

Motivations and Misinformation:
Why People Retain Some Errors but Quickly Dismiss Others

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Abstract:

Attempts to correct political misperceptions often fail. The dominant theoretical explanation for this failure comes from research on motivated reasoning: people are motivated to dismiss corrections that are incongruent with existing beliefs. Yet, in many situations people must navigate multiple motivations when responding to new information. In this manuscript we consider the influence of two *competing* motivations—maintaining congruence and justifying a socially undesirable preference—on people’s responses to misinformation and corrections. Our empirical test is a national survey experiment that asks participants to reconcile two powerful sources of motivation: partisan and racial preferences. Consistent with our argument, participants high in racial prejudice dismiss corrections when the misperception is essential to justify voting against an African American candidate *of their own party*, but accept corrections about an otherwise identical candidate *of the opposing party*. Our results suggest a previously unidentified rationale for the persistence of misperceptions.

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Many citizens hold misperceptions about politically relevant facts.¹ Attempts to change these false beliefs by providing correct information often fail (e.g., Nyhan and Reifler 2010). Why do misperceptions persist, even in the face of corrections?² The dominant theoretical explanation for this persistence comes from research on motivated reasoning, or people’s tendency to accept information that is congruent with existing beliefs and to dismiss incongruent information (Kunda 1990, Taber and Lodge 2006). In the context of misinformation, this means that people are more (less) likely to accept corrections when the message is congruent (incongruent) with existing beliefs.

Although congruence is important, people’s responsiveness to new information is often the product of numerous, at times *competing*, motivations (Druckman 2012). For example, psychological research suggests that people create “mental event models,” or narratives that allow them to justify their own preferences and decisions (Johnson and Seifert 1994, Wilkes and Leatherbarrow 1988). These mental event models are particularly important when they justify a preference or decision that would otherwise seem controversial or socially undesirable. People construct these models using various pieces of information, and, importantly, they are generally aware when a given piece of information is pivotal to their model (Ecker et al. 2011). People are particularly reluctant to dismiss or drop these *pivotal* pieces of information, even when they are discredited (Ecker et al. 2011: 570). In short, the desire to preserve mental event models provides

¹ Following Nyhan and Reifler (2010: 305), we define misperceptions as “cases in which people’s beliefs about factual matters are not supported by clear evidence and expert opinion” (cf., Gaines et al. 2007). Throughout the paper, we use the terms “misperceptions” and “misinformation” interchangeably.

² We refer to communications that attempt to correct misperceptions as “corrective messages” or “corrections.”

another important motivation in responding to new information. This logic leads to our main argument: people will be *most* motivated to dismiss a correction (i.e., to retain misinformation) when the misinformation is pivotal to justifying an otherwise uncomfortable or socially undesirable preference.

There are many contexts in which a person may need to justify – even to themselves – a socially undesirable preference, but the particular case we focus on is an unwillingness to support a black candidate. Not only is race a critical factor in voter decision-making (Hutchings and Piston 2011, Piston 2010), but people are hesitant to appear in any way racially prejudiced (Sigelman et al. 1995). As a result, people actively search for justifications for voting against black candidates (Krupnikov et al., forthcoming; Kline and Stout, forthcoming).

Our argument is captured by the following example. Consider hypothetical Voter A, who does not want to vote for his party's candidate, Candidate A, because Candidate A is black. During an election campaign Voter A receives -- and believes -- some negative information (X) about Candidate A. X provides Voter A with a justification for opposing Candidate A. In particular, X allows Voter A to justify opposing Candidate A by providing a reason that has nothing to do with Candidate A's race, making X very useful for this voter (Krupnikov et al., forthcoming). Later in the campaign credible evidence emerges that X was false. Yet, since X was an important justification for opposing Candidate A, Voter A is motivated to dismiss the correction and retain the misinformation about Candidate A.

Now consider hypothetical Voter B. Voter B is of a different party than Candidate A. Voter B receives -- and believes -- the same negative information (X) about Candidate

A. Voter B also later receives a correction—the same correction that Voter A received—indicating that X is incorrect. Voter B also does not want to vote for Candidate A; however, Voter B’s justification for this decision rests on partisanship and, potentially, many other pieces of information (e.g., issue positions). In this case, Voter B may be responsive to the correction of X, as X is not a pivotal reason for opposing Candidate A. Indeed, since Candidate A is of a different party, Voter B needs no additional justification for opposing the candidate.

