THE ROLE OF PARTISAN CUES IN VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGNS:

Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment

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Abstract[‡]

The transmission of partisan appeals during election campaigns is widely believed to aid the formation of citizens' candidate preferences, or to serve as rallying cries, thereby increasing turnout. While laboratory and survey experiments show that partisan cues help citizens decide between candidates, and partisan elections see higher turnout than non-partisan elections, it is unclear if party labels and partisan rhetoric *cause* voters to turn out in higher numbers in real-world elections. We exploit a low-information election in the UK to randomly assign whether campaign phone messages include strong partisan cues or promote the same candidate without such cues. Whereas we find no significant difference in the overall effectiveness of messages with and without partisan cues at increasing turnout, the effectiveness of the former is moderated by party preference: Consistent with the use of acceptance-rejection heuristics, campaign calls with partisan cues are more likely to mobilize party supporters than rival partisans.

Keywords: election campaigns, field experiment, GOTV, partisanship, political parties, turnout

1. Introduction

The involvement of political parties in election campaigns is often seen as ameliorating two intertwined collective action problems faced by voters: The individual costs of getting informed about candidates and of turning out to vote, almost always outweigh the benefits of voting (Downs 1957; Aldrich 1995; Schaffner et al. 2001). A party provides candidates with a "brand name," which conveys a great deal of low-cost information and reduces the costs of decision-making (Aldrich 1995: 49-50; see also Sniderman et al. 1991; Rahn 1993; Lau and Redlawsk 2001; Snyder and Ting 2002; Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009). By facilitating decision-making, party labels are then, in a second step, thought to ameliorate the turnout problem (Downs 1957; Sniderman et al. 1991; Mondak 1993, Popkin 1994; Snyder and Ting 2002). In this paper we address the question whether campaign messages that include strong partisan cues are more successful at increasing turnout than messages without such cues. In addressing this question we make three important contributions.

First, using a field experimental design we test the causal effects of GOTV phone messages including and excluding explicit partisan cues on turnout in a real-world election. The problem of identifying whether the use of partisan cues in campaign messages increases turnout constitutes a classical problem of causal inference. Much of the empirical evidence that supports the hypothesis that the provision of partisan cues facilitates turnout is based on observational studies of local and judicial elections in the United States, in which candidates are banned from displaying any kind of party affiliation. Evidence from these observational studies is mixed, but most studies find that turnout levels are higher in partisan contests than in similar, non-partisan elections (Alford and Lee 1968; Karnig and Walter 1983; Schaffner et al. 2001; Holbrook and Kaufmann 2012). However, partisan contests differ on many observable and unobservable attributes from non-partisan contests –e.g., competitiveness, campaign intensity or any of the other many factors that are associated with turnout differences– which

observational studies have difficulty accounting for (Schaffner et al. 2001; Holbrook and Kaufman 2012).

Although there is much lab- and survey experimental evidence that supports the theoretical assumption that the provision of partisan cues helps individuals articulate candidate preferences (Conover 1981; Rahn 1993; Druckman 2001), these effects might only be short-lived in the real-world (Mutz 2011) and may not translate into higher turnout. Field experiments are a promising means to address the issue of confounding variables in the context of real-world political campaigns. So far though, such experiments have failed to confirm our observational priors about the mobilizing effects of partisan cues. When the results of partisan campaign experiments conducted in the US and in European countries (Gerber 2004; Cardy 2005; McNulty 2005; Nickerson et al. 2006; Bailey et al. 2013; Barton et al. 2013; Pons 2014) are compared to the well-established positive results of non-partisan Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) experiments (for a review see Green et al. 2013), no clear conclusion emerges. If at all, partisan campaign interventions appear less effective at mobilizing voters than non-partisan GOTV efforts (ibid.). The heterogeneity across the different studies –in campaign interventions, campaign goals, messages and electoral settings– greatly complicates any attempt at direct comparison. Furthermore, the partisan nature of a campaign is often difficult to manipulate in the context of the same field experiment given extensive media coverage, campaign activity, and the distribution of free electoral materials that characterize most elections. Cognizant of these problems, Panagopoulos (2009) randomly assigned individuals to receive similar partisan and non-partisan GOTV messages within the same field experiment in the context of a low-salience election. He found that neither partisan nor non-partisan appeals significantly boosted turnout, and interpreted this as consistent with previous findings of the inefficacy of commercial phone banks at mobilizing voters.

We build on Panagopoulos's research, but deviate from his design by exploiting a low-information environment that allows us to randomize whether messages campaigning in favor of *the same* candidate used partisan cues or not.

Thus, we can directly test whether campaigns that provide voters with partisan cues boost turnout. This environment was created during a nationwide election for a newly established elected office in England: the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) election, which was first held in November 2012 and can be compared to Sheriff elections in the US. A Labour Constituency Party in Birmingham, England's second largest city, agreed to implement the experiment.[1] Unlike elections that are either clearly partisan and where candidates' party affiliations are widely known, or clearly non-partisan and therefore hardly comparable to partisan elections, the PCC election provided us with a unique opportunity. Before the elections, parties hesitated whether to field candidates under their party brand, but eventually decided in favor of fielding party-affiliated candidates (Travis 2011). Importantly, very little information was available to voters about the elections, the candidates and their party affiliation: none of the candidates were incumbents, constituencies were very large and no free electoral materials were available (Garland and Terry 2012).[2]

Elections such as the PCC Election in which the electorate has little information about the candidates are not uncommon: many local council and mayoral elections in the United Kingdom, the US, and elsewhere can be considered low-information elections. In such elections, it is reasonable to expect that a substantial portion of the electorate is unfamiliar with the candidates, given that research

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[1] We gained informed consent from the Constituency Labour Party to conduct this experiment, and the study was approved by the internal review boards of both Oxford University and Simon Fraser University.

[2] In fact, the government failed to provide funds to the Electoral Commission to distribute leaflets with information about candidates to eligible households (Garland and Terry 2012: 10). In order to receive information about candidates or the election, potential voters had to actively search the Internet or request a leaflet from the Electoral Commission (Electoral Commission 2013). As a consequence, the Electoral Reform Society concluded in its report on the election: "Voters were then left in the dark about who they could vote for with a lack of centrally provided candidate information" (idem: 7).

has shown that even in congressional elections in the US about a third to half of the electorate is not able to recall or does not even recognize the name of the candidates (e.g. Stokes and Miller 1962, Goldenberg and Traugott 1980, Mann and Wolfinger 1980). A particular strength of our research design is that we are thus able to test the causal impact of messages employing partisan cues on turnout in a real-world setting; yet the generalizability of our results to high-salience elections is an open question. In elections in which an abundance of information is available to voters, the impact of a single phone call and the partisan cues transmitted via the call might be drowned out by other competing campaign messages. In that sense the Police and Crime Commissioner Election approximates a controlled environment, in which the effect of different messages can be tested in the real-world net of the interference of other factors. The effect sizes that we find in this paper might hence constitute a best-case scenario, in which the effects of partisan cues are isolated. If we do not find that partisan cues boost turnout in this setting, then, arguably, it is unlikely that we would find strong effects on turnout in higher-salience elections. Alternatively, one could imagine a scenario in which voters expect strongly partisan messages in high-information contests, but view the same messages as less appropriate in low-salience contests such as the Police and Crime Commissioner Election. Nickerson has suggested that it is possible that partisan messages are viewed with more suspicion than non-partisan messages due to their greater persuasion component (2005; Nickerson et al. 2006). If this applies in particular to low-information elections, strongly partisan messages might be less effective at increasing turnout than they would be in high-salience elections.

Our second contribution is that we examine whether the effectiveness of messages at increasing turnout is moderated by the partisanship of the targeted individual. Panagopoulos (2009) examines the impact of partisan (and non-partisan) phone calls on both registered Democrats and Republicans; however, whereas Democrats received a Democratic message, Republicans received a Republican message. This leaves open the question of how partisans respond to messages that cue rival parties. On

the one hand, they might use rival party cues as informational shortcuts about which candidate to support, thereby lowering their turnout costs; on the other, they might simply ignore the informational content of messages when these are associated with rival parties. However, while our study design allows us to identify the causal effects of campaign contact including or excluding explicit partisan cues on turnout versus a randomly assigned control group, we prime, but do not randomly assign individuals' partisans preferences. Consequently, we cannot fully rule out that the moderating variable (partisanship) might be confounded by other, unobserved moderators.

Our third contribution relates to the electoral context, in which the field experiment was conducted. The vast majority of partisan GOTV studies have been conducted in the US. Ours is the first randomized field experiment to evaluate the effectiveness of a political party's GOTV phone campaign in the UK. The inclusion of rival party supporters in our study is important because, in contrast to some US states, European countries do not require their citizens to publically register their party support, and parties' voter targeting strategies are less sophisticated. In such countries partisan campaigns are likely contacting rival party supporters on a regular basis. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the baseline turnout rate of 13% is not much lower than turnout in many US mayoral and local elections, on which the majority of observational studies about the effects of partisan cues on turnout are based (Maciag 2014). Our study is therefore conducted in a similar, low salience context as previous observational studies of the same issue.

