Online Appendix

President on Honeymoon: Elections, Media, and the Winner–Loser Gap in Affective Polarization

Descriptive Statistics

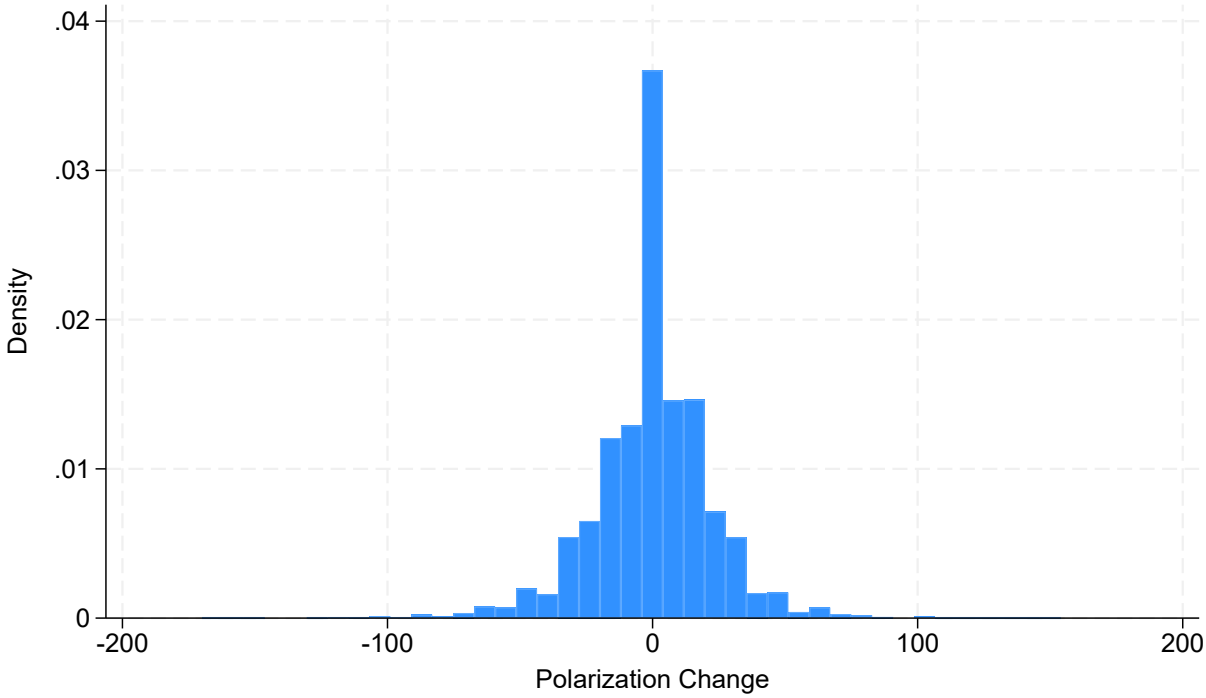
Table A1: Descriptive Statistics of the Main Model

	N	Mean	Min	Max	P50	SD
Aff. Polarization Change (DV)	14426	.0372	-170	154	0	21.9
Winner Status	14426	.535	0	1	1	.499
Age	14426	52.4	17	93	53	16.6
Sex (Male)	14426	.47	0	1	0	.499
Ideological Extremity	14426	.903	.0407	2.57	.874	.572
Family Income (logged)	14426	11.2	8.41	12.8	11.4	.966
Interview Mode (Internet=1)	14426	.695	0	1	1	.461
Election Closeness (Close=1)	14426	.749	0	1	1	.434
College	14426	.459	0	1	0	.498
Election Year	14426	2016	2000	2024	2020	6.62

Table A2: The Distribution of Sample by Election Years

	Winner Status		
Election Year	Loser	Winner	Total
2000	384	328	712
2004	272	279	551
2008	362	726	1,088
2012	1,212	1,790	3,002
2016	980	827	1,807
2020	1,859	2,559	4,418
2024	1,635	1,213	2,848
Total	6,704	7,722	14,426

Figure A1: The Distribution of the Dependent Variable (Affective Polarization Change)



Robustness and Sensitivity Checks for the Main Model

Several robustness and sensitivity checks of the main model are provided at Table A3. The first model re-estimates the effect without excluding either voting misreports or non-partisan voters. Here, only the respondents' post-election reporting on whom they voted for is used without matching with their pre-election intentions. There is no substantial difference in the substantive effect of election-winning on the outcome. The second model differs only by including non-partisans; respondents who did not report a pre-election intention, or whose intention did not match their post-election report, are dropped.

The sample weights provided by the ANES in each election study to make the survey sample representative of the country are added in the third model. The weighted estimate is considerably larger than the unweighted one (11.5 versus 6.5), though also far less precise given the variance weighting introduces. I report the unweighted model as the main specification because the regression aims to estimate the within-person association between winner status and affective-polarization change, not a population mean. When the model is correctly specified, unweighted OLS is consistent and more efficient, whereas survey weights are designed to recover population-representative descriptive quantities. The yearly averages in Table A9, which are descriptive population quantities, are weighted for that reason. That the coefficient grows under weighting suggests the winner–loser gap is, if anything, larger among the groups the ANES upweights toward the electorate, making the unweighted estimate the more conservative choice.

