-50 tie with the opposing party's counterpart both only increase their favorability toward the in-party but do not have discernible effects on the change in feelings toward the out-party. I also find that both losing and tie messages induce partisans to have more negative emotions toward general politics. These findings suggest that the change in affective polarization in these two groups is more driven by one's in-party love rather than out-party hate, and that this increase in in-party favorability is not associated with positive but with negative emotions toward general politics.

This article proceeds as follows: First, I review existing literature on the effects of election salience on affective polarization and the winner-loser gap on citizens' attitudes toward democracy. Based on this literature review, I develop hypotheses on how voters' expectations of electoral outcomes affect their emotions and feelings toward general politics and parties. Next, I explain the design and results of my survey experiment. Finally, I discuss the implications of the findings and the limitations of this study.

2. Literature Review & Theory

2.1 Election Salience and Affective Polarization

In democracies, elections, particularly national ones, are a major focus of political competition and are high salient political events for voters.[1] Individuals become more polarized before and after elections. Studies have found that they perceive ideological distances between parties as more extreme and their attachment to a preferred political party becomes stronger during election campaigns (Hansen & Kosiara-Pedersen, 2017; Hernandez et al., 2021; Singh & Thornton 2019; Ward & Tavits, 2019). In the U.S. context, Sood & Iyengar's (2016) analysis shows that the difference between in-party and out-party candidate favorability ratings increases dramatically between the start of the campaign and election day. In the comparative context, using seven rounds of the Israeli National Election Study (INES), Bassan-Nygate & Weiss (2022) find that "the salience of electoral competition, measured as temporal proximity to the

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[1] I acknowledge that not all types of elections share the same level of election salience. For instance, in the U.S., presidential elections are typically more salient than midterm elections, with a turnout difference between the two types of elections of approximately 10%-15%. However, turnout has surged during the 2018 and 2022 midterm elections when 49 and 47 percent of eligible voters cast a ballot for the highest office in their state, respectively, as compared to only 41 and 36 percent during 2010 and 2014 midterm elections (McDonald, 2023). The Census Bureau reported that the 2018 midterm election had the highest recorded turnout since the bureau started keeping records in 1978, using a slightly different measure (Misra, 2019). These statistics all suggest that midterm elections in the U.S. have become more salient in recent years.

election date, increases general affective partisan polarization by over a 10th of a standard deviation" (22). While Bassan-Nygate & Weiss (2022) argue that this effect is likely driven by three potential mechanisms: information, engagement, and turnout, their analysis only provides indirect evidence that polarization is partly driven by citizens' increased intention to participate in politics. There is no evidence to support the claim that electoral competition induces higher levels of affective polarization through increased political information or engagement.

By analyzing data from Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) survey in 42 countries, Hernandez et al. (2021) also find similar evidence of affective polarization. They systematically discover that the change in individual-level affective polarization is influenced by the elapsed time since the last election: voters' affective polarization is greater immediately after an election, but less so as elections lose salience. They also substantiate that election salience exacerbates voters' interpersonal affect by strengthening attachment to their supported party and by increasing perceived ideological polarization between parties (Hernandez et al., 2021: 7). In addition, their complimentary analysis suggests that such change in individual-level affective polarization is due to both a decline in enthusiasm for voters' most liked party and an improvement in evaluations of their least liked party (Hernandez et al., 2021: 6).

Existing studies have demonstrated that affective polarization is "a byproduct of the electoral dynamics that are inherent to democracies (Hernandez et al., 2021: 1)," but they have not explored of why and how exactly electoral competition activates partisans' identities, thereby influencing the change in affective polarization (i.e., why do they like their own party more and dislike opposing parties more during elections). In this paper, I explore the impact of projected winning and losing – the most salient feature of any election – on affective polarization to provide one aspect of the causal mechanisms linking election salience and affective polarization.

2.2 Election Outcomes, Emotions, and Affective Polarization

Existing research has provided compelling evidence that election outcomes can affect citizens' perceptions of their democracy. Democracy is meant to provide equal opportunities in the political environment. However, it does not mean that everyone gets an equal response after the election, for elections produce winners and losers (i.e., political majority and minority). This inequality can cause those in the political minority to perceive the political process as unfair and political institutions as unreliable and untrustworthy (Anderson & LoTempio, 2002; Anderson & Mendes, 2005; Curini et al., 2012). In contrast, voters who support the winning party are generally more satisfied with the election outcome since their voice is more likely to be fully represented by the incoming government. The experience of being in the majority (winner) or minority (loser) has a profound influence on voters' attitudes toward the political system. Previous studies have shown that winners have higher levels of satisfaction and trust in democracy and more positive feelings about government responsiveness and political efficacy than losers (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Anderson et al., 2005; Clarke & Acock, 1989). Scholars emphasize that losers are "the crucial veto players of democratic governance" (Anderson et al., 2005: 7). Those who experience electoral defeat and thus harbor more unsatisfaction with democracy are more inclined to violence and more likely to engage in political protests than those who do not (Kalmoe & Mason, 2022), indicating that "the legitimacy and stability of political systems are more likely to be challenged by those in the minority than those in the majority" (Anderson & Mendes, 2005: 93-94). The attack on the United States Capitol in January 2021 exemplifies how electoral loss can dramatically impact the attitudes of voters who supported the losing party.

In addition to the effect of actual election outcomes on citizens' attitudes toward democracy, their "expectation of election victory and defeat" can also induce different action-oriented emotions.[2] Partisanship is one of the important social identities (Bankert et al., 2017; Dias & Lelkes, 2022; Mason, 2015; Huddy et al., 2015). Scholars have shown convincing evidence substantiating that party identification is largely expressive rather than instrumental in nature (Huddy et al., 2015): "partisanship is not merely a 'running tally' of policy preferences and past political experiences, but a visceral attachment to the political parties as social groups" (Dias & Lelkes, 2022: 2).[3] As social identity theory suggested, once individuals identify themselves with a group (in here, a political party), they "are motivated to protect and advance the party's status and electoral dominance as a way to maintain their [group's] positive distinctiveness" (Huddy et al., 2015: 3). Through their survey experiments on partisan reassurance and threat, Huddy et al. (2015) highlight the potency of partisan identity in generating action-oriented emotions, anger and enthusiasm, that drive citizens' involvement in campaign activity. Partisans were randomly assigned to read a fictitious blog post where a member of either their own party or the opposing party states their party would win or lose the upcoming election. The blog posts were designed to delineate electoral victory as a reassurance of the party's national status, and electoral defeat as a threat to that status. Those who received a reassuring message, portraying their party as the likely winner, responded with greater anger while reading it, while those who received a threatening message, portraying their party as the

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[2] The role of emotions in political engagement is crucial as they are closely linked to action. Anger and positive emotions are considered approach emotions that are more likely to prompt action (Huddy et al., 2015; Lerner et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2007). Anger is a motivating force for political interest and protest activity, while positive enthusiasm is linked to political engagement.