In what follows we first develop theoretical expectations about how the provision of party cues in campaign messages might affect the formation of candidate preferences and the effectiveness of campaign appeals at mobilizing voters to turn out. We then describe the research design and present the results. Our experiment shows that a telephone campaign with strong Labour partisan cues was indeed very effective at mobilizing Labour supporters and unattached voters, but significantly less effective at mobilizing supporters of rival parties. At the same time the same volunteers advocating for the same

candidate in the same election, but without employing partisan cues, were equally effective at mobilizing Labour supporters and unattached voters. It therefore does not appear that the use of partisan cues increased turnout over and above what we would expect from a normal GOTV message, not even for the group of individuals – supporters of the party – that should be most receptive to such cues. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of our findings in the concluding section.

2. Party Cues and Voter Decision-Making

It has been shown that most individuals are badly informed about politics (e.g. Page and Shapiro 1992; Popkin 1994; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), and individuals' cognitive abilities when processing political information and forming reliable judgments are said to be limited (Mondak 1993). Moreover, irrespective of any individual limitations, politics operate in the context of a "large world", in which some relevant information will always be lacking (Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier 2011: 453). Although such constraints are likely to deter individuals from voting, social scientists have argued that individuals are able to reduce the costs associated with voting through heuristic processing, utilizing easily accessible elite cues and political symbols to form an opinion on who or what to support (Sniderman et al. 1991; Mondak 1993; Popkin 1994; Druckman 2001).

Heuristic processing is essentially the use of a "cognitive shortcut" (Lau and Redlawsk 2001: 952) or "parsimonious decision rule" (Mondak 1993: 169) to simplify opinion formation (Chaiken 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran 1994). Individuals are more likely to engage in heuristic processing when either their motivation or capacity for systematic processing is low (Chaiken and Maheswaran 1994), for instance when the topic has little personal relevance (Chaiken 1980; Petty and Cacioppo 1986) –like most political issues– or when limited information on a complex issue is available (Lupia 1994).

Party labels are widely seen as the most important signals that the political environment can provide to voters to reduce information costs (Conover 1981; Aldrich 1995, 2006; Rahn 1993; Druckman

2001; Snyder and Ting 2002). The "initial reputation" (Aldrich 2006) that the party affiliation label confers on a candidate, allows voters to associate candidates with readily available stereotypes about the typical representative of that party and his or her ideological position (Conover 1981; Rahn 1993; Green et al. 2002). In addition to providing heuristics that reduce the costs of deciding whether to support a certain candidate, party affiliation labels in campaign messages could also function as a social identity cue (Green et al. 2002; Greene 2004). Partisans might derive expressive benefits from showing support for their team by voting (Green et al. 2002: 49; 220). Accordingly, campaign messages that can clearly be associated with a political party could be viewed as providing rallying cries, to which the party's supporters in particular are likely to respond by turning out. Rival party supporters might similarly be mobilized to show support for their own team as a result of the rallying cries of a competitor. Both of these perspectives would lead us to expect higher turnout rates as a result of campaign messages with strong partisan cues compared to those without, because either the former provide heuristics that reduce the costs of deciding whether to support a certain candidate, or they activate partisan identities.

There are reasons, however, to question whether the provision of partisan cues in campaign messages indeed results in higher turnout. First, from an empirical point of view, although such cues might enable the formation of candidate preferences, evidence from laboratory and survey experiments provides little insight as to whether this eventually translates into higher turnout in real-world elections. It remains a possibility that it is not the provision of partisan cues that makes a campaign appeal effective at increasing turnout, but simply other elements that make up a standard GOTV appeal. Campaign messages typically provide useful information on where, when and how to vote, and if delivered in a personable way these messages can be very effective at increasing turnout (Arceneaux 2007; Green and Gerber 2008).

Second and relatedly, whether party-affiliated GOTV appeals mobilize constituents might depend on the individuals' evaluation of the source of the message. In line with Zaller's (1992)

acceptance-rejection axiom that shows that individuals decide whether to accept a message based on their evaluation of the messenger (Zaller 1992; Iyengar and Simon 2000), we might expect judgement of the message's source to impact the effectiveness of campaign appeals. Since many individuals are attached to political parties (Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002; Bartle and Bellucci 2009), individuals are likely to judge a campaign appeal based on whether they like the source of the message – in this case the party the campaign volunteer affiliates with. That is to say, if a Labour volunteer contacts them, potential voters might choose to ignore the mobilizing content of the message if they dislike the Labour Party, and accept the GOTV message if they approve of the Labour Party or are neutral to it. For voters who, based on their partisan predispositions, oppose the Labour Party, we would then expect lower turnout rates as a result of the campaign messages with partisan cues compared to voters who support the Labour Party.

3. Research Design

We take advantage of the first nation-wide elections to the newly created office of Police and Crime Commissioner in the UK, which were held on November 15th 2012, to conduct our randomized field experiment. The experiment was fielded in the city of Birmingham. None of the candidates in the West Midlands PCC Election –the setting of our experiment– had served in national office before or were incumbents with high name recognition.[3] This and the sheer size of the West Midlands Constituency, which spans 902 km^2 and includes 2.7 million people, contributed to the fact that candidates were unknown to the general public. The low-information context of the election serves as a strong test of the role of partisan cues in GOTV campaigns. If voters are unaware of candidates' positions on policy issues, party labels should serve as the only yardstick that individuals have to decide between candidates. Due to the unusually large size of the PCC constituency, the number of individuals assigned

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[3] Three independent candidates and one candidate each for the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Democrats and the UK Independence Party stood in the election.

to treatment in the experiment compared to the number of eligible voters was very small.[4] Moreover, because the West Midlands constituency is a Labour stronghold that was represented by 19 Labour MPs, 7 Conservative MPs and 2 Liberal Democrats in the 2010-2015 parliament, the chance of affecting the outcome of the election was minimal.

In conducting the experiment, we worked together with a local Constituency Labour Party. In fielding the experiment, we adhered as closely as possible to a standard Labour telephone campaign message. The study relies on a three-armed experimental design. Random assignment to one of the three experimental groups assures that, in expectation, there should be no observable or unobservable differences between individuals assigned either of the two treatment groups or to the control group.

3.1 Study Population

Our study population comprises registered voters living in a select number of electoral wards in Birmingham, and whose names were included in the Labour Campaign's electoral database, a total of 26,827 individuals. This database had most recently been updated after the May 3, 2012 local elections.[5] We used a fully anonymized version of this database to randomly assign individuals into treatment and

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[4] Our experimental dataset covered only 1.3% of eligible voters in the West Midlands constituency (26,827 out of 2 million). Even if our treatments increased turnout by as much as 10 percentage-points among all individuals *and* their household members assigned to the treatment groups (approximately 10,279), we would not mobilize more than 1,028 additional voters. In total, there were 238,384 votes cast in the West Midlands PCC Election (12%). Thus, the difference between the top two candidates would have had to be smaller than 1,028/238,384 = .04 percentage-points. This would have been an exceptionally close election. Moreover, this would have implied that all 1,028 additional voters would have supported the same candidate. Given that the Labour candidate's winning margin amounted to 61,703 votes, our experiment in no way affected the result of the election. We neither expected, nor found, *demobilization* of opposition supporters, as turnout was widely predicted to be very low. For more information on the election see:
<http://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/transparency/bob-jones-archive/> and
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-20343913>.
[5] The database is updated after every election. Information on individuals included in the database combines publically available sources, and canvassing records.

control groups.[6] To fulfill the so-called assumption of non-interference[7], meaning individuals should only respond to their own treatment and not to the treatment of others surrounding them, we randomly selected one person per household to be included in the sample. After excluding additional household members our sample consisted of 15,461 individuals. For our experiment, we then selected those individuals for which the contact variable in the database indicated that they had provided a landline phone number only. This left us with a total of 13,065 experimental units.[8] In addition to information on whether individuals share the same household, the database includes information on gender ('Mr' or 'Ms'), year of birth, whether individuals were registered as absentee voters, as well as individuals' latest recorded party preference and their turnout history (as available from public records or recorded during previous Labour campaigns).

3.2 Experimental Assignment

In order to test whether our treatments had different effects on Labour supporters than on supporters of rival parties, we stratified the sample by pre-recorded partisanship. A measure of party support was included in the Labour Party's extensive targeting database, and is based on prior door-to-door and phone canvassing efforts conducted by party volunteers in the constituency. The party aims to contact every voter living in the parliamentary constituency to identify potential supporters. It is common practice for constituents to volunteer their voting intentions to party canvassers in the UK. The database covered around 38% of registered voters. We distinguish those whose latest recorded partisanship in the database was 'Labour', those whose latest recorded partisanship was a (specific) 'rival party' (i.e. Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Green, BNP, Respect, UK Independence Party, or who otherwise

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[6] All names and contact details were removed and replaced by a unique personal identifier code by the Labour campaign.

[7] This assumption is part of the stable unit-treatment value assumption (SUTVA). See Rubin 1980, Gerber and Green 2012.

