

**Going Maverick:  
How Candidates Can Use Agenda-Setting to Influence Citizen Motivations and Offset  
Unpopular Issue Positions<sup>1</sup>**

Matthew T. Pietryka  
[mtpietryka@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mtpietryka@ucdavis.edu)  
University of California, Davis  
Department of Political Science  
469 Kerr Hall  
Davis, CA 95616

Amber E. Boydstun  
[aboydstun@ucdavis.edu](mailto:aboydstun@ucdavis.edu)  
University of California, Davis  
Department of Political Science  
469 Kerr Hall  
Davis, CA 95616

**Abstract:**

Holding an unpopular position on an issue important to voters can endanger a candidate's electoral success. What is the candidate's best agenda-setting strategy? To focus on other issue positions congruent with the same ideological stereotype, shoring up support among like-minded voters? Or to "go maverick" by discussing some issues that signal liberal positions and some that signal conservative positions? Existing voting models suggest the answer depends on voter preferences, since going maverick should have symmetric effects—support among voters who agree with the candidate's positions will decrease, proportionally, as support increases among voters who disagree. We argue, however, that stereotype incongruence prompts these voters to process information differently, yielding *asymmetric* effects. We test our expectations experimentally, using a fictional candidate webpage to show how the benefits of going maverick can outweigh the costs.

**Keywords:** agenda-setting, candidate, campaign, ideology, motivated reasoning, stereotyping

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The 2006 U.S. midterm election acted largely as a referendum on George W. Bush's presidency and his Iraq war policy (Jacobson 2007; Stone et al. 2008), and as such pushed the issue of the Iraq war onto the agenda in virtually all House races. National exit polls showed that 56% of voters disapproved of the war in Iraq at the time, with 68% of voters citing Iraq as being "extremely" or "very" important in determining their vote for the U.S. House.<sup>2</sup> Those incumbents who had publicly supported the war over the previous four years were thus put at a significant disadvantage. Jim Gerlach's (R-PA6) district mirrored the nation's distaste for the war; 57% of the independents in his district preferred a quick withdrawal of troops and 71% believed invading Iraq was a mistake (Ansolabehere 2006). Yet, Gerlach's support for the salient and unpopular war did not derail his candidacy; he won reelection with 51% of the vote in his district.

While Gerlach's overall voting record suggests a conservative ideology, his 2006 campaign highlighted his liberal side. Although he had little choice in addressing the issue of Iraq, he set his platform agenda to include issues that provided some degree of ideological balance. The first issue mentioned on his campaign website was his support for embryonic stem cell research. The website also stressed his support for open-space preservation and government incentives for alternative fuels (Gerlach 2006). In this way, he may have signaled that he was not

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<sup>2</sup> In response to the question "How do you feel about the U.S. war in Iraq?" (N=12,535), 13% of Republicans and 19% of Democrats said they "somewhat disapproved," and 9% of Republicans and 65% of Democrats said they "strongly disapproved." In response to the question "In your vote for U.S. House, how important was the war in Iraq?" (N=6,350), 30% of Republicans and 40% of Democrats said "extremely important," and 38% of Republicans and 28% of Democrats said "very important" (Roper Center 2006).

a typical pro-war, pro-Bush Republican. Perhaps by portraying himself as an ideological maverick, he was able to maintain his seat, albeit by the smallest of margins.

This paper seeks to identify the effect of this rhetorical campaign strategy on citizen attention to campaign information and support for candidates. We are interested in particular in the case of a candidate whose position on a high-importance issue is favorable to some voters, but unfavorable to others (a condition which fits every candidate to some degree). In general, how a candidate sets her agenda (i.e., which issues she chooses to discuss) influences voters' perceptions of, and support for, the candidate by priming voters to consider some issues over others (e.g., Druckman and Holmes 2004; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; McCombs and Shaw 1972; Nicholson 2005). For a candidate who holds an issue position that some voters deem unfavorable, then, what is the best agenda-setting strategy? Should she stick to a "stereotype-congruent" (i.e., completely liberal or completely conservative) campaign platform, or "go maverick," so to speak, by advocating some positions on each side of the ideological aisle?

If going maverick moves candidates toward the center of the policy space, the effect of this behavior may be *symmetric*: candidates may lose support among voters at the extreme and gain support among voters in the middle (as well as among voters on the other extreme, if we ignore the position of the opponent). We argue, however, that the effects of this process are not symmetric, due to the influence of voter motivation on information seeking and candidate evaluation. Taking motivated reasoning (Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006) into account, we argue instead that: (1) Going maverick produces *asymmetric* effects—the increase in support a candidate gains from voters who disagree with the candidate's position on an issue will outweigh the decrease in support from voters who agree with the candidate; (2)

Going maverick on issues of relatively low-importance to voters can in fact mitigate the effect of disagreement—but not agreement—on a more important issue.

No study has explored this asymmetric effect of stereotype-incongruent campaign information on citizens' evaluations. We do so in the context of an experiment where subjects view the webpage of a fictional candidate. Our findings suggest that a maverick agenda-setting strategy can mitigate the electoral sanctions of unpopular positions without decreasing the support resulting from favorable positions, allowing candidates to use position-taking on issues of relatively low importance to voters to overcome unfavorable positions on issues of greater importance. This strategy is effective because a maverick platform increases reliance on campaign information, but only when citizens do not support the candidate on high-importance issues.

### **An Asymmetric Theory of Campaign Evaluation**

Representatives and election scholars have long recognized that candidates with issue positions unfavorable to the electorate face a significant electoral disadvantage. In Fenno's (1978) study of representatives in their districts, many representatives believe strongly that they have to vote the preferences of their districts in order to maintain office. One representative exemplifies this wisdom, stating:

On gun control, I believe we should have it. But my district—a rural district—is overwhelmingly against gun control, 80 percent to 20 percent.

So I decided a long time ago not to hassle the issue. I am against all gun control (Fenno 1978).

More recently, a wave of research pinpoints a number of challenges that incumbents face because of poor issue congruence with their district. Carson (2005), for example, shows that

incumbents whose voting records favor the party line over district opinion face stronger primary challengers. Further, a great deal of research suggests that such incumbents are also at greater risk for losing in the general election (Canes-Wrone et al. 2002; Carson et al. 2010). Candidates who are out of step with the electorate on salient issues may be particularly disadvantaged.

The social psychological processes that guide individuals' search for and evaluation of political information may make unfavorable positions on salient issues particularly damaging to candidates' electoral prospects. People seek and accumulate information primarily about the issues they deem most important (Iyengar et al. 2008), recall that information more readily (Holbrook et al. 2005), and place elevated emphasis on these issues when evaluating candidates (Krosnick 1990). Information on such issues, therefore, is particularly likely to shape voters' predispositions toward candidates running in low-information settings such as congressional elections. These predispositions present a challenge to candidates that are out of step with their constituents because they govern the mix of motivations with which they will evaluate a candidate or campaign.

Motivations occur along two broad dimensions: accuracy goals and directional goals. Accuracy goals encourage individuals to "get it right," while directional goals encourage people to find evidence in support of a specific conclusion—and discount evidence in conflict with that conclusion (Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000; Taber and Lodge 2006). Accuracy goals drive citizens to seek diagnostic information, evaluate that information carefully, and update their attitudes in light of such information (Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000). Directional goals encourage heuristic processing—reliance on stereotypes and informational shortcuts—and generate confirmation and disconfirmation biases in the acquisition and processing of political information (Taber and Lodge 2006). Thus, directional goals tend to minimize opinion change

while accuracy goals encourage engagement with new information and therefore maximize the potential for reevaluation. *Candidates in step with the electorate, then, should encourage directional goals, while candidates seeking to downplay unfavorable positions should encourage accuracy goals.*

In most instances, citizens favor directional goals (Lodge and Taber 2000) as they evaluate politics through a perceptual screen (Campbell et al. 1960). Although people tend to pursue opinion-reinforcing information, they do not necessarily avoid information that may challenge their current evaluation (Garrett 2009a, 2009b). Information that diverges sharply from expectations encourages citizens to overcome this directional reasoning and improve the accuracy of their evaluations (Klayman and Ha 1987; Maheswaran and Chaiken 1991; Rahn 1993). In particular, stereotype-incongruent information—such as an issue position that contradicts the ideological stereotype signaled by another position—forces people to reassess the applicability of a stereotype to the situation at hand. Thus, people will abandon their negative predisposition toward a candidate if it appears insufficiently applicable, searching for better information, and they will do so even when they do not perceive the decision as important (Maheswaran and Chaiken 1991).

