Shot by the Messenger: An Experimental Examination of the Effects of Party Cues on Public Opinion Regarding National Security and War

Research has shown that messages of intra-party harmony tend to be ignored by the news media, while internal disputes, especially within the governing party, generally receive prominent coverage. We examine how messages of party conflict and cooperation affect public opinion regarding national security, as well as whether and how the reputations of media outlets matter. We develop a typology of partisan messages in the news, determining their likely effects based on the characteristics of the speaker, listener, news outlet, and message content. We hypothesize that criticism of the president by his fellow partisan elites should be exceptionally damaging (especially on a "conservative" media outlet), while opposition party praise of the president should be the most helpful (especially on a "liberal" outlet). We test our hypotheses through an experiment and a national survey on attitudes regarding the Iraq War. The results show that credible communication (i.e., "costly" rhetoric harmful to a party) is more influential than "cheap talk" in moving public opinion. Ironically, news media outlets perceived as ideologically "hostile" can actually enhance the credibility of certain messages relative to "friendly" news sources.

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Introduction

In August 2006, political neophyte Ned Lamont scored a shocking victory over incumbent Senator Joseph Lieberman in the Connecticut Democratic primary election. Lieberman's defeat seemed highly improbable. He was an 18-year incumbent who six years earlier had been his party's vice presidential nominee on a ticket that won the national popular vote. Unlike most incumbents ousted in primaries, Lieberman was not implicated in a scandal, had trounced his prior opponent by a margin of nearly 2-1, and appeared ideologically compatible with his primary voters on most issues.

Instead, Lieberman's primary defeat appeared largely to have resulted from his support for the Bush Administration—particularly on Iraq. A CBS/NYT exit poll (CBS/NYT 2006) indicated that over three quarters of primary voters disapproved of the decision to go to war, and of those disapprovers, 60% voted for Lamont. Lamont himself argued prior to the election that Lieberman was "too likely to support the President, particularly on this war…It takes away from the Democratic voice" (Bacon 2006).[1]

In this study, we examine how elite messages like Lieberman's support of President Bush's Iraq policies affect public opinion. In particular, we seek to explain why partisans might disproportionately fear criticism from their fellow party members while seeking praise from

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[1]In the same article, Bacon added, "Other than his opposition to Lieberman's war support, Lamont doesn't have much of a campaign platform." Following Lieberman's defeat in the primary, popular liberal website Dailykos argued, "[Lieberman's defeat] was also about Lieberman's general desire to do Bush's bidding and to attack fellow Democrats. Which he did full throttle, attacking Lamont for being about just one issue–Iraq, sounding suspiciously like a lot of Republicans in making that charge" (Dailykos.com 2006).

across the aisle. While prior research has given some basic intuition about the potential effects of different elite messages, we use national survey data and a controlled experiment to determine exactly *when* and *how* public opinion is influenced by various partisan messages emanating from different sources and media outlets.

Our theoretical framework is general. However, we focus on war and related national security policies as a theoretically interesting and politically consequential application of our framework. In the former case, prior theories of public opinion and foreign policy have generally ignored the strategic incentives of media actors and their potential effects on the *nature* of the information upon which distinct subgroups of the public base their opinions, as well as on the persuasiveness of different types of elite rhetoric emanating from different media sources. In the latter, because typical Americans tend to know relatively little about foreign affairs (Holsti 2004) – and less than with respect to domestic policy (Edwards 1983, Sobel 1993, Canes-Wrone 2006) --) – they are particularly dependent upon elite cues in determining whether to support or oppose a presidential foreign policy initiative, like a military conflict. This makes individuals' credibility assessments especially important in the realm of foreign policy.

We begin in the next section by explicating our theoretical framework. After briefly situating our theory in the pertinent literature, we present a typology of partisan messages in the news, determining the likely effects of these messages based on the characteristics of the speaker, listener, news organization, and the valence of the message itself. We examine how varying the party of the source and respondent, as well as the valence of the message and the identity of the media organization conveying it influence the credibility, and hence effectiveness, of such messages. We argue that the influence of partisan messages on viewers will depend upon whether: a) the speaker shares the viewer's party affiliation, b) the message imposes some cost upon the speaker, and c) the news outlet conveying the message is viewed as biased *in favor of*

or *against* the message being conveyed.

To test for these effects, we conducted an experiment in which we exposed participants to a series of distinct partisan messages embedded into streaming video and web text versions of edited news stories attributed to either CNN or the Fox News Channel ("FOX"). We subsequently investigated the treatments' effects on our subjects' opinions regarding the president and the news stories they consumed. Finally, to bolster confidence in the external validity of our experimental results, we applied our analysis to national survey data examining public opinion related to the war in Iraq.

A Theory of Partisan Cues and Public Opinion

Public Opinion and National Security

Politicians and pundits routinely assert that public support is vital for the success of national security policy, especially in the case of military conflicts. As former President Bill Clinton's 1997 National Security Strategy document put it: "One…consideration regards the central role the American people rightfully play in how the United States wields its power abroad: the United States cannot long sustain a commitment without the support of the public" (NSC 1997).

Yet the conditions under which the public will support a policy remain inadequately understood. The literature emphasizes either the public's reliance on elite cues in the news in determining whether to support the president (Brody 1991) or on the characteristics of the policies or conflicts themselves -- most notably their principal policy objectives (Jentleson 1992, Oneal et al. 1996, Eichenberg 2005), degrees of success (Feaver and Gelpi 2004, Kull and Ramsay 2001), and the numbers of and trends in U.S. casualties (Mueller 1973, Gartner and Segura 2000).

Throughout these theories, the *public* appears to engage in little, if any, evaluation of the *content* of public discourse. In the former case, the public meekly buys the "spin" of politicians

in the news, while in the latter they effectively ignore the news and focus on objective indicators, like body bags. We argue that the public plays a more proactive role in deciding whether to support or oppose presidential foreign policy initiatives, actively reasoning about the content and credibility of the messages they receive in the media.

Of course, because most Americans know relatively little about foreign affairs (Holsti 2004), they are ill-equipped to independently assess the merits of a policy, especially in the short-term. Instead they rely on information shortcuts, or heuristic cues (Sniderman *et al.* 1991, Popkin 1994), most notably the opinions of trusted political elites whom they consider credible. Trust and credibility assessments, in turn, frequently hinge on one particularly accessible heuristic: party identification (Rahn 1993, Popkin 1994, Nelson and Garst 2005).[2]

With a few partial exceptions (e.g., Morgan and Bickers 1992, Edwards and Swenson 1997, Baum 2002), most theoretical discussions of public opinion and foreign policy do not account for partisan differences in public opinion. Yet voluminous research (e.g., Lupia and McCubbins 1998, Druckman 2001a and 2001b) shows that typical individuals are more responsive to information, such as being more susceptible to framing effects (Druckman 2001b), when they perceive the source as credible. The party affiliations of information sources (e.g., political and media elites) and receivers (citizens), in interaction with the content of the partisan messages themselves, thus can mediate the selection and implications of the information

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[2] Individuals' interpretations of heuristic cues depend in significant measure on their pre-existing belief systems (Hurwitz and Peffley 1987, Herrmann *et al.* 1997), for which party identification is typically an important (Rahn 1993, Popkin 1994, Lupia and McCubbins 1998, Groeling 2001, Nelson and Garst 2005), albeit incomplete (Holsti 2004), element.

shortcuts typical individuals rely upon in making political judgments.

A Typology of Partisan Messages

We assume that the evaluative statements of partisans break down into four basic categories: (1) attacks on the other party (cross-party attacks), (2) support for one's own party (intra-party praise), (3) support for the other party (cross-party praise), and (4) attacks on one's own party (intra-party attacks).