[8] We randomly assigned the remaining 2,395 units, for which the records provided a mobile number, to a control and treatment group in order to conduct a separate, small text message experiment.

indicated to oppose Labour), and those 'unattached' subjects who were identified as non-partisans, non-voters or whose partisanship was unknown (i.e. 'don't know', 'non-voter', missing or 'won't say').[9] Next, we divided the partisan subsamples into two treatment groups (message with and without partisan cues), and one control group based on the random numbers created to choose our experimental sample. This procedure led to a stratified random assignment to treatment and control groups that created equal probabilities of assignment conditional on party support and household size. In all our analyses, we account for this procedure by including inverse probability weights of assignment to treatment and control groups. The allocation of individuals into treatment and control groups for each partisan group is shown in Figure 1.

< Figure 1 >

3.3 Treatments

Individuals in the two treatment groups were called by telephone by Labour Party volunteers in the week leading up to the election (November 10th – 15th), and were encouraged to vote for a particular candidate in the West Midlands PCC Election on November 15th 2012. In formulating the campaign scripts we worked closely with the local Labour Party in order to ensure the messages paralleled normal campaign efforts. Both messages provided practical information to subjects on the election date and their local polling station and encouraged them to turn out and to vote for the candidate. However, the content of the scripts did vary across the two treatment groups. The 'partisan cue' treatment identified the source of the message as the local Labour Party, explicitly referred multiple times to the candidate's party

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[9] To validate the canvassing-based measure, one of us conducted a separate experiment elsewhere in the UK, which drew data from the same database, and found that the broad three-group operationalization (Labour, rival party, unattached) indeed correlates highly with party support as reported in independent phone interviews conducted by the researchers (see Foos 2016). "Unattached" is a composite category that groups together all voters that did not explicitly volunteer their party support, either in favour or against the Labour Party. Empirically, there is no heterogeneity in how subjects that have missing values or refused to answer the party support question behave in response to the party cues treatment compared to "don't knows/abstentions".

affiliation, and identified the (Conservative) party in charge of the national government as the responsible party for cuts in policing. In contrast, the 'call without partisan cues' neither mentioned a partisan source of the message, nor the candidate's party affiliation, or the party affiliation of the Westminster government. Instead, it emphasized the candidate's previous experience and credentials. Although this means that there are small differences between the two scripts other than the partisan cues, both scripts were meant not only to mobilize voters to vote, but also to persuade them in favour of the candidate. Accordingly, we included realistic, but non-partisan, arguments in favour of the candidate in the message without partisan cues. It is important to note that the policy positions mentioned in the scripts, such as the candidate's opposition to cuts in police numbers, did not provide any cue to his partisan affiliation as similar pledges were made by independent candidates running in the West Midlands PCC Election (Secretary of State for the Home Department 2012). The treatment scripts are displayed in Box 1 and 2 below. The combination of source cue, party affiliation of the candidate and party affiliation of the opponent is frequently used in Labour campaign messages. While the combination of different party cues makes it difficult to isolate the impact of any single cue, it allows us to test the effect of a message that combines all partisan cues, as commonly employed by political parties.

Box 1: Campaign telephone call without partisan cues

"Hello, my name is …. I am phoning to remind you to go out and vote for [candidate name] in the Police and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday. Your local polling station is located at … during the usual opening hours from 7am to 10pm.

Have you heard of [candidate name]? [Candidate name] is a candidate for Police and Crime Commissioner and he is determined to fight the cuts in frontline policing. As [former role] [candidate's first name] has a strong record in reducing crime and protecting our Police Force. [Candidate name] has been fighting for the victims of crime for over 30 years.

Box 2: Campaign telephone call with partisan cues

"Hello, my name is …. I am phoning from your local **Labour Party**. I just wanted to remind you to go out and vote for **Labour** candidate [candidate name] in the Police and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday. Your local polling station is located at … during the usual opening hours from 7am to 10pm.

> Have you heard of the **Labour** candidate [candidate name]? **Labour's** [candidate name] is determined to fight the **Tory** cuts to frontline policing that will hit Birmingham hard if a **Conservative** is elected. The **Conservatives** have sacked Police Officers and closed down Police Stations. In contrast, the **Labour Party** put more Police Officers on the ground and will protect police numbers.

After listening to the appeal, subjects in both treatment groups had the possibility to converse with the volunteer, who, in the condition without cues, was instructed not to mention that the candidate was affiliated with the Labour Party unless she was explicitly asked if the candidate ran for a political party, which occurred very rarely. Subjects were also asked whether they were going to vote for a Police Commissioner, which candidate or party they would support, and were thanked for their time. Campaign volunteers were asked to fill out a form on whether contact with the targeted individual was made, any reasons for why contact had failed (i.e. answering machine, no answer, hang-up, etc.), and the number of call-backs made (see Appendix). After the election the local Labour Party provided us with an updated version of the anonymized database, which included turnout data for the PCC Election from the marked electoral register.[10]

3.4 Contact Rates

Forty percent of all subjects who were assigned to be treated were successfully contacted by campaign volunteers (the contact rate), meaning that the caller spoke to the named person (see Table 1). The

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[10] We removed all individuals from the dataset who could be identified as absentee voters based on a pre-treatment measure, as most absentee voters would have voted before our GOTV effort and we therefore did not expect the Labour campaign to have any impact on these individuals' turnout in the PCC Election. In addition, there are a small number of individuals in our dataset for which we could not verify whether they voted, as their names were removed from the updated electoral register. These individuals had either passed away or moved to another city. This issue of attrition is common in GOTV studies and is not usually considered a problem because the resulting 'missingness' is unlikely to be a function of treatment assignment. To test this assumption, we regressed whether turnout was reported or not on treatment assignment and compared the F-statistic of this regression to the mean of the F-statistic over 10,000 simulated randomizations. The resulting p-value of .63 confirms that attrition is likely to have occurred independently of treatment assignment. Overall, 21% of the sample was removed. The final number of individuals included in the analysis is shown in parentheses in Figure 1.

campaign failed to administer the treatment to the remaining 60% because phone lines were dead, subjects had moved away, or could not be reached on a first or second attempt. This rate of noncompliance is similar to the rate recorded in other GOTV studies in the UK (John and Brannan 2008). Moreover, thanks to the parallel administration of the treatments, contact rates for the phone messages with and without partisan cues are almost identical (39.9% and 40.3%).

3.5 Balance Test

We use randomization-inference to test whether any imbalances in available pre-treatment covariates between the experimental groups are larger than expected given random sampling variability (Gerber and Green 2012). The resulting p-value of 0.56 indicates that we cannot reject the sharp null hypothesis that the pre-treatment covariates taken together are not systematically related to treatment assignment (Figure A2 in the Appendix). We are therefore confident about the balanced nature of treatment and control groups.

3.6 Manipulation Check

We conduct a manipulation check to establish that subjects perceived the partisan cues in the partisan cue treatment condition. We use an open-ended question at the end of the call that asked subjects in both treatment groups about their party support in the PCC Election. We subsequently perform a multinomial logit regression of five responses to this question (a. voting for Labour Party or candidate; b. don't know; c. abstention; d. voting for a rival party or candidate; e. refused to answer) on the partisan cue treatment, partisan group, their interactions, and the pre-treatment covariates (see Appendix Figure A1 for predicted probabilities based on the multinomial logit model and Table A1 for OLS estimates for Labour/non-Labour vote intention). If the treatment was successful and the partisan cues are indeed picked up by potential voters, then subjects generally should be more likely to volunteer that they

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support the Labour Party when treated with a partisan cue message than with the message excluding the cues, regardless of whether this is due to social desirability and/or priming. We would expect this to be particularly true for Labour supporters.

According to expectation, the results show that Labour supporters, and to lesser extent unattached voters, are indeed less likely to indicate that they "don't know" who they would vote for in the PCC election, and significantly more likely to indicate that they would vote for the (Labour) candidate or Labour Party, as a result of the phone call with Labour Party cues compared to the phone call without partisan cues. This magnitude of the difference for Labour supporters, 28 percentage-points, is striking given that the campaign message without partisan cues does provide subjects with the name and credentials of the candidate, just not his party affiliation.

4. Analysis and Results

The first row of Table 1 shows the turnout rates in the treatment and control groups. Compared to the control group, turnout was on average 2 percentage-points higher in the treatment group that received a message with partisan cues and 3 percentage-points higher in the treatment group that received a message without partisan cues. This suggests that both treatments were effective at increasing turnout, but that the message with partisan cues was no more effective at increasing turnout than the message without partisan cues.

We subsequently use the differences-in-proportions estimator to estimate the Intent-To-Treat effects (ITT) on turnout.[11] The unadjusted and covariate-adjusted ITT effects of both treatment

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[11] Formally, the ITT can be defined as the sum of each unit-level treatment assignment effect divided by the total number of assigned subjects (N), and is equal to the difference in the averaged potential outcomes under the various treatment assignment conditions: $ITT_Y = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} Y_i(z = 1) - \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} Y_i(z = 0)$, where $Y_i(z = 1)$ is the potential outcome for individual i under the treatment condition and $Y_i(z = 0)$ is the potential outcome for i under the control condition. Given random assignment to treatment and control conditions, excludability, and non-interference, the differences-in-proportion estimator is, in expectation, an unbiased estimator of the ITT.

conditions are shown in the lower part of Table 1. When adjusting for pre-treatment covariates in order to reduce variance in the dependent variable, we include turnout in the previous seven elections, gender, age and the electoral ward in which an individual resides. We estimate p-values and confidence intervals based on randomization-inference (Gerber and Green 2012; Aronow and Samii 2012).[12] We find significant ITT effects of both the treatment with and without partisan cues on turnout of 2-3 percentage-points.

