*Online Appendix to*

# The Minimal Effects of Making Local News Free: Evidence from a Field Experiment

## Contents

# Supplemental Results

## Main ITT Results

Table A.1.1: Estimated ITT Effects on News Consumption and Political Knowledge

| | *Hypothesis 1* | | | *Hypothesis 2* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Days/Week Cons. News | Read Online Newspaper | Newsletter Recall† | Total Pol. Know. | National Pol. Know. | State/Local Pol. Know. |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | −0.018 | 0.011 | 0.333*** | −0.008 | −0.001 | −0.015 |
| | (0.016) | (0.042) | (0.040) | (0.011) | (0.012) | (0.017) |
| Constant | −0.010 | −0.031 | 0.124*** | 0.032*** | 0.019* | 0.045*** |
| | (0.012) | (0.032) | (0.024) | (0.009) | (0.009) | (0.013) |
| Observations | 439 | 439 | 439 | 382 | 382 | 382 |
| $R^2$ | 0.003 | 0.0001 | 0.128 | 0.001 | 0.00001 | 0.002 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.001 | −0.002 | 0.126 | −0.001 | −0.003 | −0.001 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement) except newsletter recall.
† Analysis of this variable was not pre-registered.

Table A.1.2: Estimated ITT Effects on Political Interest, Internal Efficacy, and Turnout

| | *Hypothesis 3: Political Interest* | | | | *Hypothesis 3: Internal Efficacy* | | | *Hypothesis 3: Turnout* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gen. Pol. Int. | Nat. Pol. Int. | Sta. Pol. Int. | Loc. Pol. Int. | Internal Index | Understands Pol. | Pol. Too Complex | Validated Vote |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| Treatment | −0.010 | −0.019 | −0.015 | 0.003 | −0.007 | −0.004 | −0.012 | −0.008 |
| | (0.013) | (0.014) | (0.016) | (0.019) | (0.015) | (0.014) | (0.024) | (0.024) |
| Constant | −0.021* | −0.014 | −0.025* | −0.024 | −0.003 | −0.003 | −0.003 | 0.938*** |
| | (0.010) | (0.011) | (0.012) | (0.014) | (0.011) | (0.010) | (0.018) | (0.017) |
| Observations | 439 | 439 | 439 | 438 | 439 | 439 | 438 | 439 |
| $R^2$ | 0.001 | 0.004 | 0.002 | 0.0001 | 0.0005 | 0.0002 | 0.001 | 0.0002 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.001 | 0.002 | −0.0002 | −0.002 | −0.002 | −0.002 | −0.002 | −0.002 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables except turnout are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.1.3: Estimated ITT Effects on Non-Voting Engagement Behaviors

| | *Hypothesis 3: Non-Voting Political Engagement* | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NV Engagement Index | Attend Meeting | Display Sign | Volunteer | Protest | Contact Off. | Pol. Donation | Write Opinion |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| Treatment | 0.010 | 0.004 | −0.019 | −0.017 | 0.035 | 0.039 | 0.036 | −0.005 |
| | (0.018) | (0.031) | (0.031) | (0.028) | (0.019) | (0.040) | (0.045) | (0.015) |
| Constant | 0.133*** | 0.119*** | 0.129*** | 0.103*** | 0.026* | 0.206*** | 0.320*** | 0.026* |
| | (0.013) | (0.023) | (0.024) | (0.022) | (0.011) | (0.029) | (0.034) | (0.011) |
| Observations | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 |
| $R^2$ | 0.001 | 0.00004 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.007 | 0.002 | 0.001 | 0.0003 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.001 | −0.002 | −0.001 | −0.001 | 0.005 | −0.0002 | −0.001 | −0.002 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are measured post-treatment only.

Table A.1.4: Estimated ITT Effects on Perceptions of Media and Election Fairness

| | *Hypothesis 4: Media Confidence* | | | | *Hypothesis 4: Election Confidence* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Media Confidence Index | Accurate | Trustworthy | Informative | Elections are Fair | Fraud Rare |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | 0.004 | −0.003 | 0.023 | −0.008 | 0.005 | −0.011 |
| | (0.016) | (0.023) | (0.020) | (0.020) | (0.025) | (0.018) |
| Constant | 0.050*** | 0.076*** | 0.049** | 0.026 | 0.031 | 0.008 |
| | (0.012) | (0.017) | (0.016) | (0.015) | (0.019) | (0.014) |
| Observations | 437 | 436 | 436 | 437 | 437 | 358 |
| $R^2$ | 0.0002 | 0.00004 | 0.003 | 0.0004 | 0.0001 | 0.001 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.002 | −0.002 | 0.001 | −0.002 | −0.002 | −0.002 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.1.5: Estimated ITT Effects on Government Trust and External Efficacy

| | *Hypothesis 4: Government Trust* | | | *Hypothesis 4: External Efficacy* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gov. Trust Index | Trust to Do Right | Responsive | External Index | Officials Care | Voice Heard |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | 0.014 | 0.006 | 0.022 | 0.021 | 0.025 | 0.013 |
| | (0.019) | (0.020) | (0.023) | (0.020) | (0.023) | (0.021) |
| Constant | 0.043** | 0.056*** | 0.030 | 0.059*** | 0.064*** | 0.054*** |
| | (0.014) | (0.014) | (0.018) | (0.016) | (0.018) | (0.016) |
| Observations | 436 | 436 | 436 | 437 | 437 | 433 |
| $R^2$ | 0.001 | 0.0002 | 0.002 | 0.002 | 0.003 | 0.001 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.001 | −0.002 | −0.0001 | 0.0001 | 0.0004 | −0.001 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).



Table A.1.6: Estimated ITT Effects on Support for Democratic Norms

| | *Hypothesis 5* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Norm Support Index | Equal Opp. Vote | No Pol. Violence | Law Enf. Free of Pol. | Respect Courts | Respect Elections |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | −0.002 | 0.002 | −0.019 | −0.011 | 0.010 | 0.005 |
| | (0.007) | (0.019) | (0.013) | (0.014) | (0.014) | (0.011) |
| Constant | 0.012* | 0.008 | 0.005 | 0.028* | 0.012 | 0.009 |
| | (0.005) | (0.014) | (0.010) | (0.011) | (0.011) | (0.009) |
| Observations | 439 | 438 | 439 | 439 | 438 | 438 |
| $R^2$ | 0.0003 | 0.00001 | 0.005 | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.001 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.002 | −0.002 | 0.003 | −0.001 | −0.001 | −0.002 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.1.7: Estimated ITT Effects on "Correct" Voting

| | *Hypothesis 6* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | US Senate | US House | NC Senate | NC House |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Treatment | 0.012 | −0.002 | −0.003 | −0.006 |
| | (0.024) | (0.028) | (0.026) | (0.025) |
| Constant | 0.932*** | 0.921*** | 0.943*** | 0.940*** |
| | (0.019) | (0.021) | (0.020) | (0.019) |
| Observations | 412 | 373 | 325 | 391 |
| $R^2$ | 0.001 | 0.00001 | 0.00004 | 0.0002 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.002 | −0.003 | −0.003 | −0.002 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands.

**Standardized ITT Results**

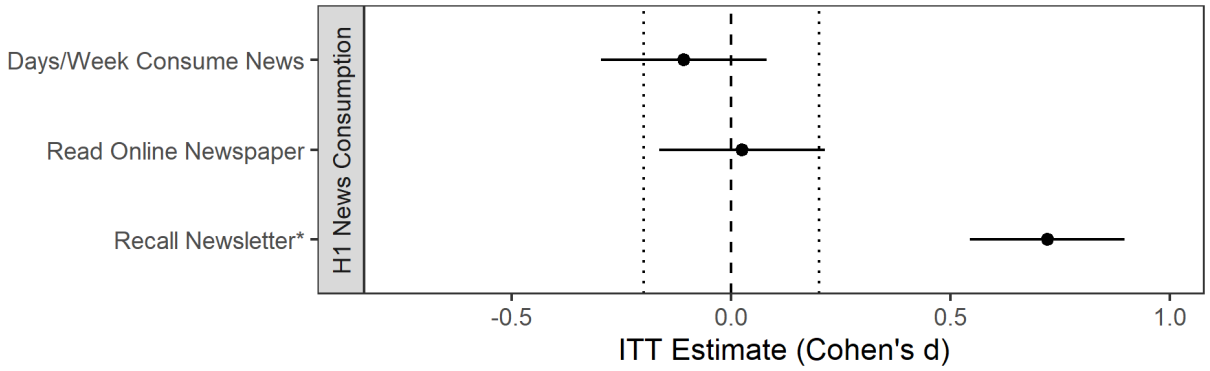



Figure A.2.1: Figure displays the estimated ITT effect of the free subscription on each outcome, expressed in "size of effect" as a function of the standard deviation of each outcome (Cohen's $d$). The error bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals. The dotted lines indicate a conventionally "small" effect of 0.2 standard deviations. All outcomes use the full experimental sample (n = 439). The analysis of newsletter recall was not pre-registered. For the non-standardized results, see Figure 2 and Appendix Table A.1.1,