Table A3: OLS Regressions on Affective Polarization Change

	With Voting Misreports & Non-partisans	With Non-partisans	Weighted	Absolute Formula	Without Ideology	Partisan Misreports	Pol2
Winner Status	6.938***	6.589***	11.522***	5.904***	6.558***	6.293***	5.805***
	(0.375)	(0.358)	(2.092)	(0.351)	(0.365)	(0.368)	(0.351)
Age	-0.077***	-0.049***	-0.068	-0.041***	-0.047***	-0.041***	-0.041***
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.054)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.010)
Sex (Male)	-1.737***	-1.694***	2.201	-1.721***	-1.784***	-1.802***	-1.724***
	(0.372)	(0.354)	(1.859)	(0.347)	(0.360)	(0.364)	(0.346)
Ideological Extremity	0.650**	1.510***	-1.896	1.369***		1.941***	1.290***
	(0.324)	(0.309)	(1.701)	(0.303)		(0.318)	(0.302)
Family Income (logged)	-0.797***	-0.454**	-2.153*	-0.286	-0.393**	-0.349*	-0.328*
	(0.202)	(0.194)	(1.236)	(0.191)	(0.198)	(0.200)	(0.190)
Interview Mode	1.573***	1.694***	0.881	1.276**	1.489***	1.562***	1.401***
	(0.555)	(0.537)	(0.877)	(0.521)	(0.542)	(0.545)	(0.520)
Election Closeness Expectation	1.778***	2.006***	0.430	2.207***	1.834***	2.100***	2.128***
	(0.439)	(0.417)	(2.520)	(0.407)	(0.421)	(0.425)	(0.406)
College	-0.602	0.066	-0.364	-0.057	0.106	0.090	-0.071
	(0.396)	(0.378)	(2.100)	(0.369)	(0.384)	(0.387)	(0.369)
2004	-5.917***	-5.383***	-7.609***	-5.226***	-5.976***	-6.000***	-5.161***
	(1.249)	(1.204)	(1.638)	(1.172)	(1.219)	(1.237)	(1.178)
2008	-10.059***	-9.815***	-13.191***	-8.850***	-10.087***	-9.606***	-9.299***
	(1.056)	(1.027)	(1.459)	(1.001)	(1.041)	(1.057)	(1.009)
2012	-9.104***	-8.508***	-9.785***	-7.736***	-8.663***	-8.448***	-8.070***
	(0.994)	(0.971)	(1.420)	(0.944)	(0.981)	(0.993)	(0.949)
2016	-6.212***	-6.496***	-7.316***	-5.245***	-6.386***	-6.018***	-5.516***
	(1.042)	(1.020)	(1.550)	(0.992)	(1.032)	(1.045)	(0.998)
2020	-4.892***	-4.714***	-5.942***	-3.730***	-4.995***	-4.706***	-4.052***
	(1.034)	(1.006)	(1.614)	(0.978)	(1.018)	(1.029)	(0.984)
2024	-7.338***	-7.184***	-7.464***	-6.268***	-7.192***	-6.662***	-6.554***
	(1.031)	(1.003)	(1.734)	(0.973)	(1.012)	(1.024)	(0.979)
Constant	15.664***	7.380***	29.207**	4.965**	8.298***	5.017**	5.851**
	(2.519)	(2.437)	(14.537)	(2.390)	(2.446)	(2.514)	(2.389)
R^2	0.036	0.039	0.066	0.037	0.037	0.039	0.037
N	16635	15193	12942	14426	14426	13660	14202

Robust standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

In the fourth model, the affective polarization change (DV) is calculated with the following absolute formula.

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta \text{ Affective Polarization} = &|\text{Post-election feeling score for voted candidate} \\ &- \text{Post-election feeling score for opposite candidate}| \\ &- |\text{Pre-election feeling score for voted candidate} \\ &- \text{Pre-election feeling score for opposite candidate}|.\end{aligned}$$

This formula suggests that if a voter was polarized 20 points in favor of the Democratic candidate before the election and became polarized 20 points in favor of the Republican candidate after the election, the affective polarization change of them is simply 0. Since I assumed this direction change was valuable to keep, the dependent variable in the main model is calculated without absolutes.

In the fifth model, ideological extremity, which can be a bad control, is dropped. The sixth model drops 766 possible misreports: respondents who identify as Democratic partisans but voted Republican, or vice versa. The coefficient of election-winning changes very slightly again. The last model drops respondents who rated the out-party candidate higher than the candidate they voted for.

Alternative Design

An alternative research design can simply leave the post-election polarization scores as the outcome, while making the pre-election scores an independent variable. Most predictors in the model are measured before the election or are demographic and stable. This leaves the post-election polarization level as the only outcome-side variable the election could move.