The lower part of Table 1 also reports the Complier Average Causal Effect (CACE), the average treatment effect for so-called 'compliers': subjects who would answer the telephone when called by campaign volunteers.[13] We estimated the CACE by running a two-stage least squares regression of turnout on contact, using treatment assignment as the instrumental variable.[14,15] For the combined sample we find a statistically significant CACE of 7 percentage-points (covariate-adjusted) as a result of the campaign message with partisan cues, and of 8 percentage-points as a result of the message without partisan cues. Thus, both the phone calls with and without partisan cues were clearly effective at mobilizing turnout.[16]

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[12] All randomization-based inference is performed using the statistical package RI for R (Aronow and Samii 2012).

[13] The ITT effect of treatment assignment (z) on actually receiving the treatment (d) equals the proportion of compliers in the sample. The CACE estimator can be defined as: $\widehat{CACE} = \frac{\widehat{ITT}}{\widehat{ITT_D}}$, where $\widehat{ITT_D} = \hat{E}[d_i(1)]$.

[14] If Y_i is turnout, D_{1i} is contact under the partisan cue treatment, D_{2i} is contact under the treatment excluding cues (the two endogenous variables), Z_{1i} is treatment assignment to the partisan cue treatment and Z_{2i} is treatment assignment to the treatment without cues, then the model we estimate can be formally written as: $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 D_{1i} + \beta_2 D_{2i} + \mu_i$, in which $D_{1i} = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 Z_{1i} + \varepsilon_{1i}$ and $D_{2i} = \delta_0 + \delta_1 Z_{2i} + \varepsilon_{2i}$.

[15] On the last day of telephone canvassing, volunteers were instructed to leave messages on answering machines in case subjects could not be reached during the second round of calling. Our CACE estimator assumes that those messages had negligible effects on subjects. If we assume instead that the messages left on answering machines had an effect as large as speaking to subjects in person, the size of the CACE reduces by around one fourth since the overall contact rate increases from .40 to .56 (.56 for Labour and rival supporters, and .53 for unattached voters).

[16] For the turnout and contact rates, and ITT effects and CACEs for each partisan group separately, see Table A2 in the Appendix.

<center>**< Table 1 >**</center>

In addition to the CACE for the combined sample, the left-hand panels of Figures 2a and b display the CACEs conditional on partisan group. Figure 2a shows the CACEs of the partisan cue message and Figure 2b of the message without partisan cues. We estimate CACEs separately for Labour supporters, rival party supporters and unattached voters. The right-hand panels of Figures 2a and b show the interaction effects between partisan group and the successfully delivered messages estimated using a linear regression model (see Table A3 and A4 in the Appendix).[17]

Figure 2b shows that the message without cues significantly increased turnout and that this increase is not moderated by pre-treatment party preference. The campaign phone call without partisan cues resulted in CACEs on turnout of 7 percentage-points for Labour supporters and supporters of rival parties, and of 10 percentage-points for unattached voters (covariate-adjusted). The differences in CACEs between partisan groups, in particular between Labour and rival party supporters are neither substantially large, nor statistically significant. In contrast, Figure 2a shows that the message using Labour partisan cues only significantly affected turnout among Labour partisans and unattached voters, but neither substantially nor significantly increased turnout among rival party supporters. For Labour supporters and unattached voters Figure 2a displays statistically significant CACEs on turnout of 10 and 9 percentage-points (covariate-adjusted). For rival party supporters the increase in turnout is much smaller at 2.6 percentage-points and statistically insignificant. Thus, rival party supporters are around 8 percentage-points less likely to turn out when treated with the Labour partisan cue message than Labour

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[17] If Y_i is turnout, D_i is contact (the endogenous variable), Z_i is treatment assignment to the partisan cue treatment, X is a n-by-k covariate matrix and B is a k-by-1 vector of coefficients, then the model we estimate can be formally written as:
$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 D_i + \beta_2 Labour_i + \beta_3 Unattached_i + \beta_4 (D * Labour)_i + \beta_5 (D * Unattached)_i + X * B + \mu_i$, in which $D_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 Z_i + \gamma_2 Labour_i + \gamma_3 Unattached_i + \gamma_4 (Z * Labour)_i + \gamma_5 (Z * Unattached)_i + X * B + \varepsilon_i$.
Both equations include the same set of exogenous covariates.

<center>18</center>

supporters. This interaction effect is statistically significant with p < .10 using a two-tailed hypothesis test (see Table A3 in the Appendix). This finding supports our second hypothesis that the effectiveness of partisan campaign calls is moderated by the existing partisan preference of the individual.

< Figure 2a and b >

As a last step we test whether messages including partisan cues are significantly more effective at mobilizing potential voters than messages without partisan cues, as our first hypothesis suggests. As was suggested by Table 1, this does not appear to be the case. Figure A3 and Table A5 in the Appendix show that, if anything, the partisan cue message *decreased* turnout by around 2 percentage-points compared to the message without cues (covariate-adjusted).[18] Although there is a small positive effect of campaign volunteers using explicit partisan cues when calling Labour supporters, the use of partisan cues only increases turnout among Labour supporters by an additional 1.2 percentage-points. None of these effects, however, are statistically significant.

What can we nonetheless learn from this analysis given that the treatment versus treatment comparisons have relatively low statistical power resulting from the relatively small number of subjects when comparing the two treatments directly to each other? Although we cannot reject the null hypothesis that messages including partisan cues are no more effective than messages without partisan cues, this does not necessarily mean that we have not learnt anything from this comparison. Figure 3 shows how prior beliefs can be updated according to Bayes' Rule based on the results of the

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[18] Since the treatment groups have been randomly assigned, we can assume that compliers do not systematically differ between treatment groups. Therefore, we can compare the compliers directly to each other, using a linear probability model for estimation.

experiment.[19] The top row shows a scenario in which one has no prior expectation of the effectiveness of partisan cues in campaign phone messages on turnout in the UK. This agnostic prior is reflected in a CACE centred on zero and a large standard deviation. After finding a negative CACE of -.015 with a standard error of .019 (see Table A5, column 2 in the Appendix), a researcher would update her prior odds of finding a positive CACE from 1:1 to posterior odds of only 0.3:1. The second row shows a scenario in which, like us, based on theoretical expectations, the researcher starts with the prior that volunteers using partisan cues are more effective at increasing turnout than volunteers who make calls without using such cues. Let us consider a scenario under which the researcher expects a positive effect size of 2 percentage-points – about half of what we conservatively might expect the CACE of a standard GOTV volunteer phone message to be, and arguably an effect size of substantive interest. She also believes that it is highly unlikely that the effect will exceed 6 percentage-points. Accordingly, the prior standard deviation is 2 percentage-points. In this scenario, the odds of obtaining a positive result diminish from prior odds of 5.3:1 to posterior odds of 1.2:1. In the final scenario depicted in the bottom row of Figure 3, a researcher starts with a prior expectation of a negative effect on turnout of the message including partisan cues compared to that of the message without partisan cues of -2 percentage-points together with a standard deviation of 2 percentage-points. In this scenario, the prior odds of obtaining a positive result were only 0.2:1. After learning of the results, however, the posterior odds are even smaller at 0.1:1. In each of these scenarios the researcher updates her prior beliefs about the impact of messages that include partisan cues compared to those without partisan cues. As we have shown, the posterior odds of finding a positive impact of the use of partisan cues in GOTV phone calls compared to not using such cues diminish, regardless of what one's initial beliefs were.

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[19] For more information on and an example using this approach see: Gerber and Green (2012: Chapter 11) and de Rooij and Green (2016a). Figures were made using code written by Alex Coppock and adapted by Donald Green (de Rooij and Green 2016b).

Our findings do hence not support the hypothesis that messages with partisan cues increase turnout to a greater extent than messages without such cues, either by lowering decision-making costs or by activating partisan identities. Instead, we find that Labour campaign messages mobilize Labour supporters and unattached voters, but are far less effective at mobilizing supporters of rival parties, providing support for the idea that pre-existing party preferences moderate whether citizens turn out to vote in favour of the party that sends the GOTV message. It also suggests that partisan campaign messages are unlikely to backfire by substantially increasing turnout among citizens who are unlikely to vote for the candidate.

