Making them Pay: Using the Norm of Honesty to Generate Costs for Political Lies

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Abstract:

Recent literature finds that, although lies politicians spread to achieve partisan goals can be corrected, politicians who spread misinformation rarely pay a price for lying. We argue that the cost of lying should be greater when the norm of honesty is salient. Using three survey experiments that feature both a well-known politician (Donald Trump) and a fictitious member of Congress, we examine the cost politicians pay when they are caught in a lie. We find that many citizens, regardless of partisanship, will recognize a lie when one has been told. And although citizens punish unknown politicians for lying, they do not punish Trump similarly *unless* the norm of honesty is made salient. This effect, however, is limited to the narrower measure of situational approval; individual lies do not affect overall measures of job approval regardless of honesty salience. These results demonstrate the difficulty of getting citizens to update their views on well-known politicians, even when those politicians are caught in an obvious lie. Yet our findings suggest fruitful paths toward creating a disincentive for politicians to distort the truth.

1.0 Introduction

Do citizens punish politicians who lie? In the polarized world of American politics, much has been made of partisan motivated reasoning and its capacity to bias information processing (Mason 2018; Redlawsk 2003). Despite this, recent work suggests that fiercely partisan individuals are willing to update their beliefs in light of new information, even if it runs counter to their partisan predispositions (Druckman 2012). An emerging literature finds mixed evidence on whether lies and misinformation spread in the media can be effectively corrected (e.g., Nyhan, Porter, Reifler, and Wood 2019; Porter and Wood 2019; Wood and Porter 2018), yet none of the work to date finds that politicians who lie face significant costs for being dishonest.

In this paper, we ask whether and to what extent citizens hold politicians accountable for lying. While partisanship has become an important social identity for many Americans, other motivations persuade citizens to recognize a lie when one has occurred and update their opinions accordingly. This includes a motivation to express accurate opinions, but also a desire to enforce the social norm of honesty. We predict that Americans, even partisan ones, will recognize a lie when they see one. We further posit that the costs of lying for a politician will be higher when the norm of honesty is made salient. To study this, we draw on evidence from three survey experiments across which we manipulate whether respondents receive an honesty prime, whether the politician is fictional or well-known, and whether he publicly lied.

Two questions are central to our analyses. First, we ask whether a lie changes citizen evaluations of a politician. Although we expect Americans to disapprove of lying generally, we anticipate that the cost of any particular lie depends on whether citizens have firm opinions of the politician. Given this, in the case of Donald Trump, a single new piece of information ("Donald Trump lied about subject X") is unlikely to change opinions. An unknown politician, by contrast,

should face harsher penalties than Donald Trump, even if that politician is a co-partisan. This backlash occurs because citizens know next to nothing about the politician—the lie is one of only a few pieces of information they have with which to form an opinion. It should, therefore, have a significant deleterious effect on public opinion.

Second, we test whether disapproval of a lie is larger when the social norm of honesty is salient. Recent scholarship notes that citizens may accept violations of this norm. Namely, a politician who peddles demonstrable falsehoods may be forgiven (or even celebrated) because they are seen as taking on an illegitimate political establishment (Hahl, Kim, and Sivan 2018). Yet not all partisans will be willing to accept these flagrant violations of honesty, especially when that norm is salient. We expect that, when honesty is "top-of-the-mind" for citizens, even co-partisans will express disapproval of a politician who lies. This would be especially noteworthy in the context of Donald Trump, for whom Republicans have shown particularly strong levels of devotion (Bartels 2018).

Across three experiments, we measure a "cost" of lying in three ways: perceptions of whether the politician described was honest, disapproval of the politician's handling of the specific situation, and disapproval of the politician's overall job performance. With each, we gauge the consequences a politician faces after getting caught in a lie. For the fictional politician, we find strong costs across all three measures regardless of whether respondents are primed to think about honesty. For Trump however, about whom voters know a great deal, attitudes are harder to change. As we expect, we find little movement on overall job approval, regardless of the topic of the lie, when Trump is the political actor involved. Notably however, respondents do recognize a lie has occurred. Additionally, and somewhat remarkably given the conventional

wisdom of Trump supporters, Trump's situational approval decreases when the norm of honesty is made salient.

This paper offers at least three contributions. First, we go beyond prior research, which finds that misperceptions can be corrected (Nyhan et al. 2019), to test systematically multiple levels of "cost" a politician may face for dishonesty. Second, whereas prior work examines factual inaccuracies about *policy*, the lies we examine operate at a more basic level: Did the politician lie in clearly demonstrable ways? Unlike questions over the justification for the Iraq war or what constitutes a "death panel" (Berinsky 2017), which are complicated issues involving multiple political actors, we present citizens with scenarios in which a politician's *own public actions and words* demonstrate that he was dishonest. As a result, we have remarkably clean tests of the effect of lying on political attitudes. Finally, we adopt the normative stance that there should be a cost to lying, and therefore develop and test a method for generating and detecting such a cost.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Effect of Norms on Political Behavior

Our research elevates the potential role social norms can play in bringing about a desired outcome: a cost for political dishonesty. Chong's (1999) work on social norms provides a good starting point. He posits that the choices individuals make are partially informed by material and social consequences, meaning social structures can incentivize certain behaviors and sanction others.[1] Yet norms need not be reliant on external enforcement and tangible punishment for adherence (e.g., Hanmer, Banks, and White 2014). Instead, values that are universal and learned early in life remain stable over time and shape individual behavior (Sears and Funk 1999).

[1] Chong makes the distinction between dispositional and incentive-based explanations for behavior, though others have noted that these incentives often reinforce one another (Theiss-Morse 2001).

A vast literature discusses the way norms shape the actions of individuals belonging to particular groups. However, a number of scholars have also discussed universal norms that govern human behavior and compel socially desirable outcomes, regardless of group membership. For instance, values such as the freedom of expression (Gibson 2006; Hurwitz and Mondak 2002;), tolerance (Peffley, Knigge, and Hurwitz 2001), and civic duty (Blais 2000) operate as social norms that require neither strong external enforcement or membership in exclusive groups. Although these norms can erode over time (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018), there is no research to suggest that the norm we examine here, honesty, has lost its potency. Like the value of civic duty, honesty operates as a socially desirable characteristic. That is, many of us are taught from an early age that honest behavior is desirable, making it a positive aspect of one's social reputation and self-concept (Grimm 2010).