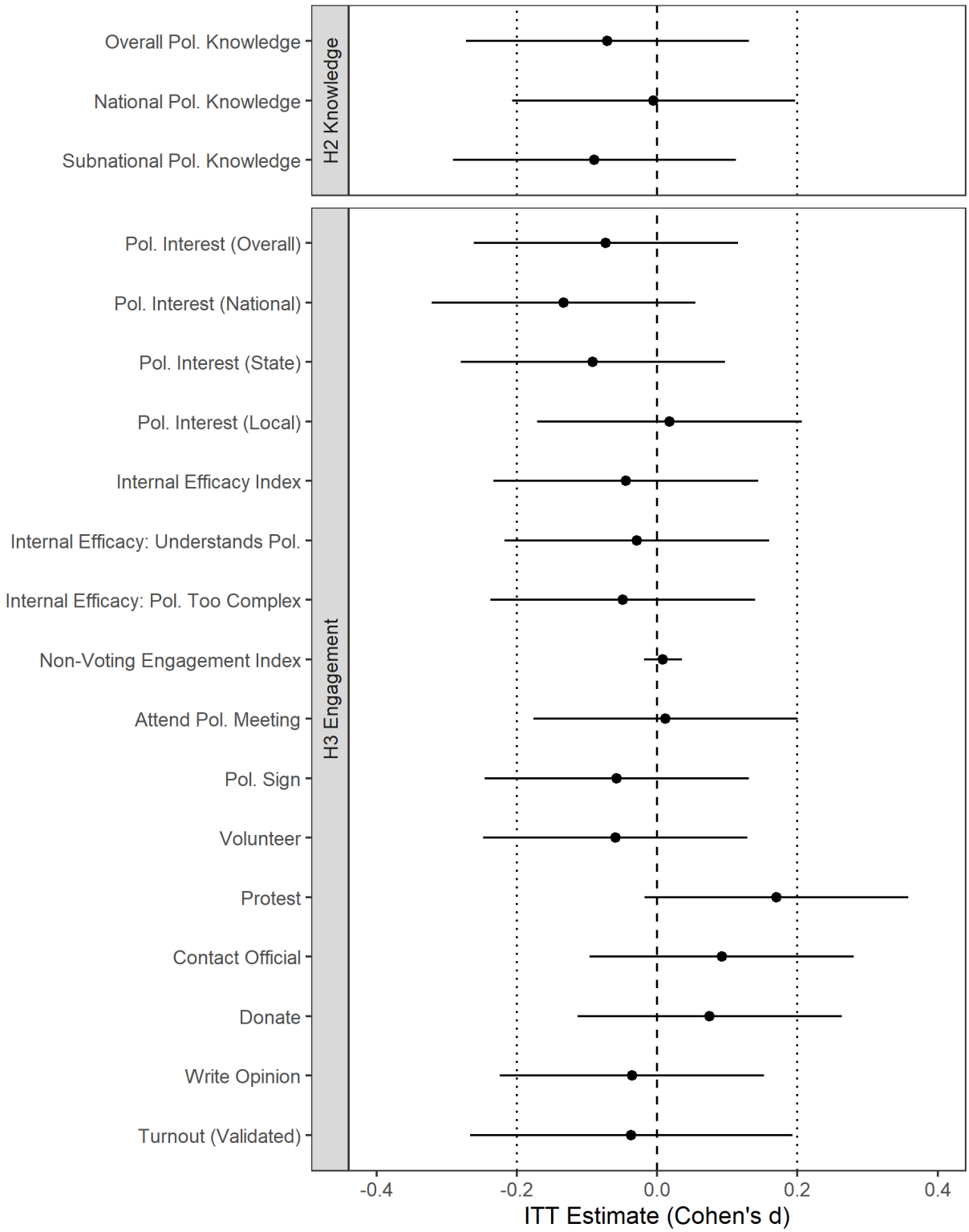



Figure A.2.2: Figure displays the estimated ITT effect of the free subscription on each outcome, expressed in "size of effect" as a function of the standard deviation of each outcome (Cohen's $d$). The error bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals. The dotted lines indicate a conventionally "small" effect of 0.2 standard deviations. Note that outcomes for H2 (knowledge) use a restricted subset of the sample (n = 382); all other outcomes use the full experimental sample (n = 439). For the non-standardized results, see Figure 3 and Appendix Tables A.1.1, A.1.2, and A.1.3.

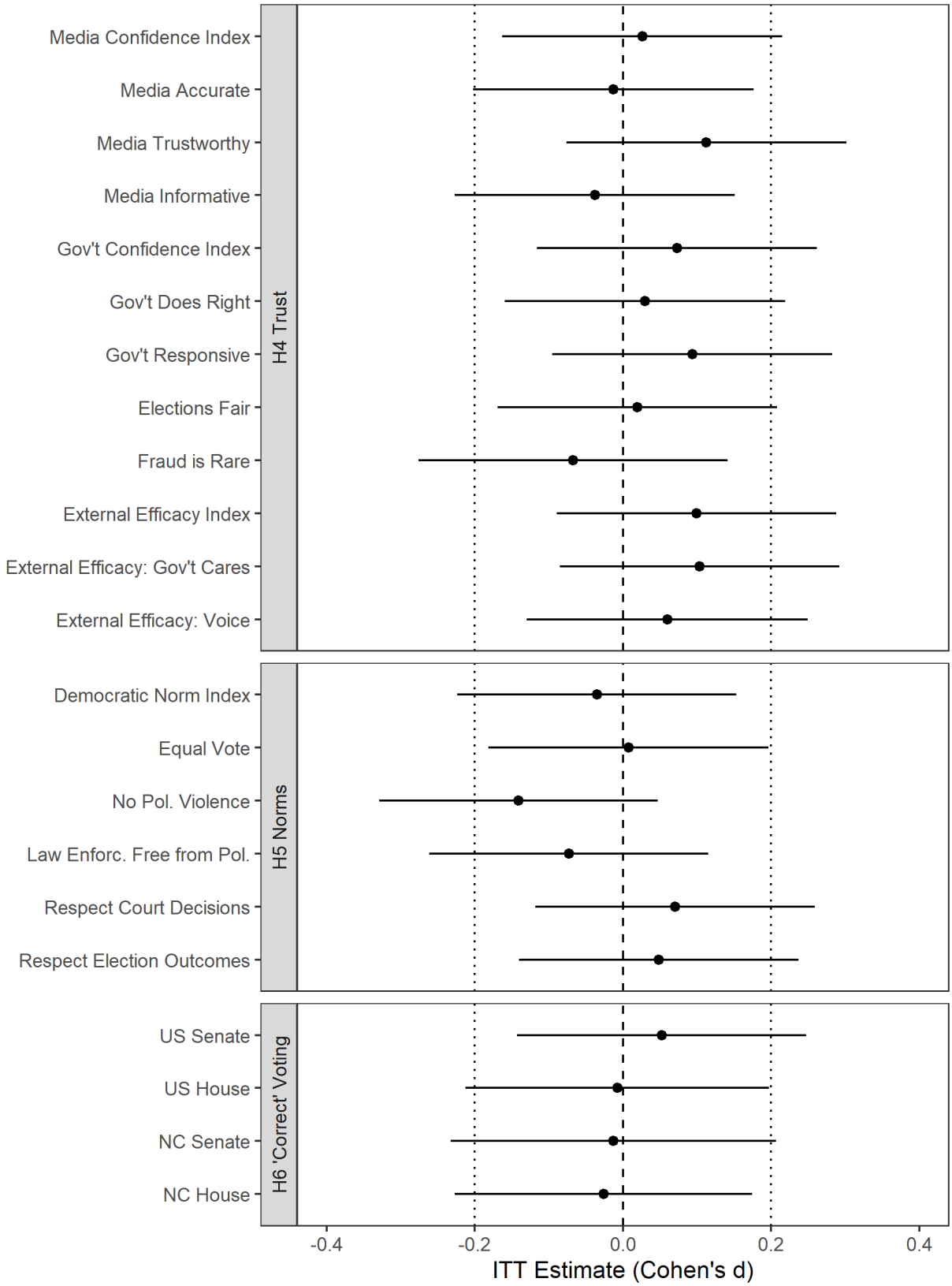



Figure A.2.3: Figure displays the estimated ITT effect of the free subscription on each outcome, expressed in "size of effect" as a function of the standard deviation of each outcome (Cohen's $d$). The error bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals. The dotted lines indicate a conventionally "small" effect of 0.2 standard deviations. All outcomes use the full experimental sample (n = 439). For the non-standardized results, see Figure 4 and Appendix Tables A.1.4, A.1.5, A.1.6, and A.1.7.

## Covariate-Adjusted ITT Results

Table A.3.1: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on News Consumption and Political Knowledge

| | *Hypothesis 1* | | | *Hypothesis 2* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Days/Week Cons. News | Read Online Newspaper | Newsletter Recall† | Total Pol. Know. | National Pol. Know. | State/Local Pol. Know. |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | −0.018 | 0.011 | 0.330*** | −0.006 | 0.001 | −0.012 |
| | (0.016) | (0.045) | (0.041) | (0.011) | (0.012) | (0.018) |
| Age | 0.001 | −0.001 | 0.003 | −0.0002 | −0.001 | 0.00003 |
| | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) |
| Male | 0.008 | 0.041 | −0.007 | −0.005 | 0.005 | −0.014 |
| | (0.016) | (0.044) | (0.044) | (0.012) | (0.012) | (0.019) |
| Nonwhite | −0.064 | 0.093 | −0.068 | −0.024 | −0.039 | −0.009 |
| | (0.044) | (0.098) | (0.097) | (0.026) | (0.027) | (0.040) |
| Education | −0.002 | −0.012 | 0.017 | −0.002 | 0.005 | −0.010 |
| | (0.008) | (0.023) | (0.019) | (0.006) | (0.006) | (0.009) |
| Household Income | −0.002 | 0.005 | 0.019 | 0.002 | 0.004 | −0.0002 |
| | (0.006) | (0.019) | (0.015) | (0.004) | (0.005) | (0.007) |
| Unemployed | 0.136 | −0.503 | 0.096 | 0.077 | 0.001 | 0.154 |
| | (0.117) | (0.272) | (0.211) | (0.060) | (0.019) | (0.120) |
| Retired | −0.036 | 0.048 | −0.042 | −0.004 | 0.004 | −0.013 |
| | (0.021) | (0.064) | (0.062) | (0.015) | (0.014) | (0.027) |
| Party ID | −0.010 | 0.012 | −0.013 | −0.007 | −0.006 | −0.007 |
| | (0.007) | (0.019) | (0.017) | (0.006) | (0.006) | (0.008) |
| Ideology | 0.011 | −0.030 | 0.005 | 0.009 | 0.012 | 0.006 |
| | (0.008) | (0.023) | (0.022) | (0.007) | (0.007) | (0.010) |
| Constant | −0.052 | 0.111 | −0.172 | 0.044 | −0.021 | 0.108 |
| | (0.073) | (0.150) | (0.148) | (0.055) | (0.053) | (0.081) |
| Observations | 425 | 425 | 425 | 369 | 369 | 369 |
| $R^2$ | 0.032 | 0.023 | 0.144 | 0.016 | 0.025 | 0.019 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.008 | −0.001 | 0.123 | −0.012 | −0.002 | −0.008 |

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

*Note:* All estimates are covariate-adjusted ITT estimands. All outcome variables except newsletter recall are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).
† Analysis of this variable was not pre-registered.