An unfavorable candidate position could produce several stereotypes among voters. Of particular relevance, citizens tend to associate specific policy positions with particular parties and ideologies (Conover and Feldman 1981; Lodge and Hamill 1986; Rahn 1993), both of which serve as powerful cues for voters (Huckfeldt et al. 1999; Huckfeldt et al. 2005).<sup>3</sup> Taking issue

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<sup>3</sup> Many people alternatively employ a likability heuristic—associating favorable positions with candidates whom they like and unfavorable positions with candidates whom they dislike (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Sniderman et al. 1993).

positions on each side of the ideological divide, therefore, may signal that the ideological or partisan stereotype is not applicable (Rahn 1993) and, thus, encourage accuracy goals. These accuracy goals, in turn, should compel voters to ignore the stereotypes and pursue more information about the candidate. In short, stereotype-incongruent campaign information should attenuate the negative influence of the unfavorable position.

Citizens are differentially disposed to noticing such stereotype-incongruent information, however. People are more likely to discount undesirable information than they are to discount desirable information (Edwards and Smith 1996). In some cases, voters with directional goals may become more supportive of previously favored candidates after encountering negative information about those candidates (Redlawsk 2002). Voters may, therefore, seek to “explain away” stereotype-incongruent information if they like the candidate, while evaluating incongruent information about a disliked candidate more even-handedly. If so, stereotype-incongruent information should trigger accuracy goals primarily for those citizens who oppose the candidate’s position on high-importance issues.

If our theory is correct, we should expect candidates with favorable positions on issues of high importance to voters to have strong support, whether or not they go maverick. Voters will employ directional goals to evaluate these candidates, seeking to avoid unpleasant information, and thereby having less accurate impressions of candidates who do not conform to common stereotypes. We should expect candidates with unfavorable positions on issues of high importance to voters to have significantly less support. Employing a maverick strategy, however, should increase citizen attention to campaign information and, thereby, mitigate the decreased support associated with unfavorable issue positions. In this way, candidate position-taking on

relatively low-importance issues to voters may mitigate the effect of candidate positioning on issues of greater importance.

In the context of the 2006 election, candidates' previous support for the Iraq war likely generated an unfavorable stereotype for the many voters who opposed the war. Moreover, most voters were likely to rely on this stereotype as they evaluated the candidates, since most voters have directional goals (Lodge and Taber 2000), which are characterized by reliance on stereotypes (Kunda and Sinclair 1999; Sinclair and Kunda 1999, 2000) and low levels of engagement (Lodge and Taber 2000). By highlighting liberal policy positions, however, Jim Gerlach pursued a strategy that may have minimized his constituents' reliance on such a stereotype, because such liberal positions are incongruent with the pro-war stereotype. This stereotype-incongruence on relatively lower-importance issues may have generated accuracy goals among the constituents who opposed the war (Klayman and Ha 1987; Maheswaran and Chaiken 1991; Rahn 1993).

Gerlach's stereotype-incongruence may have triggered two related processes, which mitigated the effect of his unfavorable position on the war. First, stereotype-incongruence signals the inapplicability of the stereotype to the current situation (Maheswaran and Chaiken 1991; Redlawsk 2002) and thus voters would be less likely to apply the negative stereotype to Gerlach. Though they may have disliked his position on the war, the liberal positions informed voters that the war did not define his candidacy. This process mirrors the intuition of the civil rights advocate in Fenno's (1978) study of representatives in their districts, who argues, "Our polls showed that I'm a little more liberal than my district on civil rights. It also showed that they tolerate that because they agree with me on most other issues and because they think I work hard."



Second, the accuracy goals brought on by Gerlach's stereotype-incongruence encourage people to seek new information (Kruglanski and Freund 1983; Redlawsk 2002; Tetlock 1985) and, therefore, voters should have spent more time engaging with his campaign. Voters in such scenarios must seek further information in order to overcome the cognitive dissonance brought on by the incongruent positions (Redlawsk 2002). Thus, voters were likely to encounter positive information about Gerlach that they would have otherwise ignored due to the relative disengagement brought on by directional goals. As Edwards & Smith (1996) and Redlawsk (2002) demonstrate, however, people are often responsive to desirable information while failing to notice undesirable information. Therefore, voters who supported the war may have continued to employ the positive stereotype associated with the position, failing to notice the positions suggesting that the stereotype was not applicable to Gerlach.

If these expectations hold, it would suggest that "maverick" candidates can have it both ways, so to speak, as they accrue and maintain the positive stereotypes that some voters associate with the candidate's position on their high-importance issues, while subverting the negative stereotypes that other voters associate with that position. If our causal story is correct, among voters who oppose the candidate's position, going maverick should suppress stereotyping and trigger campaign engagement, causing voters to pay greater attention to campaign information. Voters who share the candidate's position should remain relatively disengaged and continue to rely on stereotypes, regardless of the candidate's level of ideological congruence. We explore the asymmetric effect of stereotype-incongruent information on citizens' evaluation of campaign information in the context of an experiment where subjects view the webpage of a fictional candidate.

## Research Design

We recruited experiment participants from undergraduate political science classes at a large research university in the fall of 2009. Subjects viewed a non-interactive webpage of a fictional (though purportedly real) candidate running for the U.S. House of Representatives. The page was designed to look like the “About the Candidate” page common to candidate websites.

The main text on the page consisted of three paragraphs. The first and last paragraphs contained general non-partisan statements about the candidate’s ambitions (e.g., “I believe we have the power to solve the problems we face today”). In between these two paragraphs, a second paragraph stated the candidate’s specific positions on five policy issues. Those issues were selected by a random draw from one of eight policy platforms discussing the following eight policy issues: abortion, gay marriage, capital punishment, oil exploration, prescription drug re-importation, the public health insurance option, federal banking regulations, and private school vouchers. The issue order was also randomized.

Approximately half of the subjects (randomly selected) received a “Stereotype-Congruent Treatment,” in which they viewed a candidate whose positions on all five issues fit a stereotypical conservative or liberal ideology.<sup>4</sup> For example, a congruent conservative treatment

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<sup>4</sup> We intentionally chose a set of eight issues that provided variation in terms of salience. While the more salient issues, like abortion and capital punishment, are relatively easy for most people to classify in terms of stereotypical ideological positions, others are more nuanced. The issue of prescription drugs is arguably the most challenging, yet even this issue can be ideologically stereotyped. George W. Bush (Miller 2007) and former Senate majority leader Bill Frist (R-TN) (Pear 2004) oppose the practice of reimportation, while in October 2009 (the time our study was run) prominent Democrats such as John Kerry (McCarthy 2004) and Barack Obama (Associated

might read: “I will fight to make abortion illegal, oppose gay marriage, uphold the use of the death penalty, begin drilling for oil in ANWR, and prevent the importation of prescription drugs.” As a manipulation check, we asked subjects to guess whether the candidate’s position was liberal or conservative on 10 issues not mentioned on the website. Subjects in the conservative treatment placed the candidate as conservative on these issues 66% of the time, while subjects in the liberal treatment placed the candidate as conservative only 34% of the time. Thus, subjects in the Stereotype-Congruent Conservative treatment, compared to those in the Stereotype-Congruent Liberal treatment, were almost twice as likely to place the candidate as conservative on these issues ( $\chi^2=541, p<.001$ ). The ideological charge of the treatments, therefore, was consistent with our expectations and subjects were employing the ideological stereotype as expected.<sup>5</sup>

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Press 2009) supported the practice. Note that the picture has become cloudier since the time of our study, as many Democrats opposed a December 2009 amendment to the health care reform bill that would have allowed the practice (Welna 2009). In order to confirm that most subjects would reasonably be able to identify the ideological sides of this issue, we administered a pretest in which subjects classified each of the two positions on each of our eight issues (as well as several issues not mentioned by the candidates) as liberal or conservative. In this pretest, 75% of subjects viewed prescription importation as a liberal position, which is lower than the 94% who classified support for gay marriage as liberal and the 87% who classified opposition to the death penalty as liberal, but significantly more than the 50% we would expect from random guessing ( $T_{530} = 15.5$ ). Thus, the issue was largely identifiable in terms of ideological alignment.