[3] For example, Dias & Lelkes (2022) replicated one of Orr & Huber's (2020) survey experiments but revised the design by dissociating partisan branding from policy disagreement. They found that the impact of partisanship on affective polarization is primarily determined by partisan identity, while policy preferences influence interpersonal affect by signaling partisan identity.

likely loser, responded with greater enthusiasm. These emotional responses were particularly strong among strongly identified partisans, as compared to those with weaker partisanship (Huddy et al., 2015). Moreover, Huddy et al. (2015) also find that threats and reassurances regarding the party's status are more effective than the prospect of losing or winning on key policy issues in inducing anger and enthusiasm among partisans.

Building on Huddy et al.'s (2015) theory and findings, this paper investigates whether manipulating partisan reassurance and threat during campaigns not only induces partisans' action-oriented emotions toward general politics but also increases their favorability and animosity toward their own party and the out-party. Dias & Lelkes (2022), in their revised version of Orr & Huber's (2020) experimental design, demonstrate that the impact of partisanship on affective polarization is primarily determined by partisan identity. Thus, I expect that partisans' evaluations of their favored party and the opposing party should also respond to reassuring and threatening messages about their party's status in electoral context. However, rather than manipulating partisan reassurance and threat through fictitious electoral victory and defeat claims from in-group or out-group members as in Huddy et al.'s (2015) experiment, this study focuses on participants' perceived reassurance and threat to their party status based on their party's electoral performance during campaigns. By focusing on the nature of elections, winning and losing, this approach allows for a more direct examination of why affective polarization is inherent in democratic systems. Specifically, I explore the impact of partisans' perceived reassurance, slight threat, and significant threat (i.e., their own party is winning over, in tie with, and losing to the opposing party) to their party status during campaigns on partisans' emotions toward general politics, their feelings toward their own party and the out-party, and their levels of affective polarization. It is worth noting that this study focuses solely on the effects of

perceived winning and losing during the campaign period, which is hardly assessed using observational data, and not on actual eventual election wins and losses, which may have different effects on affective polarization.

3. Hypotheses

As discussed earlier, this paper argues that the reassurance or threat to the status of partisans' preferred party in an electoral context influences their evaluations of the in-party and out-party. In this study, reassurance or threat to partisans' ingroup status is operationalized as the marginal difference in projected vote share between their in-party and out-party under three conditions. The first condition is when a partisan's preferred party is leading the competing party during campaigns by a 14-point margin, indicating a projected win. This condition signals to partisans that their party's status is more reassured in the electoral context. The second condition is the opposite of the first, where a partisan's preferred party is behind the competing party by a 14-point margin, suggesting a projected loss. This condition signals to partisans that their party's status is more threatened. In addition, this paper examines whether different levels of threat to a partisan's ingroup status result in distinct levels of change in their emotions toward general politics and affective polarization.[4] To test this, the third condition is designed such that a partisan's preferred party and the opposing party are tied at 50-50 during campaigns, implying a highly unpredictable election outcome. While this condition does not provide a clear projection of winning or losing, it still conveys the message that a partisan's preferred party may lose the election. The difference between the projected loss and the tie conditions is that a partisan's

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[4] Huddy et al. (2015) conducted a survey experiment on partisan reassurance and threat, but did not specify different levels of reassurance or threat when examining the effects on subjects' emotions. To build on their work, my survey experiment takes a step further to test for such differences.

preferred party in the latter condition should have a lower probability of losing the election than in the former condition. Theoretically, this suggests that a partisan's preferred party's status is less threatened in the projected loss condition than in the tie condition.[5] The following paragraphs elaborate how each electoral condition impact partisans' evaluations on their own party and the out-party, as compared to the control condition. The control condition does not provide any information to partisans regarding how well their own party is doing relative to the out-party during campaigns.

When partisans receive information suggesting that their preferred party is leading the competing party during campaigns, with the projection of winning, they will feel proud of being a member of the party and feel reassured as their party's status is perceived to be secure, thereby harboring more positive emotions toward general politics (Huddy et al., 2015). This perceived enhanced ingroup status is expected to result in a stronger favorability for their own party. With regard to partisans' evaluations of the out-party, since the status of their preferred party is reassured and there is no significant perceived threat from the out-party, partisans who receive the winning message are likely to exhibit a slightly decreased dislike of the out-party (i.e., they will express a slightly more positive evaluation of the out-party). In summary, I expect that their evaluations of both the in-party and out-party will be positively affected by receiving information of a projected win for their preferred party.

On the other hand, when partisans receive information indicating that their preferred party is behind or in a 50-50 tie with the competing party, with the projection of losing in varying degrees of certainty, they will feel more threatened as their party's status in the electoral context is deemed unsafe. As a result, they may react with significantly greater negative

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[5] Please see section 4 for a more detailed discussion of the experimental design.

emotions towards general politics (Huddy et al., 2015). Furthermore, this perceived threat from the opposing party will trigger partisans' hostility towards the out-party as they feel deprived of a reward from winning the election (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). At the same time, this situation may also induce them to favor their preferred party more, as the social identity theory suggests that individuals are motivated to protect and advance the party's status to preserve their party's positive distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Partisans may like their own party more as a psychological defense mechanism to maintain the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup, despite the unfavorable electoral projection. While partisans' emotions towards general politics and evaluations of the in-party and out-party are expected to be affected similarly in the projected loss and tie conditions, the effect size should be different. The perceived threat to the status of partisans' favored party in the projected loss condition should be theoretically greater than in the tie condition. Thus, I expect partisans in the projected loss condition will exhibit stronger negative emotions, favor their own party more, and dislike the opposing party more than those in the tie condition.