The empirical specification of this alternative model would be the following:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Post-Polarization Level}_{it} = &\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Winner Status}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{Pre-Polarization Level}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_3(\text{Winner Status}_{it} \times \text{Pre-Polarization Level}_{it}) \\ &+ \beta_4 \text{Age}_{it} + \beta_5 \text{Gender}_{it} + \beta_6 \text{Ideological Extremity}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_7 \text{Family Income}_{it} + \beta_8 \text{College Degree}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_9 \text{Interview Mode}_{it} + \beta_{10} \text{Election Closeness}_{it} + \alpha_i + \epsilon_{it}\end{aligned}$$

Both post- and pre-polarization measures are continuous again, and range between -100 and 100. The negative score can be obtained if a respondent reported voting for a Democratic candidate but favored the Republican candidate more than the Democrat candidate, or vice versa. This design greatly increases R^2 as pre-election polarization strongly predicts the post-election polarization level.

Table A4: Descriptive Statistics for the Alternative Design

	N	P50	Mean	Min	Max	SD
Post-Election Polarization	14426	70	66	-100	100	28.8
Pre-Election Polarization	14426	70	65.9	-100	100	27.7

Table A5: OLS Regressions on Affective Polarization Change

	DV: Post-polarization
Winner Status	12.179***
	(0.847)
Pre-election Polarization	0.678***
	(0.009)
Winner Status × Pre-election Polarization	-0.083***
	(0.012)
Age	0.011
	(0.010)
Sex (Male)	-2.410***
	(0.329)
Ideological Extremity	6.035***
	(0.299)
Family Income (logged)	-0.200
	(0.180)
Interview Mode	2.387***
	(0.493)
Election Closeness Expectation	-1.252***
	(0.390)
College	-0.417
	(0.350)
Constant	12.696***
	(2.301)
R^2	0.539
N	14426
Year FE	✓
Robust standard errors in parentheses.	
Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01	

Incumbent vs. Non-Incumbent & Republican vs. Democrat Wins

Table A6: OLS Regressions on Affective Polarization Change with Split-Sample Design of Incumbent and Non-Incumbent Wins

	Incumbent Win	Non-Incumbent Win
Winner Status	2.145***	7.937***
	(0.752)	(0.419)
Age	-0.072***	-0.042***
	(0.023)	(0.012)
Sex (Male)	-1.279*	-1.878***
	(0.726)	(0.415)
Ideological Extremity	1.733***	1.752***
	(0.607)	(0.369)
Family Income (logged)	-0.174	-0.441*
	(0.393)	(0.230)
Interview Mode	1.834**	1.000
	(0.888)	(0.689)
Election Closeness Expectation	3.015***	1.581***
	(0.950)	(0.472)
College	-0.451	0.206
	(0.793)	(0.438)
2008		-10.324***
		(1.041)
2012	-2.415**	
	(1.191)	
2016		-6.111***
		(1.077)
2020		-4.757***
		(1.096)
2024		-6.766***
		(1.074)
Constant	0.806	6.579**
	(4.680)	(2.846)
R^2	0.012	0.050
N	3553	10873

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The base category is 2004 for the election year in incumbent win, and 2000 in non-incumbent win.
Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

In Table A6, I separated the election years based on whether the incumbent president's party retained office. If it is a non-incumbent win, the winners had to wait for at least one term to assume office. Not surprisingly, the effect is stronger when the winning side had been out of office for at least one term. If they re-win the election, there is still a substantial effect, but its explanatory power decreases substantially. Re-winning office moves emotions much more than retaining it.

Similarly, the significant and substantive effect of election-winning (losing) on the outcome is similar for Republican and Democratic wins, though somewhat stronger when a Democratic candidate wins as presented in Table A7.

Table A7: OLS Regressions on Affective Polarization Change with Split-Sample Design of Republican and Democratic Wins

	Republican Win	Democrat Win
Winner Status	5.706***	7.331***
	(0.567)	(0.493)
Age	-0.037**	-0.049***
	(0.017)	(0.015)
Sex (Male)	-2.744***	-0.870*
	(0.559)	(0.475)
Ideological Extremity	2.676***	0.776*
	(0.491)	(0.413)
Family Income (logged)	-0.003	-0.491*
	(0.322)	(0.252)
Interview Mode	1.019	1.905**
	(0.771)	(0.759)
Election Closeness Expectation	2.166***	1.860***
	(0.662)	(0.549)
College	-0.149	-0.052
	(0.593)	(0.511)
2004	-5.702***	
	(1.204)	
2012		1.143
		(0.936)
2016	-5.971***	
	(1.102)	
2020		4.792***
		(1.032)
2024	-6.664***	
	(1.111)	
Constant	1.567	-2.177
	(3.885)	(3.011)
R^2	0.036	0.043
N	5918	8508

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The base category is 2000 for the election year in Republican win and 2008 in Democrat win.
Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Vice-presidential Candidate Polarization

The following model provides a comparison between feelings towards the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Since the main model only captures the polarization at the leader level, it is important to check if the findings are robust at other levels. Unfortunately, the ANES allows this only for presidential and vice-presidential candidates in 2012, 2016, 2020, and 2024, as other feeling thermometer questions (such as towards the parties or partisans) were not asked both before and after the elections.