Table A.3.2: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on Political Interest, Internal Efficacy, and Turnout

| | *Hypothesis 3: Political Interest* | | | | *Hypothesis 3: Internal Efficacy* | | | *Hypothesis 3: Turnout* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gen. Pol. Int. | Nat. Pol. Int. | Sta. Pol. Int. | Loc. Pol. Int. | Internal Index | Understands Pol. | Pol. Too Complex | Validated Vote |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| Treatment | −0.010 | −0.018 | −0.015 | 0.001 | −0.004 | −0.005 | −0.007 | −0.012 |
| | (0.013) | (0.015) | (0.016) | (0.019) | (0.016) | (0.014) | (0.025) | (0.024) |
| Age | −0.001 | −0.0005 | −0.001 | −0.002 | 0.0003 | 0.0004 | 0.0001 | 0.003* |
| | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) |
| Male | −0.014 | −0.0002 | −0.016 | −0.024 | −0.0001 | 0.002 | −0.004 | 0.033 |
| | (0.013) | (0.015) | (0.016) | (0.019) | (0.016) | (0.015) | (0.025) | (0.024) |
| Nonwhite | −0.019 | −0.001 | −0.029 | −0.025 | −0.022 | 0.007 | −0.052 | −0.042 |
| | (0.030) | (0.041) | (0.033) | (0.045) | (0.035) | (0.032) | (0.053) | (0.069) |
| Education | −0.001 | −0.003 | −0.001 | 0.003 | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.019 |
| | (0.006) | (0.007) | (0.007) | (0.008) | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.013) | (0.012) |
| Household Income | 0.0001 | −0.001 | −0.0004 | 0.001 | 0.002 | 0.003 | 0.001 | 0.014 |
| | (0.005) | (0.005) | (0.006) | (0.007) | (0.006) | (0.005) | (0.010) | (0.011) |
| Unemployed | 0.057 | −0.027 | 0.101 | 0.098 | 0.003 | −0.055 | 0.054 | −0.071 |
| | (0.060) | (0.062) | (0.101) | (0.113) | (0.029) | (0.051) | (0.030) | (0.213) |
| Retired | 0.006 | −0.019 | 0.019 | 0.025 | 0.019 | 0.004 | 0.036 | 0.027 |
| | (0.018) | (0.020) | (0.023) | (0.027) | (0.023) | (0.019) | (0.039) | (0.029) |
| Party ID | −0.009 | −0.008 | −0.011 | −0.008 | −0.014* | −0.015* | −0.011 | −0.030* |
| | (0.006) | (0.007) | (0.006) | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.006) | (0.011) | (0.012) |
| Ideology | 0.009 | 0.004 | 0.021** | 0.002 | 0.021* | 0.019** | 0.019 | 0.012 |
| | (0.006) | (0.008) | (0.008) | (0.010) | (0.009) | (0.007) | (0.014) | (0.016) |
| Constant | 0.044 | 0.058 | 0.009 | 0.071 | −0.106 | −0.100 | −0.098 | 0.599*** |
| | (0.045) | (0.054) | (0.057) | (0.066) | (0.057) | (0.056) | (0.091) | (0.124) |
| Observations | 425 | 425 | 425 | 424 | 425 | 425 | 424 | 425 |
| $R^2$ | 0.022 | 0.020 | 0.028 | 0.024 | 0.034 | 0.033 | 0.018 | 0.133 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.002 | −0.004 | 0.005 | −0.00005 | 0.011 | 0.009 | −0.006 | 0.112 |

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

*Note:* All estimates are covariate-adjusted ITT estimands. All outcome variables except turnout are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.3.3: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on Non-Voting Engagement Behaviors

| | *Hypothesis 3: Non-Voting Political Engagement* | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NV Engagement Index | Attend Meeting | Display Sign | Volunteer | Protest | Contact Off. | Pol. Donation | Write Opinion |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| Treatment | 0.006 | 0.004 | −0.016 | −0.023 | 0.025 | 0.033 | 0.024 | −0.005 |
| | (0.018) | (0.032) | (0.032) | (0.029) | (0.018) | (0.041) | (0.044) | (0.015) |
| Age | 0.003*** | 0.001 | 0.003 | 0.003* | −0.002* | 0.003 | 0.009*** | 0.001* |
| | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.001) |
| Male | −0.041* | −0.004 | −0.028 | −0.052* | −0.016 | −0.124** | −0.059 | −0.003 |
| | (0.017) | (0.034) | (0.031) | (0.026) | (0.019) | (0.040) | (0.043) | (0.014) |
| Nonwhite | −0.010 | 0.041 | −0.015 | 0.006 | −0.079*** | −0.045 | 0.028 | −0.008 |
| | (0.033) | (0.077) | (0.064) | (0.057) | (0.021) | (0.068) | (0.085) | (0.008) |
| Education | 0.015 | 0.026 | −0.004 | 0.007 | 0.013 | 0.029 | 0.029 | 0.005 |
| | (0.008) | (0.015) | (0.015) | (0.013) | (0.008) | (0.019) | (0.020) | (0.005) |
| Household Income | 0.001 | 0.006 | −0.025 | 0.009 | −0.007 | 0.003 | 0.016 | 0.006 |
| | (0.007) | (0.011) | (0.014) | (0.011) | (0.007) | (0.016) | (0.016) | (0.004) |
| Unemployed | 0.044 | 0.162 | −0.143** | −0.047 | −0.106** | 0.606* | −0.177 | 0.015 |
| | (0.055) | (0.245) | (0.045) | (0.059) | (0.034) | (0.265) | (0.135) | (0.022) |
| Retired | −0.022 | −0.026 | −0.067 | −0.015 | 0.002 | 0.017 | −0.041 | −0.023 |
| | (0.026) | (0.046) | (0.050) | (0.045) | (0.022) | (0.058) | (0.065) | (0.021) |
| Party ID | −0.013 | 0.003 | −0.019 | −0.016 | −0.0002 | −0.014 | −0.044* | −0.002 |
| | (0.007) | (0.015) | (0.012) | (0.012) | (0.007) | (0.017) | (0.018) | (0.005) |
| Ideology | 0.001 | 0.006 | −0.002 | −0.0005 | −0.019* | 0.019 | −0.011 | 0.015* |
| | (0.009) | (0.019) | (0.016) | (0.015) | (0.009) | (0.022) | (0.023) | (0.007) |
| Constant | −0.039 | −0.121 | 0.245* | −0.105 | 0.216* | −0.095 | −0.262 | −0.154** |
| | (0.058) | (0.105) | (0.113) | (0.091) | (0.086) | (0.137) | (0.160) | (0.057) |
| Observations | 425 | 425 | 425 | 425 | 425 | 425 | 425 | 425 |
| $R^2$ | 0.093 | 0.014 | 0.042 | 0.057 | 0.068 | 0.064 | 0.161 | 0.040 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.071 | −0.010 | 0.018 | 0.034 | 0.045 | 0.041 | 0.141 | 0.017 |

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are measured post-treatment only.

Table A.3.4: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on Perceptions of Media and Election Fairness

| | *Hypothesis 4: Media Confidence* | | | | *Hypothesis 4: Election Confidence* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Media Confidence Index | Accurate | Trustworthy | Informative | Elections are Fair | Fraud Rare |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | 0.002 | −0.006 | 0.018 | −0.009 | 0.006 | −0.010 |
| | (0.016) | (0.024) | (0.021) | (0.020) | (0.026) | (0.018) |
| Age | 0.001 | 0.0004 | 0.00005 | 0.001 | −0.001 | −0.001 |
| | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) |
| Male | −0.012 | −0.017 | −0.027 | 0.006 | −0.019 | −0.011 |
| | (0.016) | (0.023) | (0.021) | (0.020) | (0.025) | (0.018) |
| Nonwhite | −0.031 | −0.024 | −0.067 | −0.004 | 0.040 | 0.015 |
| | (0.033) | (0.035) | (0.037) | (0.041) | (0.083) | (0.049) |
| Education | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.010 | 0.005 | 0.003 | −0.006 |
| | (0.007) | (0.012) | (0.010) | (0.010) | (0.011) | (0.008) |
| Household Income | −0.003 | −0.009 | −0.001 | 0.001 | −0.005 | 0.010 |
| | (0.007) | (0.009) | (0.008) | (0.008) | (0.009) | (0.007) |
| Unemployed | 0.015 | −0.016 | −0.039 | 0.100 | −0.140 | −0.113 |
| | (0.079) | (0.154) | (0.118) | (0.057) | (0.073) | (0.064) |
| Retired | −0.026 | −0.013 | −0.021 | −0.045 | 0.003 | −0.015 |
| | (0.022) | (0.032) | (0.027) | (0.027) | (0.039) | (0.024) |
| Party ID | 0.003 | 0.009 | 0.005 | −0.003 | 0.030*** | −0.008 |
| | (0.007) | (0.011) | (0.010) | (0.009) | (0.009) | (0.006) |
| Ideology | −0.008 | −0.024 | −0.013 | 0.011 | −0.026* | 0.008 |
| | (0.010) | (0.013) | (0.012) | (0.012) | (0.011) | (0.008) |
| Constant | 0.036 | 0.142 | 0.066 | −0.100 | 0.111 | 0.023 |
| | (0.066) | (0.100) | (0.077) | (0.087) | (0.102) | (0.064) |
| Observations | 423 | 422 | 422 | 423 | 423 | 349 |
| $R^2$ | 0.014 | 0.021 | 0.025 | 0.015 | 0.033 | 0.029 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.010 | −0.002 | 0.001 | −0.009 | 0.010 | −0.00004 |

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.3.5: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on Government Trust and External Efficacy

| | *Hypothesis 4: Government Trust* | | | *Hypothesis 4: External Efficacy* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gov. Trust Index | Trust to Do Right | Responsive | External Index | Officials Care | Voice Heard |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | 0.012 | 0.001 | 0.023 | 0.014 | 0.020 | 0.004 |
| | (0.019) | (0.019) | (0.024) | (0.021) | (0.024) | (0.022) |
| Age | −0.001 | −0.002 | −0.001 | −0.001 | −0.0003 | −0.002 |
| | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) |
| Male | −0.030 | −0.038 | −0.022 | −0.019 | −0.008 | −0.028 |
| | (0.019) | (0.020) | (0.025) | (0.021) | (0.025) | (0.022) |
| Nonwhite | −0.024 | −0.078 | 0.030 | 0.003 | −0.003 | 0.010 |
| | (0.039) | (0.044) | (0.041) | (0.042) | (0.046) | (0.043) |
| Education | 0.003 | 0.001 | 0.006 | −0.006 | −0.005 | −0.007 |
| | (0.009) | (0.009) | (0.012) | (0.010) | (0.012) | (0.010) |
| Household Income | −0.024** | −0.022** | −0.026** | −0.008 | −0.010 | −0.008 |
| | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.010) | (0.007) | (0.008) | (0.007) |
| Unemployed | −0.050 | −0.148 | 0.049 | 0.024 | 0.067 | −0.020 |
| | (0.115) | (0.097) | (0.149) | (0.081) | (0.105) | (0.064) |
| Retired | 0.024 | 0.031 | 0.018 | 0.046 | 0.030 | 0.069* |
| | (0.028) | (0.029) | (0.034) | (0.029) | (0.033) | (0.030) |
| Party ID | −0.010 | −0.010 | −0.009 | −0.011 | −0.010 | −0.010 |
| | (0.009) | (0.009) | (0.010) | (0.008) | (0.010) | (0.008) |
| Ideology | 0.006 | 0.008 | 0.005 | −0.001 | −0.007 | 0.004 |
| | (0.010) | (0.011) | (0.012) | (0.010) | (0.012) | (0.010) |
| Constant | 0.242** | 0.293*** | 0.192 | 0.220** | 0.210** | 0.243*** |
| | (0.087) | (0.082) | (0.113) | (0.068) | (0.078) | (0.072) |
| Observations | 422 | 422 | 422 | 423 | 423 | 419 |
| $R^2$ | 0.047 | 0.052 | 0.036 | 0.031 | 0.029 | 0.032 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.024 | 0.029 | 0.012 | 0.008 | 0.005 | 0.008 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.3.6: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on Support for Democratic Norms