Our theory leverages the norm of honesty in an attempt to generate a cost for political lies. Yet we also note that additional norms may be working at cross-purposes. Strong partisanship constitutes an enduring social bond (Campbell et al. 1960; Mason 2018), so norms related to membership in that group may incentivize the tolerance of dishonesty expressed by co-partisans. Therefore, we posit that the importance of honesty must be similarly salient in order to generate a cost to lying.

2.2 Misinformation and Directionally Motivated Reasoning

While the norm of honesty should compel citizens to punish politicians who lie, a number of important obstacles exist. For one, Americans are not only uninformed about political matters, but may be misinformed. Additionally, while voters are knowledgeable about some salient issues, scholars often find that they lack the information necessary to meet the standard of ideal civic citizens (Delli, Carpini, and Keeter 1996). Exacerbating these problems is a media

environment that is littered with misinformation, making it difficult for citizens to arrive at informed decisions (e.g., Jerit, Barabas, and Bolson 2006). Moreover, many people are misinformed not by chance, but by choice, as they seek out biased sources of information in an effort to avoid the discomfort of cognitive dissonance. (Kuklinski et al 2000; Kuklinski, Quick, Jerit, and Rich 2001; Mutz 2006). Taken together, these factors lead to suboptimal democratic outcomes, as it becomes more difficult to correctly evaluate political leaders.

In fact, even when people do encounter information that conflicts with their pre-existing views, they often reject it as bad or unreliable (Hopkins, Sides, and Citrin 2019; Swire et al. 2017). Although the literature on motivated reasoning stretches back decades, more recent studies provide evidence that this phenomenon has grown in importance as party attachments have become more entrenched (e.g., Kunda 2000; Lenz 2012; Taber and Lodge 2006). As social identities increasingly overlap, partisans feel more in-party affection and greater out-party resentment, even when they lack true ideological disagreement (Kinder and Kalmoe 2016; Mason 2018). In this environment, correcting a lie can actually have the opposite effect from what was intended, making partisans dig deeper into believing a convenient lie (Nyhan and Reifler 2010; see also Nyhan, Reifler, and Ubel 2013). For instance, in the case of the Affordable Care Act, Berinsky (2017) finds that telling people that so-called "death panels" do not exist only reinforces the belief that they do.

Despite this pessimistic viewpoint, a significant literature suggests that misperceptions and inaccuracies can, in fact, be corrected (Gerber and Green 1999; Howell and West 2009; Prior, Sood, and Khanna 2015). While evidence of partisan motivated reasoning is strong, Druckman (2012) notes that its influence on political behavior may be overstated. Accuracy motivations, for instance, work against directional reasoning, which can lead citizens to update

their views in light of counter-attitudinal information. Pennycook and Rand (2019) also find that much of the belief in political misinformation traces its roots not to motivated reasoning, but to lower levels of cognition. It is not surprising, then, that many studies successfully correct misperceptions. Wood and Porter (2018) employ a wide-ranging study of 52 issue areas and find that correcting misinformation does not inevitably generate a backfire effect. Building on this, Nyhan, et al. (2019) argue that beliefs in a falsehood can be corrected if factual information is presented in a direct way, such that misinterpretation is difficult.

Despite this wealth of interesting work, however, extant research finds little tangible cost for a leader who spreads misinformation. Indeed, even when citizens are willing to accept facts that run counter to their pre-existing attitudes, they may still *interpret* the new information in such a way that it does not change their prior electoral preferences (Gaines et al. 2007) and which bears little consequence for the politician's overall job approval (Nyhan et al. 2019; Porter and Wood 2019). In short, there is little evidence that spreading misinformation has a consequentially negative cost on a leader who lies.

3.0 Theory

Our theory offers an explanation for what happens when a leader gets caught in an obvious lie due to his own words and actions. First, we determine if the process by which a leader arrives at a decision (i.e., lying about something he did) matters, or if only the decision itself (i.e., the thing he did) matters. Second, we test whether disapproval of a lie is larger when honesty is made salient. In essence, we ask whether it is more important to citizens to punish someone who is dishonest or to support a preferred leader.

Our theory relies on two assertions supported by the literature. First, we posit that people understand and internalize important societal norms such as honesty. Although the norm of

honesty often regulates one's own personal behavior (i.e., it keeps people from lying themselves), we argue that it should also make people more willing to punish a leader who is caught lying. Second, we expect the "cost" of lying to decrease the more we move from specific evaluations (i.e., how the leader handled the particular situation) to general evaluations (i.e., what respondents think about the leader overall). Drawing on prior literature, we posit that Trump is less likely to face a cost on job approval, since voters have firm opinions about him, and that any costs he faces are more likely to be situational (Croco et al., 2020).

Earlier work looks at what happens when a leader spreads misinformation about policy issues. Yet the inherent complexity of policy issues makes it easy for leaders to avoid punishment for a reversal—at the least, they can always reference new or evolving information as a justification for their actions. Our experiments make this harder for leaders by presenting respondents with a leader's own contradictory actions and public statements. This creates fewer opportunities for the official to explain away inconsistencies by citing "new information" or by deflecting blame. It also lowers the likelihood that a citizen might recast a lie into a truth to satisfy a personal bias. Just as the politicians in our treatments do not have time to spin their action after the fact to fit their previous statements, our respondents do not have an opportunity to be exposed to messaging that "explains" a reversal and instead must process it on their own.

Partisans who wish to continue supporting a leader after an obvious lie have two options. First, they can look for ways to rationalize the need for such a lie. In the case of Donald Trump's shifting justifications for his policy of separating children from their families at the border, for instance, some supporters claimed he was simply trying to put pressure on Congress to act on reforming American immigration laws.[2] Second, they may reject the existence of a lie altogether

[2] Associated Press, "Trump supporters steadfast despite the immigration uproar", June 21, 2018.

in an effort to avoid the cognitive dissonance of supporting a politician who is not telling the truth. We recognize that some citizens will use one of those two strategies to avoid the need to disapprove of a politician they support. With this research, however, we theorize that other aspects of individual character are important for one's positive self-concept, and therefore influence political evaluations. Chief among these features is the social norm of honesty. We leverage this norm in an attempt to hold lying politicians accountable.