Finally, since both the projected loss and tie conditions increase partisans' liking of their own party and dislike of the opposing party simultaneously, the overall change in affective polarization in these two conditions should be greater than in the projected win condition, where partisans' evaluations of the in-party and out-party are expected to move in the same direction. The hypotheses of this paper are as follows:

> **H1 (emotions):** *Partisans in the projected win condition will harbor more positive emotions towards general politics compared to those in the control condition, whereas partisans in both the projected loss and tie conditions will harbor more negative*

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emotions. Additionally, partisans in the projected loss condition will harbor even more

negative emotions than those in the tie condition.

H2a (in-party liking): Partisans in the projected win, loss, and tie conditions will like

their preferred party more compared to those in the control condition. Additionally,

partisans in the projected loss condition will like their preferred party even more than

those in the tie condition.

H2b (out-party liking): Partisans in the projected win condition will like the opposing

party slightly more compared to those in the control condition, whereas partisans in both

the projected loss and tie conditions will dislike the opposing party more. Additionally,

partisans in the projected loss condition will dislike the opposing party even more than

those in the tie condition.

H3 (affective polarization): Partisans in the projected loss and tie conditions will have

higher levels of affective polarization than those in the projected win and control

conditions.

4. Data and Empirical Strategy

4.1 Experiment Design

To test the causal effect of partisans' perceptions of their favored party's status in an

electoral context on their levels of affective polarization, I conducted a survey experiment from

November 22 to December 09, 2022, using undergraduate students at the University of

California, Davis. The sample size included 396 valid responses, consisting of 357 Democrats

(90%) and 39 Republicans (10%). Before the randomization procedure, all participants answered basic demographic questions, such as gender, race, age, income, social economic status, and partisanship.[6] Participants were then randomly assigned to one of four groups: three treatment groups (winning, losing, and tie message groups) and one control group (pure election message group). The sample size for each group was 84 (winning), 103 (losing), 93 (tie), and 116 (control).

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We now would like you to read the below passage about American politics carefully and answer the following questions.

[Treatment Group 1: Republican Winning/Democratic Losing]
An election is taking place in your state within three weeks. There are two candidates running against each other in the election: one is from the Democratic Party and the other one is from the Republican Party. A recent poll shows the Republican candidate with a 14-point lead over the Democratic candidate, 57 percent to 43 percent.

[Treatment Group 2: Democratic Winning/Republican Losing]
An election is taking place in your state within three weeks. There are two candidates running against each other in the election: one is from the Democratic Party and the other one is from the Republican Party. A recent poll shows the Democratic candidate with a 14-point lead over the Republican candidate, 57 percent to 43 percent.

[Treatment Group 3: Close Election]
An election is taking place in your state within three weeks. There are two candidates running against each other in the election: one is from the Democratic Party and the other one is from the Republican Party. A recent poll shows the Republican candidate and the Democratic candidate are in a 50-50 tie.

[Control Group]
An election is taking place in your state within three weeks. There are two candidates running against each other in the election: one is from the Democratic Party and the other one is from the Republican Party.

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Figure 1: Vignettes for Treatment and Control Groups

As discussed in the hypotheses section, this study operationalizes the reassurance or threat to partisans' preferred party status in an electoral context through three conditions. These conditions include: 1) one's preferred party leading the opposing party during campaigns by a

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[6] This paper aims to investigate how individuals' feelings towards their own party and the opposition party are affected by different perceptions of their party's electoral performance during campaigns. To achieve this, I specify conditions of projected win, loss, or tie by randomizing electoral scenario based on participants' self-identified partisanship. The sample excludes pure independents since it is challenging to determine their party affiliation and how they process the randomly assigned information.

14-point margin (winning); 2) one's preferred party behind the opposing party during campaigns by a 14-point margin (losing); and 3) one's preferred party in a 50-50 tie with the opposing party (tie).[7] The survey experiment operationalizes these three types of elections through fabricated poll statistics regarding a hypothetical election, as presented in Figure 1. In the winning and losing treatment groups, participants were assigned to read a short passage describing the Republican or Democratic candidate leading by a significant margin over their Democratic or Republican opponent in a hypothetical incoming election. For example, a self-identified Democrat received a winning message when reading that the Democratic candidate held a 14-point lead over the Republican candidate (i.e., treatment group 2 in Figure 1), while a self-identified Republican received a losing message when reading the same passage. All else being equal, the tie treatment group conveyed a message of a close election between the Republican and the Democratic candidate, suggesting a 50-50 tie. In the control group, participants were only assigned to read a short passage stating that an election is occurring without providing any election poll information.

It is important to note that the experimental subjects may not find the electoral scenarios presented in the treatment and control groups entirely credible, due to several reasons. First, this survey experiment was conducted shortly after the 2022 midterm elections, but the subjects were informed that there is an upcoming election taking place in their states, which may weaken the mundane realism of the treatment and control groups. Second, operationalizing partisans' perceptions of their favored party's electoral chances as a 14-point marginal difference in projected vote share in the winning and losing treatment groups may be somewhat unrealistic, given that recent U.S. elections have been very close. For instance, the average marginal vote

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[7] Section 4.3 provides a manipulation check analysis to ensure that participants understood the meaning of "a 14-point lead" and "behind" in the vignettes.

share difference between the top two runners in the U.S. presidential elections in the last two decades has been only 3.42 percentage points (McDonald, 2023), and winning by 5 percentage points is considered a landslide victory.

Here, I provide some justifications of why I designed my vignettes this way despite of acknowledging the above drawbacks. First, the survey experiment had to be conducted shortly after the 2022 midterm elections due to the subject pool collection procedure. Additionally, the subject pool was limited to overwhelmingly liberal UC Davis undergraduate students. To ensure that my treatments were strong enough to elicit emotional responses towards general politics and evaluations of in-party and out-party, I manipulated partisans' perceived electoral chances of their preferred party to be a 14-point marginal difference in projected vote share, rather than a more realistic difference, to reach experimental realism. One reason for this manipulation was that UC Davis undergraduate students may already be accustomed to the norm that the Democratic party usually wins elections, especially when they participated this experiment shortly after the midterm elections. A Democrat subject may not take a losing message treatment seriously enough if the Republican candidate only has a 5-point lead over the Democratic candidate in the vignette. Moreover, undergraduate students have not experienced many elections (the average age of my sample is only 20.87 years old with a standard deviation of 2.49 years old). A 5-point marginal vote share difference might not be significant enough for them to view it as a signal of their preferred party winning or losing to the opposing party.