| | *Hypothesis 5* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Norm Support Index | Equal Opp. Vote | No Pol. Violence | Law Enf. Free of Pol. | Respect Courts | Respect Elections |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Treatment | 0.005 | 0.011 | −0.013 | −0.001 | 0.013 | 0.014 |
| | (0.007) | (0.019) | (0.013) | (0.015) | (0.015) | (0.011) |
| Age | 0.00004 | 0.001 | 0.0004 | 0.0003 | −0.001 | −0.001 |
| | (0.0003) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) |
| Male | −0.005 | 0.008 | −0.015 | −0.026 | 0.003 | 0.002 |
| | (0.006) | (0.018) | (0.012) | (0.015) | (0.015) | (0.009) |
| Nonwhite | −0.001 | −0.013 | 0.018 | −0.020 | −0.006 | 0.015 |
| | (0.012) | (0.037) | (0.023) | (0.021) | (0.029) | (0.026) |
| Education | −0.008* | 0.011 | −0.010 | −0.029** | −0.008 | −0.007 |
| | (0.004) | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.010) | (0.007) | (0.005) |
| Household Income | −0.001 | 0.003 | 0.001 | −0.002 | −0.0004 | −0.007 |
| | (0.002) | (0.007) | (0.004) | (0.005) | (0.005) | (0.005) |
| Unemployed | 0.090 | −0.014 | 0.147* | 0.168 | 0.011 | 0.133 |
| | (0.050) | (0.024) | (0.060) | (0.101) | (0.045) | (0.141) |
| Retired | −0.008 | −0.047 | −0.006 | −0.017 | 0.020 | 0.010 |
| | (0.010) | (0.025) | (0.015) | (0.020) | (0.023) | (0.017) |
| Party ID | −0.0005 | 0.015* | −0.007 | −0.010 | 0.002 | −0.001 |
| | (0.003) | (0.007) | (0.006) | (0.007) | (0.006) | (0.005) |
| Ideology | −0.001 | −0.011 | −0.0005 | 0.012 | −0.008 | 0.0004 |
| | (0.003) | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.008) | (0.007) | (0.005) |
| Constant | 0.066* | −0.131 | 0.062 | 0.169* | 0.135* | 0.102* |
| | (0.031) | (0.080) | (0.068) | (0.070) | (0.069) | (0.047) |
| Observations | 425 | 424 | 425 | 425 | 424 | 424 |
| $R^2$ | 0.051 | 0.026 | 0.044 | 0.083 | 0.018 | 0.045 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.028 | 0.002 | 0.021 | 0.061 | −0.005 | 0.022 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands. All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement).

Table A.3.7: Covariate-Adjusted ITT on "Correct" Voting

| | *Hypothesis 6* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | US Senate | US House | NC Senate | NC House |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Treatment | 0.015 | −0.0004 | −0.003 | −0.013 |
| | (0.025) | (0.029) | (0.028) | (0.025) |
| Age | −0.001 | −0.0002 | −0.002 | −0.001 |
| | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.001) |
| Male | 0.021 | 0.032 | −0.005 | 0.010 |
| | (0.024) | (0.029) | (0.029) | (0.025) |
| Nonwhite | 0.009 | −0.022 | −0.049 | 0.066** |
| | (0.046) | (0.070) | (0.077) | (0.021) |
| Education | −0.020 | −0.024* | −0.010 | 0.007 |
| | (0.011) | (0.012) | (0.012) | (0.013) |
| Household Income | 0.003 | 0.005 | 0.007 | −0.007 |
| | (0.009) | (0.010) | (0.009) | (0.009) |
| Unemployed | 0.060 | 0.063 | 0.032 | 0.058 |
| | (0.045) | (0.050) | (0.042) | (0.035) |
| Retired | 0.012 | 0.013 | 0.024 | 0.058 |
| | (0.035) | (0.041) | (0.043) | (0.041) |
| Party ID | −0.042** | −0.040** | −0.030 | −0.028* |
| | (0.014) | (0.015) | (0.017) | (0.013) |
| Ideology | 0.010 | 0.0004 | 0.003 | 0.003 |
| | (0.014) | (0.016) | (0.018) | (0.015) |
| Constant | 1.132*** | 1.122*** | 1.117*** | 1.060*** |
| | (0.083) | (0.100) | (0.085) | (0.088) |
| Observations | 398 | 360 | 313 | 377 |
| $R^2$ | 0.088 | 0.083 | 0.067 | 0.068 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.065 | 0.057 | 0.037 | 0.043 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are ITT estimands.

## CACE Results

To obtain estimates of the complier-average causal effect (CACE) of the intervention, I employ a two-stage least squares (2SLS) instrumental variables approach that uses treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (as a measure of treatment exposure). Random assignment to treatment ensures that the instrument (treatment assignment) can only affect outcomes through exposure to treatment (as proxied by newsletter recall). Additionally, treatment assignment is a strong instrument for newsletter recall; see Appendix Table A.1.1 column 3 for the estimated effect of treatment assignment on newsletter recall ($p < 0.001$). The 2SLS procedure regresses newsletter recall on treatment assignment, then regresses outcomes on the instrumented (predicted) recall to obtain an estimate of the treatment effect on compliers.

Table A.4.1: Estimated CACE on News Consumption and Political Knowledge

| | *Hypothesis 1* | | *Hypothesis 2* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Days/Week Cons. News | Read Online Newspaper | Total Pol. Know. | National Pol. Know. | State/Local Pol. Know. |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| Instrumented Recall | −0.055 | 0.032 | −0.022 | −0.002 | −0.043 |
| | (0.050) | (0.125) | (0.032) | (0.034) | (0.049) |
| Constant | −0.003 | −0.035 | 0.034** | 0.019 | 0.050** |
| | (0.018) | (0.044) | (0.011) | (0.012) | (0.017) |
| Observations | 439 | 439 | 382 | 382 | 382 |
| $R^2$ | −0.042 | 0.008 | −0.008 | −0.00005 | −0.013 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.045 | 0.006 | −0.011 | −0.003 | −0.015 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement). These analyses were not pre-registered.

Table A.4.2: Estimated CACE on Political Interest, Internal Efficacy, and Turnout

| | *Hypothesis 3: Political Interest* | | | | *Hypothesis 3: Internal Efficacy* | | | *Hypothesis 3: Turnout* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gen. Pol. Int. | Nat. Pol. Int. | Sta. Pol. Int. | Loc. Pol. Int. | Internal Index | Understands Pol. | Pol. Too Complex | Turnout |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| Instrumented Recall | −0.029 | −0.058 | −0.044 | 0.010 | −0.021 | −0.013 | −0.037 | −0.023 |
| | (0.038) | (0.043) | (0.047) | (0.056) | (0.046) | (0.042) | (0.073) | (0.072) |
| Constant | −0.018 | −0.007 | −0.020 | −0.026 | −0.0005 | −0.002 | 0.002 | 0.941*** |
| | (0.013) | (0.015) | (0.016) | (0.020) | (0.016) | (0.015) | (0.026) | (0.025) |
| Observations | 439 | 439 | 439 | 438 | 439 | 439 | 438 | 439 |
| $R^2$ | −0.015 | −0.042 | −0.022 | 0.0004 | −0.010 | −0.005 | −0.011 | −0.005 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.018 | −0.045 | −0.025 | −0.002 | −0.012 | −0.007 | −0.013 | −0.007 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement). These analyses were not pre-registered.

## Table A.4.3: Estimated CACE on Non-Voting Engagement Behaviors

| | *Hypothesis 3: Non-Voting Political Engagement* | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NV Eng. Index | Pol. Meeting | Display Sign | Volunteer | Protest | Contact Off. | Donation | Write Opinion |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
| Instrumented Recall | 0.031 | 0.012 | −0.056 | −0.052 | 0.106 | 0.116 | 0.107 | −0.016 |
| | (0.052) | (0.094) | (0.093) | (0.085) | (0.061) | (0.120) | (0.136) | (0.043) |
| Constant | 0.129*** | 0.117*** | 0.136*** | 0.110*** | 0.013 | 0.192*** | 0.306*** | 0.028 |
| | (0.018) | (0.033) | (0.033) | (0.030) | (0.021) | (0.042) | (0.048) | (0.015) |
| Observations | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 | 439 |
| $R^2$ | 0.014 | 0.004 | 0.004 | −0.022 | −0.013 | 0.017 | 0.008 | −0.002 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.011 | 0.001 | 0.001 | −0.024 | −0.016 | 0.015 | 0.006 | −0.004 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). These analyses were not pre-registered.

## Table A.4.4: Estimated CACE on Perceptions of Media and Election Fairness

| | *Hypothesis 4: Media Confidence* | | | | *Hypothesis 4: Election Confidence* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Media Confidence Index | Accurate | Trustworthy | Informative | Elections are Fair | Fraud Rare |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Instrumented Recall | 0.013 | −0.009 | 0.069 | −0.024 | 0.015 | −0.031 |
| | (0.047) | (0.068) | (0.060) | (0.060) | (0.074) | (0.049) |
| Constant | 0.048** | 0.077** | 0.040 | 0.029 | 0.029 | 0.012 |
| | (0.017) | (0.024) | (0.021) | (0.021) | (0.026) | (0.018) |
| Observations | 437 | 436 | 436 | 437 | 437 | 358 |
| $R^2$ | 0.002 | −0.001 | 0.001 | −0.003 | −0.001 | 0.007 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.00002 | −0.004 | −0.001 | −0.006 | −0.003 | 0.004 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement). These analyses were not pre-registered.