3.1 Honesty as a Powerful Social Norm

Our expectations regarding the costs of lying are dependent on the value individual citizens place on honesty. Recent work often emphasizes the overwhelming power of partisanship (e.g., Mason 2018) and the willingness of co-partisans to accept flagrant lies as "speaking truth about power" (Hahl, Kim, and Sivan 2018). Yet none of these works suggests that the norm of honesty loses all potency in the face of these incentives to support dishonest politicians. In fact, an extensive body of literature finds that candidate character matters to citizens when deciding who to support, including perceptions that the candidate is honest and trustworthy (e.g., Aaldering and Vliegenthart 2016; Greene 2001; Kinder 1986; Holian and Prysby 2015). We think of strong partisanship as a barrier to accountability, one which may be overcome when accuracy and honesty motivations are sufficiently strong.

The importance of social desirability on human behavior is well-documented (e.g., Fisher 1993; Grimm 2010; Holbrook and Krosnick 2010; Maccoby and Macobby 1954; Presser 1990). Scholars argue that individuals want to think of themselves as people who do the right thing in accordance with the guidelines set by society. Although these pressures have been shown to lead

to inaccurate responses on survey items (Fisher 1993; Grimm 2010), they have also been leveraged to induce actions in accordance with a social norm (e.g., Sherman 1980).[3]

We argue that honesty, in particular, is a norm that should hold significance for most individuals. As Saxe (1991, p. 409) puts it:

> We are taught, and teach our children, that lying is immoral, reprehensible, and the mark of an immature person … Such views have a long tradition in religious and philosophical thought … From St. Augustine to Kant, lying has been viewed as "sinful" and as denying our human dignity.

Although the truth can sometimes be difficult to determine on matters of complex policy and political opinion, it is clear that honesty resonates as an important norm for most people. Even in politics, an industry renowned for its dishonesty, it is still viewed as broadly unacceptable to lie to the public. The seriousness of this norm in government and society can have deeply emotional roots, as lying with impunity fuels a perception that the opposing side is playing unfairly. The literature is not clear how the causal mechanism behind social desirability works. On the one hand, it may be the case that honesty is a norm only imposed externally on the individual by a society that seeks to ensure conformity. This would be problematic for a study such as ours, since the punishment we examine is rendered privately and anonymously. Such private activities are common in politics - such as casting a ballot or expressing a political attitude on a public opinion survey. If citizens evaluating a leader can remain anonymous and honesty only operates as a norm that matters when an external actor is there to enforce conformity, there should be no expectation that a political lie will generate a cost.

[3] The norms set out by society are vast and wide-ranging, and can be anything from honesty, fulfilling civic duties such as voting and paying taxes, or being kind and charitable to others.

The majority of scholars working in this field, however, suggest that social desirability works as an *internal* pressure. In the literature on vote overreporting (i.e., falsely claiming to have voted), scholars find that socially desirable pressures remain a major issue in completely anonymous online settings where no human interaction exists (Ansolabehere and Hersh 2012; Hanmer, Banks, and White 2014; McDonald, Scott, and Hanmer 2017). In line with this conception, if the pressure to be honest and to sanction those who are dishonest is an internal pressure, as we suggest, then citizens should feel pressure to punish a leader caught in an obvious lie. Therefore, when honesty is made salient, the costs for lying should be higher than otherwise, even for well-known leaders and among co-partisans.

3.2 What Constitutes a "Cost" to Lying?

We suggest that leaders should face a cost for lying, yet "cost" is a vague term; there are a number of ways in which citizens may express their disapproval. Existing work typically looks for direct effects on job approval. We include this measure, but go one step further by asking for an evaluation of how the leader handled the particular situation

Asking both questions is necessary because situational approval represents a notably lower cost citizens can impose on a leader. Furthermore, we ask whether the politician was dishonest in handling the issue. Although supporters may justify the need for a lie and refrain from expressing any job disapproval, there is still reason to expect that costs on situational approval and recognition of dishonesty in a situation will both increase. Here, the motivation to express an "accurate" opinion should lead citizens to recognize a lie has occurred and disapprove of it (Druckman 2012).

Yet a single lie may not be enough to change their overall perceptions of a leader. The online processing literature (e.g., Druckman and Lupia 2000; Fiorina 1981; Lodge, Steenbergen,

and Brau 1995) suggests that citizens keep a "running tally" of their opinions regarding a politician. In the case of a well-known, polarizing figure like Donald Trump, the running tally for most citizens will be extensive. Disapproving of him for lying in one particular case, then, may not be enough to hurt his job approval unless it is especially important (Croco et al. 2020) or happens repeatedly (Porter and Wood 2019). Thus, in line with prior research on political lies (Nyhan, Porter, Reifler, and Wood 2019), we do not expect that this single episode of lying will damage Trump's job approval ratings significantly.[4]

In contrast, we expect the results to be different for a lesser-known politician. When an unknown politician is caught lying, we would expect damages to the measure of situational approval. However, we would also expect for low situational approval ratings to more easily translate to a loss in overall job approval. Citizens have no background knowledge to bring to bear when evaluating an unknown politician's tenure in office, eliminating priors and making public opinion malleable (McDonald 2019).

Based on the extant literature and our own expectations we explore several features of American public opinion with regard to political lies. First, we test whether citizens will indeed recognize the presence of a lie when one is demonstrable. Second, we test whether citizens will punish a leader who lies more strongly when honesty is salient. And finally, we examine the degree to which well-known politicians are insulated from costs on job approval.

4.0 Empirical Approach.

[4] Exactly how many episodes of lying, or how important the lie needs to be before it damages job approval is an important empirical question, though it is not one we are able to answer with the current experiments.

To test the theory we have laid out, we rely on three online survey experiments using volunteer respondents,[5] though two of the three samples are designed to be representative of the adult U.S. population based on gender, age, and race. A summary of the experimental designs we employ can be found in Table 1.

In each of the three studies described below, respondents entering the survey environment first answer a standard battery of questions regarding their political preferences and affiliations. They are then randomly-assigned to two treatments in succession. In the first manipulation, we randomly prime half the sample to think about the importance of honesty. We refer to this as the Honesty Prime Condition. The remaining subjects are assigned to a Placebo Condition, in which they are asked to discuss the value of maintaining an active lifestyle. The intended difference between the primes is to make honesty salient for a random subset of respondents,[6] though the placebo employed here introduces a potential confound into the research design (Dafoe, Zhang, and Caughey 2018). The placebo may have the unintended consequence of making respondents more *cognitively* active (rather than physically active). Because cognition is negatively correlated with belief in misinformation (Pennycook and Rand 2019), respondents who are made more alert by the placebo may be better able to spot a lie when one exists. While cognition was not something we sought to manipulate, any confounding effect from the activity prime task should make for a relatively harder test of the effect of the honesty prime than if a pure control (where respondents are not asked to write anything) had been used.