<sup>5</sup> Table A1, Model 3 (in the Appendix) provides further evidence that the subjects were employing ideological stereotyping. The coefficient associated with the candidate’s conservatism

The remaining half of the subjects received one of two (randomly selected) “Stereotype-Incongruent Treatments,” viewing either 1) a candidate taking stereotypically liberal positions on three (randomized) issues and conservative positions on the remaining two issues or 2) a candidate taking stereotypically conservative positions on three (randomized) issues and liberal positions on the remaining two issues. For example, an incongruent treatment with three liberal issues and two conservative issues might read: “I will fight to keep abortion legal, oppose gay marriage, eliminate the use of the death penalty, begin drilling for oil in ANWR, and allow the importation of prescription drugs.”<sup>6</sup> Appendix A offers an example of the experiment’s webpage.

Intentionally absent from the candidate’s webpage was an explicit partisanship cue, as including the candidate’s party would have muddled our attempts to isolate the effects of stereotype-incongruent information with regard to issue positions. Since the absence of partisan cues increases the prospect of accuracy goals by decreasing people’s reliance on heuristics (Rahn 1993), by not including the candidate’s partisanship it is possible that all our subjects (in the stereotype-congruent and stereotype-incongruent treatments alike) were more likely to pursue accuracy goals than they would be in the real world, where partisan cues are prevalent. However,

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(i.e., a four-point measure of candidate ideology. See equation 1 below for more details.)

suggests that the probability of a subject placing the candidate as conservative on an issue increases with the candidate’s conservatism. This is strong support because the model includes subjects’ placements on issues that the candidate explicitly mentioned and controls for the stated position on the issue in question.

<sup>6</sup> As this example shows, many subjects saw liberal and conservative issue positions interspersed. The randomization of issue order, of course, caused some subjects to view the liberal (conservative) positions first followed by the conservative (liberal) positions.

since our primary aim is to test the *asymmetry* of stereotype-incongruent effects between people who favor and disfavor a candidate's position on a high-importance issue, the absence of a partisan cue should not bias our hypothesis testing. Our intent is not to estimate the size of the effect of stereotype-incongruent information in the real world but, instead, to determine whether the mechanisms we have discussed function as expected under optimal conditions.

The experiment also diverges from real campaigns due to the lack of an opposing candidate. Candidate strategy is contingent on the traits and strategy of the opponent and the electoral consequences of candidate strategy are similarly predicated on aspects of the opponent. Once again, this choice necessarily sacrifices some external validity in order to increase the internal validity of the design. If we were to provide a competing candidate website, it would be difficult to determine whether differences between experimental groups were due to the candidate, the opponent, or some interaction between the two. Moreover, the duration of the experiment would increase significantly, which may limit the experimental realism of the design. Thus, we test our theory under optimal circumstances, necessarily limiting the generalizability of our findings. By isolating the relationships of interest in this way, we provide solid groundwork from which future studies may build to consider multiple-candidate scenarios.

All subjects were able to view the candidate's webpage for as long as they wanted, after which the next screen prompted them to place the candidate (conservative or liberal) on a number of issue positions.<sup>7</sup> Subjects were then asked to "rate how strongly" they would support

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<sup>7</sup> We exclude from analysis the 10 subjects who viewed the webpage for less than ten seconds.

We also exclude from analysis the 105 subjects who participated in a pilot test of the experiment. Finally, we exclude from analysis the 12 subjects who left the experiment early, leaving a total of 531 subjects for our analysis.

the candidate on a scale of 0 to 100. This measure serves as the primary dependent variable in our analysis below.

Our hypotheses center around two core concepts captured in the experiment. The first is the candidate's position on an issue of high importance to the subjects. In a pre-test battery, we ask each subject "which of the following policy issues is most important to you, personally," providing us with a self-reported measure of the subject's most important policy issue, or problem (*MIP*), as selected from several choices. Included in the choices are all eight possible policy issues the candidate may discuss, as well as gun rights, national defense, and an 'other' option. After choosing their MIP issue, subjects were asked whether they supported the stereotypically liberal or conservative position on that issue (e.g., subjects who cited abortion as their MIP were asked "What do you think is the best way to address the issue of abortion? 1. Keep abortion legal. 2. Make abortion illegal."). Hence, we can identify the subjects who encountered a candidate discussing their most important policy issue and, if so, whether the candidate took a favorable (*MIP share*) or unfavorable (*MIP oppose*) position on the issue. The second core concept is the candidate's stereotype congruence or incongruence, with regard to the pre-identified stereotypical ideology of the issue positions. We refer to the candidates who discussed exclusively liberal positions or exclusively conservative positions as *stereotype-congruent* and candidates discussing some liberal and some conservative positions as *stereotype-incongruent*.

Using these measures, we are able to compare how the effects of the candidate sharing or opposing the subject's MIP on support for the candidate change depending on whether the candidate sends ideologically stereotype-congruent or incongruent policy signals. We center our analysis on comparisons between four categories of subjects: 1) Stereotype-Congruent / MIP

Share (subjects who saw a stereotype-congruent webpage where the candidate shared the subject's MIP position); 2) Stereotype-Congruent / MIP Oppose (subjects who saw a stereotype-congruent webpage but where the candidate opposed the subject's MIP position); 3) Stereotype-Incongruent / MIP Share; and 4) Stereotype-Incongruent / MIP Oppose. In this way, we compare how citizens' support for a candidate "changes" depending on these different conditions, which in this study are established contemporaneously during subjects' exposure to a single webpage. A question for future research is whether the findings we present here hold when considered in the context of individual citizens who receive varying signals from the same candidate over time, specifically with regard to the candidate's ideological congruence and his/her position on the citizen's MIP.

Our theory suggests that the asymmetric effects of position-taking on support are due to voters' relative level of engagement with campaign information. The research design also allows us to test this mechanism in several ways. First, subjects choose how long they view the webpage and thus greater view time suggests greater engagement in the campaign. Second, we can use the subjects' issue placements to assess the accuracy of their knowledge of campaign positions. Third, the issue placements also allow us to assess the degree to which subjects rely on ideological stereotypes to place candidates on issues that the website did not address.

## **Hypotheses**

Figure 1 offers a visual summary of our arguments offered above about how stereotype-incongruent campaign agenda-setting should have asymmetric effects on citizens who do and do not share a candidate's position on a high-importance issue. Voters who share the candidate's position on their MIP should exhibit evidence of directional goals: processing heuristically, seeking to avoid stereotype-incongruent information, and spending less time viewing the

webpage when the candidate does not conform to the ideological stereotype. This reliance on heuristic processing and decreased attention to the webpage should decrease the accuracy of their recall of campaign information when the candidate does not conform to the ideological-stereotype. As a result, subjects sharing the candidate's position on their MIP should exhibit equal support in the stereotype-congruent and stereotype-incongruent treatments.