Overall, the vignettes were designed this way to ensure strong treatments that would effectively elicit emotional responses and evaluations of in-party and out-party, given the limitations of the subject pool and timing of the survey experiment. Therefore, it is worth noting that the effects estimated in this study may be conservative, considering the lack of mundane

realism in this experimental design. In the next iteration of this paper, a revised version of the survey experiment will be conducted with a nationally representative subject pool at a time that is not immediately following a national election.

4.2 Measures of Outcome Variables

Affective Polarization. After reading the vignettes, participants were asked to rate how they feel about the Republican and Democratic parties. Interpersonal affect is operationalized in three ways: feeling thermometers, trait ratings, and trust ratings (Druckman & Levendusky, 2019). According to Druckman & Levendusky (2019), these three measurements are strongly related to each other, indicating that they are interchangeable when measuring an individual's degree of affective polarization. Therefore, I expect that different levels of uncertainty about election outcomes will have a similar effect on all three measurements of affective polarization.

The feeling thermometers measurement requires respondents to rate their feelings on a scale of 0 to 10 toward their own party and the out-party. Affective polarization (feeling thermometer) is defined as the difference between a partisan's positive feelings toward their own party and negative feelings toward the out-party. The trait rating measurement asks respondents to identify positive and negative traits of the in-party and out-party. The trait ratings consist of eight items and will be aggregated to create a net rating of positive minus negative traits.[8] Lastly, the trust rating measurement asks respondents to indicate how much they trust their own party and the out-party to do what is right for the country. Affective polarization of these two measurements (trait rating/trust rating) is defined as the difference between a partisan's in-party and out-party trait/trust score.

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[8] The positive traits include patriotism, intelligence, honesty, open-mindedness, and generosity; the negative traits include hypocrisy, selfishness, meanness (Druckman & Levendusky, 2019).

Emotions. Along with the affective polarization questions, participants were also asked to rate their general feelings about politics based on the vignette they had just read. This included rating their level of anger, hostility, and disgust (negative emotions), as well as their level of hope, pride, and enthusiasm (positive emotions), on a scale of 0 to 10. Table A1 presents descriptive statistics for all outcome variables.

4.3 Randomization and Manipulation Checks

Table 1 presents the balance statistics of covariates for both treatment and control groups. As shown in Table 1, there is no significant difference in the means of each covariate between the treatment and control groups. The p-values obtained from the ANOVA test, presented in the last column, are all greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05. This confirms that the randomization process for this survey experiment was successful. The results in Table 1 demonstrate that the treatment and control groups are comparable in terms of observable characteristics.

Table 1: Pre-treatment Covariates Balance Table

Covariates	Dem Winning/ Rep Losing	Rep Winning/ Dem Losing	Tie	Control group	ANOVA test p-value
Female	0.67	0.64	0.69	0.68	0.897
Social economic status level					
Lower class	0.06	0.10	0.11	0.06	0.491
Working class	0.18	0.16	0.19	0.22	0.716
Upper working class	0.12	0.08	0.08	0.05	0.382
Middle class	0.29	0.27	0.25	0.36	0.283
Upper middle class	0.35	0.33	0.31	0.29	0.873
Upper class	0.01	0.07	0.06	0.02	0.079
Ideology	5.55	5.76	5.74	5.59	0.590
Democrat	0.89	0.91	0.89	0.91	0.957
Observations	84	103	93	116	

Table 2: Manipulation Check

	Dependent Variables:	
	Republican candidate is more likely to win (1)	Democratic candidate is more likely to win (2)
Treatments (ref: control group)		
Rep Winning/Dem Losing	1.36*** (0.29)	-2.01*** (0.30)
Tie	0.38+ (0.27)	0.09 (0.32)
Dem Winning/Rep Losing	-1.02*** (0.30)	1.05** (0.34)
Intercept (Not at all likely | Not very likely)	-3.61*** (0.35)	-4.64*** (0.41)
Intercept (Not very likely | Fairly likely)	0.04 (0.18)	-1.58*** (0.22)
Intercept (Fairly likely | Very likely)	3.21*** (0.28)	2.38*** (0.26)
Observations	388	388
AIC	719.4257	639.6468

Note: + $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

To ensure that respondents received the intended treatment in the vignettes, two post-treatment questions were included in the survey, asking respondents to rate the likelihood of the Republican and Democratic candidates winning the hypothetical election mentioned in the vignette. Responses were measured on a scale from "not at all likely" to "very likely." An ordered logit model was employed, and the results in Table 2 provide evidence that all treatments significantly affected respondents' expectations of the election outcome. Model 1 shows that compared to the control group, receiving information that the Republican candidate was largely ahead of the Democratic candidate in polling significantly increased the odds of expecting the Republican candidate to win the election by approximately 290% (the odds ratio is 3.90). In contrast, receiving messages suggesting that the Democratic candidate was ahead significantly decreased the odds by 64%. Model 2 also supports these findings, indicating that those who received information that the Republican candidate was ahead expected the Democratic candidate to be less likely to win, while those who received the opposite treatment expected the Democratic candidate to be more likely to win. Both models also indicate that the tie message

treatment did not significantly affect how respondents expected the election outcome in comparison to the control group. This finding is consistent with expectations, as respondents given information suggesting that the election is highly competitive and difficult to predict based on polls should have similar perceptions to those in the control group, where polls information is not provided.

5. Results

In the results section, I will begin by presenting how partisans' perceptions of their party's chances of winning or losing during campaigns affect their emotions towards politics in general. Next, I will proceed to examine the extent to which such projections influence partisans' in-party liking, out-party liking, and overall levels of affective polarization. By doing so, we can explore how changes in feelings towards one's preferred party and the opposing party are associated with different emotions, thereby contributing to the broader scholarly discourse on affective polarization in contemporary politics.