This example is not to suggest that people are unmotivated to retain negative information about opposing party candidates. Indeed, people will generally cling to information that reinforces the superiority of their political preferences. Moreover, this is also not to suggest that members of the black candidate’s own party should in *all cases* be more likely than members of the opposing party to retain misinformation. For instance, our argument does not imply that Democrats with negative racial attitudes should be more likely than Republicans with negative racial attitudes to cling to the idea that Barack Obama was not born in the United States. Indeed, in high information contexts (e.g., presidential elections), people typically have many informational options with which to justify opposing their own party’s candidate. Thus, in the case of Barack Obama, there are many different ways in which Democrats with negative racial attitudes could justify opposing him.

Rather, we suggest that there are conditions under which people may be somewhat *more* motivated to resist corrections of misinformation about members of their own party. In lower salience, non-presidential elections -- the types of elections which are more likely to include black candidates -- it can be more difficult to justify opposing a co-

partisan candidate, which means every negative piece of information about that candidate provides much-needed justification.

We test our argument using a national survey experiment that varies two of the most salient characteristics of political candidates: partisan affiliation and race (Krupnikov and Piston, forthcoming). Consistent with our expectations, we demonstrate that people are *most resistant* to messages that seek to correct misinformation that justifies an otherwise uncomfortable decision: voting against a black candidate *of their own party*.

The Experiment

Design

We asked our participants -- a nationally-representative sample of white adults (N=1,031) -- to read a news-brief about a politician.³ While the text and layout of the news-brief remained identical for all participants, we randomized the type of politician being described and whether a correction was presented.⁴ Participants were randomly assigned into one of 8 conditions: 4 (type of politician: same party black, same party

³ We used Survey Sampling International (SSI) to collect the data. SSI recruited a sample that matches the national population on key benchmarks. See Appendix Table A1 for sample demographics. The full N for our study is 1,031. Participants were randomly assigned to read no correction (N=384), an unattributed correction (N=383), or an attributed correction (N=264). The shift in attribution does not affect results. We present the results of the attributed correction in-text and the results of the unattributed correction in Appendix Table A3. Another approach is to merge the attributed and unattributed conditions, which also leads to the same results.

⁴ Randomization checks confirm that conditions were balanced on pre-treatment covariates (see Appendix Table A2).

white, other party black, other party white) x 2 (misinformation: uncorrected, corrected) (see Table 1).⁵

The misinformation concerned allegations that the legislator described in the news-brief used his position on a key committee to secure a tax loophole for a campaign donor, citing contribution records as evidence (see Appendix A for full text of all treatments).⁶ This information was designed to reflect negatively on the legislator. The corrective message cited state legislative records, which clearly showed that the legislator in question did not actually secure the loophole; in fact, a different member of the committee introduced the amendment and worked to secure its passage. The correction also indicated that the recipient of the tax break had not actually donated to the legislator’s campaign. The correction was attributed to “PolitiCheck,” a fictional group described as “a non-partisan fact-checking organization whose goal is to adjudicate factual disputes.”⁷ Race was cued using photographs, with both images and name pre-tested to rule out confounding effects.⁸ A full list of experimental conditions is displayed in Table 1.

⁵ We found no evidence of heterogeneous treatment effects by party (see Appendix Tables A3 and A4). Although significance levels change due to lower power in the split samples, the key pattern is apparent among both Democrats and Republicans.

⁶ Previous research indicates that scandals involving professional responsibilities are particularly deleterious (Doherty, Dowling, and Miller 2011); thus, our design constitutes a tough test for the effectiveness of corrections.

⁷ We exposed some participants (N=373) to an identical treatment but did not attribute it to PolitiCheck. Our results did not change (see Appendix Table A5).

⁸ Using a separate sample (N=293), we pre-tested the attractiveness of the candidates in the photos. We find no significant differences in ratings: the white candidate was rated 2.71 and the black candidate 2.70 on a 5-point attractiveness scale.