Stereotype-incongruence should trigger accuracy goals, but only among those who oppose the candidate's position on their MIP. Accuracy goals are characterized by increased attention to relevant information and more thorough processing of that information (Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000). Thus, accuracy goals should increase the time that such subjects spend viewing the webpage, reliance on campaign information in their placements, and, subsequently, the accuracy of their recall of campaign information. As a result, subjects opposing the candidate's position on their MIP should exhibit greater support in the stereotype-incongruent treatment than in the stereotype-congruent treatment. From our theoretical discussion, we draw the following hypotheses (including two "null" hypotheses that predict an inability to reject statistically the null of no effect):

*Hypothesis 1: The Asymmetric Effects of Stereotype Incongruence on Candidate Support*

*H1a (Null):* Subjects who share the candidate's position on their MIP will have *equal* levels of support for the candidate when the ideology of the candidate's issue positions is stereotype-incongruent as when it is stereotype-congruent.

*H1b:* Subjects who oppose the candidate's position on their MIP will have *greater* support for the candidate if the ideology of the candidate's issue positions is stereotype-incongruent than if it is stereotype-congruent.

*The Asymmetric Effects of Stereotype Incongruence on Campaign Engagement*

*Hypothesis 2: View Time*

*H2a:* Subjects who share the candidate's position on their MIP will spend *less* time viewing the candidate's webpage if the ideology of the candidate's issue positions is stereotype-incongruent than if it is stereotype-congruent.



*H2b*: Subjects who oppose the candidate’s position on their MIP will spend *more* time viewing the candidate’s webpage if the ideology of the candidate’s issue positions is stereotype-incongruent than if it is stereotype-congruent.

*Hypothesis 3: Recall*

*H3a*: Subjects who share the candidate’s position on the subject’s MIP will be *less* likely to recall the candidate’s stated issue positions if the ideology of the candidate’s issue positions is stereotype-incongruent than if it is stereotype-congruent.

*H3b*: Subjects who oppose the candidate’s position on the subject’s MIP will be *more* likely to recall the candidate’s stated issue positions if the ideology of the candidate’s issue positions is stereotype-incongruent than if it is stereotype-congruent.

*Hypothesis 4: Inference*

*H4a (Null)*: For subjects who share the candidate’s position on their MIP, the marginal effect of the candidate’s stated issue position on the subject’s placement of the candidate on that issue will be *unaffected* by whether the ideology of the candidate’s issue positions is stereotype-congruent or stereotype-incongruent.

*H4b*: For subjects who oppose the candidate’s position on their MIP, the marginal effect of the candidate’s stated issue position on the subject’s placement of the candidate on that issue will be *greater* if the ideology of the candidate’s issue positions is stereotype-incongruent than if it is stereotype-congruent.

**The Effect of Stereotype Incongruence on Candidate Support**

We test our hypotheses using a multilevel modeling approach. The core of our analysis relies on the following equation:

$$Support_{ij} = \alpha + \beta_1 (MIP\ Share_{ij}) + \beta_2 (MIP\ Oppose_{ij}) + \beta_3 (Is\ Candidate\ Conservative?_{ij}) + \beta_4 (Is\ Candidate\ Stereotype\ Incongruent?_{ij}) + \beta_5 (Candidate's\ 4-Point\ Conservatism_{ij}) + \beta_6 (Subject's\ 3-Point\ Conservatism_{ij}) + \beta_7 (MIP\ Share_{ij}) * (Is\ Candidate\ Stereotype\ Incongruent?_{ij}) + \beta_8 (MIP\ Oppose_{ij}) * (Is\ Candidate\ Stereotype\ Incongruent?_{ij}) + u_j + e_{ij}$$

Where,

*Support<sub>ij</sub>* = subject *i* in treatment *j*'s expressed support for candidate, higher values suggest greater support (0-100)

*MIP Share<sub>ij</sub>* = indicator variable coded one if subject’s stated position on his/her MIP is same as Candidate’s stated position on the issue, zero otherwise

*MIP Oppose<sub>ij</sub>* = indicator variable coded one if subject’s stated position on his/her MIP is in opposition to the Candidate’s stated position on the issue, zero otherwise<sup>8</sup>

*Is Candidate Conservative?<sub>ij</sub>* = indicator variable coded one if subject was in the conservative candidate treatment and one if subject was in the liberal candidate treatment

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<sup>8</sup> The omitted baseline category contains subjects for whom the candidate did not discuss their

MIP issue.

*Candidate's 4-Point Conservatism*<sub>ij</sub> = four-point control for variation in candidate ideology produced by interaction between liberal/conservative manipulation and stereotype-congruent/incongruent manipulation. Coded -2 (liberal-congruent), -1 (liberal-incongruent), 1 liberal (conservative-incongruent), 1 (conservative-congruent). This control allows us to separate the effects of stereotype-congruence from that of movement in the policy space

*Subject's 3-Point Conservatism*<sub>ij</sub> = three-point control for subject's policy preference. Coded -1 (subject is liberal), 0 (subject is moderate or hasn't thought much about it), 1 (subject is conservative)

$u_j$  = residual error due to variation at the treatment level

$e_{ij}$  = residual error due to variation among subjects

Note the subscripting of the model. Subjects ( $i$ ) are nested within treatments ( $j$ )

corresponding to the liberal/conservative manipulation, the stereotype congruent/incongruent manipulation, and the randomization of the issue content of the platform. Candidates discussed one of eight policy platforms containing five issues each. Subjects, therefore, nest within 32 (2 x 2 x 8) possible treatments, and we employ a two-level linear model to account for the hierarchical structure of the treatment assignment. By allowing the intercept to vary across treatments, we account for error resulting from the candidate's particular mix of issues and positions. Table 1 shows that the intercept varies across treatments by an average of 4.1 points. Additionally, we allow the slope associated with the subject's conservatism ( $\beta_6$ ) to vary across treatments. This specification controls for the likelihood that the effect of the subject's conservatism will be positive for conservative candidates, negative for liberal candidates, and may vary in strength based on the candidate's stereotype congruence and ideology. The results in Table 1 support this proposition, as the standard deviation of the slope is 14.4 points and the slope has a strong correlation with candidate ideology ( $r = .85$ ).

<<Table 1 about here>>

We begin by assessing our first and central hypothesis: that stereotype incongruence will mitigate the negative electoral effect of an unfavorable position on a high-importance issue, *without* reducing the positive influence of a favorable position on the issue. We thus test the

support hypotheses, H1a (Null) and H1b, by interacting the MIP agreement and disagreement indicators with the stereotype incongruence indicator.

Due to the interaction between each of these variables and the stereotype incongruence indicator, the coefficients and standard errors on the MIP dummies ( $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  from the model) represent the effect of each variable when the candidate is stereotype-congruent. The coefficients and standard errors associated with the multiplicative terms ( $\beta_7$  and  $\beta_8$ ) tell us whether the effects of position taking are moderated by whether the candidate is stereotype congruent (Kam and Franzese 2007).

The results in Table 1 demonstrate the asymmetric effect of stereotype incongruence on support for the candidate. Looking first at candidates with stereotype-congruent platforms, the coefficient associated with shared MIP positions is 9.5 with a standard error of 4.5, while the coefficient associated with opposing positions is -11.5 with a standard error of 4.2. Thus, each effect is in the expected direction and statistically significant for subjects with stereotype-congruent candidates.

Let us consider these effects for an example citizen who believes that abortion is the most important policy (MIP) issue and supports legislation restricting abortion. The results suggest that she will give about 10 points more support to a consistently-conservative pro-life candidate compared to an otherwise identical candidate who omits the abortion issue from his platform and more than 20 points more support compared to a consistently-liberal candidate who offers a pro-choice position (after controlling for the candidate's general liberalism).