Politicians expend considerable effort in seeking to shape their messages and images in the news media. The most universally accepted assumption in U.S. electoral politics is that politicians seek, first and foremost, re-election (Mayhew 1974). We generalize Mayhew's famous observation by assuming that politicians seek re-election both for themselves and their fellow partisans. After all, winning a seat in the Congress holds dramatically different implications—both with respect to resources available for subsequent election campaigns, and for a member's ability to influence public policy—if one is a member of the majority party (Cox and McCubbins 1993, Cox and Magar 1999). Winning election or majority party status, in turn, requires making one's self and one's fellow partisans look good, while casting the opposition party in a negative light. The implication for politicians' preferences regarding media coverage is straightforward: typical politicians prefer stories that praise themselves and their fellow partisans, or criticize their opponents or the opposition party. Thus the parties will generally prefer to broadcast cross-party attacks and intra-party praise, while avoiding cross-party praise and intra-party attacks.

However, in determining each message type's effect on viewers, it is important to note not just the content of the message itself, but also the credibility of the message or its speaker. Parties do not "inject" messages into a passive public; such messages are processed by individuals who accept or reject them depending in part on their perceived credibility

(Sniderman, *et al.* 1991, Kuklinski and Hurley 1994, Druckman 2001a). One source of credibility for a message is the belief that the speaker and listener have common interests (Crawford and Sobel 1982). This suggests that statements by a listener's own party will be regarded as more credible than those of the opposing party, all else equal. We call this our Partisan Credibility Conjecture. Our first hypothesis follows:

> **(H1) Partisan Credibility**: Presidential evaluations by members of a given party will have a stronger effect on that party's identifiers' support for the president than will comments by members of the other party.

Another important source of credibility derives from the interaction of source and message: whether the message is costly to the speaker (Spence 1973). Typical individuals regard messages that are harmful to the interests of the speaker as more credible than those that impose no costs (so-called "cheap talk").[3] In the context of partisan messages, it follows that messages by partisan speakers that appear to damage their own party or help the other party are regarded as more credible than messages that help their own party or damage the other party. We term this our Costly Credibility Conjecture. Such costly messages should be at least somewhat credible regardless of the party affiliation of the listener. Our second hypothesis follows:

> **(H2) Costly Credibility**: Evaluations that impose a cost on the speaker's own party will have a stronger effect on individuals' propensity to support the president than will equivalent "cheap talk" evaluations.

Table 1 summarizes the relative credibility of different partisan messages about the

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[3] Two related lines of inquiry are research in social psychology into the influence of "incongruous" (Walster *et al.* 1966, Koeske and Crano 1968) or "disconfirming" messages (Eagly *et al.* 1978).

president based on their partisan and costly credibility for viewers of each party. It demonstrates the relatively weak persuasive power of "politics as usual" statements (i.e., intra-party praise or cross-party attacks). Such statements by members of the presidential (non-presidential) party serve only to rally their own followers, who probably *already* approved (disapproved) of the president *prior* to the statement (Baum 2002).

[Table 1 here]

In contrast, non-presidential party praise should be exceptionally persuasive and beneficial to the president, especially among non-presidential party members. Similarly, if members of the president's own party attack him, the effects on public opinion should be dramatic (but negative), especially among the president's fellow partisans. In both cases, if available, the media demand for such stories virtually ensures they will receive coverage, further magnifying their potential impact on opinion.

The Mediating Effect of the Press on Credibility

In recent years, as media have fragmented and some news outlets have begun to cater to partisan audience niches (Hamilton 2003), we argue the underlying preferences and routines of news organizations have shifted markedly, and that these changes have widened the gap between the true nature and extent of elite rhetoric and public perceptions of such rhetoric. (For empirical evidence in this regard, see Baum and Groeling n.d.) While, for the most part, traditional journalistic norms and preferences have persevered, their applicability clearly varies across media outlets, particularly for the norm of offering balanced coverage (Tuchman 1972, Graber 1997), that is, covering "both sides" in a story whenever possible. Increasingly, sophisticated and motivated consumers are able to seek out news sources —from cable news to partisan web sites to political talk radio—that reflect their own ideological preferences.

Recent research (Baum and Gussin 2004), in turn, suggests that media outlet labels, and the ideological reputations their "brand names" carry, serve as important judgmental heuristic cues, which consumers employ to help interpret both the meanings and implications of partisan messages in the media. As a consequence, we argue that the nature of the media's influence on policy has evolved from what scholars often refer to as the "CNN Effect," which emphasized the importance of the 24-hour news cycle and live coverage of events, to what we refer to as an emerging "FOX Effect," which concerns the implications of perceived partisan favoritism, combined with the effects of self-selection and credibility-based discounting by audiences.

Table 2 disaggregates the expected credibility of messages attacking and praising President Bush based on the perceived partisan leanings of the network airing the story. As before, credibility stems from perceived partisan common interest, combined with the costliness of the statement to each party's perceived interests.

[Table 2 here]

Assuming Republicans (Democrats) think they have common interests with networks they perceive as conservative (liberal), the patterns in Table 2 suggest the following hypothesis:

(H3) Partisan Media: Statements critical of a conservative (liberal) president should be more credible to viewers when they appear on a news source perceived as conservative (liberal), relative to a news source perceived as liberal (conservative). Conversely, statements praising a conservative (liberal) president should be more credible on news source perceived as liberal (conservative), relative to a news source perceived as conservative (liberal).

If, as predicted by H3, viewers find rhetoric perceived as "costly" for a given news outlet (i.e., contrary to the outlet's perceived partisan leaning) more valuable and persuasive than other rhetoric, one empirical manifestation ought to be a relatively greater propensity to discount, or

counter-argue (e.g., criticize as "biased"), "cheap talk" rhetoric (i.e., supportive of the outlet's perceived ideological leaning). This suggests a final hypothesis.

(H4) Selective Acceptance: Individuals will be more (less) critical of criticism (praise) of a conservative (liberal) president from sources they perceive as liberal (conservative), relative to the same news from sources they perceive as conservative (liberal).

Data and Methods

Experimental Examination of Message Effects

We test our theory through an online experiment designed to explore the effects of intra- and inter-party attacks on and praise of the president (2 evaluation types x 2 evaluation sources) attributed to either FOX or CNN (2 networks), for a total of 8 possible treatments. The treatments consisted of a streaming video regarding the NSA domestic spying scandal, followed by a static web text report on the war in Iraq.[4] The content across networks was identical except for formatting, logos, "crawls," and other identifying information. After watching and reading the

[4] For the static web pages, statements attributed to Members of Congress (MCs) were constant within the praise and criticism categories; only the identities were changed to reflect the known stances of existing MCs. This was more difficult with the video treatments, which utilized real news footage. Ultimately, for the Democratic praise treatment, we were forced to misattribute positive remarks by Sen. Charles Grassley (R-KS) to Sen. Herb Kohl (D-WI), and take other remarks by actual Democrats out of context. We selected Grassley as Kohl because of their relatively low name recognition. For instance, according to one survey, 62% of Americans outside of Iowa had never heard of Grassley (Beaumont 2005). Presumably, only a subset of the remaining 38% would recognize his face or voice. Kohl, by most accounts, has an even lower national profile. The remaining rhetoric types were readily available. Still, in using real-world comments, we were forced to vary somewhat both the individual speakers and the precise content of their statements.

video and text stories, participants filled out a survey asking them to indicate which aspect of the news reports they found most interesting, and answer some questions about their political attitudes. (For the full text of all treatments, see the supplemental appendix, available at http://xxx.)

Our experiment had 1610 participants drawn from UCLA communication studies (55%) and political science (45%) courses taught between Spring 2006 and Winter 2007.[5] Subjects were offered extra credit for participating. Twenty-one percent identified themselves as Republicans (including leaners), while 53% identified as Democrats (including leaners). Independents and third-party identifiers account for the remaining 24% of our subjects. Table 3 presents our population characteristics for the overall sample, as well as for Republican and Democratic sub-samples.

[Table 3 here]

Key Variables

The main dependent variable for this experiment is subjects' approval of President Bush's handling of national security ("Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling national security?"), which we employ to test H1-H3. To test H4 (selective acceptance), we measure whether subjects criticized the balance of the stories they viewed in response to an open-ended question asking: "What did you find most interesting about either or both of the news reports you just watched and read?"