Our findings regarding the mobilizing impact of campaign messages with strong partisan cues on party supporters and unattached voters contrast with the non-significant, small effects of some earlier partisan GOTV telephone experiments on turnout found in the US, such as those reported by Cardy (2005), McNulty (2005) and Panagopoulos (2009), as well as experiments conducted in Continental European elections (Pons and Liegey 2013; Pons 2014; Kendall et al. 2014). There are a number of potential explanations for these differences. First, most US studies relied on commercial phone banks rather than on a set of dedicated volunteers, which may explain their null findings as more personalized means of conveying GOTV messages have been shown to be more effective than less-personalized means (Arceneaux 2007; Green and Gerber 2008). Partisan GOTV studies in the US that have relied on volunteer phone calls or door-to-door canvassing show mixed results. In addition to a commercial phone bank, McNulty (2005) relied on volunteers in two separate partisan GOTV experiments targeting Democratic youths and finds negative, non-significant effects on turnout. Barton et al. (2013) likewise find negative effects of door-to-door canvassing by a political candidate for a local office on turnout. In contrast, Nickerson et al. (2006) report a positive and significant CACE of 3.2 percentage-points on

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turnout in the 2002 Gubernatorial Elections in Michigan as a result of volunteer phone calls targeting young Democratic and independent voters, and a non-significant but large CACE of 16.8 percentage-points as a result of a similar door-to-door campaign. Second, European GOTV experiments measured turnout predominantly at the aggregate level, masking potential heterogeneous effects conditional on prior party support. An explanation that centers on differential mobilization effects also makes sense from a theoretical point of view. The goal of partisan campaigns is not to increase turnout among all citizens – instead they aim to change the partisan composition of the electorate (Holbrook and McClurg 2005).

It is difficult to draw substantive conclusions from a comparison of these studies due to substantial heterogeneity in campaign interventions, campaign goals, messages and electoral settings. Of the partisan GOTV studies, only Panagopoulos's (2009) directly compared the effectiveness of partisan and non-partisan messages within the same field experiment in the context of a low-salience election. Like Panagopoulos, we find somewhat stronger overall effects for the message without partisan cues than for the message with partisan cues. Yet in both our studies, this difference is small and statistically insignificant. In sum, when we place our study in the context of previous partisan GOTV studies, the evidence seems to suggest that if delivered in a personable way partisan GOTV messages can increase turnout among supporters, but are unlikely to outperform non-partisan messages. What remains less clear is how effective partisan messages are compared to non-partisan messages in highly salient electoral contexts.

It is important to note that our relatively large effect sizes match those reported in non-partisan GOTV studies in the UK (John and Brennan 2008; Cutts et al. 2009; Fieldhouse et al. 2013). For instance, John and Brannan (2008) find a significant increase in turnout in the 2005 British General Election as a result of their non-partisan telephone campaign in Manchester, reporting an ITT effect of 3.5 and a CACE of 7.3 percentage-points. A second study conducted in the UK, by Fieldhouse et al.

(2013) during the 2010 British General Election finds an ITT of 3 percentage-points and a CACE of 4 percentage-points, but no increase in turnout in the European Election of 2009, as a result of a nationally-representative non-partisan GOTV telephone campaign. Our results are therefore consistent with the mobilization effects found in two studies of non-partisan telephone mobilization during British General Elections. Yet, we find little support for the idea that providing potential voters with partisan information in a campaign message increases turnout further by reducing decision-making costs or by activating partisan identities, irrespective of whether voters support or oppose the party that sends the message. As the first randomized field experiment to evaluate the effectiveness of political parties' GOTV phone calls in the UK, these results are clearly important in a comparative perspective and might update our prior assumptions about the effectiveness of local GOTV campaigns run by political parties.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

With this randomized field experiment, we set out to test competing theoretical expectations of how a campaign's use of explicit partisan cues in their messages influences individuals' turnout decisions. According to one perspective, partisan cues function as mental shortcuts for candidate positions, reducing the cost of the voting decision, or prompting individuals to vote in order to derive the expressive or social benefits associated with supporting their partisan team. These complementary perspectives suggest that the provision of partisan cues should result in an additional boost to turnout above and beyond the impact of non-partisan efforts to mobilize voters to turn out. An alternative perspective suggests no such additional impact as individuals should use partisan cues only to accept or reject the mobilization message conditional on their partisan predispositions. By providing new, field experimental evidence on how citizens use partisan cues to reject campaign appeals that conflict with their partisan predispositions, our study significantly contributes to the debate about the role of political parties in election campaigns.

We find that a campaign that advocated in favour of a candidate without using partisan cues was very effective at increasing turnout, at least as effective as a campaign that explicitly used party labels and partisan rhetoric. These results suggest that the positive correlations between the partisan nature of an election and turnout uncovered in observational studies may be due to increased GOTV activities by party volunteers as opposed to the informational or identity-activating content of party labels. Simply having party volunteers contact citizens on the phone, and encourage them to vote might constitute the most important elements of a party's role in increasing turnout during election campaigns.

At the same time and in line with the extensive literature based on laboratory and survey experiments, our manipulation check shows that the use of partisan cues significantly increases the likelihood that Labour Party supporters express support for the candidate. Although partisan cues might not mobilize voters in real-world elections, they do seem to aid in short-term opinion formation and articulation, even though we remain agnostic as to whether this 'opinion' simply reflects a socially desirable answer and/or is a result of priming. Together, our results allow for a better understanding of the role of parties in election campaigns, and both validate as well as qualify the results from earlier studies that have relied on different experimental settings.

Our experimental results also suggest that partisan cues transmitted by election campaigns matter because they are used by individuals to judge whether to respond to mobilization appeals by political parties. Partisan cues appear to signal to individuals whether to approve of the source of a campaign message: if individuals approve of the source or are neutral to it, they are more likely to accept the subsequent information contained in the mobilization message and behave accordingly; if they disapprove they are more likely to reject the content without considering the information contained in it. Interestingly, otherwise useful information such as polling date, polling place and candidate's policy positions, is therefore simply discounted. Our results thus largely support the theoretical expectations formulated by authors who emphasize the role of the messenger rather than the content of the message

(Kuklinski and Hurley 1994; Michelson 2005) and who suggest that partisanship can act as a moderator (Zaller 1992; Iyengar and Simon 2000). Furthermore, the results of this paper qualify Arceneaux and Kolodny's (2009) important finding about the heuristic function of issue-based endorsements by interest groups in GOTV campaigns, suggesting that party affiliation might play a different role due to its direct relationship to longstanding partisan predispositions.

The fact that the PCC election, the context of our experiment, was the first election of its kind, allowed for a strong test of whether or not associating a candidate and a campaign message with a particular political party leads to higher turnout among supporters of different parties. Although this context was the first of its kind in the UK, elections in which the electorate knows little about the candidates are not uncommon. Significant proportions of the electorate are not able to recall, or do not even recognize, the name of candidates running in congressional elections in the US, in particular if the candidate is not an incumbent (e.g. Stokes and Miller 1962, Goldenberg and Traugott 1980, Mann and Wolfinger 1980). Similarly, it is highly likely that many voters in the UK and elsewhere are not familiar with the names of their local councillors, or even of their MPs. Moreover, if in the context of low-information elections awareness of a candidate's party affiliation does not reduce decision-making costs and increase turnout, it is arguably unlikely to do so in an election in which information about candidates and their policy positions is abundant. On the other hand, it is possible that voters respond differently to partisan messages in low-information than in salient, high-information elections. For instance, such messages might be seen as overly antagonistic and consequently be less effective in the former, but not the latter setting where such antagonism might be expected. For now, it remains an open question to what extent our results generalize to information-rich and highly salient electoral contexts.

The contribution of this paper to understanding the role of partisan cues in campaign appeals is important not only because it allowed us to gain insight into the particulars of voter decision-making in real-world campaign environments, but also because it has serious consequences for the conduct of

partisan election campaigns. Almost every campaign unconsciously contacts supporters of rival parties as information on partisan preferences within the electorate is incomplete (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1992; for an illustrative case see Nickerson 2005). This issue is particularly widespread in countries outside of the US such as the UK, France, Germany, and Italy, where citizens do not publically register their partisanship. Moreover, it is not uncommon for campaigns to consciously target individuals who have previously voted for rival parties in an attempt to persuade and mobilize them to vote (Nickerson et al. 2006; Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Roberts 2013). The conscious targeting of rival party supporters is particularly common in competitive constituencies where parties do not hold a core voter advantage (Johnston and Pattie 2003). The message from this paper to political campaigners is mixed: while we find little evidence that targeting rival party supporters causes them to be more likely to declare support for the Labour candidate, we also do not find any evidence that campaign attempts backfire and mobilize voters who are unlikely to be persuaded.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1: Intent-to-Treat (ITT) Effects and Complier Average Causal Effects (CACE) on turnout