The picture changes considerably when we look at candidates with stereotype-incongruent platforms. While the effect of shared MIP position is still positive and statistically significant, the effect of opposing positions reduces to zero for subjects with stereotype-

incongruent candidates. The small and statistically insignificant coefficient associated with the interaction between shared MIP position and stereotype incongruence suggests that incongruence does not diminish the benefit of a favorable position on the subject's most important issue. By extracting the covariance between  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_7$  from the model, we can calculate the standard error of the effect as 4.05.<sup>9</sup> Since the standard error is less than half the size of the marginal effect ( $\beta_1 + \beta_7 = 9.5 - 1.9 = 8.6$ ), we can conclude that the effect of favorable positions is positive and statistically significant for candidates with stereotype-incongruent candidates.

The large and positive coefficient on the interaction between opposing MIP positions and stereotype incongruence, on the other hand, shows that stereotype incongruence mitigates the sanction of an unfavorable position in our experiment. For subjects with an incongruent candidate, the standard error (4.02)<sup>10</sup> is more than five times larger than the marginal effect ( $-11.5 + 12.2 = 0.7$ ), suggesting that there is no significant difference in support between voters who opposed the candidate position on their MIP and voters whose MIP is not mentioned.

<sup>9</sup> The standard error of the marginal effect is equal to,

$$s.e. \left( \frac{\partial \hat{y}}{\partial x} \right) = \sqrt{V(\hat{\beta}_x) + z^2 * V(\hat{\beta}_{xz}) + 2 * z * Cov(\hat{\beta}_x, \hat{\beta}_{xz})}$$

Hence, for subjects with stereotype-incongruent candidates,

$$s.e. \left( \frac{\partial \widehat{support}}{\partial MIP\ Share} \right) = 4.46^2 + 6.03^2 + 2 * -19.93 = \sqrt{16.4} = 4.05$$

<sup>10</sup>  $s.e. \left( \frac{\partial \widehat{support}}{\partial MIP\ oppose} \right)$

$$\begin{aligned} &= \sqrt{V(\hat{\beta}_{MIP\ oppose}) + Inconsistent^2 * V(\hat{\beta}_{MIP\ oppose * Inconsistent}) + 2 * Inconsistent * Cov(\hat{\beta}_{MIP\ oppose}, \hat{\beta}_{MIP\ oppose * Inconsistent})} \\ &= \sqrt{17.54 + 33.65 - 35.02} \\ &= 4.02 \end{aligned}$$

Returning to our example citizen who prioritizes pro-life legislation, the model predicts that she will support a consistently conservative *pro-life* candidate almost 10 points more than an otherwise identical candidate who does not address abortion. Yet, she will support a mostly-conservative *pro-choice* candidate at about the same rate as an otherwise identical candidate who ignores the abortion issue. Thus, the candidate's benefit from shared policy goals remains for stereotype-incongruent candidates, but stereotype incongruence eliminates the candidate's loss from opposing policy goals.

We can also consider the effect of "going maverick" for subjects whose candidate did not mention their MIP. The coefficient on stereotype-incongruent represents the effect of stereotype-incongruence when the other interacted variables equal zero and thus represents the effect for subjects whose MIP was not mentioned. The coefficient is substantively small and less than the size of its standard error, suggesting that for these subjects, there is little change in support when comparing a maverick candidate to a stereotype-congruent candidate. Thus, the primary effect of stereotype-incongruent position taking works in conjunction with position taking on other high importance issues.

In summary, Table 1 provides clear support for Hypotheses 1a and 1b: *Stereotype incongruence mitigates the negative effect of unfavorable candidate positions on high-importance issues without diminishing the positive effect of favorable candidate positions.* These results suggest that candidates can indeed have it "both ways" by going maverick, dodging the electoral sanctions of unpopular positions while retaining the electoral payoffs of popular ones. We now turn our attention to exploring the cognitive mechanisms producing this effect.

## The Effect of Stereotype Incongruence on Campaign Engagement

Our theory suggests that subjects sharing a candidate's position on the subjects' most important problem will pursue directional goals. As such, they should discount information that diverges from their beliefs. Stereotype-incongruent information, then, should discourage attention to the campaign and reduce knowledge of candidate's other issue positions. By contrast, subjects opposing a stereotype-congruent candidate's position on their most important problem should be disengaged, with little motivation to pay attention. Yet for these subjects, stereotype-incongruent information should trigger accuracy goals, *increasing* attention to the campaign, knowledge of stated candidate positions, and reliance on campaign information in their inferences about the candidate's positions.

We test these propositions applying the model described in the support equation listed above to the response variables *log of seconds spent viewing the webpage*, *accurate recall of candidate's stated position on an issue*,<sup>11</sup> and *placement of candidate as conservative on issue*.<sup>12</sup> Like the support model, the view time equation employs a hierarchical linear model with observations at the subject level. The recall and placement models rely on logistic regression with observations at the issue-placement level. Candidates discussed five issues each and subjects placed candidates on each issue as well as ten others. The recall model, therefore, has 2,655 observations (531 subjects \* 5 placements) and the placement model has 7,965 observations (531 subjects \* 15 placements). Observations in these placement-level models are

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<sup>11</sup> Indicator variable coded one if subject correctly identified candidate's stated position and zero otherwise.

<sup>12</sup> Indicator variable coded one if subject placed candidate as conservative on the issue and zero otherwise.

clustered by the substantive issue content of the placement, the subject making the placements, as well as the treatment. We therefore employ a mixed model where the intercept is allowed to vary across subjects, issues, and treatments. We display the regressions in Appendix B and here focus on the results directly relevant to our hypotheses.

Figure 2 presents predictions from these models to test our hypotheses from Figure 1.<sup>13</sup> Each cell of the figure displays the marginal effect of stereotype-incongruence on the response variable. That is, they show the change in predicted support, view time, probability of correct recall, or probability of placing the candidate as conservative when comparing a subject whose candidate is stereotype-congruent to an otherwise identical subject and candidate but where the candidate is stereotype-incongruent. The light bars represent effects for subjects who share the candidate's position on their most important issue, while the dark bars correspond to effects for subjects who oppose the candidate's position.<sup>14</sup> Our directional hypotheses imply a one-tailed test and, thus, the bars include vertical lines to indicate the 90% confidence interval of the

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<sup>13</sup> We employ the Zelig package (Imai et al. 2008, 2009) in R to create the estimates by using the model parameters and associated uncertainty to generate 10,000 simulations of the relevant contrast. We compute the effect size and confidence interval from the distribution of these simulations with the median draw corresponding to the effect. The parameters we use to predict support are from Table 1 and the remaining estimates come from models presented in Table B1 that apply the model in equation 1 to the remaining three response variables.

<sup>14</sup> The covariate profile for all bars in Figure 2 is a moderate subject in the Liberal treatment, with a candidate who is moderate overall. The estimates use the average intercept size and average coefficient for subject conservatism. The view time model includes a control for the subject's average response latency (Fazio 1990). The predictions use the average of this measure.

estimate. The candidate in the fourth cell has stated a liberal position on the issue. Negative values hence suggest that the effect of the candidate's true position is greater for stereotype-incongruent candidates than for stereotype-congruent candidates.

Our expectations suggest that voters will engage with stereotype-incongruent candidates asymmetrically, depending on candidates' positions on high importance issues—a pro-life voter who prioritizes abortion will ignore any liberal signals a pro-life candidate sends, but will notice conservative signals sent by a pro-choice candidate. Consequently, this voter will increase attention to the pro-choice candidate's campaign and will be less likely to apply the liberal stereotype to this candidate.