The results suggest that election-winning is also associated with the affective polarization change towards the vice-presidential candidates, though with a smaller effect. However, Figure A2 shows that polarization at the vice-presidential level increases for both winners and losers, but to different degrees.

Figure A2: The Effect of Winning Status on Affective Polarization Change towards Vice-presidential Candidates

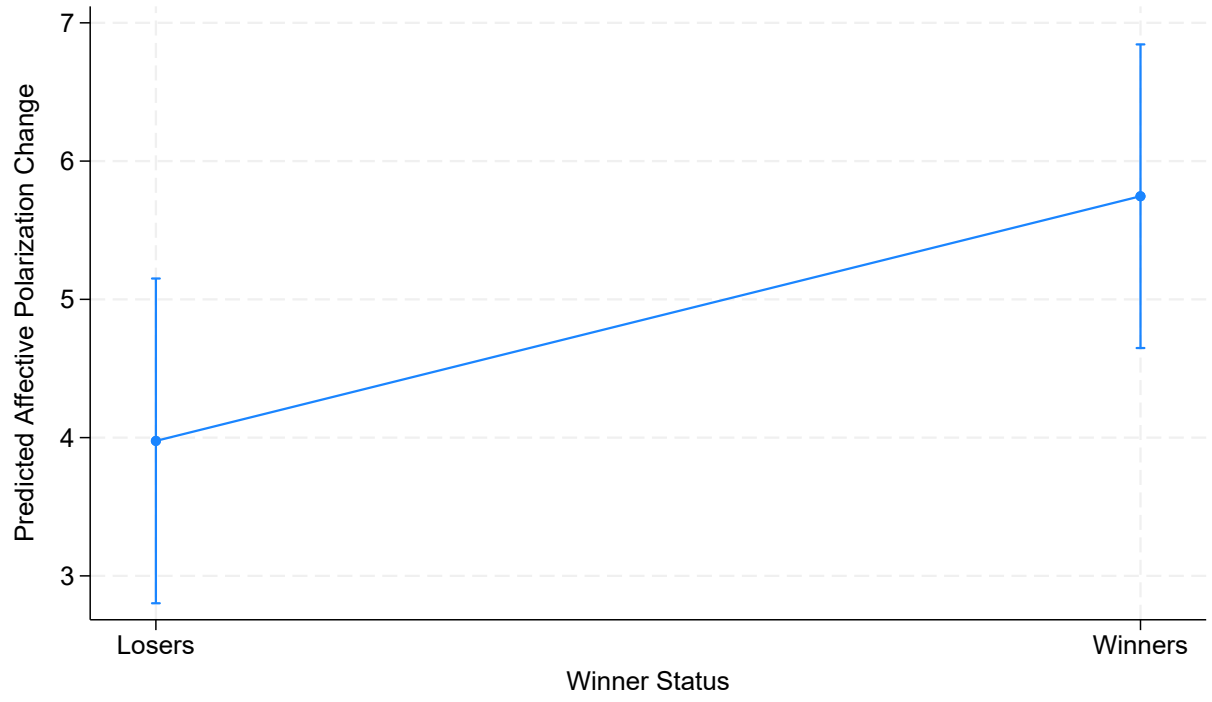


Table A8: OLS Regressions on Affective Polarization Change towards (Vice-)presidential Candidates

	DV: Vice-pres. candidates	DV: Pres. candidates
Winner Status	4.057***	6.544***
	(0.494)	(0.398)
Age	-0.132***	-0.030**
	(0.015)	(0.012)
Sex (Male)	-2.243***	-1.799***
	(0.487)	(0.392)
Ideological Extremity	1.432***	1.772***
	(0.428)	(0.344)
Family Income (logged)	-0.090	-0.124
	(0.263)	(0.212)
Interview Mode	1.360*	1.597***
	(0.722)	(0.581)
Election Closeness Expectation	2.080***	2.331***
	(0.562)	(0.452)
College	-1.070**	0.549
	(0.514)	(0.414)
2016	9.661***	2.136***
	(0.842)	(0.678)
2020	8.921***	3.577***
	(0.646)	(0.520)
2024	6.232***	1.184**
	(0.714)	(0.575)
Constant	0.796	-6.480**
	(3.141)	(2.529)
R^2	0.038	0.041
N	11023	11023

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Election years include 2012, 2016, 2020, and 2024.

Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Average Affective Polarization by Election

Table A9: Means of Feeling Scores for Both Winner and Loser Candidates Before and After Elections (Weighted)

Voters	ΔPol	Pre-feel for Winner	Post-feel for Winner	Pre-feel for Loser	Post-feel for Loser
2000		**Bush**	**Bush**	**Gore**	**Gore**
Dems	2.62	39.4	↓ 37.2	74.8	↑ 75.3
Reps	10.7	77.9	↑ 81.3	35.1	↓ 27.8
Total	6.41	57.4	57.8	56.3	53.1
2004		**Bush**	**Bush**	**Kerry**	**Kerry**
Dem	1.52	24.2	↑ 27	74.4	↑ 78.6
Rep	-2.16	87.2	↑ 88.2	28.5	↑ 31.6
Total	-.365	56.5	58.3	50.9	54.5
2008		**Obama**	**Obama**	**McCain**	**McCain**
Rep	-11.9	30.1	↑ 38.5	75	↓ 71.4
Dem	-.0203	82	↑ 88.1	35.5	↑ 41.6
Total	-5.49	58.2	65.4	53.6	55.3
2012		**Obama**	**Obama**	**Romney**	**Romney**
Rep	-3.49	19.6	↑ 22.1	78.2	↓ 77.2
Dem	.318	84.6	↑ 87	22.5	↑ 24.6
Total	-1.46	54.2	56.7	48.6	49.2
2016		**Trump**	**Trump**	**Clinton**	**Clinton**
Dem	-3.73	6.73	↑ 11.9	75.2	↑ 76.6
Rep	3.56	74.6	↑ 79.4	10.1	↑ 11.4
Total	-.486	37	42	46.2	47.5
2020		**Biden**	**Biden**	**Trump**	**Trump**
Rep	-4.2	14.3	↑ 16.7	86.5	↓ 84.6
Dem	6.69	76.4	↑ 81.8	5.73	↓ 4.39
Total	1.92	49.2	53.2	41.1	39.6
2024		**Trump**	**Trump**	**Harris**	**Harris**
Dem	-3.58	2.96	↑ 5.15	82	↓ 80.6
Rep	1.92	84.6	↑ 87	9.24	↑ 9.77
Total	-1.2	38.2	40.5	50.6	50

Media Consumption

Table A10: The Descriptive Statistics of the 2000-2016 Model in Table 5

	N	P50	Mean	Min	Max	SD
Aff. Polarization Change (DV)	7156	0	-.68	-150	135	22.5
Winner Status	7156	1	.552	0	1	.497
Media Consumption	7156	2	1.58	0	2	.672
Age	7156	51	50.6	17	93	16.4
Sex (Male)	7156	0	.476	0	1	.499
Ideological Extremity	7156	.816	.901	.0407	2.57	.593
Family Income (logged)	7156	11.3	11.1	8.41	12.8	.949
Interview Mode	7156	0	.482	0	1	.5
Election Closeness	7156	1	.799	0	1	.401
College	7156	0	.389	0	1	.487
Election Year	7156	2012	2011	2000	2016	4.87

Table A11: The Descriptive Statistics of the 2024 models in Table 5

	N	P50	Mean	Min	Max	SD
Aff. Polarization Change (DV)	2847	0	-1.28	-170	140	20.3
Winner Status	2847	0	.426	0	1	.495
Social Media Consumption	2847	1	.946	0	2	.91
News Site Consumption	2847	1	1.27	0	2	.802
Age	2847	58	55.5	18	80	16.5
Sex (Male)	2847	0	.473	0	1	.499
Ideological Extremity	2847	.895	.895	.17	2	.547
Family Income (logged)	2847	11.5	11.2	8.52	12.4	.959
Interview Mode	2847	1	.832	0	1	.374
Election Closeness	2847	1	.74	0	1	.439
College	2847	1	.537	0	1	.499

The political media outlets/programs

2012

Daily Show with Jon Stewart. Talk of the Nation (NPR). All Things Considered (NPR) (radio). Online paper New York Times. Print paper NYT. Website NYT. Colbert Report. Huffington Post. Online paper Washington Post. Print paper Washington Post. Website Washington Post. Glenn Beck program (radio). The Sean Hannity Show (radio). The Rush Limbaugh Show (radio). Drudge Report. Fox Report. Fox News website

2016

Website The Guardian. All Things Considered (NPR) (Radio). The Late Show with Stephen Colbert. Website NYT. Buzzfeed.com. PBS News Hour. BBC News (news.bbc.co.uk). Huffington

Table A12: The Descriptive Statistics of the Media Consumption Model for the 2020 study in Table 6

	N	P50	Mean	Min	Max	SD
Aff. Polarization Change (DV)	4418	0	2.07	-160	154	21.6
Winner Status	4418	1	.579	0	1	.494
Media Consumption	4418	2	1.95	0	3	.786
Age	4418	55	53.2	18	80	16.7
Sex (Male)	4418	0	.459	0	1	.498
Ideological Extremity	4418	.861	.912	.131	2.06	.553
Family Income (logged)	4418	11.4	11.3	8.71	12.6	.99
Interview Mode	4418	1	.95	0	1	.218
Election Closeness	4418	1	.673	0	1	.469
College	4418	1	.521	0	1	.5

Post website. Washington Post website. Printed Washington Post. Rush Limbaugh (radio). The Sean Hannity Show (radio). The Glenn Beck program (radio). Fox News website.