Table 1: Experimental Conditions

	Black Candidate, Same Party	White Candidate, Same Party	Black Candidate, Other Party	White Candidate, Other Party
No Correction	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Correction (“PolitiCheck”)	Group 5	Group 6	Group 7	Group 8

Measures

We next asked our participants a series of questions to measure the extent to which they viewed the politician from the news-brief favorably (see Appendix B for all questions). After collecting these variables, we gauged our participants’ racial attitudes using the standard racial stereotype battery, which consists of four questions. Following previous research, we use these variables to create a racial prejudice score by subtracting participants’ ratings of blacks from their ratings of whites (e.g., Kinder and Mendelberg 1995; Hutchings 2009; Piston 2010; Krupnikov and Piston 2015). We dichotomize the resulting scale at the median and refer to people who scored above the median prejudice level as having “negative racial attitudes” (Piston 2010).

Predictions

Given this design, we can expect that -- all things being equal -- individuals with negative racial attitudes will prefer the white politician to the black politician (Hutchings and Piston 2011). As a result, it is these participants with negative racial attitudes who will allow us to cleanly test for the strategic retention of misinformation.

People with negative racial attitudes certainly dislike black candidates (Ehrlinger et al. 2011; Highton 2004; Hutchings 2009; Lewis-Beck et al. 2010; Piston 2010; Redlawsk et al. 2010; Schaffner 2011; Tesler and Sears 2010); however, it is socially

undesirable to acknowledge that one would not vote for a candidate due solely to his or her race (Berinsky 2004). In particular, voting against a black candidate of *one's own party* may seem like a particularly obvious act of prejudice (Krupnikov and Piston 2015). Faced with a black candidate of their own party, negative (but not explicitly racial) misinformation about the black politician proves useful: it offers people with negative racial attitudes a convenient, non-racial explanation for their lack of support.

In contrast, a black politician of the opposing party presents a different context for people with negative racial attitudes. In this case, expressing opposition is expected on the basis of partisanship alone and thus unlikely to be seen as overtly racial. In this case, the misinformation is no longer pivotal, as party offers sufficient justification for opposing the black candidate. Thus, there is no additional motivation to retain misinformation, and corrections about a black candidate should prove effective, even for a person with negative racial attitudes.

In sum, our key prediction is that corrections should prove least effective for participants with negative racial attitudes when they are faced with a black candidate of *their own party*. In contrast, these same participants should be more responsive to a correction about a black candidate of the opposing party.

Results

Our estimand of interest is the difference between participants who saw a correction and participants who did not. Following previous scholars, we use a statistically significant shift as proxy for correction effectiveness, and lack of a significant difference as a proxy for ineffectiveness and the continued influence of misinformation (Fridkin et al. 2015). A significant, positive (negative) difference means

that views of the politician became more (less) favorable after reading the correction. The absence of group differences would suggest that favorability was the same pre- and post-correction. We consider each of these differences within candidate type. We analyze participants with negative racial attitudes separately from those with more positive or neutral racial attitudes, as it is these participants who offer the clearest test of our argument. We limit our in-text discussion to the favorability dependent variable, but emphasize that results are robust across the other candidate evaluation items, which we present in Table 2.

We first turn to participants with negative racial attitudes. Among these participants, we expect to observe the smallest group differences -- meaning that the correction was *least* effective -- when these participants are confronted with a black candidate of their own party.

We see precisely this effect. As shown in column 2 of Table 2, we see that the correction had no effect when participants with negative racial attitudes were confronted with a black candidate of their own party. Indeed, participants who receive the correction and those who do not rated the black politician similarly (difference=0.13, $p=0.82$).⁹ This lack of a significant correction effect is shown graphically in the left-most bar in Figure 1. In contrast, as shown in column 3 of Table 2 (and the second bar in Figure 1), when the politician is a white co-partisan, we see that the correction was largely effective.

Participants who receive the correction rate the white politician significantly and substantively more positively than those who did not receive the correction (difference=1.38, $p<0.01$). In short, while the correction eliminated the deleterious effects

⁹ All reported p-values come from two-sided tests.