## Table A.4.5: Estimated CACE on Government Trust and External Efficacy

| | *Hypothesis 4: Government Trust* | | | *Hypothesis 4: External Efficacy* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gov. Trust Index | Trust to Do Right | Responsive | External Index | Officials Care | Voice Heard |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Instrumented Recall | 0.042 | 0.018 | 0.067 | 0.062 | 0.075 | 0.038 |
| | (0.057) | (0.059) | (0.070) | (0.061) | (0.070) | (0.062) |
| Constant | 0.038 | 0.054* | 0.022 | 0.051* | 0.055* | 0.049* |
| | (0.020) | (0.021) | (0.025) | (0.021) | (0.025) | (0.022) |
| Observations | 436 | 436 | 436 | 437 | 437 | 433 |
| $R^2$ | −0.021 | −0.006 | −0.029 | −0.014 | −0.016 | −0.003 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.023 | −0.008 | −0.031 | −0.016 | −0.019 | −0.005 |
| | *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement). These analyses were not pre-registered.

Table A.4.6: Estimated CACE on Support for Democratic Norms

| | *Hypothesis 5* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Norm Index | Eq. Opp. Vote | No Viol. | Enf. Free of Pol. | Respect Courts | Respect Elec. |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) |
| Instrumented Recall | −0.007 | 0.005 | −0.057 | −0.032 | 0.031 | 0.016 |
| | (0.020) | (0.058) | (0.040) | (0.043) | (0.043) | (0.033) |
| Constant | 0.013 | 0.008 | 0.012 | 0.032* | 0.009 | 0.007 |
| | (0.007) | (0.020) | (0.014) | (0.015) | (0.015) | (0.012) |
| Observations | 439 | 438 | 439 | 439 | 438 | 438 |
| $R^2$ | −0.003 | 0.001 | −0.037 | −0.027 | −0.023 | −0.012 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.005 | −0.002 | −0.040 | −0.029 | −0.025 | −0.014 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). All outcome variables are change variables (post- minus pre-treatment measurement). These analyses were not pre-registered.

Table A.4.7: Estimated CACE on "Correct" Voting

| | *Hypothesis 6* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | US Senate | US House | NC Senate | NC House |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Instrumented Recall | 0.037 | −0.006 | −0.010 | −0.019 |
| | (0.071) | (0.089) | (0.082) | (0.075) |
| Constant | 0.928*** | 0.922*** | 0.945*** | 0.942*** |
| | (0.026) | (0.031) | (0.030) | (0.027) |
| Observations | 412 | 373 | 325 | 391 |
| $R^2$ | −0.027 | 0.002 | 0.004 | 0.009 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | −0.030 | −0.001 | 0.001 | 0.006 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | | | |

*Note:* All estimates are CACE estimands, estimated via 2SLS with treatment assignment as an instrument for newsletter recall (treatment exposure). These analyses were not pre-registered.

**Hierarchical Linear Modeling Results**

Table A.5.1: Hierarchical Linear Modeling Estimation of ITT Effect

| | Random Intercepts | Random Slopes |
|---|---|---|
| Fixed Effects | (1) | (2) |
| Treatment | 0.002 | 0.002 |
| | (0.004) | (0.004) |
| Constant | 0.183*** | 0.183*** |
| | (0.057) | (0.057) |
| Observations | 14,122 | 14,122 |
| Groups (Outcomes) | 33 | 33 |
| Random Intercepts Variance | 0.109 | 0.108 |
| Random Slopes Variance | | 0.000 |
| Residual Variance | 0.056 | 0.056 |
| *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001 | | |

*Note:* Each model estimates a fixed effect of treatment (ITT) across all outcomes of interest and a random intercept for each outcome. The model reported in column 2 additionally estimates random slopes for each outcome.

# Study Information

I conducted a two-wave mail-to-web field experiment between September 1st 2022 and January 2nd 2023. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Duke University under protocol #2023-0005. Pre-registration materials for this study are available here.

An address-based probability sample was recruited from registered voters of Chatham County, North Carolina. I obtained the North Carolina State Board of Elections' list of registered voters in Chatham County on August 9th 2022. This file is updated weekly by the Board of Elections and provides the name, address, age, party affiliation, and (for most of the file) sex and race, among other variables.

The original file contained 68,423 records. I removed 8,515 records that were listed as "removed" from the voter rolls, which occurs when a formerly registered person has moved out of the county or is otherwise no longer eligible to vote in that county. I then removed 490 records listed as "denied," which occurs when an attempt to register to vote is denied by the Board of Elections (often due to paperwork being returned as undeliverable). Finally, I removed 6 records with confidential addresses. This provided 59,412 records, from which I

drew an initial random sample of 10,000 registered voters.

Chatham County was selected for the study for several reasons. First, Chatham County is located within the greater Triangle area served by *The News & Observer* newspaper, has strong ties to the Triangle,[1] and exists within a common (television) media market (the Raleigh-Durham-Fayetteville designated market area, per Nielsen). Second, in contrast to several other counties in the newspaper's service area (such as Wake, Durham, and Orange Counties), Chatham County is relatively purple. Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton carried the county by just 10 points in 2016 while the 2020 nominee, Joe Biden, did so by 12 points. While Democrats are certainly favored in Chatham, Republicans for statewide office do occasionally carry the county. Concentrating the study in Chatham thus presented an opportunity to achieve greater participation across the partisan spectrum and a greater potential for vote choice to matter. Finally, in the contemporary iteration of redistricting, the entire county was included in a single US House district, a single State Senate district, and a single State House district. This convenience reduced the technical challenges associated with fielding the vote preference and vote choice questions on the pre- and post-treatment surveys because all participants could be asked about the same two candidates for each of these contests.

On September 1$^{st}$, the 10,000 sampled registered voters were each mailed a letter inviting them to participate in a study conducted by researchers at Duke University and supported by the non-partisan Knight Foundation. The envelope included a visible $1 bill as a cash pre-incentive. As an additional participation incentive, the letter noted the invitee would be eligible to win a $50 prize by completing the survey; the letter also advised that participants in the initial survey would receive another invitation for a later follow-up survey with another chance to win a $50 prize. The letter provided a URL to an online survey and a unique code that would allow the invited participant to access and complete the survey, and requested that the initial survey be completed by September 25$^{th}$.

The pre-treatment survey was hosted on the Qualtrics web survey platform. After entering their unique access code, recruited respondents were provided additional information about the study and screened for eligibility. Respondents who did not consent to participate, did not report being at least 18 years of age, or who reported not residing in North Carolina were thanked for their time and removed from the study. Of the 1,244 participants who accessed the survey, 7 did not consent, 3 reported being under the age of 18, and 8 reported residing outside North Carolina. Of the remaining 1,226 consenting respondents, 1,156 reached the final question of the survey. Of these, 2 were removed because they failed at least two of six pre-registered quality checks: reported age did not match reported birth year (within a tolerance of 2 years), reported zip code is not located in Chatham County, non-sequitur or item non-response to an open-ended question about favorite news source, reporting using a social media platform that does not exist (straightlining), reporting watching a television channel that does not exist (straightlining), or completing the survey in less than a third of the median time (speeding). The final pre-treatment survey sample was thus 1,154. The median completion time for the pre-treatment survey was 23 minutes.

At the end of the pre-treatment survey, respondents were provided an opportunity to

[1]Indeed, two suburbs of Raleigh (Cary and Apex) include incorporated territory in both Chatham County and Raleigh's home county of Wake.

submit an email address to be entered into a drawing to win one of 20 completion prizes, each in the amount of $50. Respondents were advised that this email would be used to contact them if they won one of the prizes, and were encouraged to provide a real email address that they check regularly. A total of 992 respondents provided an email (86.0 percent). Of the 20 respondents who were randomly selected to receive a $50 (in the form of an electronic Visa gift card) and notified by email, 18 responded to collect their prize, providing a small but meaningful indication that most of the 992 respondents provided a real email.

After the pre-treatment survey closed on September 26th, the names, physical mailing addresses, and email addresses for these 992 participants were confidentially provided to *The News & Observer* on to check for any existing subscribers identifiable in the paper's records.[2] 69 such subscribers were identified and removed from the experimental sample, leaving 923 to be assigned to treatment or control. Because *The News & Observer* had agreed to provide 500 free subscriptions for the study, I assigned 500 participants to the treatment condition (the free subscription) and the remaining 423 to the control condition by simple random assignment.

Beginning September 30th, *The News & Observer* individually emailed all 500 members of the treatment group a congratulatory message notifying them that they have been selected to receive a free two-month digital subscription to the newspaper. Subsequent reminder emails about the free subscription were sent weekly. These emails provided username and login information for accessing the *News & Observer*'s website and stressed that there was no cost or financial obligation associated with using the subscription. Beginning October 7th, treatment group participants also received several regular newsletter emails from the newspaper, including daily morning and evening briefings, a weekly politics newsletter, and a breaking news newsletter. The free subscriptions were ended on November 30th, at which time the paper provided an offer to sign up for a paid subscription.

The 1,156 study participants who completed the pre-treatment survey (including the 923 included in the experiment) were mailed a second letter on December 1st thanking them for their earlier participation and inviting them to participate in a follow-up survey. As with the first letter, the envelope included a visible $1 bill as a cash pre-incentive. As an additional participation incentive, the letter noted the invitee would be eligible to win a $50 prize by completing the follow-up survey. The letter again provided a URL to an online survey and the same unique code that would allow the invited participant to access and complete the survey. The letter requested that the follow-up survey be completed by December 31st.

This post-treatment survey was also hosted on the Qualtrics web survey platform. After entering their unique access code, respondents were provided reminder information about the study, provided an opportunity to re-consent or to decline further participation, and screened for eligibility. Respondents who did not re-consent, did not report being at least 18 years of age, or who reported not residing in North Carolina were thanked for their time and removed from the study. Of the 5,70 participants who accessed the survey, 2 declined to participate further; no other participants were screened out. Of the remaining

[2]We took substantial pains to protect the study participants' privacy. Only the name and email address information for the treatment group was retained by the paper during the study. As per our agreement, at the conclusion of the study the newspaper was only permitted to retain volunteered information from participants who activated a subscription with the paper, and was requested to destroy all other records of personally identifiable information connected to the study.

568 re-consenting respondents, 552 reached the final question of the survey. Of these, 2 were removed because they failed at least two of six pre-registered quality checks: reported age did not match reported birth year (within a tolerance of 2 years), reported zip code is not located in Chatham County, non-sequitur or item non-response to an open-ended question about favorite news source, reporting using a social media platform that does not exist (straightlining), reporting watching a television channel that does not exist (straightlining), or completing the survey in less than a third of the median time (speeding). The final pre-treatment survey sample was thus 552. Of these, 439 were included in the experiment in either the treatment or control group. The median completion time for the post-treatment survey was 16 minutes.

At the end of the post-treatment survey, respondents were provided an opportunity to submit an email address to be entered into a drawing to win one of 20 completion prizes, each in the amount of $50. Respondents were again advised that this email would be used to contact them if they won one of the prizes, and were encouraged to provide a real email address that they check regularly. A total of 491 respondents provided an email (88.6 percent). Of the 20 respondents who were randomly selected to receive a $50 (in the form of an electronic Visa gift card) and notified by email, 17 responded to collect their prize.