The results in Figure 2 provide support for this process, suggesting that the asymmetric effects of stereotype-incongruence on support are due to asymmetric engagement with candidates' campaigns. As discussed above, stereotype incongruence increases support for those subjects who oppose the candidate's position, but does not decrease appreciably support among those who share the candidate's position. Stereotype incongruence also increases attention to the candidate in terms of time spent viewing the website, but again only for those subjects who oppose the candidate's position on their most important issue. This finding supports Hypothesis 2b, but fails to support Hypothesis 2a. Our example pro-life voter will not pay significantly less attention to a pro-life candidate who takes liberal positions on low-importance issues compared to a pro-life candidate who is consistently conservative. On the other hand, that voter will spend significantly more time considering the webpage of a pro-choice candidate who sends conservative messages on low-importance issues than one who takes only liberal positions.

The results for the probability of correct placement are also partially supportive of the theory. Subjects sharing the candidate's position on their most important issue are less accurate



for the stereotype-incongruent condition, supporting Hypothesis 3a, but stereotype incongruence does not improve accuracy for subjects who oppose the candidate's position, as Hypothesis 3b predicts. Finally, the probability of placing a candidate who emphasized a liberal position on the issue as conservative on that issue decreases in the stereotype-incongruent condition for subjects who oppose the candidate's position on their MIP. Stereotype incongruence, therefore, increases the effect of the candidate's stated issue positions in subject inference about the candidate's positions only for subjects who oppose the candidate's position on their MIP, as Hypotheses 4a and 4b predict.

More concretely, consider for a final time our pro-life voter who prioritizes abortion. The conservative-placement model suggests that she will largely ignore a pro-life candidate's liberal positions, placing such a candidate as equally conservative as a consistently conservative candidate. As a result, she will be less accurate when placing the pro-life candidate with liberal positions than when placing the consistently conservative candidate, as evidenced by the correct-placement model. In contrast, a pro-choice voter will be quite responsive to signals that the pro-life candidate has liberal positions, being significantly more likely to place such a candidate as liberal compared to a consistently conservative candidate. This decreased stereotyping, however, does not appear to improve accuracy of placements for such subjects in the correct-placement model.

The lack of support for Hypotheses 2a and 3b calls for explanation. The fact that subjects who support the candidate's position on their MIP issue spent almost the same amount of time viewing the webpage regardless of stereotype-incongruence suggests that people did not actively turn away from stereotype-incongruent information. The lack of improvement in recall accuracy is easier to explain. Even when accuracy goals are present, people often employ heuristics (see

Chaiken et al. 1989), which can help them make good choices in complex situations (Lupia 1994). Model 3 of Table B1 shows that subjects relied heavily on the candidate's conservatism to place the candidate on each issue. The impact of the candidate's true position increases with stereotype incongruence, but the utility of the ideology heuristic decreases. These effects offset to prevent any change in recall accuracy.

The emerging picture from Figure 2 is one of motivated evaluation of the campaign. Citizens who agree with the candidate's position on their most important issue are less attentive to campaign information, overall. Reliance on predispositions and shortcuts leads such citizens to recall the positions of candidates with congruent ideologies, but results in lowered recall accuracy for candidates with stereotype-incongruent ideologies. Such citizens overlook the stereotype incongruence and support the candidate at approximately equal levels to a stereotype-congruent candidate. By contrast, citizens who oppose the candidate's position respond differently to stereotype incongruence. These citizens *increase* their attention to campaign information in terms of view time and inference and, consequently, support for candidates emphasizing stereotype-incongruent positions.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

While the representatives in Fenno's (1978) study believed that their voting record had to reflect district preferences to maintain office, they did not believe that any single one of their votes could cost them their jobs. Rather, they believed that general policy congruence with their districts could shelter them from the electoral costs of any single voting decision. In this study, we show that policy congruence does in fact protect candidates from unfavorable positions. Shared positions on high importance issues mitigate the impact of the candidate's positions on less-important issues to the voter. Yet, candidates' positions on relatively low-importance issues

to voters can help candidates overcome unfavorable positions on voters' high-importance issues. Thus, our findings suggest a more nuanced story than a single-dimensional model of policy proximity might imply.

The standard proximity model of voting (Davis et al. 1970; Downs 1957; Poole and Rosenthal 1991) asserts that a voter's support for a candidate increases as the candidate approaches the voter's ideal point in the policy space. Such models predict that the increase in support associated with a candidate's move toward the voter's ideal point should be equal to the loss in support that occurs when the candidate moves an equal distance away from the voter's ideal point. Our results suggest that, instead, the marginal effect of position taking depends on the candidate's baseline favorability. Citizens who are predisposed to support a candidate will be less likely to notice the candidate's divergence from their ideal point. Citizens who are predisposed to dislike a candidate will be more likely to notice the candidate's movement in the policy space and respond positively to a candidate's convergence toward their ideal point.

We are not arguing, of course, that proximity does not matter. In fact, subject and candidate ideology have strong effects in our models. Our point is that the effects presented in this analysis are independent of general policy proximity and, thus, modify the traditional assumptions of the model. Therefore, stereotype incongruence will be most effective if the candidate's positions are favorable to the constituency.

Our results also differ from predictions of the directional voting model (Matthews 1979; Rabinowitz and Macdonald 1989), which suggests that voters have diffuse policy preferences, preferring one side of an issue, but typically lacking a single ideal point. The model predicts that a voter's support for a candidate is a function of issue agreement weighted by the intensity of the voter's preference on the issue. The increase in candidate support resulting from agreement on an

additional issue should be equal to the loss in support from disagreement on an issue of equal preference intensity. Once again, our findings suggest that this is not always the case: Among stereotype-incongruent candidates, the loss of support for candidates who take an opposing position on citizens' high-importance issues is small (and statistically significant) compared to the gain in support for candidates who take a favorable position.

These results build on the issue public literature (Holbrook et al. 2005; Iyengar et al. 2008; Krosnick 1990) by identifying a condition in which issues of relatively little importance to voters trump an issue of greater importance. The issue public literature (Holbrook et al. 2005; Iyengar et al. 2008; Krosnick 1990) suggests that, typically, the effect of agreement or disagreement on issues of high-importance to voters should outweigh the effect of agreement or disagreement on issues of relatively less importance to voters. While the primacy of high-importance issues remains in our experiment, we see that candidates can overcome their effect by emphasizing a stereotype-incongruent campaign. This position taking on relatively low-importance issues serves to undermine the predispositions created by the high-importance issue, but only for those citizens who oppose the candidate's position.

These findings hold practical implications for candidates who hold an issue position not shared by a significant portion of voters; which is to say, our findings apply to most candidates at one time or another. Unfavorable issue positions pose a considerable threat to candidates' chances of winning office (Canes-Wrone et al. 2002; Carson 2005; Carson et al. 2010). The results presented here suggest a strategy to help candidates overcome that threat.

Our experiment, of course, departs from the real world in several important ways that may limit the potential impact of the strategy. First, we study one candidate in isolation from any opponents who may seek to reinforce the negative stereotypes associated with the candidate.

Second, many voters will not seek information about disliked candidates and, therefore, may not notice any stereotype-incongruent cues a candidate provides. Jim Gerlach's 2006 victory, however, was by less than 2% of the popular vote, and hence even small effects can change the outcome of such elections.

To summarize and conclude, we find that a stereotype-incongruent policy platform increases citizens' reliance on campaign information, which, in our experiment, translated into support. This effect holds only for citizens who oppose the candidate's position on their most important issue. Citizens who support a candidate's position on their most important issue relied, instead, upon heuristic processing and hence overlooked stereotype-incongruent cues. Such voters, as a result, were equally supportive of stereotype-congruent and incongruent candidates. Maverick candidates, therefore, can encourage the positive stereotypes that some voters associate with the candidate's position on their high-importance issues, while subverting the negative stereotypes that other voters associate with that position. Intentionally or not, Jim Gerlach exemplified this strategy in his 2006 bid for reelection to the U.S. House.