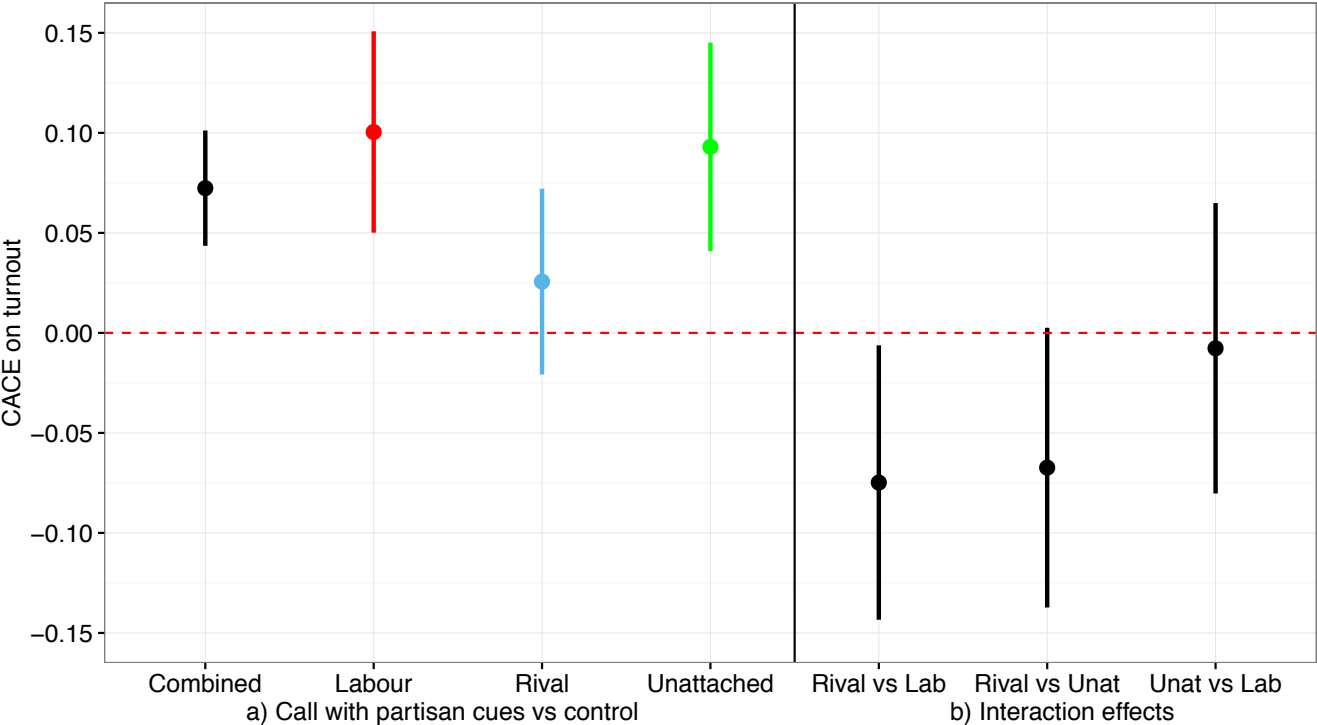|	Control	Call with partisan cues	Call without partisan cues
Turnout percentages	13.0	15.3	15.9
Contact rate		39.9	40.3
N	6,295	2,062	2,018
ITT unadjusted		2.4**	2.9***
		[0.6, 4.2]	[1.1, 4.7]
ITT covariate-adjusted		2.9***	3.4***
		[1.2, 4.6]	[1.8, 5.1]
CACE unadjusted		5.9**	7.2**
		[1.1, 10.8]	[2.6, 11.9]
CACE covariate-adjusted		7.2***	8.4***
		[2.7, 11.7]	[4.1, 12.8]

† p-value < .10; * p-value < .05; ** p-value < .01; *** p-value < .001 (based on one-tailed tests). 95%-confidence intervals in brackets. Note: Estimates obtained using inverse probability weighting to account for varying probabilities of assignment to experimental conditions between partisan blocks and by household size. Covariates are turnout in seven previous elections, gender, age and electoral ward.

**Figure 1: Blocked random assignment to treatment and control groups**
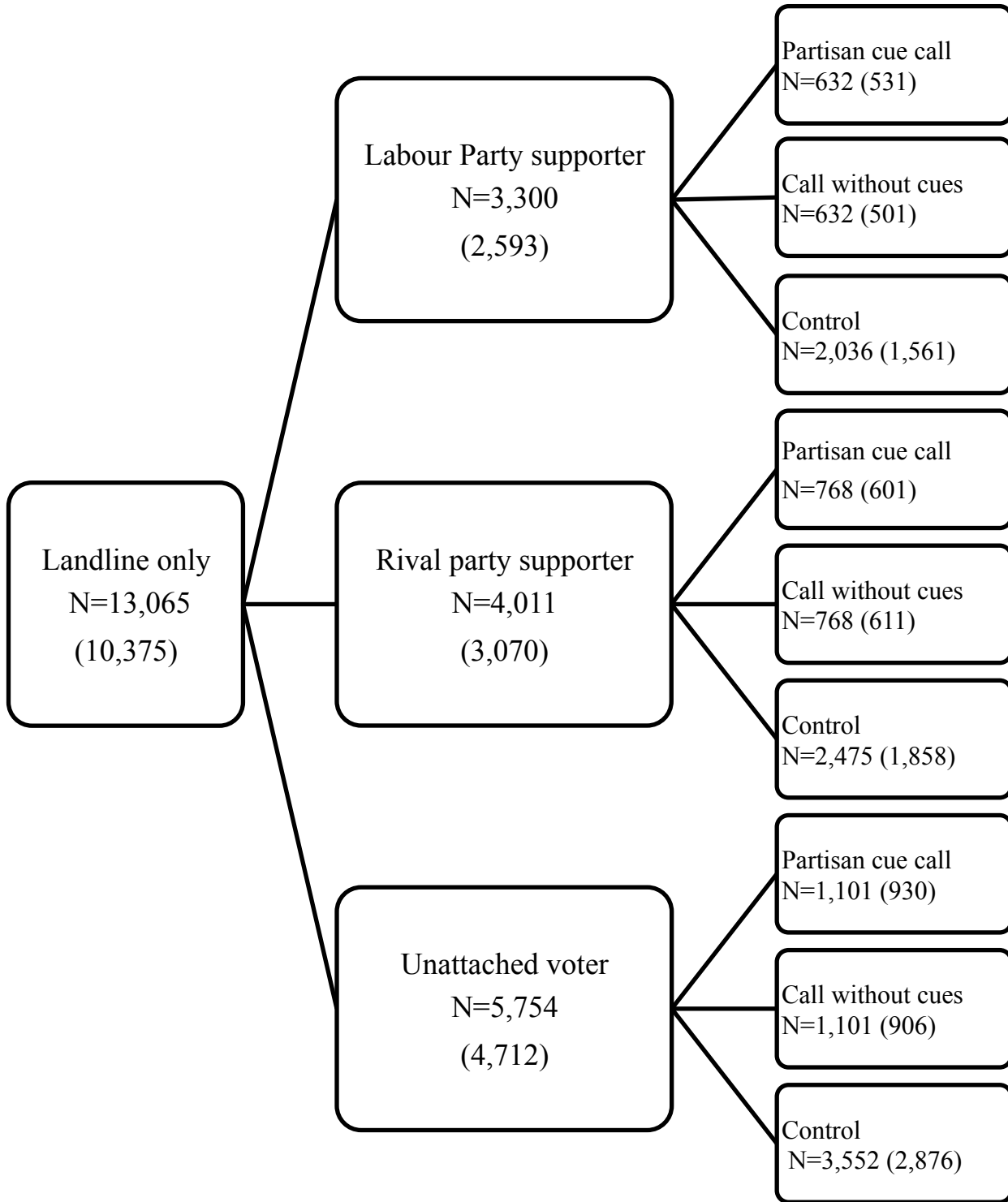
Note: Numbers in parentheses exclude absentee voters and individuals with missing turnout data. Probabilities of assignment within blocks to experimental groups differ by household size. We account for this through inverse-probability weighting.

Figure 2a: Complier Average Causal Effects (CACE) on turnout of call with partisan cues versus control group, interacted with partisan group


Note: The figure is based on the covariate-adjusted results shown in Table A3 in the Appendix. 90%-confidence intervals shown.