The demographic characteristics for the pre-treatment survey sample, post-treatment survey sample, experimental study study sample, and the target population of study (Chatham County registered voters) are provided in Table B.1.1. The observations are not weighted. As with all survey research, the design and collection of data has limitations, and resulting estimates may involve unmeasured error that limits representativeness to the target population.

## Sample Characteristics

Table B.1.1: Sample Characteristics on Selected Variables

| | *Study Sample* | | | *Chatham County* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Survey 1 | Survey 2 | Experiment | Registered Voters |
| Age | 59.7 | 63.2 | 61.6 | 54.4 |
| Male | 0.477 | 0.500 | 0.490 | 46.2* |
| Nonwhite | 0.100 | 0.056 | 0.064 | 0.167* |
| Bachelor's or Higher | 0.767 | 0.802 | 0.779 | 0.450† |
| Median Household Income | $100-150k | $100-150k | $100-150k | $76,791† |
| Retired | 0.471 | 0.545 | 0.513 | 0.422† |
| Unemployed | 0.016 | 0.009 | 0.009 | 0.031‡ |
| Democrat | 0.414 | 0.433 | 0.437 | 0.358 |
| Independent/Other Party | 0.406 | 0.393 | 0.387 | 0.399 |
| Republican | 0.179 | 0.174 | 0.175 | 0.238 |
| N | 1,154 | 552 | 439 | 59,412 |

* Reflects the proportion of known sex or race cases in the voter file. About 9.3 percent of observations do not identify sex and 10.3 percent do not identify race.
† Reflects county-wide statistics drawn from the US Census Bureau; registered voter statistics may differ. Estimate of retired persons reflects proportion of those aged 16 or more that are not in the labor force.
‡ Reflects county-wide statistics for August 2022 (not seasonally adjusted), drawn from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; registered voter statistics may differ.

**Balance Tests**

Table B.2.1: Balance Tests for Treatment Assignment

| Variable | Treatment | Control | Difference | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 61.2 | 62.2 | −0.939 | 0.515 |
| Male | 0.469 | 0.515 | −0.046 | 0.339 |
| Nonwhite | 0.065 | 0.062 | 0.003 | 0.886 |
| Education | 5.114 | 4.912 | 0.202 | 0.074 |
| Household Income | 5.694 | 5.561 | 0.133 | 0.334 |
| Party ID | 3.069 | 3.211 | −0.142 | 0.485 |
| Ideology | 3.432 | 3.510 | −0.078 | 0.637 |
| Pol. Interest (National) | 0.714 | 0.703 | 0.011 | 0.626 |
| Pol. Interest (State) | 0.628 | 0.622 | 0.006 | 0.793 |
| Pol. Interest (Local) | 0.484 | 0.482 | 0.002 | 0.927 |
| News Consumption | 0.877 | 0.870 | 0.007 | 0.764 |
| N | 245 | 194 | | |

Data from 439 respondents in the experimental sample. The table displays the mean value of each variable for the treatment and control groups, the difference in means between them, and the p-value of a t-test comparing the two group means.

**Outcome Measures**

News consumption was measured with two variables: the number of days per week in which the respondent typically consumes news (via any medium), and a dichotomous variable for whether the respondent read an online newspaper in the past week.

Political knowledge was measured by 10 multiple-choice factual knowledge questions. Five questions pertain to national politics and are adapted from standard batteries for political knowledge. The remaining five are similarly structured questions that pertain to the subnational politics of North Carolina and Chatham County. I combine these questions into three additive indices: a national knowledge scale, a subnational knowledge scale, and an overall knowledge scale. As recommended by Clifford and Jerit (2016), I asked respondents before the battery to pledge not to look up the answers. Following Motta, Callaghan and Smith (2017), I also included a question that asked when an obscure court case was decided; it is very unlikely that any respondent would know the answer to this question without looking it up. This final question is not included in any of the indices. For the political knowledge outcomes only, I exclude participants who either failed to make the pledge or correctly answered the court case question (analysis n = 382 for these outcomes).

I measured several forms of political interest and engagement. First, I measured political interest at the national, state, and local levels (each via two questions, each with a 5-point

scale), as well as an overall measure of political interest that averages across the three levels of government. Second, I measured internal political efficacy with two standard variables (each on a balanced 6-point scale) that assess the respondent's belief that they have a good understanding of contemporary political issues, and their belief that politics is too complicated to understand (reverse-coded). I average these two questions for an overall measure of internal political efficacy. Third, I measure turnout by validating each respondent's participation in the November 2022 general election from state election records.[3] Finally, the post-treatment survey asked about several non-voting forms of political participation: attending local political meetings, putting up a political sign, volunteering for a candidate or campaign, attending a protest, contacting a public official, donating to a candidate or campaign, or writing an op-ed or letter on a public issue. I combine these seven dichotomous variables into an additive index of non-voting political participation.

I also measured several forms of institutional trust. I measured the extent to which respondents consider the news media to be trustworthy, accurate, and informative (each on a balanced 6-point scale); I average these three variables for an overall measure of confidence in media. Trust in government was measured with two questions (each on a balanced 6-point scale) that asked about government responsiveness and trust in the government to "do what's right"; I average these two variables for an overall measure of government trust. I measured external efficacy with two standard questions (each on a balanced 6-point scale) that assessed perceptions that government officials care what people like the respondent think, and that the respondent has a voice in government decisions that affect them. Finally, I measured confidence in elections with two variables intended to capture beliefs that today's elections are free and fair (on a balanced 6-point scale), and perceptions of the rate of fraudulent voting (on an 8-point scale, reverse coded).

Support for democratic norms was measured with five variables (each on a balanced 6-point scale) that assessed support for equal opportunity to vote, support for political violence (reverse-coded), opposition to political influence in law enforcement, respect for court rulings, and respect for the results of free and fair elections. I average across these five variables to obtain an overall measure of support for democratic norms.

Finally, following Lau and Redlawsk (1997), I assess the incidence of "correct" voting. I estimate ideal points on a unidimensional left-right scale of policy attitudes for both individual respondents and the major-party nominees for four state and federal contests decided during the 2022 general election. In the pre-treatment survey, I measure respondents' policy attitudes on 11 issues (marriage equality, affirmative action, abortion, immigration, government health insurance, the minimum wage, taxing the wealthy, environmental regulation, Medicaid expansion, school choice vouchers, and parental control over school curricula), as well as party identification (7-point scale) and self-placement on a 7-point scale of liberal-conservative. In the weeks leading up to the election, four research assistants compiled information—from campaign websites, press coverage, public statements, social media accounts, and so forth—on the policy positions of local Democratic and Republican nominees for U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives (NC District 9), NC State Senate (District

[3]The pre-registration specified using a self-reported measure of turnout. Because state records provide a superior, definitive measure of turnout behavior, I analyze turnout with the validated measure instead. This choice does not affect the results.

20), and NC State House of Representatives (District 54). Just before Election Day, each research assistant independently answered the same questions fielded to respondents "on behalf of" each of the eight candidates. I average these four "candidate" responses to estimate the candidates' policy positions in the same space as respondents' preferences. After rescaling each variable to vary between 0 and 1, I average the items for each respondent and candidate to obtain a single left-right ideal point for each individual in each contest.[4] For each contest, a respondent casts a "correct" vote (1) if they voted for the closer candidate in this common left-right space, or casts a "incorrect" vote (0) if they voted for the more distant candidate.

The exact question wording and responses options are provided in the next section.

## Survey Questionnaires

> *Note:* Unless otherwise specified, each question was asked in both the pre-treatment survey and the post-treatment survey. A single asterisk (∗) indicates that a question was asked only in the pre-treatment survey. A double asterisk (∗∗) indicates that a question was asked only in the post-treatment survey.

*Consent and Screening*

(∗) Thank you for your interest in participating in this survey by researchers at Duke University. To better understand public opinion about media and current events in Chatham County, this research study will ask you to answer a series of questions about you and your opinions about topics in the news. We think that the survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you may choose to be entered into a drawing to receive 1 of 20 Visa gift cards, each in the amount of $50. You may withdraw at any time and you may refuse to answer any questions, but you must proceed to the final screen of the survey and elect to be entered in order to be eligible for the drawing. You may also receive communication related to the study, including a follow-up survey, in the coming months. The research will not benefit you personally. We know of no risks resulting from participating in the study. Your participation is voluntary. We will store your survey responses separate from your mailing address and email address (if you decide to enter the drawing). Although collected data may be made public or used for future research purposes, your responses will always remain confidential, and any reported data from the study will not include information that could individually identify you. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the researchers at [redacted]. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, contact Duke's Campus Institutional Review Board at [redacted]. If writing to the Campus IRB, please reference protocol ID #2023-0005.

- I consent to participate, begin the study.
- I do NOT consent.

(∗∗) Thank you for your interest in participating in this survey by researchers at Duke University. To better understand public opinion about media and current events in Chatham County, this research study will ask you to answer a series of questions about you and your opinions about topics in the news. We think that the survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you may choose to be entered into a drawing to receive 1 of 20 Visa gift cards, each in the amount of $50. You may withdraw at any time and you may refuse to answer any questions, but you must proceed to the final screen of the survey and elect to be entered in order to be eligible for the drawing. The research will not benefit you personally. We know of no risks resulting from participating in the study. Your participation is voluntary. We will store your survey responses separate from your mailing address and email address (if you decide to enter the drawing). Although collected data may be made public or used for future research purposes, your responses will always remain confidential, and any reported data from the study will not include information that could individually identify you. If you have any questions about the research, please contact the researchers at [redacted]. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, contact Duke's Campus Institutional Review Board at [redacted]. If writing to the Campus IRB, please reference protocol ID #2023-0005.

- I consent to participate, begin the survey.
- I do NOT wish to participate.

[4] As per the pre-registration, I exclude the Medicaid expansion, school choice vouchers, and school curricula items for federal offices, and exclude the immigration, taxing the wealthy, and government health insurance items for state offices, such that each office is considered with respect to eight policy issues plus partisanship and ideology. I adopt a naive approach to evaluating issue importance. Specifically, I treat all issues for which a respondent provides a position as "important," and weigh them equally. In practice, this functionally means that all issues are weighed as equally important because there are only 10 missing data points across all 5,707 pre-treatment policy position cells in the final dataset.

Thank you. We first have just a few questions to confirm your eligibility for the survey. What is your age? Please enter a whole number.