[5] Full wording of the treatments and questions can be found in the Appendix. The studies we discuss below were not preregistered, though the findings from Study 3 formed the basis of a grant proposal for the funding that was used to carry out Studies 1 and 2. This proposal laid out the hypotheses of these studies prior to gathering the data.

[6] To assess effect of the manipulation, respondents in the 2019 Qualtrics survey were asked to rank the importance of honesty, trustworthiness, intelligence, and work ethic. Despite this item being at the end of the survey long, far removed from the manipulation itself, individuals in the Honesty Prime Condition ranked honesty higher than those in the Activity Prime Condition by a statistically significant margin (results in the Appendix).

Respondents are then randomly assigned to two different versions of a story—one in which a politician lies and one in which a politician does not. After reading these stories, respondents are asked to react to them. We focus on three primary outcomes. First, we ask the respondent whether the politician was honest in the story described. It is important to note that, across all three studies, evaluations of honesty are relatively low regardless of treatment condition. This is because all three scenarios we describe below portray the politician in a negative light, regardless of whether a lie was explicit.[7] Again, we do this in order to make a harder test of the manipulations we use. It should be relatively difficult to lower evaluations of a politician that are starting from an already low baseline.

Second, we ask about situational approval – or each respondent's opinion on how the politician had handled the particular event. Finally, we ask for opinions of Trump's job performance.[8] We recoded the scales for all of the dependent variables from 0 to 1, such that treatment effects may be interpreted as the percentage point shift across the response scale. Statistical analyses are performed via OLS regression, in which the outcomes of interest are regressed on dummy variables indicating assignment to the Honesty Prime Condition, the Dishonesty Condition, an interaction between the two experimental conditions, and other covariates.[9]

[7] The one possible exception to this is the "No Lie" treatment for Study 3, where respondents only read that Trump has ended the family separation policy with an executive order. This, on the face of it, is a good thing. Despite this, honesty perceptions for this subgroup were very similar to respondents in other subgroups where the politician did something more objectionable. This suggests that many citizens assume politicians are liars.

[8] Although they are distinct questions, situational and job approval might be seen as similar by voters. For this reason, we randomized the order in which respondents answered these two questions within the survey.

[9] Covariates include partisanship, age, gender, race, and income. While the inclusion of covariates is not essential due to random assignment, their inclusion gives the model estimates greater precision. Analyses excluding covariates can be found in the Appendix.

	No Lie Condition		Dishonesty Condition	
	Honesty Prime	*Placebo Prime*	*Honesty Prime*	*Placebo Prime*
Study 1—Rep. Jerry Hastings (R) - *fictional*	Retained Chief of Staff despite evidence of misconduct		Claimed no evidence of misconduct	
Study 2—Pres. Donald Trump	Ordered Chief of Staff to provide Kushner security clearance		Claimed he never intervened in security clearance matter	
Study 3—Pres. Donald Trump	Ended family separation policy via executive order		Claimed he could not end family separation policy via executive order	

Table 1: Research Design

4.0 Study 1

4.1 Research Design

Study 1 took place in September 2019 with a sample of 1,250 voting-eligible Americans. Respondents were recruited by the survey firm Qualtrics, which maintains a panel of volunteer respondents they recruit using a variety of incentives.

In Study 1, respondents read a story about a fictional Republican member of Congress named Jerry Hastings. As noted above, using a fictional politician—about whom respondents have no prior opinion—is necessary to establish that known politicians are relatively insulated from dips in general approval precisely *because* the public already knows more about them. While information on the costs Hastings pays for lying should not apply to better-known politicians, this study performs an essential function in providing a theoretical control for how voters might react to a public lie, notwithstanding their preexisting beliefs and opinions of the official. Additionally, explicitly labeling Hastings as a Republican allows us to compare how co-partisans might react to a politician they know (Trump) and one they do not.

In the No Lie Condition, respondents read that Rep. Hastings opted to keep his Chief of Staff against the recommendation of an investigation that found the Chief of Staff guilty of

professional misconduct. Importantly, in this condition, respondents only see the final action of Hastings; there is no demonstration of a lie. In the Dishonesty Condition, however, respondents read additional information that Hastings publicly claimed that the investigation never recommended firing his employee, despite internal memos later revealing that he knew about the recommendation of the investigation but simply chose to ignore it. With this additional information, the context of Hastings' final action is more defined, with the politician making a public statement contrary to his eventual action, thus making the lie apparent to respondents.

4.2 Results

Study 1 reveals that Hastings, the hypothetical congressman, faces a steep penalty for being dishonest regardless of whether honesty is made salient (Table 2).[10] Given the presence of the interaction term in the models, the coefficient on "Dishonesty Condition" tells us the effect of seeing the dishonest treatment *without* the honesty prime. In the first model the Dishonesty Condition leads to a roughly -0.14 effect (on a 0-1 scale), indicating that respondents were indeed able to identify that a lie had occurred and rate Hastings as being less honest. Similarly, the survey-takers rated Hastings' handling of the situation negatively, with approval on this measure dropping more than -0.12 in the second model.

In line with our expectations regarding the differences between well-known and unknown politicians, we find that the penalty for being dishonest is not restricted to narrower measures of approval, but instead remains consistent across all three outcomes measured here. In fact, in the third model the unknown Hastings faces what amounts to a roughly 10 percentage point drop in

[10] The treatment/prime coefficients in all of the OLS models should be interpreted against the excluded conditions, which are the "No Lie" and Placebo (Activity Prime) conditions. Negative coefficients, therefore, represent the politician paying a cost (i.e., a drop in the perception of his honesty or a decrease in situational or general approval). The interaction term represents the *additional* cost of the lie for those in both the Dishonesty and Honesty Prime Conditions.

job approval on the basis of having lied in the story the respondents read. Because there is very little information with which a respondent can evaluate the member of Congress, the lie looms large over evaluations of his performance in office.