5.1 Emotions

Figure 2 displays the mean emotion scores of both treatment and control groups. The initial analysis confirms the hypothesis that partisans' projections of their party's electoral chances significantly impact their emotional response to general politics (H1). First, the winning message group exhibited a more positive and less negative emotional disposition towards general politics compared to the control group. Partisans who received a message indicating that their supported party was likely to win the election experienced a significant decrease in feelings of anger, hostility, and disgust, by 1.21 ($p=0.0019$), 1.29 ($p=0.0012$), and 1.08 ($p=0.0066$) units

respectively, along with an increase in feelings of hopefulness and enthusiasm by 0.83

(p=0.0152) and 0.53 (p=0.0957) units respectively. Second, the losing message group reported

significantly more negative and less positive emotions towards general politics compared to the

control group. Participants who were informed that their party was likely to lose the election felt

more disgusted by 0.67 (p=0.0486) units and less hopeful, proud, and enthusiastic by 1.03

(p=0.0020), 1.42 (p=0.0000), and 1.41 (p=0.0000) units respectively. Lastly, the tie message

group showed a significant decrease in positive emotions towards general politics. Specifically,

these participants reported feeling less hopeful and proud about politics by 0.52 (p=0.0771) and
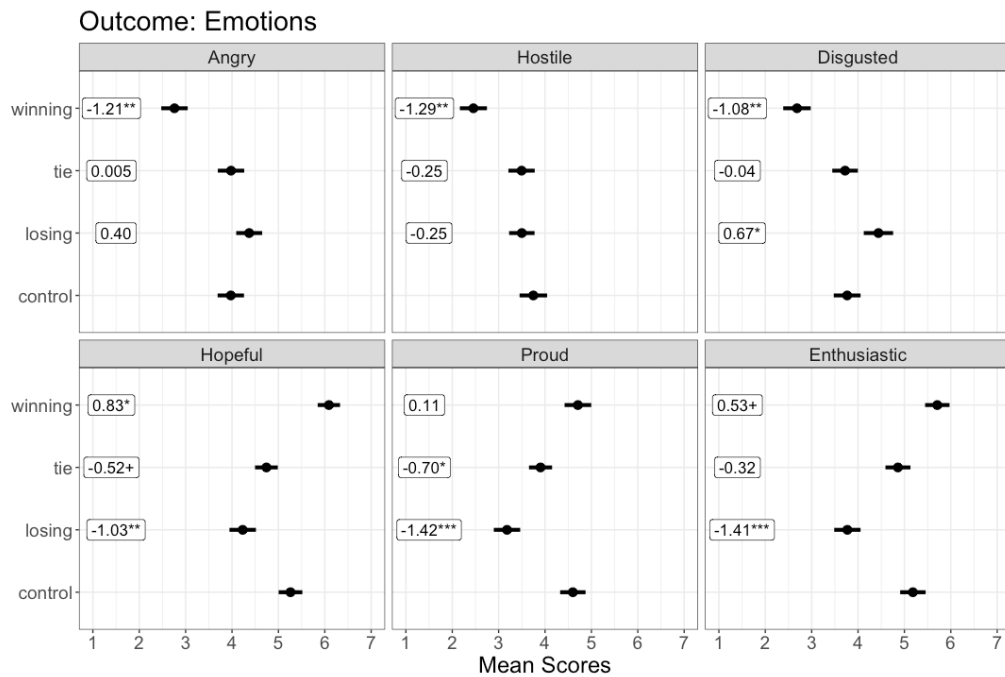
0.70 (p=0.0355) units respectively.

Figure 2: Mean Scores of Emotions by Treatment and Control Groups

Note: The coefficients of each treatment on partisans' emotion scores are presented on the left-hand side, and these were estimated using ordinary least squared linear models without control variables. For more detailed regression results, please refer to Table A3. [+] p<0.1; * p<0.05; **p<0.01; *** p<0.001. One-tailed test.

These findings correspond to those of Huddy et al. (2015) and demonstrate that when

partisans perceive their party to be winning, they feel reassured about their party's status in the

political landscape, leading to positive emotions towards general politics. Conversely, the

perception of their party losing generates negative emotions as they feel threatened by the opposition. My experiment further shows that the degree of the threat posed by the competing party influences the intensity of partisans' emotional response. As depicted in Figure 2, participants who received a losing message experienced even more negative emotions and less positive emotions than those in the tie message group. Partisans in the losing message group felt more disgusted by 0.72 (p=0.0467) units and less hopeful, proud, and enthusiastic by 0.51 (p=0.0868), 0.72 (p=0.0348), and 1.09 (p=0.0031) units, respectively. This suggests that the threat of electoral loss, as conveyed by the losing message, generates a greater sense of threat and insecurity in partisans compared to an uncertain election outcome as depicted in the tie message.

5.2 Affective Polarization

Figure 3 presents the mean feeling thermometer scores for each treatment and control group. Compared to the control group, the winning message group show a slight increase of 0.17 units in partisans' in-party like scores and a decrease of 0.30 units in their out-party like scores. However, as Table A2 shows, these changes caused by the winning message are not significant at any conventional levels. Furthermore, these changes in in- and out-party like scores do not contribute to an overall increase in affective polarization. The top panel in Figure 3 reveals no detectable difference in affective polarization between the winning message group and the control group. These findings remain consistent even after controlling for variables that may impact the effect. The results suggest that while projecting one's party's electoral victory may lead to positive emotions toward politics in general, it does not significantly affect one's favorability or hostility toward their own or out-party, let alone affect their level of affective