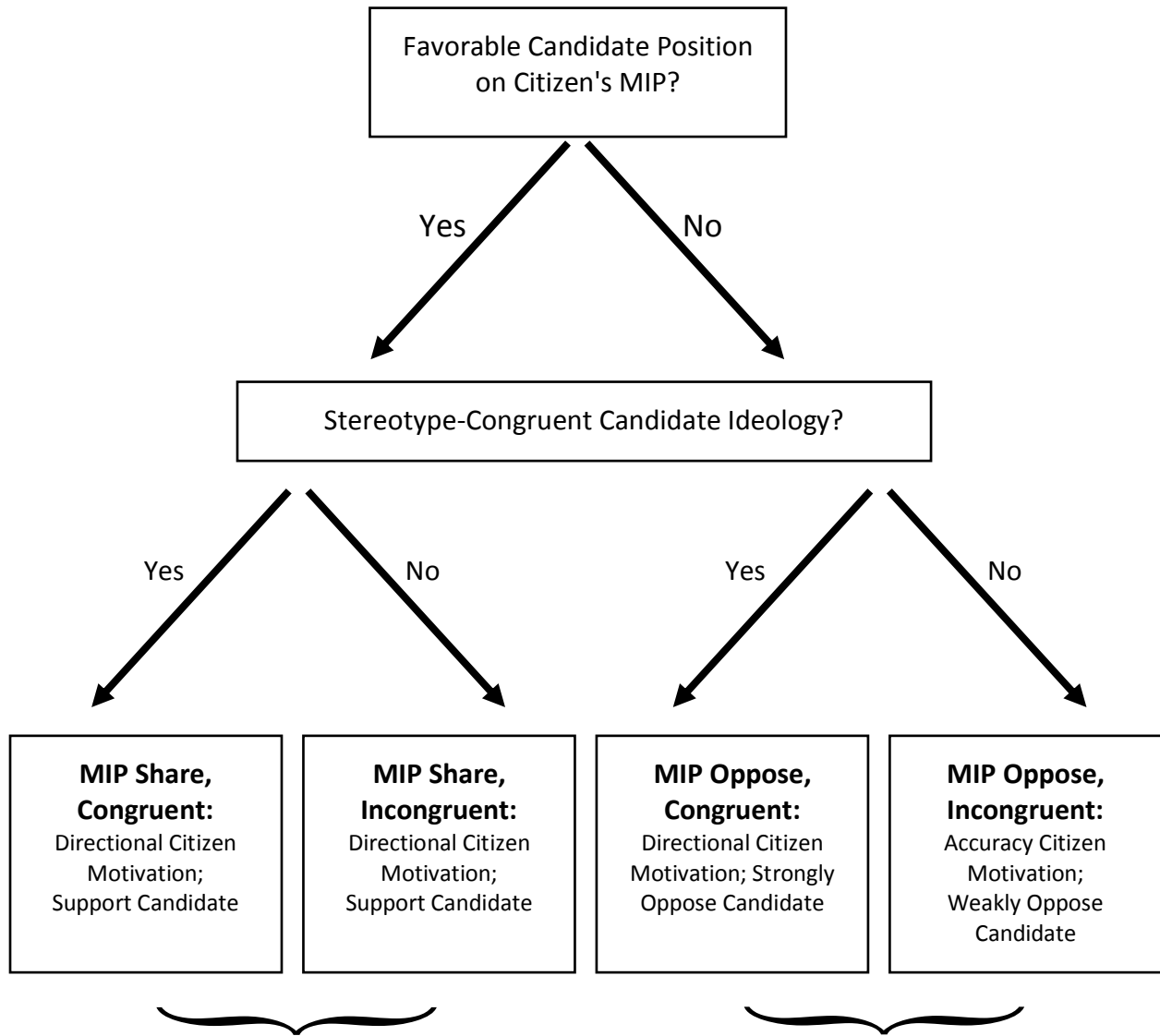
## Tables and Figures

Table 1. Support for Candidate by Most Important Problem (MIP) Position and Candidate Stereotype Congruence

	Support (0 - 100)	
<b><i>Fixed Part</i></b>		
	Estimate	Std. Error
Shares candidate's position on MIP	9.5	(4.46)
Opposes candidate's position on MIP	-11.5	(4.19)
Candidate was conservative	1.2	(8.40)
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent	-2.2	(3.35)
Candidate's 4-point conservatism	-3.9	(2.70)
Subject's 3-point conservatism	1.2	(2.90)
Shares candidate's position on MIP X	-1.9	(6.03)
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent		
Opposes candidate's position on MIP X	12.2	(5.80)
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent		
Intercept	44.1	(4.86)
<b><i>Random part</i></b>		
	Parameter	Estimate
	$\sigma_e$	25.41
Treatment	$\sigma_u$	4.13
	$\sigma\beta$ subject's conservatism	14.45
<b><i>Model fit</i></b>		
AIC	4982.3	
BIC	5037.9	
Log likelihood	-2478.2	
Observations (subjects)	531	
Treatments	32	

Multilevel linear model estimates. The 32 treatments are comprised of a conservative manipulation, a congruence manipulation, and eight issue combinations (2 X 2 X 8).

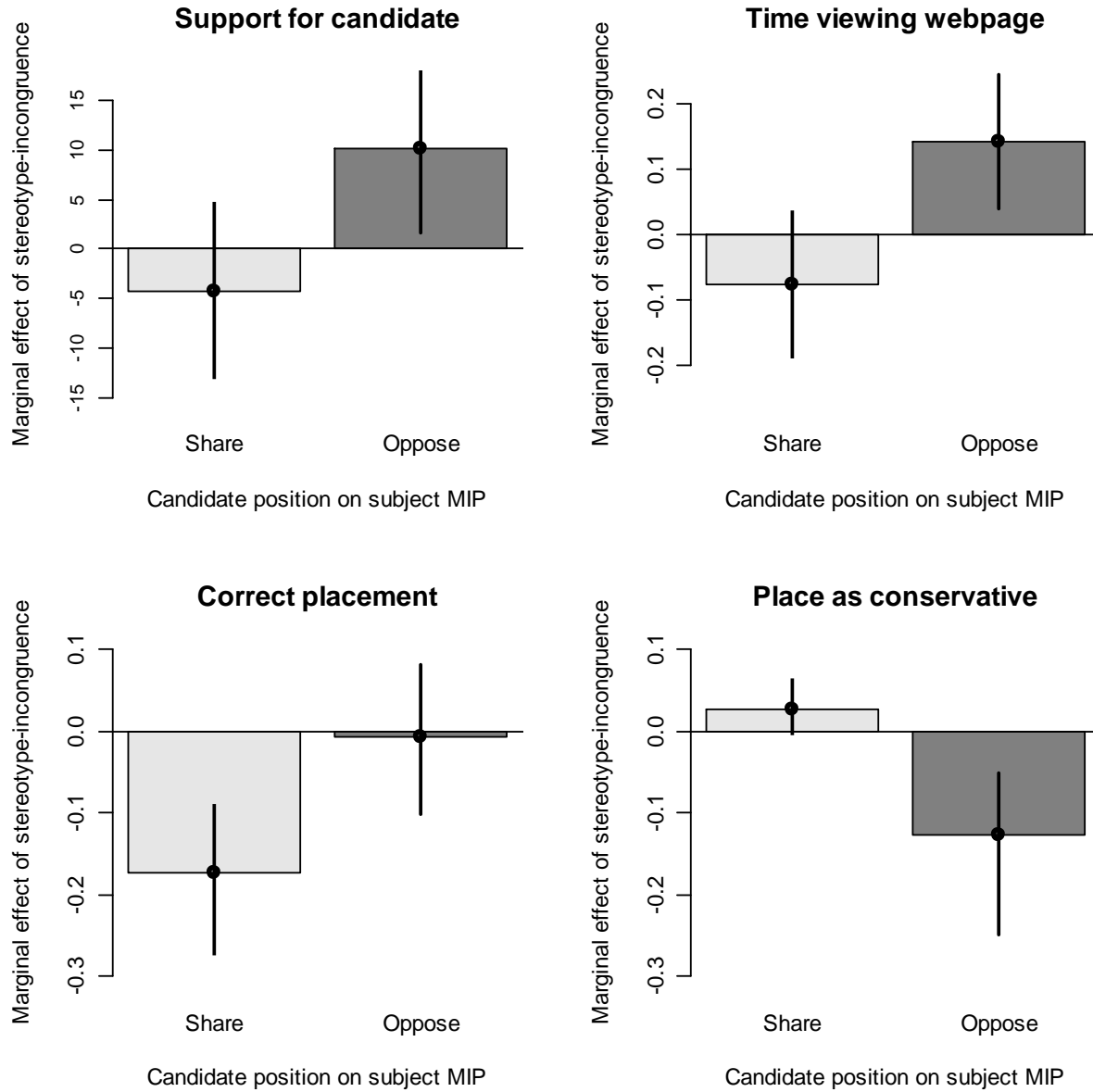
Figure 1. Hypotheses Testing Theory of Asymmetric Motivated Campaign Evaluation