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[5] As noted, to enhance our confidence in the generalizeability of our findings, we subsequently apply our analysis a national survey. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that recent research has called into at least some question the oft-repeated claim that experimental results derived from student subject pools are unrepresentative in important ways. Most notably, Kuhberger (1998) reviewed 136 studies of framing effects and found no differences between student and target samples. Our research, though not directly addressing framing, focuses on similar types of cognitive processes

We employ national security approval, rather than overall presidential approval, for two reasons. First, we specifically selected our treatments to target the national security domain of politics. Consequently, we anticipate that the treatment conditions should primarily influence subjects' attitudes in this area. Second, at the time of the experiment, President Bush's approval ratings were well below 40%. Among Democrats in our data, less than 5% indicated that they approved of the President's overall job performance. This creates a significant floor effect; criticism of the president, however credible, could not significantly erode the president's approval among our Democratic subjects, nearly all of whom already disapproved. While most Democrats also disapproved of the President's handling of national security, his approval rating in this area, among Democrats, was nonetheless over twice as high, at about 10%.[6] This leaves somewhat more room for any hypothesized negative effects of credible criticism to emerge.

For a similar reason, we also employ an expanded version of the approval question, which distinguishes between "strongly" and "somewhat" approving or disapproving, as well as permitting a response of "neither approve nor disapprove." This allows us to observe treatment effects that a more blunt "approve vs. disapprove" question might obscure. For the Criticize Balance dependent variable, in turn, we created a dummy, coded 1 if the respondent explicitly criticized the ideological balance of the treatment to which they were exposed (in the open-ended question), and 0 otherwise.

Our main independent variables are dummies indicating which of the eight treatment conditions participants viewed. We modeled these variables as interactions between three variables: Negative (scored 1 if the treatment criticized the Bush administration), Republican Source (scored 1 if the members of Congress (MC's) who appeared in the stories were

[6] These figures set responses of "neither approve nor disapprove" to zero. If these responses are set at the mid-point between 0 and 1, overall and national security approval rises to about 7 and 15%, respectively.

Republicans), and, to allow us to test differences in partisan credibility, the participant's own party affiliation. In the latter case, we created dummy variables for Republicans and Democrats, including leaners, and also for non-leaning Independents, including third-party members.[7]

We also add a variety of control variables, including ideology, campaign interest, whether subjects were enrolled in a communication studies or political science course, ethnicity, a 10-point index of political knowledge, family income, age, and subjects' assessments of the ideological orientations of FOX and CNN (taken from the pretest).

Results

Experiment

We begin with tests of the Partisan (H1) and Costly (H2) Credibility Hypotheses. Model 1 in Table 4 presents our tests of these hypotheses.[8] In Figure 1, in turn, we employ statistical simulation software (King et al. 2000) to transform the key coefficients into probabilities of approving of President Bush's handling of national security and chart the effects of moving from one type of treatment message to the next.

[Table 4 and Figure 1 here]

Beginning with H1 (Partisan Credibility), we first compare the effects of moving from

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[7] We remap "Other" and "None" responses into the otherwise-sparsely-populated Independents category. The inclusion of the "other" partisans, has no significant effect on the ideological orientation of subjects grouped into the Independent category.

[8] Model 1 excludes four influential outlier observations (.02% of our cases). Including these cases modestly weakens several results and modestly strengthens several others, but does not materially alter the results. We also exclude 16 observations (.09% of our cases) where subjects clearly indicated in open-ended questions that they had recognized the treatment manipulations.

the Democratic Criticism to Democratic Praise treatments among Democrats with the corresponding changes among Republican identifiers. H1 would predict that the former effect should be larger and more significant, which is, in fact, what we find. In the former case, moving from criticism to praise by Democratic members of Congress (MC's) yields a 16.2 percentage point decrease in the probability of disapproving of President Bush's handling of national security (combining "strong" and "somewhat" disapprove), a 6.7 percentage point increase in the probability of neither approving nor disapproving and an 9.1 percentage point increase in the probability of approving ($p<.01$ in each case).[9] In contrast, among Republicans, the corresponding effects are small and statistically insignificant.

Similarly, Figure 1 also indicates that, as predicted by H1, shifting from Republican Criticism to Republican Praise affects the approval of Republicans far more than Democrats. For Republicans, this shift is associated with nearly a 22-percentage point drop in the probability of disapproving (compared to only 6 percentage points for Democrats), while the probability that Republicans will approve of the president's performance jumps 20 percentage points (compared to only 3.3 percentage points for Democrats). While both the Republican differences are statistically significant ($p<.01$), the Democratic differences are, as predicted, insignificant.

The data in Figure 1 also facilitate a further test for partisan credibility effects by allowing us to hold the message content constant while varying the party. In this instance, we anticipate that subjects will view rhetoric by their fellow partisan elites as more credible, all else equal. However, it is important to note that in some cases, costly and partisan rhetoric will conflict, thereby

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[9] For clarity (and brevity) of exposition, we collapse the "strong" and "somewhat" categories in our reported results. Fully disaggregated results are available from the authors.

presumably weakening the results.

As predicted by H1, shifting from Republican to Democratic praise – where partisan and costly credibility are *not* in conflict – decreases by 6.7 percentage points ($p<.10$) the probability that Democratic subjects will disapprove of the president's national security performance, while increasing by 4 points ($p<.10$) the probability that they will approve. Presumably because costly and partisan credibility conflict for Democrats when moving from Democratic to Republican criticism, this latter shift is associated with smaller and statistically insignificant effects.

Among Republicans, and also consistent with H1, shifting from Democratic to Republican criticism – where partisan and costly credibility do *not* conflict – is associated with about a 12 (10) percentage point increase (decrease) in the probability of disapproving (approving) ($p<.10$ in both cases). Conversely, shifting from Democratic to Republican praise – where partisan and costly credibility *do* conflict – has no significant effect on approval ratings.

Turning next to H2 (Costly Credibility), we compare the effects of moving from "cheap" (Democratic) criticism to "cheap" (Republican) praise with the effects of moving from "costly" (Republican) criticism to "costly" (Democratic) praise. In this instance, we focus our analysis on Independents, for whom partisan credibility presumably plays no offsetting role in credibility assessments, thereby allowing us to isolate the effects of costly credibility.

The results, shown in Model 1 of Table 4, and transformed into probabilities in Figure 1, once again strongly support the hypothesis. Among Independents, moving from costly (Republican) criticism to costly (Democratic) praise is associated with about a 14 (8) percentage point decrease (increase) in the probability of disapproving (approving) ($p<.01$ in both cases). Conversely, moving from cheap (Democratic) criticism to cheap (Republican) praise is associated with a small and statistically insignificant effect on approval ratings.

Moving on to our media-outlet hypotheses, the Partisan Media Hypothesis (H3) predicts that, due to its relatively greater costly credibility, viewers will find criticism (praise) of President Bush more credible when it appears on a news source they perceive as conservative (liberal). Model 2 in Table 4 tests this hypothesis. Table 5 converts the coefficients into probabilities, as well as assessing the magnitude and significance of the difference in support for President Bush's handling of national security, as a given message moves from a liberal to a conservative network. In the top half of Figure 2, in turn, we separately plot the probabilities of disapproving (strongly or weakly) among subjects exposed to costly or cheap rhetoric.

[Table 5 and Figure 2 here]

The results in Table 5 and Figure 2 strongly support our hypothesis. Costly outlet communication mattered far more than cheap talk. Among respondents exposed to cheap talk (any praise on a conservative network or any criticism on a liberal network) moving from the praise to criticism conditions is associated with a small and insignificant effect on disapproval of the president's handling of national security. The corresponding effect among respondents exposed to costly communication (praise on a liberal network or criticism on a conservative network) is a highly significant ($p<.01$) 30 percentage point increase in the probability of disapproving (strongly or weakly), from.47 to.77. In other words, as predicted, the ideological reputations of the networks mediate the persuasive power of the information they present to consumers. Messages perceived by our subjects as running counter to the perceived ideological interests of the outlets to which they were exposed had a far greater effect on their attitudes toward the president than messages perceived as self-serving for the networks, given their presumed ideological orientations.