Given the strong effect the lie had on evaluations of Hastings, it is not surprising that the Honesty Prime Condition had little to no effect, as indicated by the insignificant coefficients of the interaction term. This suggests that holding an unknown official accountable does not require an honesty prime to overcome partisan biases. This does not mean partisanship is irrelevant in evaluations of Hastings. Indeed, Republicans are more positive than Democrats toward Hastings, with Republicans in the No Lie condition rating him 0.49 and Democrats rating him 0.39 (full results by partisanship can be found in the Appendix). Yet Democrats *and* Republicans alike appear willing to update their views (i.e., both. groups became more disapproving of Hastings when it became clear that he lied), suggesting a bipartisan willingness to acknowledge the lie.

	Honesty Evaluation	Situational Approval	Job Approval
	b/se	b/se	b/se
Dishonesty Condition	-0.143** (0.021)	-0.125** (0.021)	-0.099** (0.019)
Honesty Prime	-0.010 (0.021)	-0.033 (0.020)	-0.029 (0.019)
Dishonesty Condition X Honesty Prime	-0.013 (0.030)	0.024 (0.029)	0.006 (0.027)
Partisanship (7-point)	0.021** (0.004)	0.023** (0.004)	0.025** (0.003)
Age	-0.002** (0.001)	-0.002** (0.000)	-0.002** (0.000)
Gender (Male)	0.029^{+} (0.016)	0.032* (0.015)	0.022 (0.014)
Hispanic	0.000 (0.023)	-0.004 (0.022)	-0.003 (0.021)
Race (White)	-0.041* (0.019)	-0.048** (0.018)	-0.026 (0.017)
Family Income	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.009 (0.009)	-0.014^{+} (0.008)
Constant	0.459** (0.029)	0.431** (0.029)	0.423** (0.027)
Prob > F	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	1,232	1,235	1,234

Table 2: Study 1 OLS – Regressing outcomes on treatment condition and covariates (outcomes coded on 0-1 scale)

$^{+}$ Significant at $\alpha<0.1$, two-tailed test, *Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test, **Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

5.0 Study 2

5.1 Research Design

Study 2 seeks to replicate the results from Study 1 in the context of a well-known politician, Donald Trump. Also conducted in September 2019 on a sample of 1,253 Qualtrics panelists, subjects in Study 2 are randomly assigned to perform the task described in the Honesty Prime Condition or a Placebo Condition (the Activity Prime). Subjects then read a story that manipulates whether a politician lied. Respondents in the No Lie Condition read that Trump ordered White House officials to grant his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, a top-secret security clearance over the objection of CIA and FBI officials. In the Dishonesty Condition, respondents are further informed that Trump claimed to media outlets that he played no role in Kushner's security clearance, but that internal White House memos later showed he had indeed intervened on Kushner's behalf. The direct comparison of these two experiments allows us to examine if A) A known politician pays a cost to lying when compared to an unknown one, and B) If the honesty prime generates any political cost for Trump.

5.2 Results

The findings from Study 2 make two important contributions. First, they highlight the difficulty of changing public opinion toward a well-known and polarizing political figure. Second, they show the potential for honesty salience to help overcome (albeit only partially) the unwillingness of some to update their opinions.

Beginning with evaluations of whether Donald Trump was honest in the situation described in the vignette, we see that individuals are again willing to update their views (Table 3). We estimate that the penalty for Trump's lie absent an honesty prime is greater than -0.10, representing a substantial proportion of respondents who recognized that Trump had lied in the

story. This penalty, however, is significantly larger among individuals in the Honesty Prime Condition (by a margin of nearly -0.07).[11] A significant portion of respondents in our sample are unwilling to admit to Donald Trump's dishonesty unless the norm of honesty was made salient, which was not the case for the fictional Jerry Hastings.

On measures of situational approval, we find that there is no direct effect of the lie *unless honesty is made salient*. Table 3 shows that the direct effect of the Dishonesty Condition is a statistically insignificant and substantively small -0.002. This effect balloons to more than -0.07 when the respondents are first primed to think about the importance of honesty. This pattern again shows an unwillingness on the part of some respondents to express their disapproval of Donald Trump when he is caught in a lie unless honesty is salient.

When we turn to the effect of the treatments on job approval, however, we find that neither of the experimental manipulations moves overall support for Donald Trump. Unlike the fictional Hastings, opinions toward Trump have been built over time and will not change greatly based on a short vignette. Neither the lie, nor the salience of honesty, significantly shifts perceptions of Trump's overall performance in office.

[11] As noted above, the placebo condition asked respondents to think about the importance of staying physically active. Thus, it is not a pure control as it could prompt respondents to become more cognitively active and aware of what they are reading (i.e., make them more likely to detect a lie, etc.). If this is the case, it actually makes for a harder test for the honesty prime, which was designed to elicit this behavior in respondents.

	Honesty Evaluation	Situational Approval	Job Approval
	b/se	b/se	b/se
Dishonesty Condition	-0.102**	-0.002	0.011
	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.022)
Honesty Prime	-0.021	-0.003	-0.018
	(0.023)	(0.021)	(0.022)
Dishonesty Condition X Honesty Prime	-0.066*	-0.072*	-0.043
	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Partisanship (7-point)	0.068**	0.078**	0.110**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Age	-0.000	-0.000	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Gender (Male)	0.047**	0.034*	0.052**
	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Hispanic	-0.023	-0.034	-0.045^{+}
	(0.025)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Race (White)	-0.024	-0.022	0.000
	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.020)
Family Income	-0.008	-0.019*	-0.010
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Constant	0.168**	0.055^{+}	0.065*
	(0.033)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Prob > F	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	1,241	1,235	1,242

Table 3: Study 2 OLS – Regressing outcomes on treatment condition and covariates (outcomes coded on 0-1 scale)

$^{+}$ Significant at $\alpha<0.1$, two-tailed test, *Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test, **Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

6.0 Study 3

6.1 Research Design

Study 3 differs slightly from Studies 1 and 2. While we again examine a lie involving Donald Trump, we do so in the context of a highly-publicized crisis at the height of media attention. Using Amazon's Mechanical Turk, we administered a survey experiment on 1,200 American adults in the summer of 2018 as the backlash against the administration's policy of separating children from their families during illegal border crossings reached a fever pitch.[12] This study employed a structure similar to the designs described above. We first primed half the sample to think about the importance of honesty, then presented them with one of two descriptions of Donald Trump's recent behavior regarding the family separation policy. In the No Lie Condition, respondents read that Trump had used his executive order authority to end family separations at the U.S.-Mexico border. In the Dishonesty Condition, respondents were also shown a previous statement made by President Trump wherein he declared he did not have the power as president to end the separation of families at the border. This treatment also included a statement indicating that a few days later, Trump reversed course and did exactly that. Again, this additional information serves to make Trump's reversal clear to respondents.[13]

6.2 Results

The results from Study 3 are shown in Table 4 below. Not surprisingly, the effect of the lie alone (as represented by the coefficient on the Dishonesty Condition) is somewhat smaller than in Studies 1 and 2. This is likely due to pre-treatment effects. 84 percent of our sample said

[12] While this results in a sample that is somewhat younger and more liberal than the general population, the literature on experimental research using MTurk finds that researchers can make credible inferences regarding the relationships between treatments and outcomes of interest (Berinsky et al. 2012)

[13] This experiment differs from the first two in that this reversal could be rationalized not as a lie but as Trump learning new information about his ability to issue an executive order in this context. We include this as one of the 3 designs to test a case that involves apparent dishonesty but does not explicitly make the connection for respondents.

they were following the news on family separations either somewhat or very closely, making this a particularly hard test of our theory. Yet even so, we still find marginally significant effects of the lie on both evaluations of Trump's honesty and situational approval.

Moreover, we find that the cost of the lie on honesty evaluations and situational approval is more two times larger among respondents in the Honesty Prime Condition. This is fueled in large part by Trump's own co-partisans. We find that Democrats strongly disapprove of Donald Trump regardless of whether the lie is made apparent (in the No Lie Condition, their average situational approval is under 0.23). Republicans, however, are starting from a much higher level of approval (~0.65). Among Republicans in the Honesty Prime Condition, the lie has an effect of -0.12.

That said, we stop short of making strong claims about a consistent effect of the honesty prime in this study. While the interaction terms in Table 4 are substantively meaningful, they only achieve very marginal levels of statistical significance. The results also show that Donald Trump's job approval is exceedingly difficult to move, and that the interaction of the Dishonesty Condition and the Honesty Prime Condition does not significantly alter this approval. If presidents only care about the public's overall perception of them, as some have argued (see, e.g., Croco, Hanmer, and McDonald 2020), then the penalties Trump pays on honesty evaluations and situational approval may be relatively less important.

	Honesty Evaluation	Situational Approval	Job Approval
	b/se	b/se	b/se
Dishonesty Condition	-0.045*	-0.041^{+}	0.011
	(0.022)	(0.024)	(0.022)
Honesty Prime	0.019	0.058*	0.024
	(0.023)	(0.021)	(0.023)
Dishonesty Condition X Honesty Prime	-0.055^{+}	-0.063^{+}	-0.035
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.032)
Partisanship (7-point)	0.101**	0.098**	0.124**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Age	-0.000	-0.001^{+}	0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Gender (Male)	0.018	-0.004	-0.008
	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.016)
Hispanic	-0.027	0.031	-0.010
	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.027)
Race (White)	-0.002	0.007	0.011
	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.021)
Family Income	-0.009	0.002	-0.019
	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.021)
Constant	-0.009	0.062	-0.160**
	(0.040)	(0.043)	(0.040)
Prob > F	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	1,171	1,170	1,171

Table 4: Study 3 OLS – Regressing outcomes on treatment condition and covariates (outcomes coded on 0-1 scale)

$^{+}$ Significant at $\alpha<0.1$, two-tailed test, *Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test, **Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

6.0 Discussion

Our research advances our understanding of political culpability by demonstrating that well-known politicians pay a cost for lying. The results presented here suggest that not only do Americans disapprove of a leader caught in a lie, but that they may disapprove more strongly when the norm of honesty is salient. These results apply broadly, including among Republicans, who represent the most critical source of support for President Trump.

This research contributes to a growing literature on political dishonesty and the barriers to holding lying politicians accountable. On the one hand, our findings confirm that moving larger measures of job approval is difficult, even in a demonstrable instance of dishonesty. Donald Trump, as a real president, is highly polarizing. Even when we put his contradictions directly in front of respondents, Americans do not change their broader evaluations of him. However, by measuring more discrete, situational evaluations of Trump, our results suggest that some costs can be imposed as other important components of political approval are altered by pointing out a lie. The findings provide hope that raising the salience of important social norms like honesty may generate greater costs for lying, yet here important caveats exist. In the case of the fictional Hastings, the costs of lying are consistently high, such that the cost of the lie did not increase in the Honesty Prime condition relative to the placebo. For the better-known Trump, the results were stronger but remained inconsistent. We find that the cost of the lie was higher for respondents in the Honesty Prime condition relative to the placebo, though effects on job approval remained stubbornly insignificant. In sum, honesty salience may only change the mind of a small number of citizens and only in particular contexts.

The research presented here suggests the need for more work on the relationship between situational and overall job approval. They measure different concepts, yet the relationship

between the two is unclear. Precisely how many situations or how important a situation has to be for it to have an effect on job approval is an empirical question of great importance. As episodes of dishonesty accumulate, and if honesty is made salient among the electorate, we believe that negative situational results may accumulate to have important implications for overall presidential support and job approval.

We also note that while respondents were treated with a very specific situation in our survey, co-partisans in the real world may be able to avoid the discomfort of hearing negative things about Trump by exclusively watching news that is friendly to Republican leaders. They may also reject the scenarios presented to them because they perceive institutions described in the vignettes (bureaucratic oversight groups and the media) as untrustworthy. When it comes to holding politicians accountable in this era of strong partisan polarization, there is still a great deal of research needed to determine the most effective ways of conveying political dishonesty to the masses. Yet, by priming our shared societal values, there may be more ways to unravel the power of partisanship than we have previously recognized.

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APPENDIX

Treatment and Question Wording

Manipulation #1: Honesty Prime vs. Activity Prime

Activity Prime: Staying active is important. As people progress through life, it is important to maintain an active lifestyle. Please write about why you think an active lifestyle is helpful, using specific examples if you can.

Honest Prime: Honesty is a very important trait to have. Everyone makes a choice to be honest or dishonest every day of their life. Please write about why you think honesty is an important quality, using specific examples if you can.

Manipulation #2: No Lie vs. Dishonesty Condition

Control Condition:

Hastings Chief of Staff Experiment

In May of 2018, Republican Representative Jerry Hastings chose not to fire his long-time Chief of Staff against the recommendation of an official investigation that found him guilty of professional misconduct.

Trump Kushner Security Clearance Experiment

In May of 2018, Donald Trump ordered that his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, be granted a top-secret security clearance over the concerns of intelligence officials at the CIA and FBI.

Trump Family Separation Experiment

In May of 2018, border control authorities began separating migrant children from their parents as families illegally crossed the US border.

On June 20th Trump signed an executive order that ended family separation at the border.

Dishonesty Condition:

Hastings Chief of Staff Experiment

In May of 2018, Republican Representative Jerry Hastings chose not to fire his long-time Chief of Staff against the recommendation of an official investigation that found him guilty of professional misconduct.

Despite making this choice, Rep. Hastings falsely claimed that the investigation never recommended firing his Chief of Staff. Several months later, however, internal memos showed that Hastings had indeed been told about the findings of the official investigation but he chose to ignore the recommendation.

Trump Kushner Security Clearance Experiment

In May of 2018, Donald Trump ordered that his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, be granted a top-secret security clearance over the concerns of intelligence officials at the CIA and FBI.

Despite giving this order, President Trump falsely claimed that he played no role in directing White House officials to arrange for Kushner's security clearance. Several months later, however, internal White House memos showed that Trump had indeed ordered his chief-of-staff to grant the clearance.

Trump Family Separation Experiment

In May of 2018, border control authorities began separating migrant children from their parents as families illegally crossed the US border.

On June 13th, when asked about families being separated at the border, President Trump said, "This situation is very unfortunate, but our hands are tied. This can't be fixed with an executive order. Congress has to change the law for the family separations to stop." He repeated this claim regarding the executive order several times in the days that followed.

On June 20th, however, Trump signed an executive order that ended family separation at the border.

Dependent Variables

Was Politician Dishonest: In the story you just read, was [Jerry Hastings/Donald Trump honest or dishonest]? (Very honest, somewhat honest, neither honest nor dishonest, somewhat dishonest, very dishonest)

Situational Approval: Do you approve, disapprove, or neither approve nor disapprove of the way [Jerry Hastings/Donald Trump] handled the situation involving [the official investigation's recommendation/the situation involving Jared Kushner's security clearance/family separation at the border]? (Approve strongly, approve somewhat, neither approve nor disapprove, disapprove somewhat, disapprove strongly)

Job Approval: Do you approve, disapprove, or neither approve nor disapprove of the way [Jerry Hastings/Donald Trump] is handling his job as [legislator/president]? (Approve strongly, approve somewhat, neither approve nor disapprove, disapprove somewhat, disapprove strongly)

Experimental Results

Study 1: Hastings Chief-of-Staff

		No Lie Condition	Dishonesty Condition	Dishonesty-No Lie
Honesty Evaluation	Honesty Prime	0.420	0.268	-0.152**
	Activity Prime	0.441	0.296	-0.145**
Situational Approval	Honesty Prime	0.371	0.278	-0.937**
	Activity Prime	0.417	0.288	-0.129**
Job Approval	Honesty Prime	0.394	0.307	-0.087**
	Activity Prime	0.433	0.328	-0.105**

*Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test
**Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

Study 2: Trump-Kushner Clearance

		No Lie Condition	Dishonesty Condition	Dishonesty-No Lie
Honesty Evaluation	Honesty Prime	0.379	0.222	-0.157**
	Activity Prime	0.386	0.302	-0.084**
Situational Approval	Honesty Prime	0.296	0.237	-0.059*
	Activity Prime	0.283	0.300	0.017
Job Approval	Honesty Prime	0.348	0.337	-0.011
	Activity Prime	0.340	0.378	0.038

*Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test
**Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

Study 3: Trump-Family Separation

		No Lie Condition	Dishonesty Condition	Dishonesty-No Lie
Honesty Evaluation	Honesty Prime	0.397	0.294	-0.103**
	Activity Prime	0.389	0.322	-0.068*
Situational Approval	Honesty Prime	0.434	0.322	-0.112**

	Activity Prime	0.382	0.319	-0.063*
Job Approval	Honesty Prime	0.366	0.330	-0.035
	Activity Prime	0.350	0.336	-0.014

*Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test
**Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

Experimental Results by Partisanship

Study 1: Hastings Chief-of-Staff		**Effect (Difference Between Dishonesty & No Lie Conditions)**			
		Democrats	Republicans	Independents	**Total**
		b/se	b/se	b/se	**b/se**
Honesty Evaluation	Honesty Prime	-13.0** (3.6)	-23.6** (3.5)	-7.4 (4.6)	**-15.2** (2.2)**
	Activity Prime	-14.0** (3.3)	-16.9** (3.2)	-10.0* (4.7)	**14.5** (2.1)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**1.0 (4.8)**	**-6.7 (4.7)**	**2.6 (6.6)**	**0.7 (3.1)**
Situational Approval	Honesty Prime	-7.5* (3.3)	-14.8** (3.7)	-5.7 (4.2)	**-9.4** (2.2)**
	Activity Prime	12.4** (3.1)	-14.0** (3.4)	-10.9* (3.9)	**-12.9** (2.0)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**4.9 (4.5)**	**-0.8 (5.0)**	**5.2 (5.8)**	**3.5 (3.0)**
Job Approval	Honesty Prime	-8.2** (3.2)	-14.2** (3.4)	-2.3 (4.0)	**-8.7** (2.1)**
	Activity Prime	7.5** (2.9)	-12.5** (2.9)	-12.2** (4.1)	**-10.5** (1.9)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**0.7 (4.2)**	**-1.7 (4.5)**	**9.8 (5.7)**	**1.8 (2.8)**

Study 1—Effect of Dishonesty Treatments by Prime Condition and Respondent Partisanship (units in percentage points)
*Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test
**Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