polarization. These findings do not support the hypotheses that partisans' reassurance of their party's status significantly affects their feelings toward the in- and out-party (as stated in the first part in H2a and H2b).
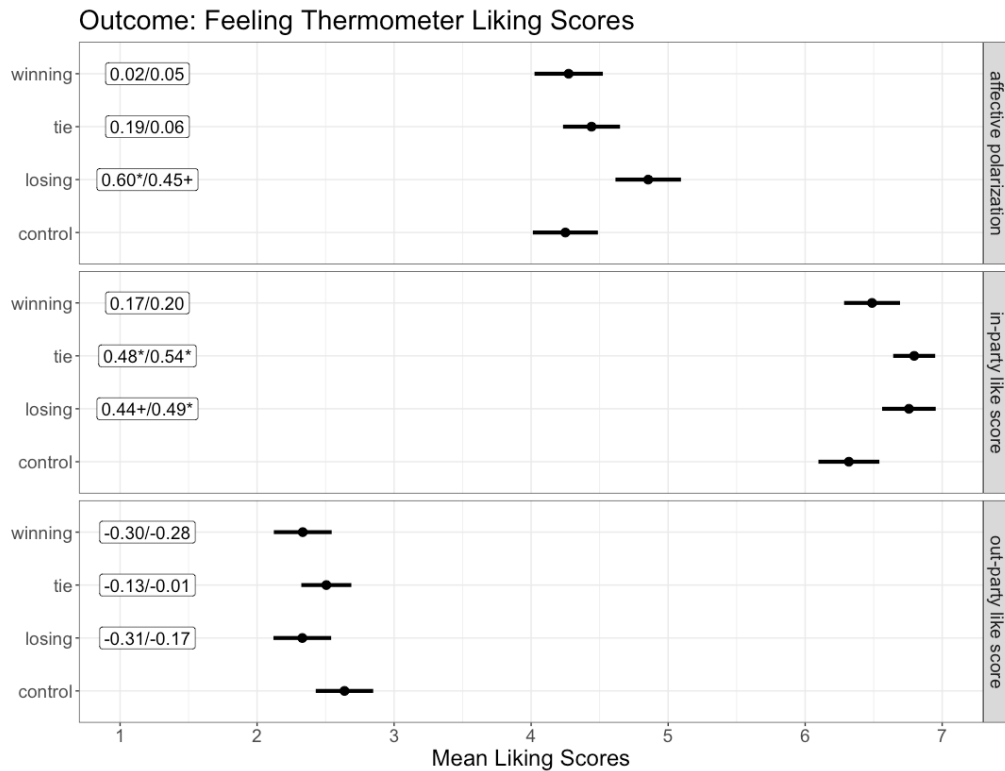

Figure 3: Mean Liking Scores by Treatment and Control Groups

Note: The coefficients of each treatment on partisans' affective polarization, in-party, and out-party like scores are displayed on the left-hand side. These coefficients were estimated using ordinary least squared linear models, both with and without control variables. For a more comprehensive overview of the regression results, please refer to Table A2. [+] p<0.1; * p<0.05; **p<0.01; *** p<0.001. One-tailed test.

I hypothesize that receiving messages during campaigns that suggest one's supported party's status is threatened by the opposing party will increase both their favorability and hostility toward their own party and the out-party (as outlined in the second part of H2a and H2b), thus augmenting their overall levels of affective polarization (as stated in H3). While the tie and losing message groups decrease partisans' out-party like scores by 0.31 and 0.13 units, respectively (by 0.17 and 0.01 units when control variables are taken into account), the effect is not statistically significant. However, as expected, both the tie and losing message groups

significantly increase partisans' in-party like scores by 0.44 and 0.48 units (by 0.49 and 0.54 units when control variables are taken into account), respectively. These changes represent about 22% and 24% of the standard deviation of this outcome variable. The opposite direction of changes in the evaluation of in- and out-party increases partisans' overall level of affective polarization in the tie and losing message groups by 0.60 and 0.19 units (by 0.45 and 0.06 units when control variables are taken into account), respectively, compared to the control group. However, only the effect of the perceived threat on affective polarization in the losing message group is statistically significant, not the tie message group.

In addition to comparing the in-party liking, out-party liking, and overall affective polarization of partisans in the losing and tie message groups to those in the control group, I also examine whether the effect size of the perceived threat to partisans' favored party's status from the opposing party during campaigns differs between the losing message group and the tie message group. The losing message group is designed to have a higher probability of the favored party losing the election than the tie message group. Compared to the tie message group, the losing message group decrease partisans' out-party liking by 0.18 units (0.17 units when controlling for other variables) and increased their overall level of affective polarization by 0.41 units (0.39 units when controlling for other variables), consistent with expectations. However, these effects are not statistically significant at any conventional levels.

Finally, I hypothesize that partisans' affective polarization levels should be higher in the losing and tie message groups than in the winning message group, as their evaluations of the in-party and out-party are expected to move in opposite directions in the former but in the same direction in the latter. Compared to the winning message group, partisans in the losing and tie message groups are more affectively polarized by 0.58 and 0.17 units, respectively (0.40 and

0.01 units when controlling for other variables). However, this difference is only statistically detectable in the losing message group, not the tie message group.

As the feeling thermometer, trust, and trait ratings are closely related, they can be used interchangeably to measure an individual's affective polarization (Druckman & Levendusky, 2019). To test if the treatment effects found in the feeling thermometer measure are also present in the trust and trait ratings measure, I conducted additional analyses, which are presented in Tables A4 and A5. In summary, I did not find similar treatment effects on trust and trait ratings. None of the three treatment groups had a significant impact on partisans' in- and out-party trust/trait ratings or their corresponding affective polarization changes.

In short, my analysis suggests that partisans' feelings toward their own party and the out-party are more influenced by their perceived threat to their favored party's status than by their perceived reassurance during campaigns. Specifically, partisans' perceived threat from the out-party during campaigns significantly increases their affective polarization, with the effect driven mostly by their increased favorability toward their own party rather than hostility toward the out-party. In contrast, perceived reassurance does not have a significant impact on partisans' liking of their own party or their dislike of the out-party. Furthermore, my findings show that partisans' feelings toward their own party and the out-party do not differ across varying levels of perceived threat from the opposing party. A summary table, Table 3, presents which hypotheses receive support from the analysis.