Finally, we turn to H4 (Selective Acceptance), which holds that, all else equal, people are more prone to critically evaluate, or counter-argue, information perceived as supportive of a news

outlet's perceived ideological orientation (cheap talk), relative to information that challenges an outlet's perceived orientation (costly talk). Model 3 in Table 4 presents the results of our test of this hypothesis. In the bottom half of Figure 2, we again transform the key coefficients into predicted probabilities that subjects criticized the experiment's news stories as biased.

Once again, the results strongly support our hypothesis. Subjects were 12 percentage points *more* likely to criticize rhetoric *critical* of the president when it appeared on a network that they considered liberal, relative to the identical rhetoric appearing on a network perceived as conservative (.34 vs. .22, $p<.10$). Conversely, subjects were 17 percentage points *less* likely to criticize rhetoric *supportive* of the president when it appeared on a network they perceived as liberal, relative to the same rhetoric on a network perceived as conservative (.18 vs. .35, $p<.05$). Interestingly, looking across the criticism and praise treatments, we see that the probabilities of criticizing both types of cheap talk are nearly identical – .34 for criticism on a liberal network and .35 for praise on a conservative network – as are the probabilities of criticizing costly talk – .22 for criticism on a conservative network and .19 for praise on a liberal network. This strongly suggests that viewer credibility assessments derive in significant measure from *ex ante* assumptions regarding the ideological orientations of news outlets. Such assessments, in turn, appear to heavily influence consumers' propensity to counter-argue different types of rhetoric (cheap vs. costly talk).

News Consumption and Attitudes Toward Iraq

We turn next to an empirical investigation of national public opinion regarding the Iraq war. The goal is to determine whether the patterns that emerged in our experiment generalize to a real-world context. Specifically, we investigate the effects of the credibility assessments of different types of consumers (Democrats and Republicans) vis-à-vis different media outlets (FOX vs. CNN) on attitudes toward the Iraq war. This investigation tests the external validity of

our theoretical framework, and, in particular – given the distinct perceived partisan leanings of FOX and CNN – the effects of partisan credibility (H1) and selective acceptance (H4).

For our dependent variable in this analysis, we employ the following question from a June 2005 survey (Pew Center 2005): "How well is the U.S. military effort in Iraq going?" We coded the responses dichotomously, where 1=very or fairly well, and 0=not too well or not at all well.[10] We compare responses to this question across individuals with different partisan affiliations who claim to get most of their news about politics and international affairs from CNN or FOX.[11]

Unlike our experiment, in this survey we have no way to determine precisely what information survey respondents who report watching FOX or CNN actually consumed. Fortunately, we can derive some insight from a Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ) study (PEJ 2005), which content analyzed cable news coverage of the war in Iraq in 2004, the year leading up to the Pew survey. PEJ found that in that year, FOX was nearly twice as likely as CNN to air stories with an "overwhelmingly" positive tone (38% of war-related stories for FOX, vs. 20% for CNN). Conversely, CNN aired nearly twice as many segments with negative tones as FOX (23% vs 14%). Overall, CNN aired slightly more negative segments than positive ones, while FOX aired more than twice as many positive segments as negative ones.[12]

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[10] Fifty-four responses of "don't know" or refusals to answer are coded as missing.

[11] This represents about 35% of the sample. Among CNN viewers, 104, 66, and 93 respondents identified themselves as Democrats, Republicans and Independents, respectively. Among FOX viewers, the corresponding numbers are 46, 131 and 66.

[12] PEJ reports that 41 and 39% of FOX and CNN stories, respectively, were neutral, while 15 and 9%, respectively, were categorized as multi-subject and were not coded for tone.

The implications of our theory depend not only on the objective characteristics of news on different outlets, but also on consumer *perceptions*. In fact, evidence suggests Americans are polarized in their opinions regarding the ideological slant of FOX to a greater extent than with respect to CNN. For instance, one survey (Pew Center 2006) found a much larger gap between liberals and conservatives in rating the believability of FOX, relative to CNN. Liberal and conservative respondents differed by only three percentage points in their probabilities of saying they believe "all or most" of the news on CNN (28 vs. 25%, respectively). The gap for FOX was over five times larger (16 vs. 32%). In other words, liberals rate CNN as similarly believable as conservatives rate FOX (28 vs. 32%). Yet, liberals rate FOX as considerably less believable than conservatives rate CNN (16 vs 25%).

If, as the aforementioned PEJ study found, FOX is more likely to praise the war than CNN, the implications differ for respondents with different partisan affiliations. For Democrats, pro-war information encountered on FOX will likely be dismissed as non-credible, while equivalent information they encounter on CNN will likely be accepted as reliable. Conversely, among Republicans, exposure to the disproportionately-positive war news on FOX will tend to be much more strongly associated with an increased propensity to believe things are going well in Iraq, relative to consuming CNN's near-equal mix of praise and criticism. Moreover, given that liberals (who are relatively more likely to be Democrats) are more skeptical of FOX than conservatives (who are more likely to be Republicans) are of CNN, the implication is that liberals (and Democrats) are more likely to discount pro-war content on FOX than conservatives (and Republicans) are to dismiss anti-war content on CNN.

To test these predictions, we interact respondents' partisan affiliations with their preferred sources of news about politics and international affairs. We also include a standard battery of

demographic and political control variables, as well as controls for respondents' overall trust in the news media and interest in the Iraq war (see Appendix B for variable definitions and coding).[13] Model 1 in Table 6 reports the results of a logit model testing the effects of news preferences and partisan affiliation on attitudes toward the Iraq War.[14] In Figure 3, in turn, we transform the results into probabilities that the respondent believes things are "going well" in Iraq as the primary source of news about politics and international affairs varies from CNN to FOX.

[Table 6 and Figure 3 here]

Consistent with most other polling data (Jacobsen 2006), regardless of the network they rely upon for war news, Republicans are considerably more supportive of the war than Democrats. However, the magnitude of that gap varies significantly, depending on whether respondents report relying primarily upon CNN or FOX for their news. Among respondents whose primary source of news is CNN, Republicans are 29 percentage points more likely than Democrats to believe things are going well in Iraq (.39 vs. .68, $p<.01$). Among FOX viewers, the gap is more than twice as large. Republican FOX viewers are fully 67 percentage points more likely than their Democratic counterparts to believe the Iraq war is going well (.92 vs. .24, $p<.01$).

Looking at differences *within* partisan groups, given the PEJ analysis of FOX and CNN news coverage, these results suggest that Democrats watching disproportionately positive coverage

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[13] We include controls for preferring network newscasts or the Internet as sources for national and international political news. Other media outlets (newspapers, magazines, radio) were insignificant and did not affect our results. Hence, they are excluded.

[14] The reported results exclude four influential outlier observations (or .03% of our cases). Including these outliers modestly weakens, but does not materially alter, the reported results.

of the war on FOX actually decreased their assessment of the war's progress by 15 percentage points ($p<.10$), relative to their peers who consumed relatively balanced coverage on CNN. Republicans, on the other hand, were more strongly influenced by FOX's positive coverage, increasing their already-high assessment of the war's progress by a highly-significant 24 points ($p<.01$). These results offer clear evidence of partisan credibility and selective acceptance effects.

It is, of course, possible that differences in the characteristics of respondents who choose to watch FOX and CNN, rather than in the content of news to which they are exposed, is driving our results. To some extent, we anticipate that this is the case. After all, our theory presumes that partisans will take advantage of the opportunity to self-select into friendly environments. In fact, there is evidence of such a pattern. Democratic and Republican FOX watchers in this survey are more conservative than their counterparts who prefer CNN (by .42 and .46 points on the 5-point ideology scale, for Democrats and Republicans, respectively). While this moderate differential could theoretically help account for at least part of the greater optimism regarding the war among Republican FOX watchers, it cannot account for *lower* optimism among Democratic FOX watchers, relative to their CNN-watching counterparts. This latter pattern is precisely the opposite of what one would predict if differences in the ideological preferences of CNN and FOX viewers were driving our results. Consequently, viewed in tandem, these results offer clear additional evidence that partisan credibility and selective acceptance mediate the persuasiveness for different consumers of information presented by news outlets with distinct ideological viewpoints.