In which state do you currently reside?
- I do not reside in the United States
- Alabama
- ...
- Wyoming

*News Consumption*

Thank you. You have qualified for the survey. We want to begin by asking you some questions about topics in the news. Politics can be fast-paced, and many people do not follow every new story. How often do you pay attention to what's going on in national politics?
- Always
- Most of the time
- About half the time
- Sometimes
- Not at all

How often do you pay attention to what's going on in politics in your home state?
- Always
- ...
- Not at all

How often do you pay attention to what's going on in politics in your home town?
- Always
- ...
- Not at all

Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns, while others follow campaigns closely. How about you? Generally speaking, how interested are you in national political campaigns?
- Not at all interested
- Slightly interested
- Moderately interested
- Very interested
- Extremely interested

Generally speaking, how interested are you in political campaigns in your home state?
- Not at all interested
- ...
- Extremely interested

Generally speaking, how interested are you in political campaigns in your home town?
- Not at all interested
- ...
- Extremely interested

During a typical week, how many days, if any, do you watch, read, or listen to news, not including sports news?
- 0 days
- 1 day
- ...
- 7 days

In the past week, have you... (please check all that apply)
- Used social media (such as Facebook or YouTube)
- Watched news on television
- Read a newspaper (in print or online)
- Listened to a radio news program, talk radio, or news podcast
- None of these

[If TV Yes] In the past week, did you watch local news, national news, or both on television?
- Local newscast
- National newscast
- Both

[If TV Yes] Which of these networks did you watch on television? Please check all that apply.
- ABC
- CBS
- CNN
- Fox News
- GRQ
- MSNBC
- NBC
- NewsMax
- OAN
- PBS
- Something else

[If SM Yes] In the past week, did you do any of the following on social media? Please check all that apply.
- Posted a story, photo, video, or link about politics
- Posted a comment about politics
- Read a story or watched a video about politics
- Followed a political event live
- Forwarded a story, photo, video, or link about politics to friends
- None of these

[If SM Yes] Which of these social media sites did you use in the past week? Please check all that apply.
- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Doromojo
- TikTok
- Truth Social
- Parler
- Gab
- Something else

[If Newspaper Yes] In the past week, did you read a print newspaper, an online newspaper, or both?
- Print newspaper
- Online newspaper
- Both

What is your favorite source of news? This could be a website, a television network, a radio station, a social media platform, or another source.
- (Open-ended text entry.)

(∗) How much money do you typically spend on newspapers each month (such as for printed newspapers, digital newspapers, or online blogs)?

- $0
- $1 to $9
- $10 to $19
- $20 to $49
- $50 to $99
- $100 to $199
- $200 or more

(∗∗) In the past month, which of the following news organizations have you received email newsletters from, if any?
- Raleigh News & Observer
- New York Times
- Washington Post
- Wall Street Journal
- NPR (WUNC, WFAE, etc.)
- Axios
- The Hill
- Charlotte Observer
- Politico
- Chatham News & Record
- INDY Week
- Cardinal & Pine
- None of these

*Voting and Engagement*

(∗) Are you currently registered to vote in North Carolina?
- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

(∗) Do you intend to vote in the 2022 General Election taking place on November 8th?
- Yes, definitely
- Probably
- I already voted (early or absentee)
- No
- I haven't decided whether I will vote

(∗) [If Intends to Vote] In the race for US Senator for North Carolina, who do you prefer?
- Cheri Beasley
- Ted Budd
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗) [If Intends to Vote] In the race for US House Representative for District 9, who do you prefer?
- Ben Clark
- Richard Hudson
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗) [If Intends to Vote] In the race for North Carolina State Senate District 20, who do you prefer?
- Natalie Murdock
- Alvin Reed
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗) [If Intends to Vote] In the race for North Carolina State House Representative for District 54, who do you prefer?
- Robert Reives
- Walter Petty
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗∗) During the past year, did you... (please check all that apply):
- Attend a local political meeting, such as school board or city council
- Put up a political sign, such as a lawn sign or bumper sticker
- Volunteer or work for a political candidate or campaign
- Contact a public official
- Donate money to a candidate, campaign, or political organization
- Write an op-ed or letter to the editor about a public issue
- Donate blood
- None of these

(∗∗) In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren't registered, they were sick, or they just didn't have time. Regarding the General Election that took place on November 8th, 2022, which of the following statements best describes you?
- I did NOT vote.
- I thought about voting this time, but didn't.
- I usually vote, but didn't this time.
- I attempted to vote, but did not or could not.
- I am sure that I voted.

(∗∗) [If Voted] In the race for US Senator for North Carolina, for whom did you vote?
- Cheri Beasley
- Ted Budd
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗∗) [If Voted] In the race for US House Representative for District 9, for whom did you vote?
- Ben Clark
- Richard Hudson
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗∗) [If Voted] In the race for North Carolina State Senate District 20, for whom did you vote?
- Natalie Murdock
- Alvin Reed
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗∗) [If Voted] In the race for North Carolina State House Representative for District 54, for whom did you vote?
- Robert Reives
- Walter Petty
- Someone else
- Undecided
- No one

(∗∗) [If Did Not Vote] What is the main reason you did not vote?

- Forgot
- Wasn't interested
- Too busy
- Didn't like the candidates
- Not registered to vote
- Didn't have the correct form of identification
- Out of town
- Sick or disabled
- Lack of transportation
- Bad weather
- The line at the polls was too long
- I wasn't allowed to vote, even though I tried
- I requested an absentee ballot, but I didn't receive it
- Didn't know where to vote
- Didn't feel I knew enough about the candidates
- Concern about exposing myself to the coronavirus
- Concern about violence at the polls
- Something else
- I'm not sure

*Political Preferences*

(∗) Next, we would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your opinions. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Other party (please specify)

(∗) [If Democrat] Would you call yourself a strong Democrat, or a not very strong Democrat?

- Strong
- Not very strong

(∗) [If Republican] Would you call yourself a strong Republican, or a not very strong Republican?

- Strong
- Not very strong

(∗) [If Neither] Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic Party or to the Republican Party?

- Closer to the Democratic Party
- Closer to the Republican Party
- Neither

(∗) Where would you place yourself on this scale?

- Extremely liberal
- Mostly liberal
- Slightly liberal
- Middle of the road
- Slightly conservative
- Mostly conservative
- Extremely conservative

(∗) How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

(∗) "This country would be better off if people put more emphasis on traditional family ties."

- Completely agree
- Moderately agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Moderately disagree
- Completely disagree

(∗) "Society is just as well off if people have priorities other than marriage and children."

- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(∗) "The government should do more to solve problems."

- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

(∗) "The less government, the better."

- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

(∗∗) Next, we would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your opinions. Which of the following issues are the most important to you? Please rank up to 3 issues.

- Abortion
- Affirmative action
- Immigration
- Same-sex marriage
- Health insurance
- Environmental regulation
- The minimum wage
- Tax rates
- NC Medicaid expansion
- School choice
- Parental rights in education
- Something else

> *Note:* The following issue preference questions were each asked in the pre-treatment questionnaire. In the post-treatment questionnaire, they were only asked if the corresponding issue was ranked as among the respondent's three most important issues above.

There has been a lot of talk recently about whether gay and lesbian couples should have the legal right to marry. How much do you support or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry legally?

- Strongly support
- Moderately support
- Slightly support
- Slightly oppose
- Moderately oppose
- Strongly oppose

Some people say that because of past discrimination, Black people should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of Black people is wrong because it gives Black people advantages they haven't earned. How much do you support or oppose preferential hiring of Black people?

- Strongly support

- ...
- Strongly oppose

In general, do you think of yourself as supporting or opposing legal abortion access?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

How much do you support or oppose allowing the children of immigrants, who came to the United States illegally, to remain in the United States and eventually apply for citizenship?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

Some people feel that there should be a government insurance plan, which would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone. Others feel that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals through private insurance plans. How much do you support or oppose a government insurance plan?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

The current federally mandated minimum wage is $7.25 per hour. Recently, Congress has been considering whether to increase the federal minimum wage. How much do you support or oppose increasing the federal minimum wage?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

How much do you support or oppose increasing the tax rate for wealthy Americans?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

Some people say that we should greatly increase federal environmental protections to preserve the natural environment. Others say that such measures are a burden for businesses and limit economic growth. How much do you support or oppose increasing federal environmental protections?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

North Carolina is one of several states that have chosen not to expand Medicaid, which would allow more low-income uninsured adults to have health insurance. Recently, the North Carolina legislature has debated whether to expand Medicaid in the state. How much do you support or oppose expanding Medicaid in North Carolina?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

The North Carolina legislature recently made changes that make it easier for families to obtain a school voucher, allowing them to use taxpayer dollars to send their child to a private school if they so choose. How much do you support or oppose this decision by the North Carolina legislature?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

Some people believe that parents should have a say in what gets taught in their children's schools. Other people believe that school teachers and administrators should determine what subjects are taught in the classroom. How much do you support or oppose parents in North Carolina being able to prevent schools from teaching subjects that they do not approve of?
- Strongly support
- ...
- Strongly oppose

*Institutional Trust and Efficacy*

Now we'll move to another set of topics. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

"I can count on the news media to be accurate."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"I consider the news media to be trustworthy."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"I find that the news media are informative."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

"I can trust the government to do what's right."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"The government is responsive to the concerns and interests of the public."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

"Most elected officials in government care what people like me think."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"I feel my voice is heard in government decisions that affect me."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

"I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues debated today."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"Sometimes, political issues seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

*Democratic Norms*

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

"All adult citizens should have equal opportunity to vote."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"It is justified for people to use political violence to pursue their political goals."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"Law enforcement investigations of elected officials and their associates should be free from political influence."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"Elected officials should obey court rulings, even when they disagree."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

"Americans should respect the results of a free and fair election, even when they dislike the outcome."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

Thinking about the current state of the country, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Elections are free and fair."
- Completely agree
- ...
- Completely disagree

*Information Environment*

(∗) The growth of the internet, social media platforms, and other modern communication technologies have offered unprecedented access to a range of news and opinion. In your view, has today's media environment made it easier or harder for you to be a well-informed citizen?
- Much harder
- Slightly harder
- About the same
- Slightly easier
- Much easier

(∗) Who do you think should be the most responsible for limiting the spread of false information on the internet?
- Each individual person
- Social media companies
- Traditional media organizations
- The government
- The legal system and the courts
- Someone else

(∗) Who do you think should be the most responsible for identifying what news information is true?
- Each individual person
- Social media companies
- Traditional media organizations
- The government
- The legal system and the courts
- Someone else

(∗) How much, if at all, do you feel a personal responsibility to only share information about politics that is true and accurate?
- Completely responsible
- Mostly responsible
- Somewhat responsible
- Slightly responsible
- Not at all responsible

(∗) How much, if at all, do you feel a personal responsibility to identify which information about politics is true and accurate?
- Completely responsible
- ...
- Not at all responsible

*Political Knowledge*

In the next segment, we're going to ask you some questions about current events. It is important to us the you do NOT use outside sources like the Internet to search for the correct answer. Will you answer the following questions without help from outside sources?
- Yes
- No

Who is the current Speaker of the US House of Representatives?
- Nancy Pelosi
- Harry Reid
- Marco Rubio
- Paul Ryan
- I don't know

How long is the term of office for a US Senator?
- 2 years
- 4 years
- 6 years
- 8 years
- I don't know

What job or political office is now held by John Roberts?
- Chair of the Democratic National Committee
- Senate Majority Leader
- Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
- Chair of the Republican National Committee
- I don't know

What job or political office is now held by Emmanuel Macron?
- Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- President of France
- Prime Minister of Australia
- Secretary of the Treasury
- I don't know

Who is the current Vice President of the United States?
- Elizabeth Warren
- Kamala Harris
- Chuck Schumer
- Mitch McConnell
- I don't know

Who is the current Governor of North Carolina?
- Roy Cooper
- Pat McCrory
- Terry McAuliffe
- Richard Burr
- I don't know

Which party currently controls the North Carolina State House of Representatives?
- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- Neither
- I don't know

Which party currently controls the North Carolina State Senate?
- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- Neither
- I don't know

What job or political office is now held by Tim Moore?
- North Carolina State Attorney General
- Speaker of the North Carolina State House of Representatives
- Mayor of Raleigh, North Carolina
- US Senator from North Carolina
- I don't know

How long is the term of office for a Chatham County Commissioner?
- 2 years
- 4 years
- 6 years
- 8 years
- I don't know

In what year did the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) decide the case *North Carolina v. Alford*?
- 1893
- 1926
- 1952
- 1970
- 2001
- I don't know

Out of every 1 million (1,000,000) votes cast in a typical election in the United States, which of the following do you think is closest to the true number of votes that are cast illegally?
- Less than 1 illegal vote
- 1 illegal vote
- 10 illegal votes
- 100 illegal votes
- 1,000 illegal votes
- 10,000 illegal votes
- 100,000 illegal votes
- More than 100,000 illegal votes
- I don't know

*Polarization*

(**) Next, we would like to get your feelings towards some groups in the news these days. We will use something we call a feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm towards a group. Ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable towards a group and don't care too much for that group. You would rate a group at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold towards that group.

(**) How would you rate your feelings towards: Democratic Party leaders? Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.

(**) How would you rate your feelings towards: Republican Party leaders? Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.

(**) How would you rate your feelings towards: Democratic Party voters? Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.

(**) How would you rate your feelings towards: Republican Party voters? Please enter a whole number between 0 and 100.

*Demographics*

Finally, we have some background questions for statistical purposes. Which of the following best describes your gender?
- Male
- Female
- Something else

What race or ethnic group best describes you? Please check all that apply.
- Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander
- Black or African-American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Middle Eastern
- Native American or Alaska Native
- White or European American
- Multi-race or something else

(*) What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
- Less than a high school degree or equivalent
- High school degree or equivalent (for example: GED)
- Some college, but no degree
- 2-year college degree (Associate's degree)
- 4-year college degree (Bachelor's degree)
- Postgraduate degree (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, etc.)

(*) What is your current employment status?
- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Full-time homemaker
- Retired

- Student
- Unemployed
- Something else

In what year were you born? Please enter a 4-digit number.

(∗) Which of the following describes your total annual household income from 2021—that is the total income everyone living in your household made together, before taxes, in 2021?

- Less than $10,000
- $10,000 to $29,999
- $30,000 to $49,999
- $50,000 to $69,999
- $70,000 to $99,999
- $100,000 to $150,000
- More than $150,000

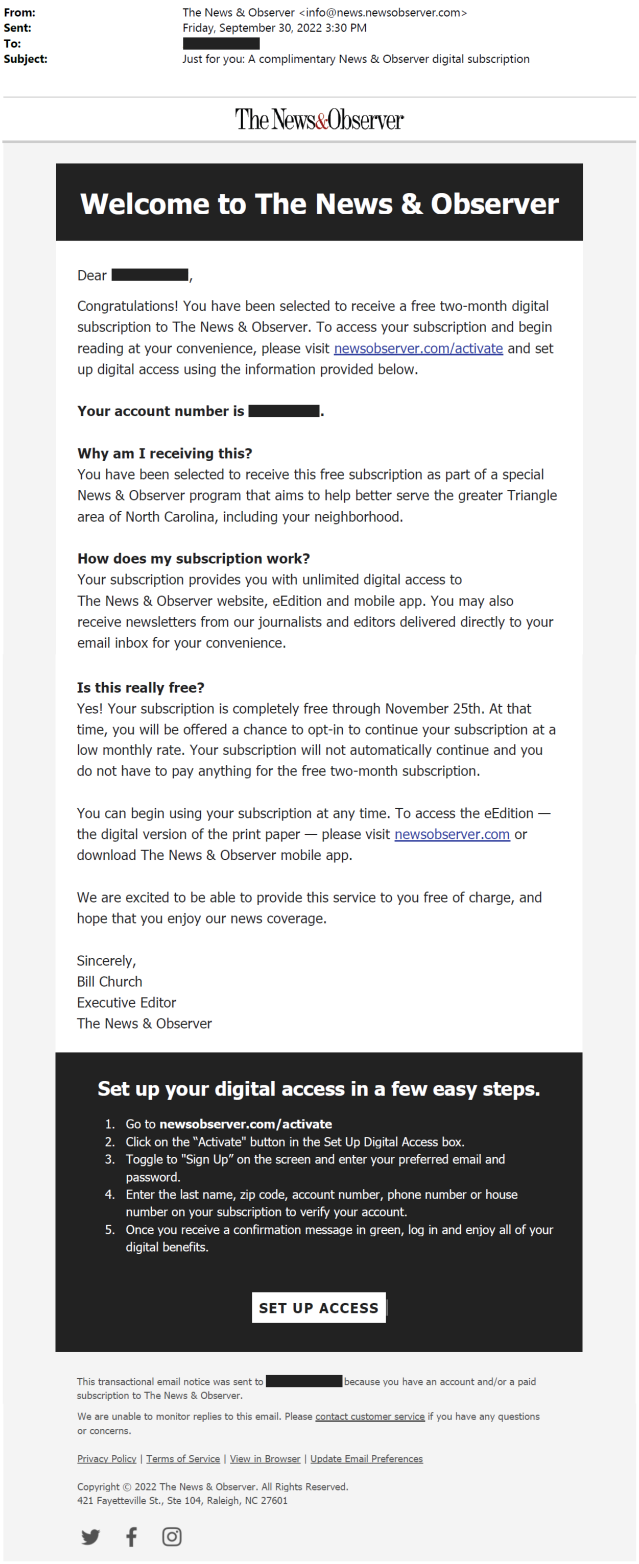
What is your zip code? Please enter a 4-digit number.

Thank you for completing this survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated. On the next page, you will have an opportunity to be entered into a drawing to win a prize of $50. We welcome your feedback. Please share any comments you have about the survey.

Thank you again for completing the survey. If you wish to be entered into a drawing to win a $50 Visa gift card, please provide a valid email address below. This information will be kept confidential. We will draw 20 random winners to each receive a $50 Visa gift card. Please be sure to provide an email address that you use regularly. We will use this email address to contact you for payment if you win a gift card. Your email address:

(∗) We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. We will contact you again in a few months to invite you to participate in a follow-up survey.
(∗∗) We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey.

**Emailed Notice of Free Subscription**



**From:** The News & Observer <info@news.newsobserver.com>
**Sent:** Friday, September 30, 2022 3:30 PM
**To:** [redacted]
**Subject:** Just for you: A complimentary News & Observer digital subscription

The News&Observer

## Welcome to The News & Observer

Dear [redacted],

Congratulations! You have been selected to receive a free two-month digital subscription to The News & Observer. To access your subscription and begin reading at your convenience, please visit newsobserver.com/activate and set up digital access using the information provided below.

**Your account number is [redacted].**

**Why am I receiving this?**
You have been selected to receive this free subscription as part of a special News & Observer program that aims to help better serve the greater Triangle area of North Carolina, including your neighborhood.

**How does my subscription work?**
Your subscription provides you with unlimited digital access to The News & Observer website, eEdition and mobile app. You may also receive newsletters from our journalists and editors delivered directly to your email inbox for your convenience.

**Is this really free?**
Yes! Your subscription is completely free through November 25th. At that time, you will be offered a chance to opt-in to continue your subscription at a low monthly rate. Your subscription will not automatically continue and you do not have to pay anything for the free two-month subscription.

You can begin using your subscription at any time. To access the eEdition — the digital version of the print paper — please visit newsobserver.com or download The News & Observer mobile app.

We are excited to be able to provide this service to you free of charge, and hope that you enjoy our news coverage.

Sincerely,
Bill Church
Executive Editor
The News & Observer

### Set up your digital access in a few easy steps.

1. Go to **newsobserver.com/activate**
2. Click on the "Activate" button in the Set Up Digital Access box.
3. Toggle to "Sign Up" on the screen and enter your preferred email and password.
4. Enter the last name, zip code, account number, phone number or house number on your subscription to verify your account.
5. Once you receive a confirmation message in green, log in and enjoy all of your digital benefits.

SET UP ACCESS

This transactional email notice was sent to [redacted] because you have an account and/or a paid subscription to The News & Observer.

We are unable to monitor replies to this email. Please contact customer service if you have any questions or concerns.

Privacy Policy | Terms of Service | View in Browser | Update Email Preferences


421 Fayetteville St., Ste 104, Raleigh, NC 27601

Figure B.5.1: Figure shows a redacted version of the email that *The News & Observer* sent to treated participants notifying them of the free digital subscription. This email was first sent on September 30$^{th}$ 2022. Follow-up emails were sent on October 6$^{th}$, October 13$^{th}$, October 25$^{th}$, November 2$^{nd}$, November 9$^{th}$, and November 21$^{st}$.

# References

Clifford, Scott and Jennifer Jerit. 2016. "Cheating on Political Knowledge Questions in Online Surveys: An Assessment of the Problem and Solutions." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 80(4):858–887.

Lau, Richard R. and David P. Redlawsk. 1997. "Voting Correctly." *American Political Science Review* 91(3):585–598.

Motta, Matthew P., Timothy H. Callaghan and Brianna Smith. 2017. "Looking for Answers: Identifying Search Behavior and Improving Knowledge-Based Data Quality in Online Surveys." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 29(4):575–603.