2020

Website Buzzfeed. Website CNN. The lead with Jake Tapper (CNN) (TV Prog). Cuomo Prime Time (CNN) (TV Prog). Erin Burnett OutFront (CNN) (TV Prog). Website Huffington Post. The Rachel Maddow Show (MSNBC) (TV Prog). The Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell (MSNBC) (TV Prog). Morning Joe (MSNBC) (TV Prog). All In with Chris Hayes (MSNBC) (TV Prog). The 11th Hour with Brian Williams (MSNBC) (TV Prog). Website NYT. Print NYT. Online newspaper NYT. ABC World News Tonight (TV Prog). Good Morning America (ABC) (TV Prog). Website Bloomberg. CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell (TV Prog). 60 Minutes (CBS) (TV Prog). Face the Nation (CBS) (TV Prog). CBS This Morning (TV Prog). Website the Guardian. Website Washington Post. Print Washington Post. Online newspaper Washington Post. Website Yahoo News. All Things Considered (NPR) (radio). Morning Edition (NPR) (radio). Website NPR News. NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt (TV Prog). Meet the Press (NBC) (TV Prog). Website NBC News. Hannity (Fox) (TV Prog). Tucker Carlson Tonight (Fox) (TV Prog). The Five (Fox) (TV Prog). The Ingraham Angle (Fox) (TV Prog). The Story with Martha MacCallum (Fox) (TV Prog). Special Report with Bret Baier (Fox) (TV Prog). Website Fox News (www.foxnews.com). Website Daily Caller (dailycaller.com). Printed, The Wall Street Journal. Online paper, online.wsj.com.

2024[1]

Hannity (TV). Jesse Waters Primetime (TV). Rachel Maddow Show (TV). The Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell (TV). The Five (TV). The Ingraham Angle (TV). The Lead with Jack Tapper (TV). Special Report with Bret Baier (TV). CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell (TV). World

[1]Radio programs are omitted because of a data-collection error in the 2024 study

News Tonight with David Muir (TV). Nightly News with Lester Holt (TV). Fareed Zakaria GPS (World News) (TV). The Daily Show with Jon Stewart (TV). Anderson Cooper 360 (TV). Erin Burnett Out Front (TV). 60 Minutes (TV). Face the Nation (TV). Meet the Press (TV). Good Morning America (TV). Today (TV). Outnumbered (TV). Deadline: White House (TV). All in with Chris Hayes (TV). the 11th hour with Stephanie Rutle (TV). PBS News Hour (TV). Al Punto (TV). Al Rojo Vivo (TV). Noticiero Estrella TV. Noticiero Telemundo (TV). Noticiero Univision (TV). Primer Impacto (TV). Yahoo News. CNN. Newsmax. Breitbart. Fox News. New York Post. The Guardian. AP News. BBC News. NPR News. Daily Caller. Bloomberg. Politico. NBC News. One America News. Huffington Post. New York Times. USA Today. Wall Street Journal. Washington Post. New York Post.

Partisanship

Adding the partisanship variable does not change the substantive significance of the winner status coefficient. Partisanship does not moderate this relationship as none of the interactive partisanship variables are statistically distinguishable from each other. However, strong partisan winners' affective polarization increases less than other winner groups, and strong partisan losers' affective polarization decreases more than other loser groups, possibly reflecting a ceiling effect: strong partisans were already highly polarized before the election.

Table A13: OLS Regression on the Effect of Winning Status on Affective Polarization Change Conditional on Partisanship Strength

Winner Status	6.153***
	(0.751)
Partisanship=Weak	-0.242
	(0.757)
Partisanship=Strong	-2.706***
	(0.671)
Partisanship=Weak × Winner Status	1.692
	(1.039)
Partisanship=Strong × Winner Status	-0.067
	(0.897)
Constant	6.521***
	(2.528)
R^2	0.043
N	14426
Controls	✓
Year FE	✓

Robust standard errors in parentheses.
The base category for partisanship is leaning.
Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table A14: OLS Regressions on the Effect of Partisanship Strength on Affective Polarization

	Winners	Losers
Partisanship=Weak	1.691**	-0.251
	(0.676)	(0.801)
Partisanship=Strong	-2.078***	-3.122***
	(0.599)	(0.724)
Age	-0.008	-0.059***
	(0.014)	(0.017)
Sex (Male)	-0.849*	-2.687***
	(0.468)	(0.559)
Ideological Extremity	0.846**	4.318***
	(0.422)	(0.530)
Family Income (logged)	-0.362	-0.354
	(0.252)	(0.314)
Interview Mode	1.384**	1.126
	(0.683)	(0.863)
Election Closeness Expectation	2.150***	1.114*
	(0.557)	(0.651)
College	-0.506	0.120
	(0.505)	(0.593)
2004	-11.671***	-0.535
	(1.649)	(1.791)
2008	-9.068***	-11.173***
	(1.357)	(1.663)
2012	-10.388***	-4.874***
	(1.309)	(1.492)
2016	-7.281***	-5.487***
	(1.411)	(1.510)
2020	-4.232***	-4.974***
	(1.359)	(1.529)
2024	-7.970***	-5.536***
	(1.391)	(1.482)
Constant	12.592***	6.220
	(3.208)	(3.901)
R^2	0.031	0.028
N	7722	6704
Year FE	✓	✓

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

The base category for partisanship is leaning partisans.

Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Figure A3: The Effect of Winner Status on Affective Polarization Change Conditional on Partisanship

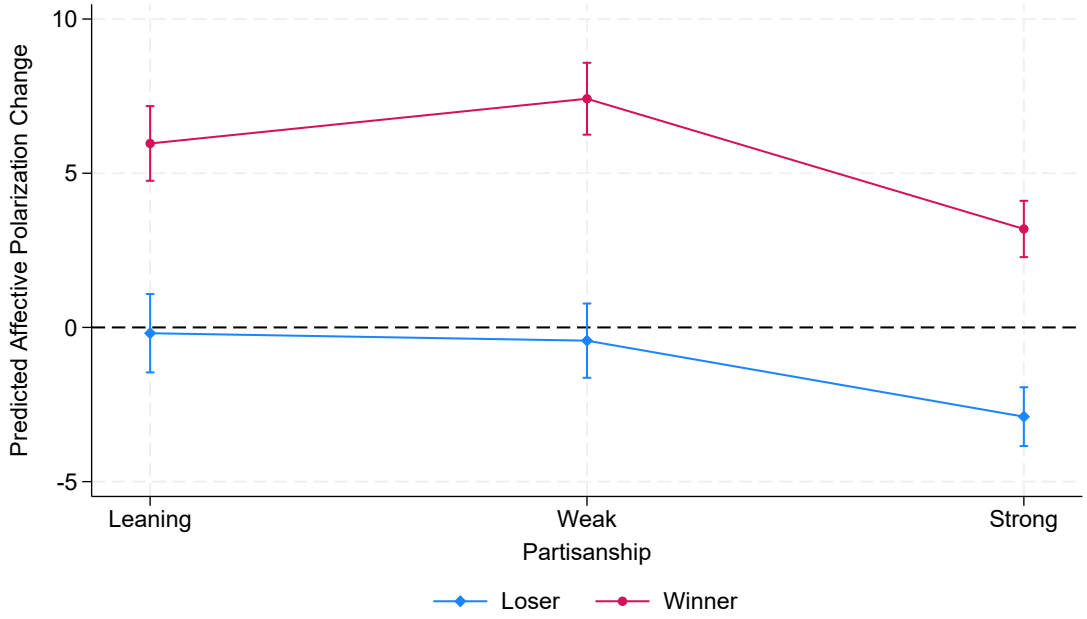


Table A15: The Distribution of Partisans

Partisanship	**N**
Leaning	3307
Weak	3517
Strong	7602
Total	14426

Table A16: The Percentages of Partisans by Election Years in the Full Sample with 14,426 Observations

	Election Year							
Partisanship	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020	2024	**Total**
Strong	43.82	45.01	48.81	50.5	53.35	55.05	56.14	52.7
Weak	30.20	29.95	28.12	27.02	25.12	21.71	21.31	24.38
Leaning	25.98	25.05	23.07	22.49	21.53	23.25	22.54	22.92
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

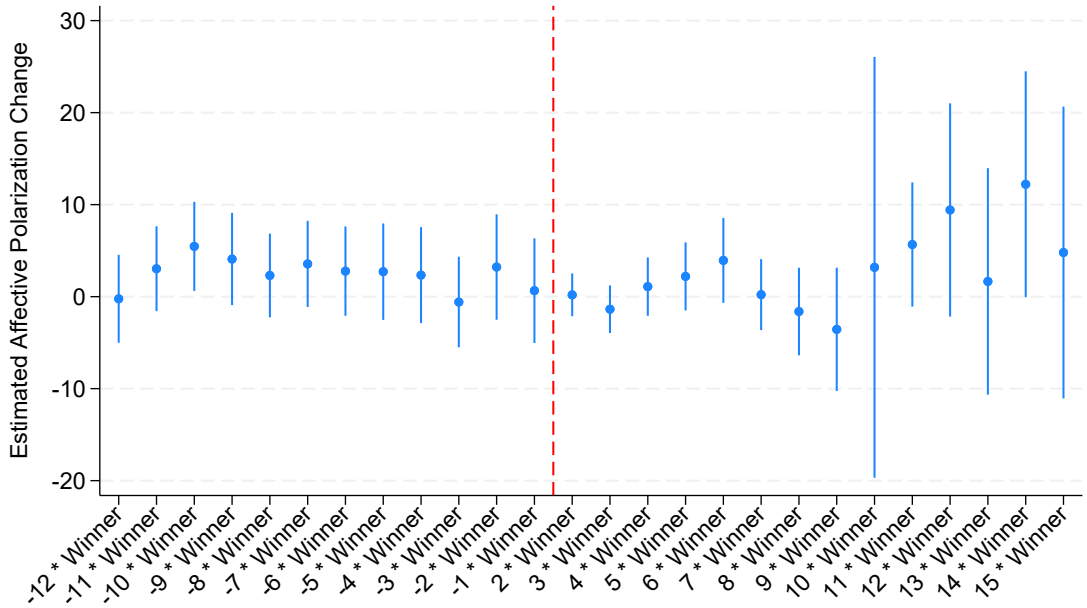
Survey Timing

Another possible explanation for the main finding could be the timing of the survey. Some studies suggest that as elections lose their salience, polarization decreases, meaning that the timing of the survey can have an effect on the polarization level. According to this account, the closer the survey date is to the election, the higher the polarization the respondent is likely to report as the elections gain more salience and the campaigns intensify. Therefore, the same respondent who is interviewed one week before the election is expected to report a higher polarization level than 10 weeks before the election.