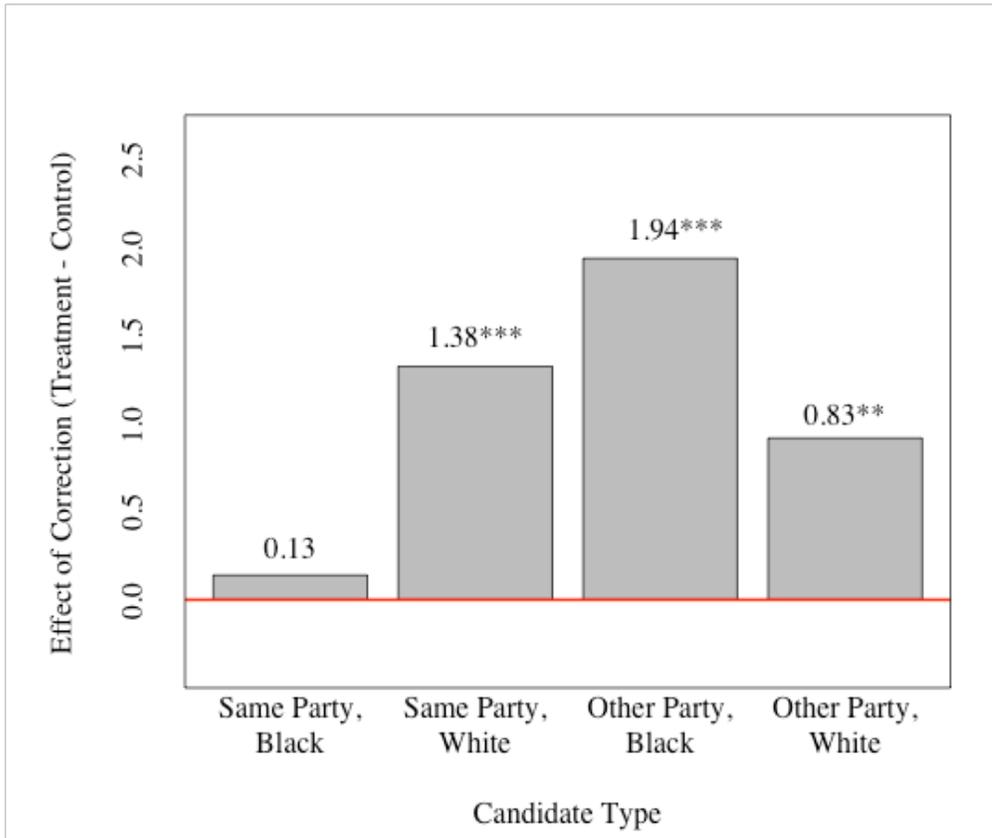
of misinformation for the white co-partisan, it failed to do so for the black co-partisan.

Table 2: Effect of Correction on Candidate Evaluations, by Type of Candidate and Prejudice Level

	Black Candidate, Same Party	White Candidate, Same Party	Black Candidate, Other Party	White Candidate, Other Party
<i>High Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.13 (p=0.82)	1.38 (p<.01)	1.94 (p<.01)	0.83 (p=.04)
Δ Vote Willingness	0	0.45 (p=0.10)	1.23 (p<.01)	0.53 (p=.10)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.32 (p=0.53)	1.24 (p<.01)	1.10 (p<.01)	1.04 (p=.01)
Δ Presidential Success	0.24 (p=0.66)	1.10 (p=.01)	1.05 (p=.01)	0.66 (p=.14)
<i>Low Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.84 (p=.01)	1.09 (p<.01)	1.40 (p<.01)	-0.26 (p=.04)
Δ Vote Willingness	0.34 (p=0.10)	0.64 (p=.01)	0.40 (p=.01)	0.25 (p=.34)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.60 (p=0.03)	0.77 (p=.03)	1.08 (p=.01)	0.09 (p=.78)
Δ Presidential Success	0.54 (p=0.08)	0.83 (p=.02)	1.09 (p=.01)	0.19 (p=.58)

Note: Cells contain the effect of the correction (treatment – control) on evaluations. Positive (negative) scores mean that participants moved in a more positive (negative) direction. Favorability and likelihood of success as governor and president are measured on a 7-point scale. Vote willingness is measured on a 5-point scale. P-values come from two-sided tests comparing treatment (correction) and control (uncorrected) group means.

Figure 1: Effect of Correction on Favorability Ratings
(High Prejudice Participants):



Note: The number on top of each bar gives the effect of the correction (treatment - control) on favorability ratings, broken down by type of candidate. Significance levels (two-tailed): *** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$. Positive (negative) scores mean that participants became more (less) favorable. Favorability is measured on a 7-point scale.