Figure 2b: Complier Average Causal Effects (CACE) on turnout of call without partisan cues versus control group, interacted with partisan group
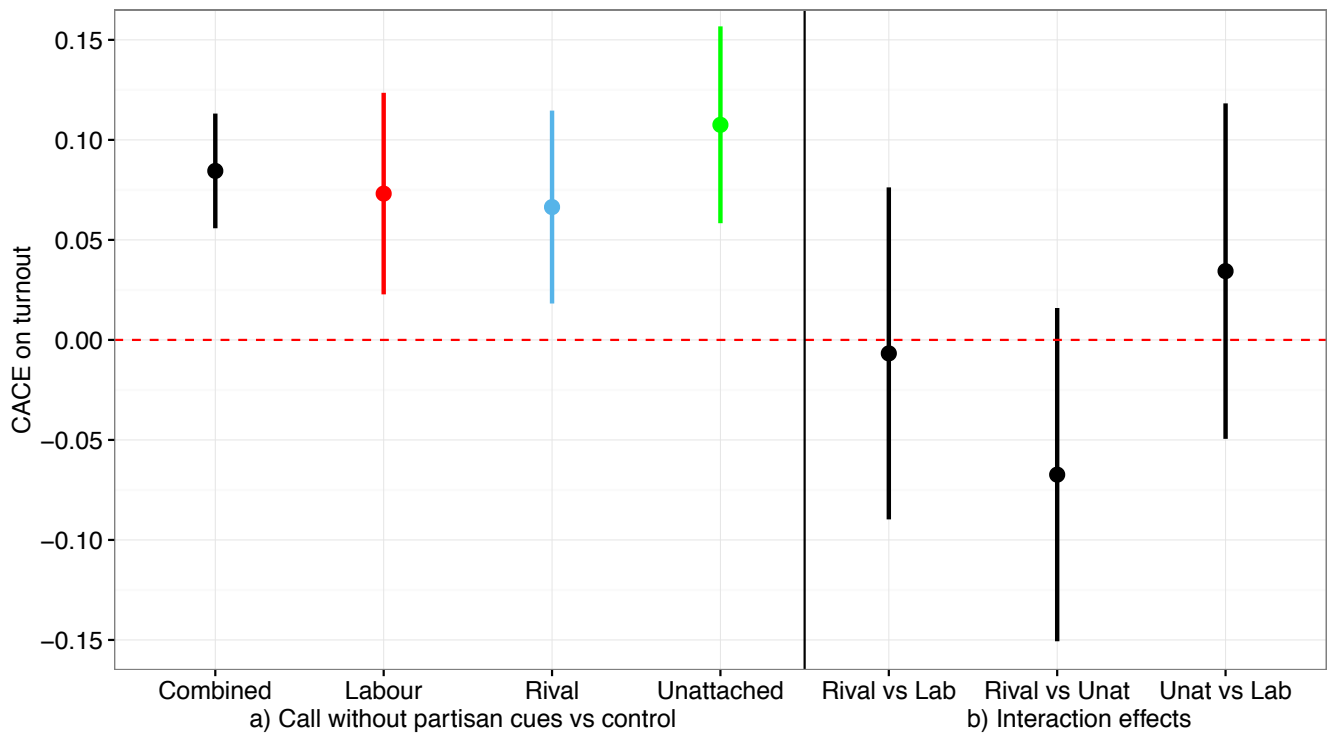
Note: The figure is based on the covariate-adjusted results shown in Table A4 in the Appendix. 90%-confidence intervals shown.

Figure 3: Three scenarios of how prior beliefs (first column) about the Complier Average Causal Effects (CACE) of partisan cues in GOTV messages on turnout are updated by the results of our experiment
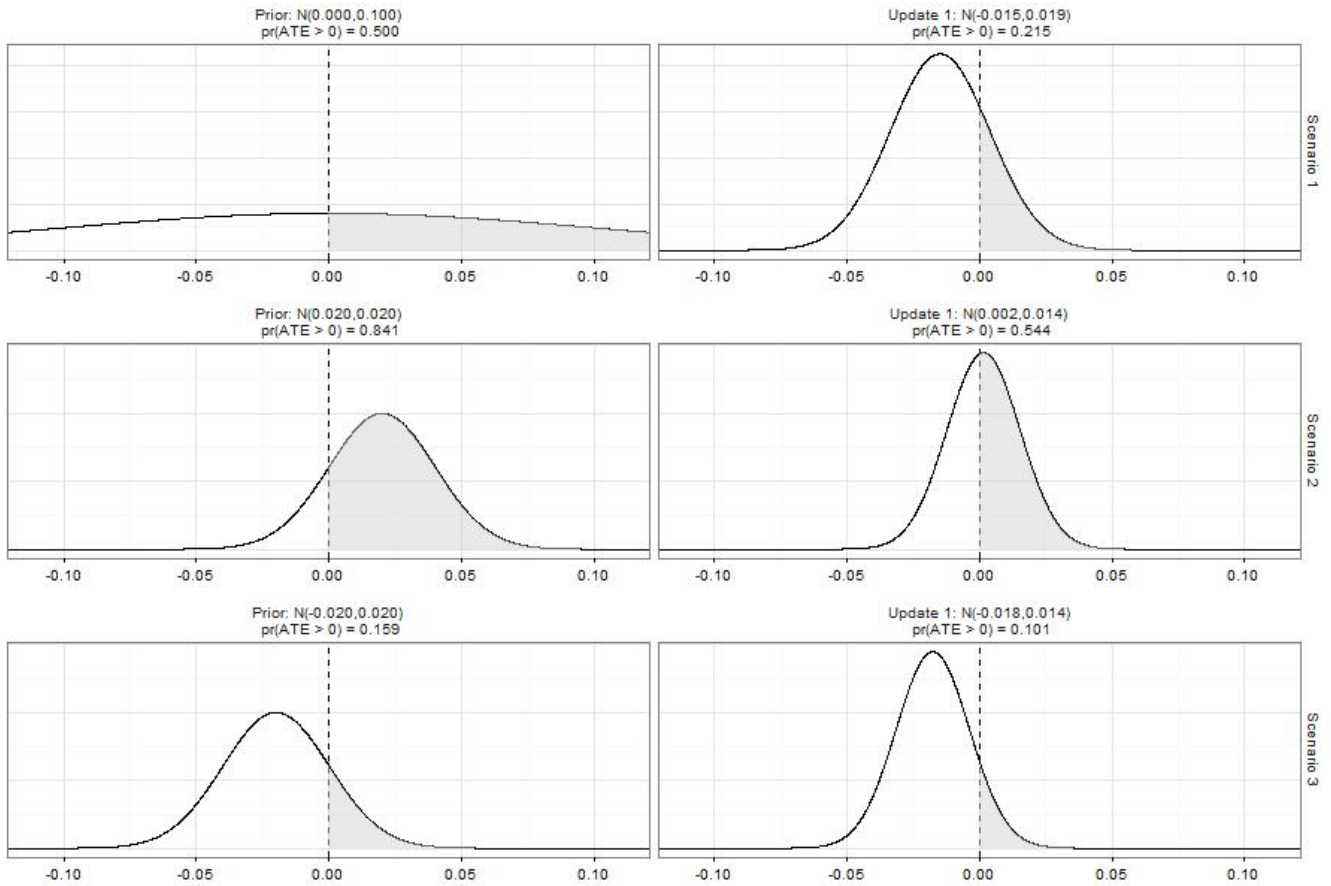
Online Appendices

THE ROLE OF PARTISAN CUES IN VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGNS:

Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment

Appendix A: Calling Scripts

2012 PCC Elections Calling Script
Pool 1 Call with partisan cues

When you make a call tick a box in the "Call Attempted" row. Do not leave an answer phone message unless it is the fifth call and we have not made contact yet. Do not call again if a contact has been made (i.e. the larger Question boxes have been filled in), similarly don't write anything in these boxes unless you make a contact or establish that it is a wrong number.

We have a message that we would like you to deliver. You can do it in a conversational manner but please do try and hit all the talking points in the message.

> Please do make sure to mention that [candidate name] is the Labour party candidate. This is to preserve the integrity of this experiment which will greatly help us in the long run.

Message:
"Hello, my name is …. I am phoning from your local Labour Party. I just wanted to remind you to go out and vote for Labour candidate [candidate name] in the Police and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday. Your local polling station is located at … during the usual opening hours from 7am to 10pm. Have you heard of the Labour candidate [candidate name]?

Labour's [candidate name] is determined to fight the Tory cuts to frontline policing that will hit Birmingham hard if a Conservative is elected. The Conservatives have sacked Police Officers and closed down Police Stations. In contrast, the Labour Party put more Police Officers on the ground and will protect police numbers.

- Are you going to vote for a Police Commissioner?
- Which candidate/party are you going to support in this election?
- If there was a General Election tomorrow, which party would you support?

Thanks a lot for taking the time to talk to me.

Voice message: On the 5th attempt leave a voice message with the above content but without the ending questions.

Fill in the boxes 1 to 5 according to the criteria laid out on the next page:

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5

When you make a call tick a box in the "Call Attempted" row. Do not leave an answer phone message unless it is the fifth call and we have not made contact yet. Do not call again if a contact has been made (i.e. the larger Question boxes have been filled in), similarly don't write anything in these boxes unless you make a contact or establish that it is a wrong number.

We have a message that we would like you to deliver. You can do it in a conversational manner but please do try and hit all the talking points in the message.

> Please do NOT mention that [candidate name] is the Labour party candidate unless the contact brings it up or asks you which party he represents. This is to preserve the integrity of this experiment which will greatly help us in the long run.

Message:
"Hello, my name is …. I am phoning to remind you to go out and vote for [candidate name] in the Police and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday. Your local polling station is located at … during the usual opening hours from 7am to 10pm. Have you heard of [candidate name]?

[Candidate name] is a candidate for Police and Crime Commissioner and he is determined to fight the cuts in frontline policing. As [former role] [candidate's first name] has a strong record in reducing crime and protecting our Police Force. [Candidate name] has been fighting for the victims of crime for over 30 years.

- Are you going to vote for a Police Commissioner?
- Which candidate/party are you going to support in this election?

Thanks a lot for taking the time to talk to me.

Voice message: On the 5th attempt leave a voice message with the above content.

Fill in the boxes 1 to 5 according to the criteria laid out on the next page:

| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q5 |

Filling in Q1-5:

Q1   tells us the status of the call so that we can analyse if and how contact was made. Use the following codes to indicate this status:

1. Conversation with the specific individual i.e. you spoke to them and they didn't ask you to "call back later"
2. Voice message left; do not leave a message unless it is the fifth attempt to contact
3. Wrong number i.e. number is for a different address/family or the specific individual has moved away
4. Number not recognised i.e. line is dead or is a fax/modem line

Q2   tells us whether the message was delivered in full; please use the following codes:

1. Full message delivered
2. Individual ends the conversation before you can deliver the full message and does not ask you to "call back later"; if you are asked to call back later leave all of the question boxes blank and we will call through the list again later
3. Individual has already voted i.e. postal voter

Q3   tells us if the individual is interested in which party [candidate name] represents

1. Individual asks you which party [candidate name] represents
2. Individual knows and mentions that [candidate name] represents Labour

**Q4**   tells us how the person will vote in the PCC election. Please use the following codes:

L	Labour	**B**	UKIP / [candidate name]
A	Against Labour	**I**	Independent / [candidate names]
D	Don't Know	**Z**	Not voting in PCC elections
X	Won't say	**J**	Will vote for [candidate name] specifically
T	Conservative / [candidate name]		(rather than just the Labour candidate)
S	Lib Dem / [candidate name]	**O**	Will vote against [candidate name] personally (rather than just generally Against Labour [A])

Q5   IF the individual mentions that [candidate name] is Labour or asks what party he represents, please finish by asking which party they would support if there was a General Election tomorrow and use the following codes:

L	Labour	**A**	Against i.e. not Labour
T	Conservative	**D**	Don't Know
S	Lib Dem	**X**	Won't Say
G	Green	**V**	BNP
B	UKIP	**Z**	Won't vote

Figure A1: Predicted probabilities of expressing different PCC vote choice intentions as a function of using partisan cues
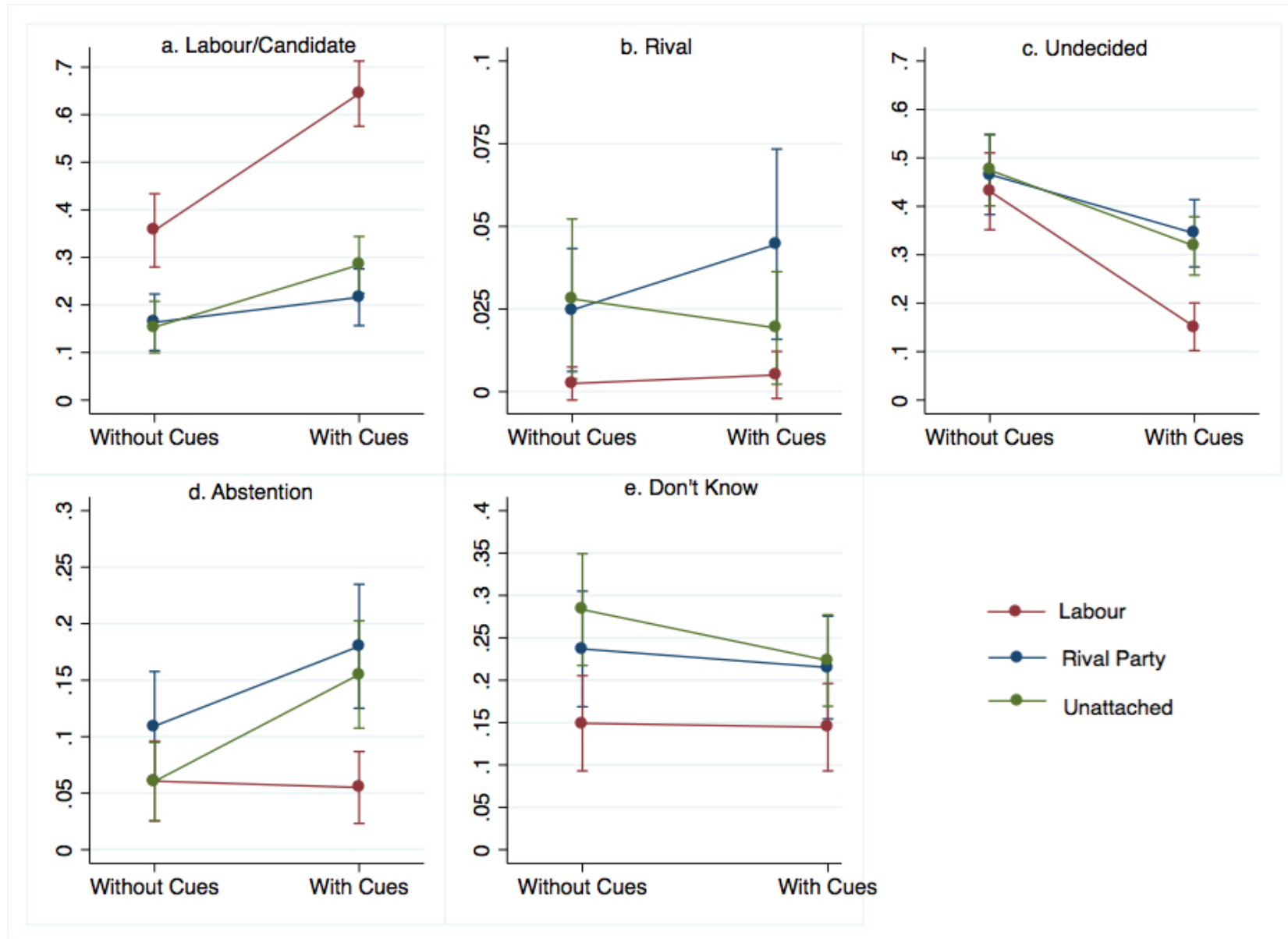
Note: Bars denote 95% confidence intervals.

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Appendix B: Manipulation Check

Impact of the Treatment on Expressed Candidate Support

To establish that the treatment without partisan cues and the Labour partisan cue treatment were indeed perceived by subjects as providing different party cues, we estimate the impact of the treatment on answering either the Labour candidate[23] or Party to the question –posed at the end of the GOTV phone call– which party the subject would support in the PCC Election. The question was open-ended. We perform a multinomial logit regression of five responses to the question (a. voting for Labour Party or candidate; b. don't know; c. abstention; d. voting for a rival party or candidate; e. refused to answer) on the partisan cue treatment, partisan group, their interactions, and the pre-treatment covariates. If the treatment was successful, then subjects should be more likely to volunteer that they support the Labour Party when treated with a partisan cue message than with a message without partisan cues. The results displayed in Figure A1 show that this is indeed the case for Labour supporters, and to some extent unattached voters, who are less likely to indicate that they "don't know" who they would vote for in the PCC election, and more likely to indicate that they would vote for the Labour candidate or Party, as a result of the phone call with strong Labour Party cues compared to the phone call without strong party cues.

Table A1 shows the CACEs of the partisan cue message on expressing support for either the Labour candidate or Party (versus any other response) by partisan group, and combined as a weighted average. We can estimate the CACE of the Labour cue call versus the call without the cues under the assumption resulting from random assignment that the shares of compliers and never-takers do not systematically differ between the two treatment groups. Our design does not allow us to estimate ITT effects because we are missing data for never-takers, those subjects who would not answer the phone

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[23] Either by mentioning his name or by indicating "Labour candidate".

when assigned to treatment. We display both unadjusted and covariate-adjusted differences-in-proportions estimates.[24]

Providing strong Labour partisan cues makes Labour supporters 28 percentage-points more likely to volunteer that they would vote for the Labour candidate. We find the same, albeit less strong, effect for unattached voters. In contrast, we consistently find a null effect for supporters of rival parties. They are no more or less likely to express that they would vote for the candidate when the message includes strong Labour partisan cues. Across all partisan groups we find a robust positive effect of 14 percentage-points of providing strong Labour partisan cues in the message on expressing the intention to support the Labour candidate in the PCC Election.

Table A1: Complier Average Causal Effect (CACE) on Labour candidate or Party support (1 = Candidate/Labour; 0 = other) by partisan group, without and with covariates

	Labour	Rival Party	Unattached	Combined
No covariates	.284***	.045	.127***	.142***
	[.181, .387]	[-.034, .124]	[.051, .202]	[.090, .195]
Covariates	.283***	.038	.125**	.141***
	[.181, .385]	[-.039, .115]	[.048, .202]	[.088, .194]
N	366	365	444	1175

† p-value < .10; * p-value < .05; ** p-value < .01; *** p-value < .001 (based on two-tailed hypothesis tests). 95%-confidence intervals in brackets. Note: Covariates are turnout in seven previous elections, gender, age and electoral ward.

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[24] In order to test if attrition was a function of treatment assignment, we regress a variable indicating if outcome data was missing on whether compliers received the partisan cue or the messages without cues and extracted the resulting F-statistics. In the next step we simulate blocked random assignment to control and treatment groups 10,000 times and compare the resulting mean of all F-statistics to the F-statistics extracted from the realized data set. The p-value of .14 indicates that we cannot reject the sharp null hypothesis that whether an outcome is missing or not is unrelated to treatment assignment for any unit.