To this end, I calculated the weekly distance from the survey interview date to the election date. I could not add the 2012 study to these models due to a mix in different waves of the study. The baseline category for the survey week in both the pre-election survey model and post-election survey is Week 1. The number of observations in each week for both pre and post-election surveys is reported in Table A19.

The full results of the regression model are presented in Table A17. The coefficient plots in Figure A4 show that the survey timing does not moderate the main finding. This either suggests that the election campaign periods are already quite intense in the last three months in the United States, or that this mechanism does not explain the winner-loser gap in affective polarization change.

Figure A4: The Effect of Winner Status on Affective Polarization Change conditional on the Survey Timing



Note: The numbers indicate the weekly distance to the election date, with (-) indicating the pre-election period. The baseline for the weeks is -13 and 1.

Table A17: OLS Regression on the Effect of Winning Status on Affective Polarization Change Conditional on Survey Timing

	Model for Survey Timing
Winner Status	5.309**
	(2.446)
Pre-election week = 2	-0.354
	(2.356)
3	2.878
	(2.059)
4	1.601
	(2.247)
5	3.971*
	(2.205)
6	2.814
	(2.024)
7	1.486
	(1.964)
8	0.670
	(1.912)
9	2.093
	(2.117)
10	0.596
	(2.152)
11	3.300
	(2.077)
Pre-election week = 2 × Winner Status	2.861
	(3.218)
3 × Winner Status	-0.583
	(2.759)
4 × Winner Status	2.473
	(3.000)
5 × Winner Status	2.060
	(2.932)
6 × Winner Status	2.148
	(2.716)
7 × Winner Status	2.931
	(2.633)

8 × Winner Status	2.224
	(2.548)
9 × Winner Status	3.886
	(2.838)
10 × Winner Status	5.342*
	(2.772)
11 × Winner Status	2.389
	(2.677)
Post-election week = 2	-0.723
	(0.971)
3	0.552
	(1.123)
4	-1.116
	(1.374)
5	-1.406
	(1.609)
6	-3.451*
	(2.084)
7	-0.471
	(1.588)
8	0.114
	(2.284)
9	3.931
	(2.746)
Post-election week = 2 × Winner Status	0.207
	(1.283)
3 × Winner Status	-1.482
	(1.512)
4 × Winner Status	1.279
	(1.863)
5 × Winner Status	2.824
	(2.188)
6 × Winner Status	5.057*
	(2.800)
7 × Winner Status	-0.305
	(2.153)

8 × Winner Status	-2.023
	(3.078)
9 × Winner Status	-4.045
	(3.740)
Constant	9.655***
	(3.660)
R^2	0.053
N	8641
Year FE	✓
Controls	✓

Robust standard errors in parentheses.

The base category for election weeks is Week -13th and 1st.

Two-tailed tests. * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

Table A18: Descriptive Statistics for the Model in Table A17

	N	**P50**	**Mean**	**Min**	**Max**	**SD**
Aff. Polarization Change (DV)	11403	0	.422	-170	154	22
Winner Status	11403	1	.519	0	1	.5
Pre-election Survey Week (1st week=12)	11403	5	5.37	0	12	3.3
Post-election Survey Week	11403	2	2.37	0	14	2.57
Age	11403	53	52.6	17	93	16.8
Sex (Male)	11403	0	.464	0	1	.499
Ideological Extremity	11403	.895	.908	.0721	2.57	.562
Family Income (logged)	11403	11.4	11.2	8.41	12.8	.946
Interview Mode	11403	1	.689	0	1	.463
Election Closeness	11403	1	.73	0	1	.444
College	11403	0	.483	0	1	.5
Election Year	11403	2020	2017	2000	2024	7.05

Table A19: The Number of Observations within the Weeks Survey Conducted Before and After the Elections

Week	**N**	**Percent**
-1st week	449	4
-2	421	4
-3	873	8
-4	635	6
-5	629	6
-6	947	8
-7	1209	11
-8	1,591	14
-9	794	7
-10	977	9
-11	1,360	12
-12	1022	9
-13	496	4
1st week	2,421	21
2	3,229	28
3	2,111	19
4	1,046	9
5	687	6
6	394	3
7	607	5
8	367	3
9	171	1
10	14	0
11	172	2
12	55	0
13	51	0
14	49	0
15	29	0
Total	11,403	100