**H1a (Null):** Support will be statistically indistinguishable between treatments.  
**H2a:** Time spent viewing page will be significantly *lower* in incongruent treatment.  
**H3a:** Accuracy of recall of stated candidate positions will be significantly *lower* in incongruent treatment.  
**H4a (Null):** Effect of candidate's stated position on voter inference will be statistically indistinguishable between treatments.

**H1b:** Support will be significantly *higher* in incongruent treatment.  
**H2b:** Time spent viewing page will be significantly *higher* in incongruent treatment.  
**H3b:** Accuracy of recall of candidate positions will be significantly *higher* in incongruent treatment.  
**H4b:** Effect of candidate's stated position on voter inference will be *higher* in incongruent treatment.

Figure 2. Effect of Stereotype Incongruence, by Policy Agreement on Subject’s Most Important Problem



First row estimates from the `ls.mixed` model (Bailey and Alimadhi 2007a) in R’s Zelig package (Imai et al. 2008, 2009). Second row estimates from the `logit.mixed` model (Bailey and Alimadhi 2007b) in the Zelig package. Model estimates for the simulations are drawn from Table B1.



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## Appendix A.

Figure A1. Example Candidate Webpage from Experiment



**Ted Jenkins** for U.S. Congress

Home **About Ted** News The Issues Get Involved Contribute Contact

A Note from Ted...

I'm running for Congress because I believe our country is the greatest nation on earth, with the greatest opportunities the world has ever known, and I believe we have the power to solve the problems we face today. Most importantly, I believe many solutions to the world's problems can and must come from the hearts and minds of folks right here in California.

I am going to Washington to tackle the issues that really matter. Key among these, I will fight to make abortion illegal, decrease governmental regulation of the banking industry, uphold the use of the death penalty, allow the importation of prescription drugs, and support gay marriage.

In short, I will be part of the solution for our nation's problems. And I will take my mandate for solutions not from special interest groups in Washington, D.C. but from the people of the great state of California. Thank you for your support. I hope to see you out on the campaign trail!

*Ted*

Press [space] to continue

All subjects viewed the above webpage with the same first and third paragraphs; only the second paragraph varied. Subjects in the two Stereotype-Congruent treatments (Conservative and Liberal) viewed a webpage in which the second paragraph listed “Ted’s” ideologically-congruent policy positions (all conservative or all liberal) on five issues drawn randomly from the eight we employed in total. Subjects in the two Stereotype-Incongruent treatments viewed instead a second paragraph listing ideologically-incongruent policy positions on five randomly-drawn issues: either three liberal and two conservative, or three conservative and two liberal, but not necessarily clustered according to ideology. The example shown here is from one of the Stereotype-Incongruent (Conservative) treatments, offering three stereotypically-conservative positions (on abortion, banking, and capital punishment) and two stereotypically-liberal positions (on prescription drugs and gay marriage). In all cases, issue order was randomized.

## Appendix B.

Table B1. Measures of Campaign Engagement by MIP Position and Candidate Stereotype Congruence

	<u>Model 1</u>		<u>Model 2</u>		<u>Model 3</u>	
	Time viewing page		Correct placement?		Conservative placement?	
	log(seconds)		(0 = no; 1 = yes)		(0 = liberal 1 = conservative)	
<b>Fixed part</b>						
	Estimate	Std. Error	Estimate	Std. Error	Estimate	Std. Error
Shares candidate's position on MIP	-0.01	0.057	0.71	0.337	-0.19	0.224
Opposes candidate's position on MIP	-0.08	0.054	-0.49	0.264	0.46	0.212
Candidate was conservative	0.01	0.097	0.85	0.471	-0.65	0.426
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent	0.05	0.041	-0.35	0.206	0.25	0.174
Candidate's 4-point conservatism	-0.01	0.032	-0.33	0.158	0.73	0.140
Subject's conservatism	0.00	0.018	-0.13	0.091	0.04	0.072
Candidate was liberal on issue					-1.78	0.260
Candidate was conservative on issue					0.96	0.182
Average response time (seconds)	0.14	0.011				
Shares candidate's position on MIP X						
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent	-0.13	0.078	-0.98	0.420	0.31	0.300
Candidate was liberal on issue					-0.85	0.619
Candidate was conservative on issue					0.30	0.515
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent X						
Candidate was liberal on issue					1.32	0.722
Candidate was conservative on issue					-0.34	0.585
Opposes candidate's position on MIP X						
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent	0.09	0.075	0.31	0.362	-0.62	0.287
Candidate was liberal on issue					0.98	0.466
Candidate was conservative on issue					-0.78	0.273
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent X						
Candidate was liberal on issue					-0.76	0.593
Candidate was conservative on issue					0.78	0.380
Candidate was stereotype-incongruent X						
Candidate was liberal on issue					-1.53	0.333
Candidate was conservative on issue					0.58	0.231
Intercept	2.97	0.084	1.64	0.293	0.12	0.263
<b>Random part</b>						
	Parameter	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate		
	$\sigma_e$	0.347	--	--		
Treatment	$\sigma_u$	0	0	0.240		
	$\sigma_{\beta}$ s's conservatism	0	0	0.161		
Subject	$\sigma_v$	--	1.150	1.059		
Issue	$\sigma_w$	--	0.267	0.327		

<b>Model fit</b>			
AIC	452.5	2435.9	8434.8
BIC	512.4	2518.3	8616.3
Log likelihood	-212.3	-1204.0	-4191.4
Observations	531	2655	7965
Subjects	531	531	531
Issues	--	8	15
Treatments	32	32	32

Model 1: Multilevel linear regression estimates. Unit of analysis is the subject (n = subjects = 531).

Model 2: Multilevel logistic regression estimates. Unit of analysis is the issue placement. Sample includes only the five of eight issues on which the candidate took a position (n = subjects \* 5 = 2,655).

Model 3: Multilevel logistic regression estimates. Unit of analysis is the issue placement. Sample includes all 15 issue placements (n = subjects \* 15 = 7,965). “Candidate was liberal on issue” and “candidate was conservative on issue” are dummies. The omitted baseline category is “candidate did not take position on issue.”

Independent Variables are described in discussion of Table 1.

The 32 treatments are comprised of a conservative manipulation, a congruence manipulation, and eight issue combinations (2 X 2 X 8).