Conclusion

Scholars have a clear understanding of the concept and implications of party with respect to legislative and voting behavior. Increasingly, however, parties have become more concerned about the collective image they present to the public through the media. As a consequence, as Joe

Lieberman recently discovered, parties are growing increasingly aggressive in their attempts to foster or enforce such unity. Our findings suggest that politicians are justified in being concerned not just about what they *do*, but also what they *say*. While much rhetoric in the public domain is rightly characterized as "cheap talk," a party's messages (and those of the opposing party) do have tremendous potential to affect public opinion. In many cases politicians' messages will be lost in the modern media maelstrom. Yet we find that relatively subtle partisan messages can have large effects on opinion, even in high-salience issue areas like war and national security, and among well-informed, politically-attentive partisans on the lookout for political manipulation and bias. The task for parties is made even more difficult by the fact that journalists regard "off message" partisan statements as almost inherently more newsworthy than cohesive messages. Parties can therefore generally count on having any damage associated with such messages magnified through extensive media coverage (Groeling 2001, Baum and Groeling n.d.).

However, the news media environment itself is clearly changing. For instance, regardless of whether CNN or FOX actually favor a particular party, the public's increasing belief that they – particularly FOX – do so has important implications for partisan communication. As we saw in our tests of Hypotheses 3 and 4, ascriptions of partisanship on the part of news media strongly influence which partisan messages the public regards as credible on those media. For politicians attempting to influence public opinion, the contrast to most of the television era could not be more clear: new media perceived as siding with a particular party will actually be less persuasive for all, save members of the same party, in communicating anything short of attacks against that same party. Conversely, stories communicating bipartisan support reported by a "hostile" media outlet should be one of the few positive messages that remain credible to partisans from *both* parties.

It is therefore unsurprising that politicians have increasingly worked to shape how the

public perceives different news outlets. Republican candidates have famously argued that the media as a whole are biased against their candidates, perhaps best exemplified by a popular 1992 bumper sticker saying, "Annoy the Media: Re-elect George Bush." However, with the rise of FOX, Democrats have mounted specific and targeted attempts to marginalize and delegitimize what they argue is a pro-Republican news outlet. For instance, in early 2007, liberal activists pressured the Nevada Democratic Party to cancel a FOX-sponsored Democratic candidate debate. In launching the successful campaign to drop FOX as a debate sponsor, liberal blogger Chris Bowers of MyDD.com argued that, "…instead of giving [FOX] a golden opportunity to further distort the image of Democratic presidential candidates, and instead of providing them with credibility for all of their past and future attacks against Democrats, it would be best if the Nevada Democratic Party chose a different media partner to broadcast this debate" (Bowers 2007).[15]

Ironically, the bipartisanship that sprang more easily from cross-cutting cleavages and overlapping party issue areas has become that much more critical for parties and politicians striving to rally public support just as the parties are becoming more ideologically polarized at the national level. Similarly, news outlets with independent reserves of credibility and prestige have themselves become less influential, or have squandered their remaining credibility in well-

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[15] The cited cause for the cancellation was a joke by FOX News chairman Roger Ailes conflating Barack Obama with Osama Bin Laden. Ailes also complained that pressure groups were now urging candidates to "only appear on those networks and venues that give them favorable coverage" (Whitcomb 2007). While FOX and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) later agreed to co-sponsor one Republican and one Democratic candidate debate, activist groups immediately sought to pressure both the CBC and Democratic candidates to withdraw from the debate (Phillips 2007). The Democratic National Committee subsequently declined to sanction it, and the three major Democratic candidates also declined to participate.

publicized reporting failures (e.g. election night 2000, WMD reporting) or scandals (Jayson Blair, "Rathergate," and the recent Reuters doctored photos are but a few recent examples). Without being able to draw on these reservoirs of credibility, American parties will likely find their opportunities to actually *persuade* the public increasingly few and far between.

This, in turn, will almost certainly complicate efforts to forge a bipartisan consensus behind major presidential or congressional policy initiatives. For instance, scholars (e.g., Mueller 1973, Brody 1991) have long recognized that since World War II, presidents sending American troops into harm's way have frequently enjoyed temporary spikes in their approval ratings. Yet recent research (Baum 2002) has found that the vast majority of this so-called "rally-round-the-flag" effect is located among opposition identifiers, the very individuals who are increasingly likely to discount, if not avoid altogether, elite messages supporting the president's actions abroad. As a consequence, it seems likely that, at least in many circumstances, future presidents will find the American public less willing than in prior decades to rally behind their president when he sends the nation to war.

Appendix A: Experiment Survey Questions

Ethnicity: What is your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply): African American/Black, Asian, American/Asian, Caucasian/ White, Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern, Native American, Other.

Family Income: Which category best describes the total annual income of all members of your immediate family before taxes. (Choose One): Less than $25,000, $25,001–$50,000, $50,001–$75,000, $75,001–$100,000, 100,001–$125,000, $125,001–$150,000, $150,001–$175,000, $175,001–$200,000, $200,001 or more, don't know.

Campaign Interest: Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you are very much interested, somewhat interested, not much

interested, or not at all interested in the political campaigns this year?

Self Ideology Rating: Many people describe their political views as liberal, conservative or centrist. How would you describe your political views, or haven't you given it much thought: Extremely Conservative, Conservative, Centrist, but leaning conservative, Centrist, Centrist, but leaning liberal, Liberal, Extremely liberal, or haven't give it much thought?

Ideology of Treatment Outlet: How would you characterize the political orientation (if any) of [CNN/][FOX] (*separate questions*), or haven't you given it much thought: Extremely Conservative, Conservative, Centrist, but leaning conservative, Centrist, Centrist, but leaning liberal, Liberal, Extremely liberal, or haven't give it much thought? (Note: for the combined indicator, we employ the ideology rating of the outlet to which subjects were exposed.)

Party ID: What do you consider to be your party affiliation? Strong Democrat, Weak Democrat, Independent-Lean Democrat, Independent, Independent-Lean Republican, Weak Republican, Strong Republican, Other Political Party, No Political Affiliation

Political Knowledge Scale: Derived from 10 questions: (1) Who has the final responsibility to decide if a law is constitutional or not?; (2/3) Which political party has the most members in the United States [House of Representatives]/ [Senate]?; (4) In order for an international treaty to become law in the United States, who, other than the President, must approve it?; (5) What percentage of members of the U.S. Senate and House are necessary to override a presidential veto?; (6) What are the first ten amendments to the Constitution called?; (7)Who is the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives?; (8) Who is the majority leader of the U.S. Senate?; (9) Who is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?; (10) Who was Vice-president of the United States when Bill Clinton was President? The resulting scale runs from 0 to 10 (μ=5.59, σ=2.30).

Appendix B: Pew Survey Questions

Follow Iraq War: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely: News about the current situation in Iraq.

FOX, CNN, Network News, or Internet Primary News Source: How have you been getting most of your news about national and international issues…From television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet? IF ' TELEVISION' AS EITHER 1ST OR 2ND RESPONSE ASK: Do you get most of your news about national and international issues from: Local news programming, ABC Network news, CBS Network news; NBC Network news; CNN Cable news, MSNBC Cable news, The FOX News Cable Channel, CNBC Cable news, Don't know/Refused.

Party ID: In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

Ideology: In general, would you describe your political views as...Very conservative, Conservative, Moderate, Liberal, or Very liberal?

Voted in 2004: In last year's presidential election between George W. Bush and John Kerry, did things come up that kept you from voting, or did you happen to vote?

Family Income: Last year, that is in 2004, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category: < $10,000, 10–$20,000, 20–$30,000, 30–$40,000, 40–$50,000, 50–$75,000, 75–$100,000, 100–$150,000, > $150.