Although the correction proves ineffective for a black *co-partisan*, it proves markedly effective for a black politician *of the opposing party* (see column 4 of Table 2 and the third bar in Figure 1). Here we see that the correction leads people to rate the black politician significantly more favorably (difference=1.94, $p < .01$). The correction is also effective for the white politician of the opposing party, also increasing his favorability rating (difference=0.83, $p < 0.05$). As we might expect, however, this increase in favorability is somewhat less than the favorability increase for the white politician of

the participants' own party. These results are consistent with our argument that the some forms of misinformation are more pivotal than other forms. For voters with negative racial attitudes, misinformation is most pivotal when they are faced with a black politician of their own party.

Also consistent with our argument, results change when we consider participants with more positive or neutral racial attitudes. Turning to these participants, we see that they are equally responsive to corrections about their own party's politician, regardless of the politician's race (black politician: difference=0.84, $p<.05$; white politician: difference=1.09, $p<.01$). Moreover, these participants are more responsive to corrections about the black politician of the opposing party than about the white politician of the opposing party. Although these participants do rate both politicians more favorably after receiving the correction, the effect is significantly more pronounced for the black candidate. This is not surprising given that people with more positive racial attitudes often prefer black politicians to white politicians (Tesler and Sears 2010).

Discussion and Conclusion

Many citizens hold misperceptions about political facts and engage in motivated reasoning when presented with corrections. Our goal here was to highlight a previously unidentified source of motivation: the need to justify socially undesirable preferences. As we show, participants with negative racial attitudes are much more likely to retain misinformation about black co-partisans than black candidates of the opposing party. This is because, in this case, the misinformation offers a pivotal, *non-racial* justification for opposing a co-partisan candidate.

Before considering the implications of this research, we consider two potential limitations. First, it is important to note that our study focuses on a decidedly non-racial piece of misinformation (i.e., special interest influence). It is possible that our results would change if the misinformation were racially tinged. That said, it is unlikely that explicitly racial misinformation will be viewed as pivotal by people who acknowledge the socially undesirability of opposing black candidates. Thus, our focus on non-racial information is more reflective of the type of information people are likely to employ as justifications for opposing co-partisan minority candidates.

Second, our study represents a low-information election. Our participants made their judgments based on race, partisanship, and the information provided in our treatments. In other contexts (e.g., presidential elections), people have much more information to justify socially undesirable choices. A Democrat who did not want to vote for President Barack Obama, for example, could call upon numerous non-racial justifications for his decision; thus, he might not have been motivated to cling to every bit of misinformation about Obama. Another possibility is that, in high profile elections, opposing partisans may want to justify a particularly vitriolic dislike for a black candidate, and as a result be more motivated to retain misinformation. Further, we note that many -- if not most -- elections are low information elections, and most black candidates run for lower offices (Krupnikov and Piston 2015). As a result, our study reflects the informational conditions under which people are most likely to encounter black candidates.

Finally, one may worry that our results are driven in part by participants over-reporting levels of support for the black candidate (Berinsky 2004). However, two

considerations lead us to believe that over-reporting does not undermine our results. First, if participants are inflating their evaluations of black candidates, this tendency should affect both the correction and no-correction conditions, resulting in parallel increases in ratings. Thus, between-condition differences still reflect the effect of the correction. Second, if the desire to evaluate black candidates more positively is leading participants to be more responsive to the correction, the patterns we uncover are still important. The fact that we see heterogeneous effects on the basis of racial attitudes suggests that even if people are inflating their evaluations of black candidates, they do so differentially depending on partisan condition and individual motivations. Put differently, the possibility that individuals are more likely to over-report levels of support of black candidates in some conditions but less likely to do so in others is suggestive of the types of motivations we describe earlier.

The patterns reported here have critical implications for the way we view misinformation in contemporary politics. Citizens, we suggest, are not powerless in the face of their own biases. Rather, when they are seeking to justify socially undesirable preferences, they may dismiss corrections for a much simpler reason: misinformation is convenient.

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Supplemental Materials for the Web

Appendix A: Full Text of Experimental Treatments

[All participants]

The State Capitol – This week the legislature continues its consideration of the education reform bill, with the final vote expected sometime in the next two weeks.

However, for one legislator, debate on the education package continues to be overshadowed by allegations that he used his position on a key house committee to secure a tax loophole for a large retailer headquartered in his district.