Table 3: Confirmation of Hypotheses

Hypotheses		Expectation	Results
H1 (emotions)	Partisans in the projected win condition will harbor more positive emotions towards general politics compared to those in the control condition.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected loss condition will harbor more negative emotions towards general politics compared to those in the control condition.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected tie condition will harbor more negative emotions towards general politics compared to those in the control condition.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected loss condition will harbor even more negative emotions towards general politics than those in the tie condition.	+	+
H2a (in-party liking)	Partisans in the projected win condition will like their preferred party more compared to those in the control condition.	+	0
	Partisans in the projected loss condition will like their preferred party more compared to those in the control condition.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected tie condition will like their preferred party more compared to those in the control condition.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected loss condition will like their preferred party even more than those in the tie condition.	+	0
H2b (out-party liking)	Partisans in the projected win condition will like the opposing party slightly more compared to those in the control condition.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected loss condition will dislike the opposing party more compared to those in the control condition.	−	0
	Partisans in the projected tie condition will dislike the opposing party more compared to those in the control condition.	−	0
	Partisans in the projected loss condition will dislike the opposing party even more than those in the tie condition.	−	0
H3 (affective polarization)	Partisans in the projected loss condition will have higher levels of affective polarization than those in the projected win and control conditions.	+	+
	Partisans in the projected tie condition will have higher levels of affective polarization than those in the projected win and control conditions.	+	0

Note: The last two columns of the table represent the expected direction from the hypotheses (positive, negative, or null) and the actual direction detected in the analysis. A positive sign indicates a positive effect as hypothesized, a negative sign indicates a negative effect as hypothesized, and a 0 indicates no significant effect.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

By conducting a survey experiment, I find that partisans' perceptions of their favored party's electoral chances during campaigns are one of the causal mechanisms behind the relationship between election salience and affective polarization. This helps us understand why elections, a core element of democratic systems, can be a source of affective polarization. Furthermore, my findings suggest that some degree of affective polarization is an inherent characteristic of democratic systems, much like the presence of ideological polarization (Hernandez et al., 2021). In summary, I find that receiving a winning message does not affect partisans' attitudes toward their own party or the out-party, but it does impact their emotional response to politics in general. On the other hand, receiving a tie or losing message significantly increases one's in-party like scores, but it has no strong effect on their evaluation of the out-party. This suggests that changes in affective polarization in these two groups are driven more by one's love for their in-party than their hate for the out-party. Additionally, the change in affective polarization observed in this survey experiment seems to be driven only by changes in in-party liking based on the feeling thermometer measure, not changes in trust or trait perceptions.[9] Finally, I find that only receiving losing messages during election campaigns noticeably increases partisans' affective polarization. Overall, my analysis indicates that the influence of perceived threats to a favored party's status is greater than that of reassurance conveyed during campaigns, in shaping partisans' feelings towards both their own party and the out-party.

Many studies have highlighted the potential consequences of affective polarization, including democratic backsliding or the violation of democratic norms (Iyengar et al., 2019; McCoy & Somer, 2019; Orrhan, 2022). However, there is limited empirical research on why

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[9] The findings remain consistent even when solely examining Democrats. For further information, please refer to Tables A6-8.

more affectively polarized voters are more prone to engage in such behavior than less polarized ones. This study helps fill this gap in the literature. The intergroup emotions theory emphasizes that group emotions can influence not only intragroup and intergroup attitudes but also different behavior tendencies (Lerner et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2007). For instance, psychologists have found that angry individuals are more likely to perceive less risk and be motivated to attack and confront members of the opposing group (Lerner et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2007). While this paper does not examine whether higher levels of affective polarization increase citizens' likelihood of undermining electoral accountability or violating democratic norms, it sheds light on how partisans' perceptions of their favored party's status during campaigns trigger their different emotions toward general politics and impact their feelings toward parties. Understanding the link between emotions and affective polarization triggered under different conditions of projected electoral chances (i.e., winning, losing, and tie) can help us explore under what conditions higher levels of affective polarization could have a pernicious effect on democratic systems. My survey experiment shows that the more citizens feel threatened by the competing group (i.e., losing to their opposing party), the more negative emotions they harbor toward general politics and the more affectively polarized they become. Furthermore, this increasing level of affective polarization is mainly driven by in-party favoritism as a psychological defense mechanism to preserve the positive distinctiveness of their party. As scholars have argued, ingroup favoritism may hinder interpersonal cooperation and act as a major catalyst for intergroup hostility, conflict, and violence (Balliet et al., 2014). Future studies should consider in-party favoritism when studying the consequences of affective polarization.

It is important to note that the survey experiment conducted for this study consists mainly of liberal undergraduate students who lacked past political participation in voting. Additionally,

the experiment was carried out shortly after the 2022 midterm elections, which may result in the effects uncovered in this study being conservative estimates. This may also explain the lack of significant findings when measuring affective polarization using trust and trait ratings. The subsequent version of this paper will address these limitations by conducting a modified survey experiment using a nationally representative subject pool at a time that is not immediately following a national election. Studying changes in affective polarization during an electoral event, including the campaign period, outcome, and post-election aftermath, is a significant research question that relates directly to the growing literature on affective polarization. However, this paper is constrained to investigating the impact of partisans' projections of their preferred party's electoral chances during campaigns at one particular time. Future studies should address questions regarding the duration of the effects observed in this study or whether the effects are similar across different election periods. For example, it would be interesting to investigate whether partisans respond differently to projected losses during campaigns compared to actual losses after elections, and whether the impact on affective polarization varies in these two scenarios.

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Appendix

Table A1: Descriptive Statistics of Outcome Variables

	min	mean	sd	max	n
In-party like scores	0	6.58	2.00	10	396
Out-party like scores	0	2.46	2.07	10	396
Affective polarization	0	4.46	2.38	10	396
Angry	0	3.83	2.89	10	387
Hostile	0	3.36	2.91	10	387
Disgusted	0	3.71	3.02	10	387
Hopeful	0	5.04	2.68	10	387
Proud	0	4.09	2.82	10	387
Enthusiastic	0	4.85	2.83	10	387

Table A2: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on their Emotions towards General Politics

	Dependent Variables:					
	Negative Emotions			Positive Emotions		
	Angry	**Hostile**	**Disgusted**	**Hopeful**	**Proud**	**Enthusiastic**
Treatments (ref: control group)						
Winning Message	-1.21^{**}	-1.29^{**}	-1.08^{**}	0.83^{*}	0.11	0.53^{+}
	(0.42)	(0.42)	(0.43)	(0.38)	(0.40)	(0.40)
Losing Message	0.40	-0.25	0.67^{*}	-1.03^{**}	-1.42^{***}	-1.41^{***}
	(0.39)	(0.39)	(0.41)	(0.36)	(0.38)	(0.38)
Tie Message	0.005	-0.25	-0.04	-0.52^{+}	-0.70^{*}	-0.32
	(0.40)	(0.40)	(0.41)	(0.36)	(0.38)	(0.38)
Constant	3.97***	3.75***	3.77***	5.26***	4.60***	5.18***
	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.28)	(0.24)	(0.26)	(0.26)
Observations	387	387	387	387	387	387
R2	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.06

Note: $^{+}$ $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A3: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on Affective Polarization (Feeling Thermometer Ratings)

	Dependent Variables:					
	Affective Polarization (3)		In-party Scores (2)		Out-party Scores (3)	
Treatments (ref: control group)						
Winning Message	0.02 (0.34)	0.05 (0.32)	0.17 (0.29)	0.20 (0.29)	-0.30 (0.30)	-0.28 (0.28)
Losing Message	0.60* (0.32)	0.45+ (0.30)	0.44+ (0.27)	0.49* (0.27)	-0.31 (0.28)	-0.17 (0.26)
Tie Message	0.19 (0.33)	0.06 (0.31)	0.48* (0.28)	0.54* (0.28)	-0.13 (0.29)	-0.01 (0.27)
Constant	4.25*** (0.22)	0.36 (0.66)	6.32*** (0.19)	5.79*** (0.60)	2.64*** (0.19)	5.88*** (0.57)
Control Variables	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Observations	396	396	396	396	396	396
R2	0.01	0.16	0.01	0.04	0.004	0.17

Note: The dependent variables are measured by the feeling thermometer questions in which respondents were asked to rate how much they like their own party and the out-party on a 0 to 10 scale. Affective polarization is defined as the absolute difference between a respondent's in-party and out-party like scores. For control variables, I include gender, social economic status, self-perceived ideology, and party ID. + $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A4: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on Affective Polarization (Trust Ratings)

	Dependent Variables:		
	Affective Polarization (1)	In-party Scores (2)	Out-party Scores (3)
Treatments (ref: control group)			
Winning Message	-0.01 (0.14)	-0.002 (0.12)	-0.03 (0.12)
Losing Message	-0.01 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.11)	-0.16+ (0.11)
Tie Message	0.02 (0.14)	-0.01 (0.11)	-0.10 (0.11)
Constant	1.50*** (0.09)	3.28*** (0.08)	1.91*** (0.08)
Observations	396	396	396
R2	0.0001	0.0003	0.01

Note: The dependent variables are measured by the trust rating questions in which respondents were asked to rate how much they can trust their own party and the out-party on a 1 to 5 scale. Affective polarization is defined as the absolute difference between a respondent's in-party and out-party trust scores. + $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A5: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on Affective Polarization (Trait Ratings)

	Dependent Variables:		
	Affective Polarization (1)	In-party Scores (2)	Out-party Scores (3)
Treatments (ref: control group)			
Winning Message	0.25 (1.05)	0.18 (0.85)	-0.19 (0.77)
Losing Message	-0.42 (0.99)	-0.57 (0.80)	0.10 (0.73)
Tie Message	0.13 (1.03)	-0.18 (0.83)	-0.38 (0.75)
Constant	10.16*** (0.68)	7.94*** (0.55)	-2.10*** (0.50)
Observations	324	324	324
R2	0.001	0.003	0.001

Note: The dependent variables are measured by the trait ratings questions in which respondents were asked to specify what positive and negative traits do they think that the in-party and out-party have. The trait ratings include eight items and will be aggregated to create a net rating of positive minus negative traits. Affective polarization is defined as the absolute difference between a respondent's in-party and out-party trait scores. $^+$ $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A6: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on Affective Polarization (Feeling Thermometer Ratings with only Democrats)

	Dependent Variables:		
	Affective Polarization (1)	In-party Scores (2)	Out-party Scores (3)
Treatments (ref: control group)			
Winning Message	0.20 (0.35)	0.46$^+$ (0.28)	-0.38 (0.30)
Losing Message	0.70* (0.33)	0.20 (0.29)	-0.35 (0.28)
Tie Message	0.27 (0.34)	0.41$^+$ (0.27)	-0.16 (0.29)
Constant	4.40*** (0.22)	6.41*** (0.19)	2.52*** (0.20)
Observations	357	357	357
R2	0.01	0.01	0.01

Note: The dependent variables are measured by the feeling thermometer questions in which respondents were asked to rate how much they like their own party and the out-party on a 0 to 10 scale. Affective polarization is defined as the absolute difference between a respondent's in-party and out-party like scores. $^+$ $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A7: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on Affective Polarization (Trust Ratings with only Democrats)

	Dependent Variables:		
	Affective Polarization (1)	In-party Scores (2)	Out-party Scores (3)
Treatments (ref: control group)			
Winning Message	0.07 (0.15)	0.02 (0.12)	-0.10 (0.12)
Losing Message	-0.001 (0.14)	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.17[+] (0.11)
Tie Message	0.03 (0.14)	0.003 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.11)
Constant	1.53*** (0.10)	3.29*** (0.08)	1.89*** (0.08)
Observations	357	357	357
R2	0.001	0.001	0.01

Note: The dependent variables are measured by the trust rating questions in which respondents were asked to rate how much they can trust their own party and the out-party on a 1 to 5 scale. Affective polarization is defined as the absolute difference between a respondent's in-party and out-party trust scores. [+] $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A8: The Effect of Partisans' Perceptions of their Party's Chances of Winning or Losing on Affective Polarization (Trait Ratings with only Democrats)

	Dependent Variables:		
	Affective Polarization (1)	In-party Scores (2)	Out-party Scores (3)
Treatments (ref: control group)			
Winning Message	0.25 (1.05)	0.18 (0.85)	-0.19 (0.77)
Losing Message	-0.42 (0.99)	-0.57 (0.80)	0.10 (0.73)
Tie Message	0.13 (1.03)	-0.18 (0.83)	-0.38 (0.75)
Constant	10.16*** (0.68)	7.94*** (0.55)	-2.10*** (0.50)
Observations	324	324	324
R2	0.001	0.003	0.001

Note: The dependent variables are measured by the trait ratings questions in which respondents were asked to specify what positive and negative traits do they think that the in-party and out-party have. The trait ratings include eight items and will be aggregated to create a net rating of positive minus negative traits. Affective polarization is defined as the absolute difference between a respondent's in-party and out-party trait scores. [+] $p<0.1$; * $p<0.05$; ** $p<0.01$; *** $p<0.001$. One-tailed test. Standard errors are in parentheses.