Education: What is the last grade or class that you completed in school? Coded: 1=None, or grade 1-8, 2=High school incomplete (Grades 9-11), 3=High school graduate (Grade 12 or GED certificate or technical, trade, or vocational school AFTER high school), 4=Some college, no 4-year degree (including associate degree), 5=College graduate (B.S., B.A., or

other 4-year degree), 6=Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's Degree or Ph.D.; law or medical school)

Ethnicity: Are you, yourself, of Hispanic origin or descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background? IF NOT HISPANIC, ASK: What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, or some other?

Know U.S. Casualty Level in Iraq: Since the start of military action in Iraq, about how many U.S. soldiers have been killed? To the best of your knowledge, has it been under 500, 500 to 1000, 1000 to 2000, or more than 2000?: Under 500, 500 to 1,000, 1,000 to 2,000, More than 2,000, Don't know/Refused. Recoding: 1=1,000-2,000 (correct response), 0=all other responses.

News Quality Scale: Constructed from four questions: (1) In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate? Coded: 1=get the facts straight, 0=stories often inaccurate, .5="don't know"; (2) In presenting the news dealing with political and social issues, do you think that news organizations deal fairly with all sides, or do they tend to favor one side? Coded: 1=Deal fairly with all sides, 0=Tend to favor one side, .5=Don't know/Refused; (3) In general, do you think news organizations are pretty independent, or are they often influenced by powerful people and organizations? Coded: 1=Pretty independent, 0=Often influenced by powerful people and organizations, .5=Don't know/Refused; and (4) In general, do you think news organizations pay too much attention to GOOD NEWS, too much attention to BAD NEWS, or do they mostly report the kinds of stories they should be covering? Coded: 1=Report the kinds of stories they should be covering, 0=Too much attention to good news or Too much attention to bad news, .5=Don't know/Refused. The elements were combined to form a 0-4 scale (μ=1.14, σ=1.13).

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TABLE 1: Party and Costly Credibility, by Party of Speaker and Viewer

	Congressional Democrats			***Congressional Republicans***		
	Rep. viewer	Ind. viewer	Dem. viewer	Rep. viewer	Ind. viewer	Dem. viewer
	Attack President Bush			*Attack President Bush*		
Partisan Credibility	no	no	YES	YES	no	no
Costly Credibility	no	no	no	YES	YES	YES
	Praise President Bush			*Praise President Bush*		
Partisan Credibility	no	no	YES	YES	no	no
Costly Credibility	YES	YES	YES	no	no	no

TABLE 2: Credibility Impact of Network Attribution[16]

	Cong. Democrats	Cong. Republicans
	Attack President Bush	*Attack President Bush*
Conservative Network	More	More
Liberal Network	Less	Less
	Praise President Bush	*Praise President Bush*
Conservative Network	Less	Less
Liberal Network	More	More

[16] Note: For viewers who see the networks as ideologically neutral, the effects should reduce to our basic model's predictions.

TABLE 3. Summary of Subjects Characteristics (Means and Standard Deviations)

	Overall	Democrats	Republicans
Total Number of Subjects	1610 [a]	861	343
% Leaners	.27 (.45)	.34 (.47)	.22 (.42)
% African American	.02 (.15)	.02 (.16)	.02 (.15)
% White	.46 (.50)	.40 (.49)	.62 (.49)
% Hispanic	.13 (.34)	.16 (.37)	.09 (.29)
% Middle Eastern	.06 (.23)	.06 (.23)	.06 (.23)
% Asian	.35 (.48	.36 (.48)	.24 (.43)
% Native American	.007 (.08)	.006 (.08)	.009 (.09)
% Liberal	.60 (.49)	.89 (.32)	.06 (.23)
% Conservative	.23 (.42)	.03 (.18)	.85 (.36)
Mean Age	20.6 (3.75)	20.5 (3.36)	20.6 (4.06)
Mean Annual Family Income	~$100,000	$75,000-100,000	$100,000-150,000
Mean % Correct of 10 Factual Political Knowledge Questions	.51 (.26)	.52 (.24)	.54 (.24)

[a]Due to missing data the total N in our statistical analysis varies from 1235 to 1471.

Note: Standard deviations shown in parentheses.

TABLE 4. Ordered Logit and Logit Analyses of the Correlates of Approving the President's Handling of National Security and Criticizing the Ideological Balance in New Story Content

	Approval (Message Source)	Approval (Outlet Credibility)	Criticize Balance (Outlet Credibility)
Democrat x Rep. Criticism	-0.071 (0.245)	-------	-------
Democrat x Rep. Praise	0.216 (0.244)	-------	-------
Democrat x Dem. Criticism	-0.267 (0.243)	-------	-------
Democrat x Dem. Praise	0.512 (0.244)*	-------	-------
Republican x Rep. Criticism	0.754 (0.339)*	-------	-------
Republcian x Rep. Praise	1.787 (0.345)***	-------	-------
Republican x Dem. Criticism	1.257 (0.336)***	-------	-------
Republican x Dem. Praise	1.301 (0.323)***	-------	-------
Independent x Rep. Criticism	-0.116 (0.260)	-------	-------
Independent x Rep. Praise	-0.088 (0.275)	-------	-------
Independent x Dem. Criticism	0.541 (0.250)*	-------	-------
Ideology of Treatment Outlet	-------	0.167 (0.053)***	-0.148 (0.066)*
Criticism	-------	-0.466(0.111)***	0.055 (0.139)
Outlet Ideology x Criticism	-------	-0.066 (0.069)	0.252 (0.084)**
FOX Treatment	0.080 (0.099)	0.319 (0.128)*	0.313 (0.153)*
Communication Class	-0.092 (0.121)	-0.083 (0.129)	-0.753 (0.155)***
Campaign Interest	-0.285 (0.076)***	-0.244 (0.086)**	0.229 (0.100)*
African American	-0.929 (0.427)*	-0.626 (0.422)	-1.107 (0.631)^
Asian	-0.011 (0.156)	-0.093 (0.172)	0.218 (0.219)
White	0.281 (0.153)^	0.195 (0.167)	0.139 (0.205)
Hispanic	-0.407 (0.193)*	-0.397 (0.205)^	0.076 (0.232)
Middle Eastern	0.453 (0.248)^	0.371 (0.258)	0.294 (0.282)
Self Ideology Rating	-0.624 (0.061)***	-0.596 (0.068)***	-0.016 (0.073)
CNN Ideology Rating	0.136 (0.046)**	-------	-------
FOX Ideology Rating	0.158 (0.037)***	-------	-------
Political Knowledge	0.012 (0.027)	0.030 (0.029)	0.074 (0.035)*
Age	-0.037 (0.017)*	-0.031 (0.019)	-0.041 (0.021)*
Republican Message Source	-------	-0.057 (0.110)	-0.105 (0.132)
Party ID	-------	-0.284 (0.052)***	-0.084 (0.058)
Constant 1	-4.925 (.562)	-6.277 (.554)	-0.477 (0.600)
Constant 2	-3.215 (.551)	-4.519 (.541)	-------
Constant 3	-2.240 (.545)	-3.745 (.535)	-------
Constant 4	-0.228 (.550)	-1.831 (.535)	-------
Pseudo R^2 (N)	.16 (N=1461)	.16 (N=1235)	.07 (N=1244)

^p<.10; *p<.05; **p<.01. ***p<.001; Robust standard errors in parentheses

TABLE 5: Effects of Perceived Outlet Ideology on Probability of Approving of President's Handling of National Security, as Treatment Varies from Liberal to Conservative Network

	Conservative Network	**Liberal Network**	**Difference (Crit-Praise)**
Costly Talk	Criticism	Praise	
Strong Disapprove	.362	.133	.229**
Disapprove	.403	.334	.069**
Neither Approve nor Disapprove	.110	.186	-.076**
Approve	.104	.274	-.170**
Strong Approve	.021	.074	-.053**
Cheap Talk	Praise	Criticism	
Strong Disapprove	.303	.238	.065
Disapprove	.411	.403	.008
Neither Approve nor Disapprove	.129	.153	-.024
Approve	.130	.169	-.039
Strong Approve	.027	.037	-.010