According to reports, Rep. Sam Larson **[(D)/(R)]** was instrumental in passing the amendment, which would significantly reduce the retailer's tax liability next year. Campaign finance records indicate that the CEO of the store contributed the maximum allowable amount to Larson's campaign last year. Larson's office did not respond to requests for comment.

[Attributed correction]

According to PolitiCheck, a non-partisan fact-checking organization whose goal is to adjudicate factual disputes, Rep. Sam Larson **[(D)/(R)]** did not use his position on a key House committee to secure a tax loophole for a large retailer headquartered in his district. State records indicate that a representative from another part of the state introduced the measure in committee and secured its passage. Also, the company issued a press release stating that the CEO has never donated to Larson's campaign. The CEO has a common surname (Thomas), and a review of campaign finance records confirms that a different individual of the same name made the contributions.

[Unattributed correction]

New evidence contradicts earlier reports that Rep. Sam Larson **[(D)/(R)]** used his position on a key House committee to secure a tax loophole for a large retailer headquartered in his district. State records indicate that a representative from another part of the state introduced the measure in committee and secured its passage. Also, the company issued a press release stating that the CEO has never donated to Larson's campaign. The CEO has a common surname (Thomas), and a review of campaign finance records confirms that a different individual of the same name made the contributions.

Candidate Pictures (Race Manipulation)



Appendix B: Question Wordings

Dependent Variables:

How favorable or unfavorable do you feel toward Rep. Larson?

- Very Favorable
- Somewhat Favorable
- Slightly Favorable
- Neither Favorable Nor Unfavorable
- Slightly Unfavorable
- Somewhat Unfavorable
- Very Unfavorable

If Rep. Larson were up for re-election, how likely would you be to vote for him?

- I would be highly likely to vote for him
- I would be somewhat likely to vote for him
- I am uncertain if I would vote for him
- I would be somewhat unlikely to vote for him
- I would be highly unlikely to vote for him

How good of a job do you think that Rep. Larson would probably do with the following...Be an effective Governor?

1 (do a very poor job) ----- 7 (do an excellent job)

How good of a job do you think that Rep. Larson would probably do with the following...Be an effective U.S. President about 10 years from now?

1 (do a very poor job) ----- 7 (do an excellent job)

Racial Attitudes Battery:

We would like you to place each group on a 7-point scale based on how well you think a particular characteristic applies to people in that group.

In the first statement, a score of '1' means that you think almost all of the people in that group tend to be "lazy." A score of '7' means that you think most people in the group are "hardworking." A score of '4' means that you think that most people in the group are not closer to one end or the other, and of course, you may choose any number in between.

Whites: 1 (lazy) ----- 7 (hardworking)

Blacks: 1 (lazy) ----- 7 (hardworking)

Whites: 1 (unintelligent) ----- 7 (intelligent)

Blacks: 1 (unintelligent) ----- 7 (intelligent)

Appendix Tables

Appendix Table A1: Sample Demographics

Variable	
% Democrat	37.6
% Republican	24.9
% with BA or higher	41.5
% Male	44.1
Median Income	\$40,000-\$50,000

Appendix Table A2: Randomization Checks

	Chi-square (p-value)
Party Identification (Independent, Democrat, Republican)	6.23 (p=0.40)
High Prejudice (0-1)	4.54 (p=0.21)
White (0-1)	1.50 (p=0.68)
Female (0-1)	2.66 (p=0.45)
Income (1-9)	23.08 (p=0.52)

Note: To further assess balance, we estimated a multinomial logistic regression model using the variables in the table to predict treatment assignment. The chi-square from this model is 21.36 (p=0.26), indicating that the variables do not jointly predict treatment assignment.

Appendix Table A3: Effect of Correction on Candidate Evaluations, by Type of Candidate and Prejudice Level (Democratic Participants Only)

	Black Candidate, Same Party	White Candidate, Same Party	Black Candidate, Other Party	White Candidate, Other Party
<i>High Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	-0.17 (p=.79)	1.12 (p=.08)	1.88 (p<.001)	0.90 (p=.16)
Δ Vote Willingness	0	0.28 (p=.54)	1.28 (p<.01)	1.06 (p=.02)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0	0.89 (p=.15)	0.92 (p=.17)	0.98 (p=.13)
Δ Presidential Success	-0.08 (p=.92)	0.72 (p=.18)	0.96 (p=.07)	0.24 (p=.69)
<i>Low Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.62 (p=.09)	1.76 (p<.001)	1.61 (p<.01)	-0.16 (p=.73)
Δ Vote Willingness	0.20 (p=.47)	1.00 (p<.01)	0.48 (p=.24)	-0.02 (p=.95)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.46 (p=.16)	1.45 (p<.001)	1.05 (p=.06)	0.29 (p=.56)
Δ Presidential Success	0.61 (p=.12)	1.41 (p<.01)	1.07 (p=.06)	0.05 (p=.92)