Study 2: Trump-Kushner Clearance		**Effect (Difference Between Dishonesty & No Lie Conditions)**			
		Democrats	Republicans	Independents	**Total**
		b/se	b/se	b/se	**b/se**
Honesty Evaluation	Honesty Prime	-11.9** (3.1)	-21.0** (4.0)	-19.5** (5.4)	**-15.7**** **(2.5)**
	Activity Prime	-4.4 (3.2)	-13.4** (4.2)	-18.9** (5.4)	**-8.4**** **(2.6)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**-7.5 (4.5)**	**-7.6 (5.8)**	**-0.1 (7.6)**	**-7.3* (3.6)**
Situational Approval	Honesty Prime	-3.1 (2.4)	-9.9* (4.2)	-12.2** (4.6)	**-5.9* (2.5)**
	Activity Prime	3.2 (2.8)	-1.6 (4.4)	-4.5 (5.0)	**1.7 (2.5)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**-6.3 (3.8)**	**-8.3 (6.0)**	**-7.7 (6.8)**	**7.6* (3.5)**
Job Approval	Honesty Prime	-1.3 (2.6)	-0.1 (4.2)	-11.3* (5.2)	**-1.1 (3.0)**
	Activity Prime	4.0 (2.9)	-0.9 (4.5)	-2.0 (6.2)	**3.8 (2.9)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**-5.3 (4.0)**	**-0.9 (6.1)**	**-9.2 (8.1)**	**-4.9 (4.2)**

Study 2—Effect of Dishonesty Treatments by Prime Condition and Respondent Partisanship (units in percentage points)
*Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test
**Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

Study 3: Trump-Family Separation		**Effect (Difference Between Dishonesty & No Lie Conditions)**			
		Democrats	Republicans	Independents	**Total**
		b/se	b/se	b/se	**b/se**
Honesty Evaluation	Honesty Prime	-10.1** (3.1)	-11.4** (4.3)	-7.9 (9.4)	**-10.3** (2.9)**
	Activity Prime	-6.0* (2.6)	-3.7 (3.9)	5.3 (8.3)	**-6.8* (2.8)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**-4.1 (4.0)**	**-7.7 (5.8)**	**-13.2 (12.5)**	**-3.6 (4.1)**
Situational Approval	Honesty Prime	-11.4** (3.4)	-11.8** (4.5)	-6.2 (9.7)	**-11.2** (3.0)**
	Activity Prime	-6.6* (2.8)	2.3 (4.0)	-10.0 (8.6)	**-6.3* (2.9)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**-4.8 (4.4)**	**-14.1* (6.0)**	**3.8 (12.9)**	**-4.9 (4.2)**
Job Approval	Honesty Prime	-5.2 (2.8)	-2.6 (4.4)	7.8 (10.3)	**-3.5 (3.2)**
	Activity Prime	-1.4 (2.3)	2.1 (4.0)	13.0 (8.7)	**-1.4 (3.1)**
	Effect of Honesty Prime	**-3.7 (3.6)**	**-4.7 (6.0)**	**-5.2 (13.4)**	**-2.2 (4.4)**

Study 3—Effect of Dishonesty Treatments by Prime Condition and Respondent Partisanship (units in percentage points). Given the sizes of the partisan subsamples, these results should be interpreted with caution.

*Significant at $\alpha<0.05$, two-tailed test

**Significant at $\alpha<0.01$, two-tailed test

Sample Demographics

		Hastings COS (N=1,250)	Kushner Clearance (N=1,253)	Family Separation (N=2,439)
Partisanship (leaners grouped with partisans)	Democrat	45.9%	48.1%	54.6%
	Republican	34.9%	34.0%	36.5%
	Independent	19.2%	17.9%	9.0%
Age	18-29	24.5%	22.3%	30.6%
	30-39	22.2%	23.7%	32.7%
	40-49	15.4%	15.5%	16.8%
	50-59	16.6%	16.9%	11.6%
	60+	21.3%	21.7%	8.2%
Education	Less than HS	4.6%	3.7%	0.8%
	HS Degree	53.2%	50.8%	29.3%
	College Degree	34.6%	36.7%	51.6%
	Graduate Degree	7.7%	8.9%	18.3%
Race	White	65.4%	65.7%	80.2%
	Black	13.4%	12.6%	7.4%
	Other	21.2%	21.7%	12.4%
Gender	Male	49.9%	49.4%	50.9%
	Female	50.1%	50.6%	49.1%
Family Income	$40k or less	40.6%	44.5%	35.4%
	$40k-75k	28.6%	26.3%	33.4%
	$75k+	30.8%	29.2%	31.2%

Honesty Prime Manipulation Check

Rank of Honesty by Assignment to Honesty or Activity Prime Conditions

Rank	Honesty Prime	Activity Prime
1	53.0%	46.6%
2	27.7%	27.0%
3	11.5%	16.0%
4	7.8%	10.4%

Chi-Squared = 15.64, p=0.001

Randomization Checks

Randomization Check – Probit Predicting Assignment to Honesty Prime Condition (Activity Prime Condition is omitted group, standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variable	Hastings COS Study	Trump Kushner Clearance Study	Trump Family Separation Study
Partisanship (7-point scale)	0.002 (0.018)	0.010 (0.017)	-0.005 (0.017)
Age	0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)
Gender (Male)	-0.097 (0.074)	0.016 (0.074)	-0.006 (0.074)
Latinx	-0.016 (0.109)	-0.092 (0.112)	0.002 (0.122)
Race (Black)	-0.146 (0.114)	-0.217 (0.117)	-0.210 (0.143)
Family Income	0.014 (0.043)	-0.036 (0.043)	0.082 (0.045)
Constant	-0.021 (0.043)	-0.038 (0.043)	-0.109 (0.164)
Prob>chi^2	0.595	0.308	0.423
N	1,235	1,242	1,171

Randomization Check – Probit Predicting Assignment to Dishonesty Condition (Control Condition is omitted group, standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variable	Hastings COS Study	Trump Kushner Clearance Study	Trump Family Separation Study
Partisanship (7-point scale)	0.001 (0.018)	0.027 (0.017)	-0.025 (0.172)
Age	0.003 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)
Gender (Male)	0.121 (0.074)	-0.004 (0.074)	0.024 (0.074)
Latinx	0.209 (0.110)	-0.070 (0.112)	0.085 (0.122)
Race (Black)	-0.117 (0.114)	-0.016 (0.116)	-0.270 (0.143)
Family Income	-0.045 (0.043)	0.029 (0.043)	0.014 (0.045)
Constant	-0.077 (0.144)	-0.091 (0.146)	0.117 (0.164)
Prob>chi^2	0.172	0.661	0.378
N	1,235	1,242	1,171