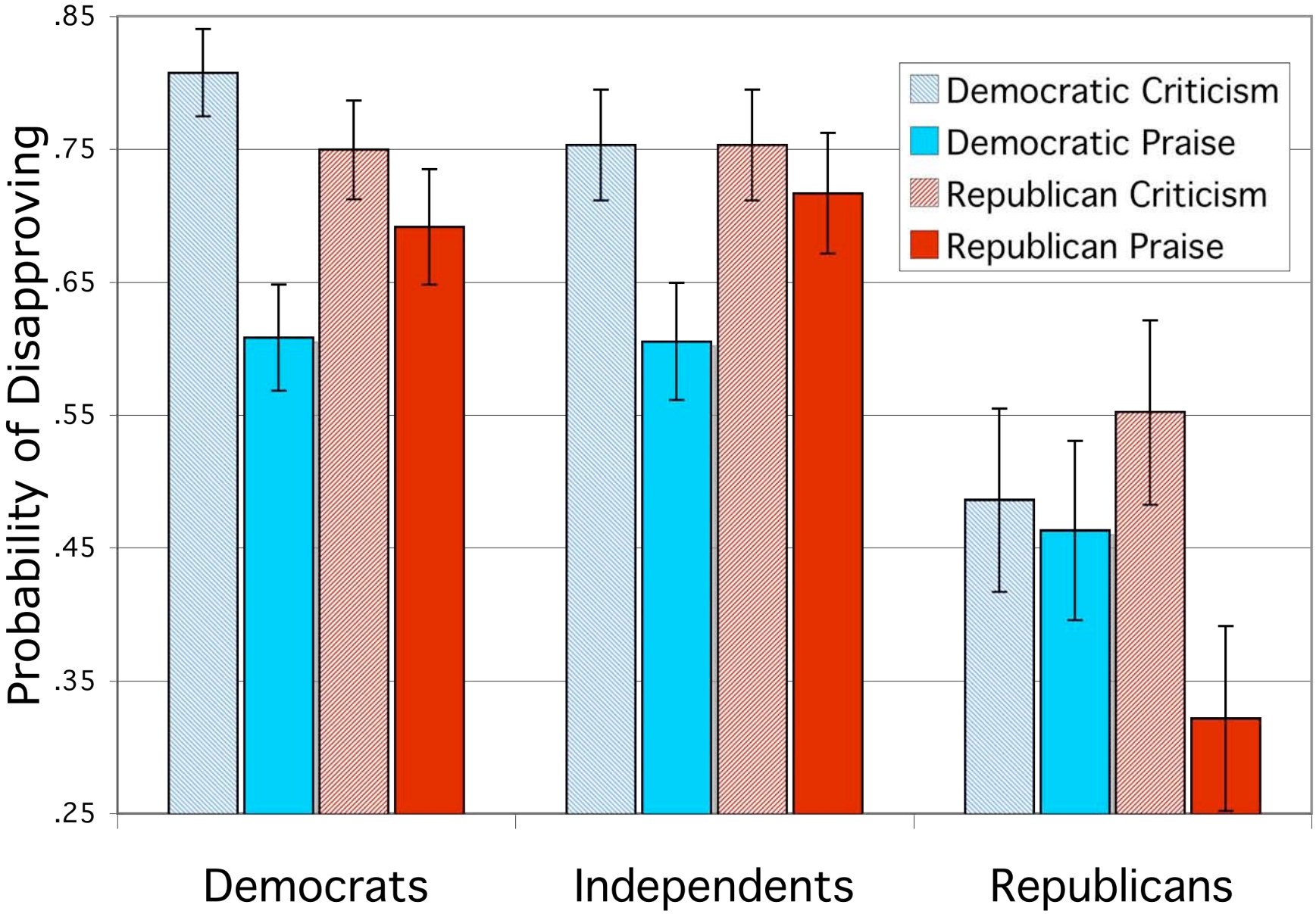
**p<.01, ^p<.1

TABLE 6. Logit Analysis of Likelihood of Believing the Conflict in Iraq is "Going Well", as News Source and Party Identification Vary

Democrat	-.765 (.182)***
Republican	1.071 (.198)***
FOX Primary News Source	.905 (.288)**
CNN Primary News Source	-.445 (.263)^
Democrat x FOX Primary News Source	-1.117 (.478)*
Democrat. x CNN Primary News Source	.955 (.376)*
Republican x FOX Primary News Source	.670 (.485)
Republican x CNN Primary News Source	.344 (.410)
Network News Primary News Source	-.063 (.147)
Internet News Primary News Source	.204 (.152)
Education	-.301 (.064)***
Male	-.086 (.134)
Family Income	.021 (.032)
Hispanic	-.505 (.248)*
White	-.292 (.343)
African American	-.842 (.408)*
Asian	-.985 (.544)^
Ideology	-.515 (.080)***
Voted in 2004	.028 (.194)
News Quality Scale	.088 (.058)
Know U.S. Casualty Level in Iraq	-.051 (.139)
Follow Iraq War	.004 (.078)
Age	-.013 (.004)**
Constant	3.322 (.578)*
Pseudo R^2 (N)	.22 (N=1340)

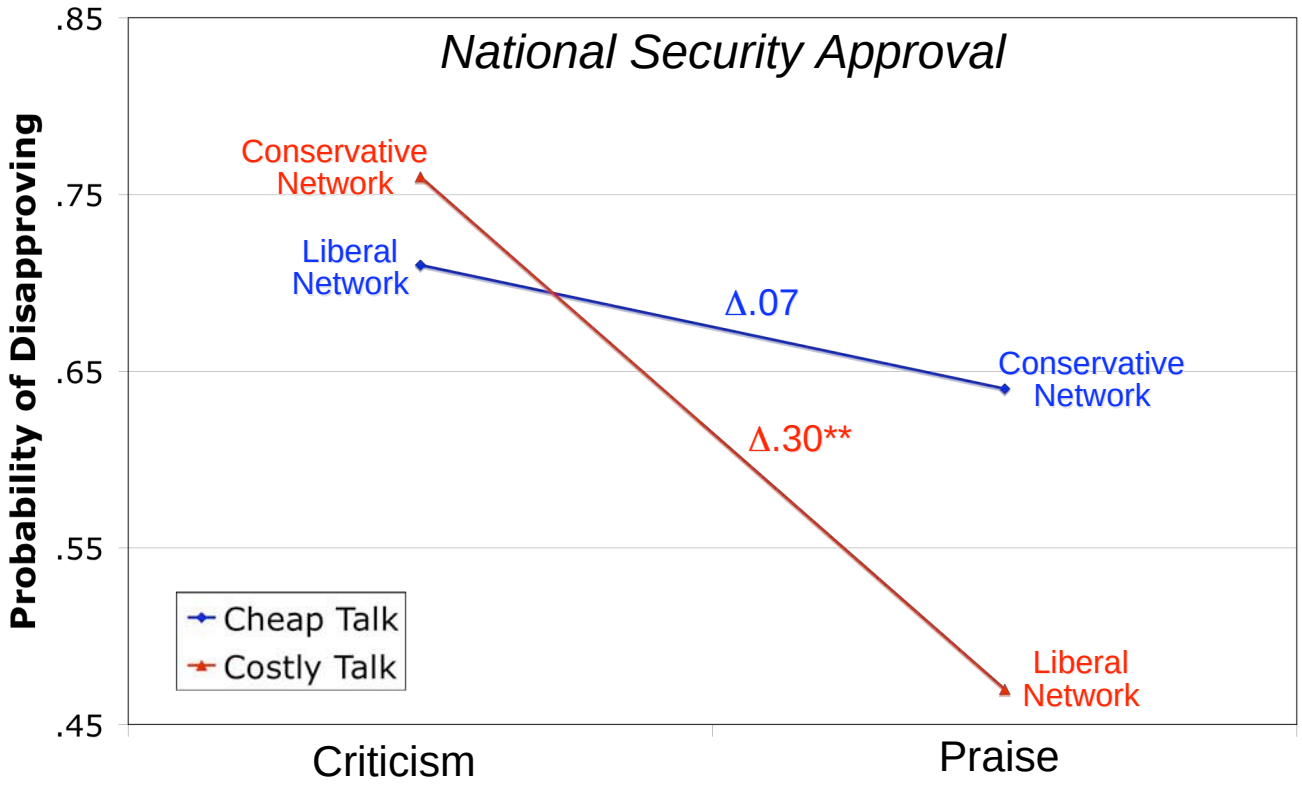
^p<.10; *p<.05; **p<.01. ***p<.001; Robust standard errors in parentheses