Note: Cells contain the effect of the correction (treatment - control) on evaluations. Positive scores mean that participants moved in a more positive direction. Favorability and likelihood of success as governor and president are measured on a 7-point scale. Vote willingness is measured on a 5-point scale. P-values come from two-sided tests comparing treatment (correction) and control (uncorrected) group means. Independents who indicated that they were closer to one of the two parties were treated as partisans (Keith et al. 1992).

Appendix Table A4: Effect of Correction on Candidate Evaluations, by Type of Candidate and Prejudice Level (Republican Participants Only)

	Black Candidate, Same Party	White Candidate, Same Party	Black Candidate, Other Party	White Candidate, Other Party
<i>High Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.33 (p=.69)	1.58 (p<.01)	2.24 (p<.01)	0.94 (p=.14)
Δ Vote Willingness	-0.16 (p=.80)	0.70 (p=.19)	1.27 (p=.06)	0.27 (p=.60)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.66 (p=.36)	1.55 (p<.01)	1.50 (p<.01)	1.22 (p=.08)
Δ Presidential Success	0.66 (p=.38)	1.44 (p=.02)	1.40 (p=.08)	1.43 (p=.07)
<i>Low Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.83 (p=.14)	0.12 (p=.81)	1.07 (p=.03)	-0.40 (p=.41)
Δ Vote Willingness	0.41 (p=.29)	0.10 (p=.77)	0.32 (p=.48)	-1.16 (p=.11)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.59 (p=.27)	-0.31 (p=.56)	1.16 (p=.02)	-0.73 (p=.15)
Δ Presidential Success	0.19 (p=.72)	0.04 (p=.94)	1.14 (p=.03)	-0.45 (p=.28)

Note: Cells contain the effect of the correction (treatment - control) on evaluations. Positive scores mean that participants moved in a more positive direction. Favorability and likelihood of success as governor and president are measured on a 7-point scale. Vote willingness is measured on a 5-point scale. P-values come from two-sided tests comparing treatment (correction) and control (uncorrected) group means. Independents who indicated that they were closer to one of the two parties were treated as partisans (Keith et al. 1992).

Appendix Table A5: Robustness Check: Effect of Unattributed Correction on Candidate Evaluations, by Type of Candidate and Prejudice Level

	Black Candidate, Same Party	White Candidate, Same Party	Black Candidate, Other Party	White Candidate, Other Party
<i>High Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.22 (p=.64)	1.36 (p<.01)	0.62 (p=.07)	0.70 (p=.05)
Δ Vote Willingness	-0.29 (p=.43)	0.70 (p=.02)	0.66 (p=.01)	0.20 (p=.43)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.14 (p=.78)	1.37 (p<.01)	0.65 (p=.06)	0.61 (p=.08)
Δ Presidential Success	-0.28 (p=.56)	1.55 (p<.01)	0.65 (p=.03)	0.59 (p=.12)
<i>Low Prejudice Participants:</i>				
Δ Favorability	0.71 (p=.03)	0.64 (p=.04)	0.88 (p=.01)	0.12 (p=.67)
Δ Vote Willingness	0.41 (p=.10)	0.36 (p=.13)	0.08 (p=.78)	0.08 (p=.75)
Δ Gubernatorial Success	0.60 (p=.05)	0.36 (p=.24)	0.77 (p=.02)	-0.002 (p=.96)
Δ Presidential Success	0.67 (p=.05)	0.40 (p=.22)	0.49 (p=.12)	-0.08 (p=.77)

Note: Cells contain the effect of the correction (treatment - control) on evaluations. Positive scores mean that participants moved in a more positive direction. Favorability and likelihood of success as governor and president are measured on a 7-point scale. Vote willingness is measured on a 5-point scales. P-values come from two-sided tests comparing treatment (correction) and control (uncorrected) group means.