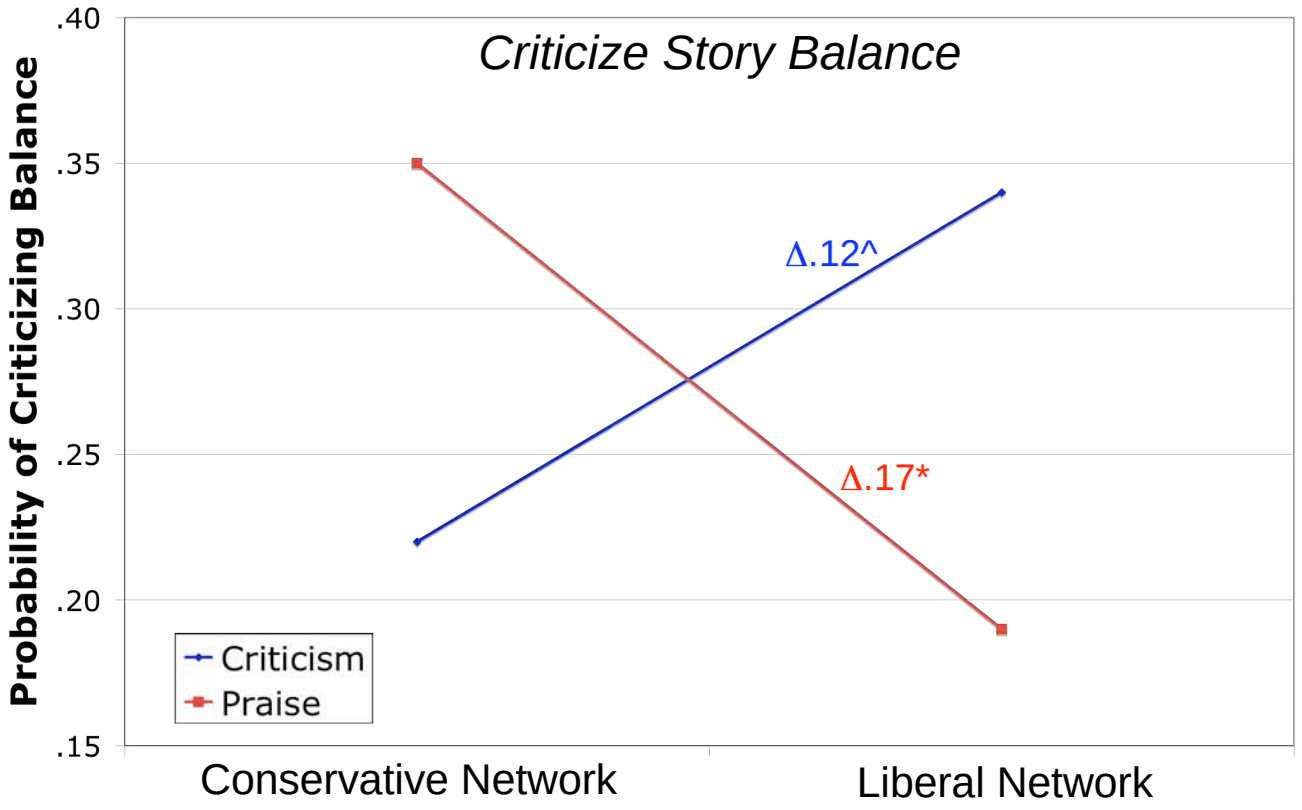
FIGURE 1. Probability of Disapproving of President Bush's Handling of National Security, as Message Source and Valence Vary



Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

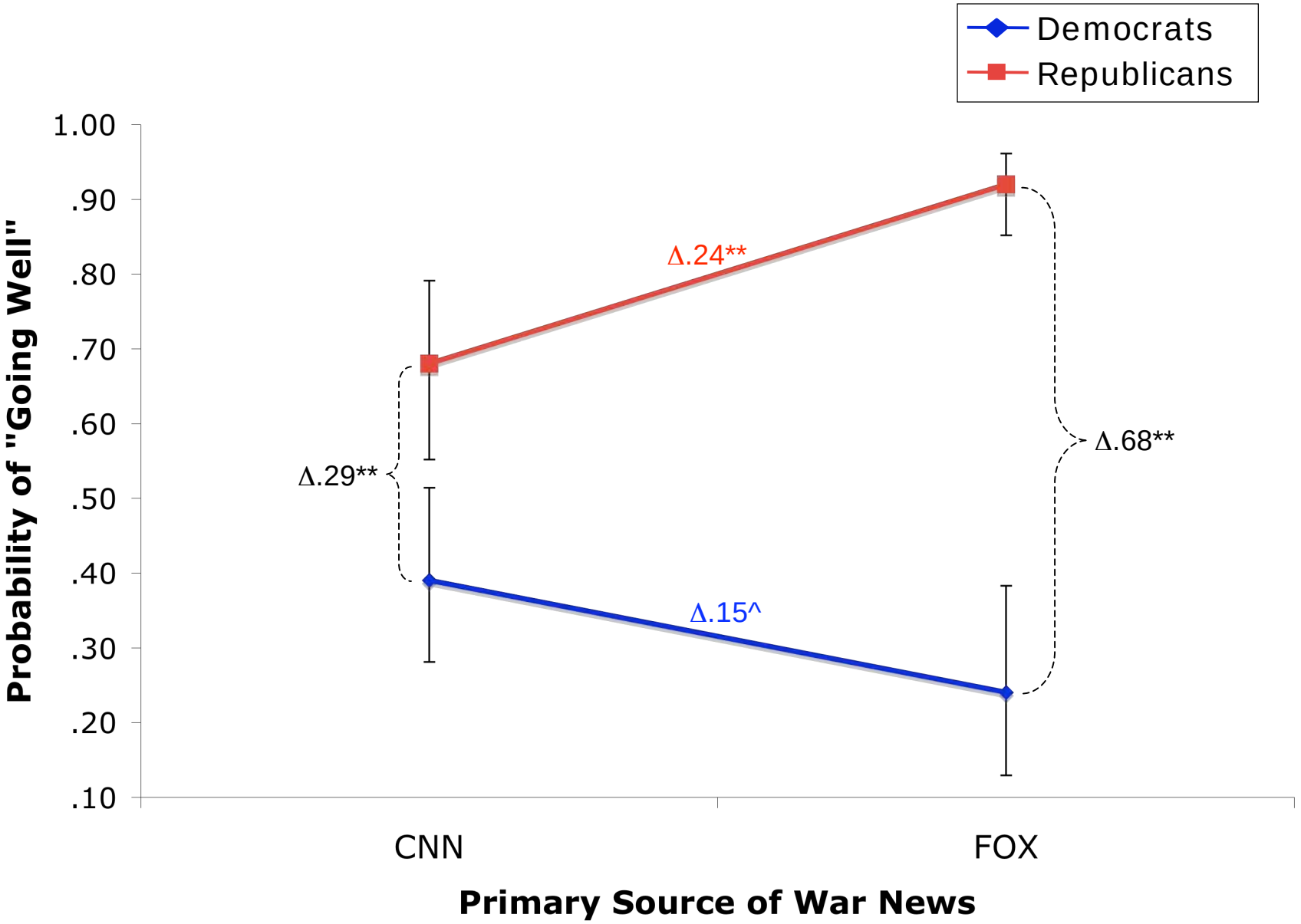
FIGURE 2. Probability of Disapproving of President Bush's Handling of National Security as News Source and Message Valence Vary





**p<.01, *p<.05, ^p<.10

FIGURE 3. Probability of Believing the Iraq Conflict is "Going Well" as Source of War News and Party Identification Vary



***p<.01, ^p<.10; Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals*