Appendix to

Electability Salience Can Bias Voting Decisions

Appendix A: Survey Flow and Questionnaire

The survey flow consists of random assignment and fielding 9 blocks. Block names (not shown to respondents) appear in bold, and survey items appear in italics. The block were fielded as follows:

1. Field **Consent** block. If *Consent* = Yes, continue; else, end.
2. Uniformly randomly assign $Z \in \{P, E\}$.
3. Field **Party** block. If *Party* = Democrat or *Lean* = Democrat, continue; else, end.
4. Field **Voting Behavior and Election Knowledge** block.
5. If $Z = P$, field **Preferences** block; else, field **Electability** block.
6. Field **Political Covariates** block.
7. If $Z = P$, field **Electability** block; else, field **Preferences** block.
8. Field **Need for Cognition** block.
9. Field **Ranking** block.
10. Field **Demographics** block.

The contents of the blocks are as follows:

Consent.

This survey is part of a research project about politics and public affairs. In the survey, you will be asked your opinions about presidential candidates and your political views. It will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. If you are willing to participate, we will also ask you about your background and some of your views about politics. All participants must be 18 years of age or older and live in the United States.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study, nor are there any direct benefits to you.

This questionnaire is completely anonymous. We will not ask for your name or any personally identifiable information, so your responses will not be identifiable in any way.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may stop completing the survey at any time.

The research study is being conducted by XXX at the University of XXX. If you have any questions about the study, you may send an email to XXX.

Consent. Do you voluntarily agree to participate in this study?

Yes

No

Party.

Branching question with the following logic:

1. Field *Party*.
2. If *Party* = Republican, field *Strong Republican*.
3. If *Party* = Democrat, field *Strong Democrat*.
4. Else, field *Lean*.

Party. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

Republican

Democrat

Independent

Other (please specify)_____

Strong Republican. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not so strong Republican?

Strong Republican

Not so strong Republican

Strong Democrat. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not so strong Democrat?

Strong Democrat

Not so strong Democrat

Lean. Do you usually think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

Republican Party

Democratic Party

Neither

Not sure

Voting Behavior and Election Knowledge.

Registered. Are you registered to vote?

Yes

No

I'm not sure

Follow Nomination Race. How much would you say you've been following the race for the Democratic presidential nomination?

A great deal

A lot

A moderate amount

A little

None at all

Open Names. Can you name some of the candidates running for president in 2020? Enter the names of as many candidates as you can remember.

Candidate 1 _____

Candidate 2 _____

Candidate 3 _____

Candidate 4 _____

Candidate 5 _____

Candidate 6 _____

Vote 2020. How likely are you to vote in the Democratic primary or caucus in your state in 2020?

Extremely likely

Somewhat likely

Neither likely nor unlikely

Somewhat unlikely

Extremely unlikely

Vote 2016. Thinking back to the 2016 election, did you vote in a Democratic primary or caucus in 2016?

Yes

No

I don't remember

If *Vote 2016* = Yes, ask: *Choice 2016* Who did you vote for in the 2016 Democratic primary or caucus?

Hillary Clinton

Bernie Sanders

Donald Trump

Other _____

Attention Check 1. Some people think the government should provide fewer services, even in areas such as health and education, in order to reduce spending. To demonstrate that you've read this much, just go ahead and select the numbers two and five no matter what your own views are.

Where would you place YOURSELF on this scale?

1 - Fewer services

2

3

4

5 - More services

Preferences.

[Responses elicited with sliders, preceded by this text:]

Next, we want to know how much you would prefer for each of several candidates to become President, ignoring their chances of winning.

Ignoring their chances of winning, how much would you prefer for each candidate to become President?

Place each candidate on a scale where 0 means "least preferred" and 100 means "most preferred". Placing candidates farther apart indicates a larger difference in preference than candidates you put closer together.

If two candidates are equally preferred, give them the same number.

(Order of candidates randomized.)

Donald Trump

Bernie Sanders

Elizabeth Warren

Joe Biden

Pete Buttigieg

Michael Bloomberg

Amy Klobuchar

Andrew Yang

Attention Check 2. Drag the slider to 27.

Political Covariates.

Next, we have a few questions about your political views.

Political Interest. In general, how interested are you in politics and public affairs?

Very interested

Somewhat interested

Slightly interested

Not at all interested

Political Person. In general do you consider yourself to be a political person? I consider myself:

Very political

Somewhat political

Not especially political

Not at all political

Symbolic Ideology. In general, do you think of yourself as...

Extremely liberal

Liberal

Slightly liberal

Moderate, or middle of the road

Slightly conservative

Conservative

Extremely conservative

Electability.

[Responses elicited with sliders, preceded by this text:]

Next, we want to know what you think of each Democratic candidate's chance of defeating Donald Trump, ignoring who you want to win.

Ignoring your preferences, what do you think is each Democratic candidate's chance of defeating Donald Trump in the general election?

You will indicate each candidate's likelihood of winning against Trump in terms of a percentage chance out of 100.

0 means "will certainly lose to Trump".

50 means "complete toss up".

100 means "will certainly defeat Trump".

Indicate the percentage chance you think <CANDIDATE> would win the election in 2020 against Donald Trump?

(Order of candidates randomized.)

Bernie Sanders

Elizabeth Warren

Joe Biden

Pete Buttigieg

Michael Bloomberg

Amy Klobuchar

Andrew Yang

Attention Check 3. Drag the slider to 88.

Need for Cognition.

Next, we have a few questions about how you feel about thinking.

Need for Cognition 1. I would prefer complex to simple problems.

Need for Cognition 2. I like to have the responsibility of handling a situation that requires a lot of thinking.

Need for Cognition 3. Thinking is not my idea of fun.

Need for Cognition 4. I would rather do something that requires little thought than something that is sure to challenge my thinking abilities.

Need for Cognition 5. I really enjoy a task that involves coming up with new solutions to problems.

Need for Cognition 6. I would prefer a task that is intellectual, difficult, and important to one that is somewhat important but does not require much thought.

All responses included the following options:

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat disagree

Strongly disagree

Ranking.

[Responses elicited with drag-and-drop into boxes for each rank, preceded by this text:]

Please rank the candidates in terms of how likely you are to vote for them if they are on the ballot in your state's Democratic primary or caucus in 2020. Drag the names to the box on the right with your most likely vote on top (1) and your least likely vote on the bottom (6). You can rearrange the order until you are satisfied.

(Order of candidates randomized.)

Bernie Sanders

Elizabeth Warren

Joe Biden

Pete Buttigieg

Michael Bloomberg

Amy Klobuchar

Andrew Yang

Demographics.

Gender. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other _____

Age. What is your age?

Under 18

18 - 24

25 - 34

35 - 44

45 - 54

55 - 64

65 - 74

75 - 84

85 or older

Race/Ethnicity. What is your race/ethnicity? (check all that apply)

White/Caucasian

African American

Hispanic

Asian or Pacific Islander

Native American

Other _____

Education. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Less than High School

High School / GED

Some college

2 year college degree (Associate)

4 year college degree (Bachelor)

Post-graduate degree (Professional, Masters, Doctorate)

ZIP. What is your ZIP code?

Appendix B: Descriptive Statistics

Table A2: Descriptive Statistics for Covariates (Main Dataset)

Covariate	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age 18-24	0.11	0.31	0.0	1.0
Age 25-34	0.21	0.40	0.0	1.0
Age 35-44	0.16	0.36	0.0	1.0
Age 45-64	0.33	0.47	0.0	1.0
Age Over 65	0.20	0.40	0.0	1.0
Did not Vote/Supp. Other Cand. in 2016	0.16	0.37	0.0	1.0
Supported Clinton in 2016	0.68	0.47	0.0	1.0
Supported Sanders in 2016	0.16	0.37	0.0	1.0
Supported Trump in 2016	0.00	0.00	0.0	0.0
HS or Less	0.23	0.42	0.0	1.0
Some College	0.38	0.49	0.0	1.0
College Graduate	0.39	0.49	0.0	1.0
Black	0.25	0.43	0.0	1.0
Latino	0.15	0.36	0.0	1.0
Other/Mixed Race/Ethnicity	0.08	0.27	0.0	1.0
White	0.51	0.50	0.0	1.0
Female	0.58	0.49	0.0	1.0
Campaign Knowledge	0.18	0.66	−1.0	1.0
Follows Politics	0.73	0.27	0.0	1.0
Strong Democrat	0.71	0.45	0.0	1.0
Trump Least Preferred	1.00	0.00	1.0	1.0
Intend to Vote	0.93	0.17	0.0	1.0
Registered Voter	0.96	0.20	0.0	1.0
Ideology = ideology	0.30	0.24	0.0	1.0
Political Interest	0.75	0.26	0.0	1.0
# Failed Attention Checks	1.41	0.64	1.0	3.0
Need for Cognition	0.66	0.15	0.0	1.0

$n = 833$, including only those respondents who failed no more than one attention check, who did not support Trump in 2016, and who preferred Trump least.

Table A3: Descriptive Statistics of Candidate Evaluations (Main Dataset)

	Preferences		Electability		Ranking	
Candidate	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Biden	73	26	74	24	2.7	1.9
Bloomberg	58	29	62	27	4.2	1.9
Buttigieg	54	28	53	27	4.5	1.7
Klobuchar	50	27	44	29	5.2	1.6
Sanders	73	26	69	26	3.0	1.9
Warren	67	26	62	27	3.3	1.7
Yang	50	28	44	29	5.1	1.7
Trump	6	13	–	–	–	–

$n = 833$, including only those respondents who failed no more than one attention check, who did not support Trump in 2016, and who preferred Trump least.

Appendix C: Covariate Balance

We check covariate balance with Hartman and Hidalgo's (2018) equivalence test method. The figure presents equivalence tests of covariate balance (Hartman and Hidalgo, 2018), using only those observations included in the main analysis dataset (i.e., those who passed most attention checks and did not indicate support for Trump). The tests indicate that we can reject the null hypotheses of differences for all covariates ($p < .001$).

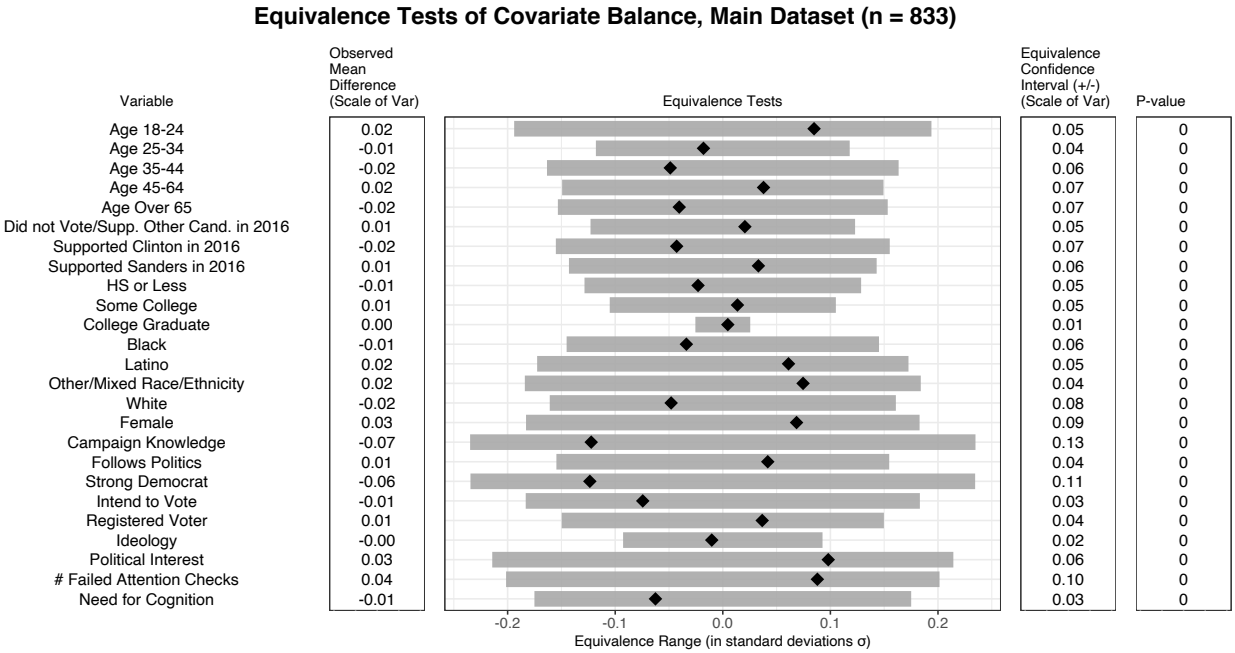

Figure A4: Covariate Balance (Main Dataset)

Appendix D: Robustness

In this appendix, we test the robustness of the results in the main paper by directly modeling candidate rankings with a rank-ordered logit model. The unit of analysis is the respondent-candidate, and, because we have full rankings from each respondent, we now have $833 \times 7 = 5831$ observations. A rank-ordered logit can be estimated with a Cox proportional hazard model, provided that we stratify by respondent (Allison and Christakis, 1994). Because the model includes this stratification, it cannot also include the main effect of treatment, as respondents are nested within treatment conditions. Therefore, we estimate the following model:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Reversed Ranking}_{iC} \sim\ & \text{Preferences}_{iC} + \text{Electability}_{iC} + \text{Expected Utility}_{iC} + \\ & \text{Preferences}_{iC} \times \text{Electability Last}_i + \\ & \text{Electability}_{iC} \times \text{Electability Last}_i + \\ & \text{Expected Utility}_{iC} \times \text{Electability Last}_i,\end{aligned}$$

where i indexes respondents and C indexes candidates. For uncertainty, we draw 1000 bootstrap resamples over respondents. Table A4 presents the results of this model.

Table A4: Robustness of Main Results to Rank-Ordered Regression

Variable	Estimate	95% Interval
Preferences	-0.052	$[-0.065, -0.041]$
Electability	-0.001	$[-0.009, 0.006]$
Expected Utility	-0.044	$[-0.057, -0.030]$
Preferences $\times$ Electability Last	0.015	$[-0.000, 0.030]$
Electability $\times$ Electability Last	-0.023	$[-0.034, -0.011]$
Expected Utility $\times$ Electability Last	0.010	$[-0.010, 0.028]$

$n = 833$.

The table indicates that the coefficients on both Preferences and Electability are altered by interaction with Electability Last. As with Cox proportional hazard models, negative coefficients imply decreasing hazard, and therefore longer "survival". Because we also reversed rankings, a negative coefficient, for example on Preferences, therefore means that if a respondent rated a candidate as high on Preferences, that respondent is also likely to rank that candidate more highly. The interaction coefficients can be interpreted as the effects of elicitation order on the weights placed on each component of decision making. For example, the coefficient estimate of 0.015 on Preferences $\times$ Electability Last means that, in that condition, preferences were less important to decision making. In contrast, the coefficient of -0.023 on Electability $\times$ Electability Last indicates that, in that condition, Electability weighed more heavily in voters' rankings. These effects are consistent with those reported in the main paper.

Appendix E: Analyses with All Respondents

Table A5: Descriptive Statistics for Covariates (All Respondents)

Covariate	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age 18-24	0.09	0.29	0.0	1.0
Age 25-34	0.18	0.39	0.0	1.0
Age 35-44	0.15	0.36	0.0	1.0
Age 45-64	0.36	0.48	0.0	1.0
Age Over 65	0.22	0.41	0.0	1.0
Did not Vote/Supp. Other Cand. in 2016	0.18	0.38	0.0	1.0
Supported Clinton in 2016	0.62	0.48	0.0	1.0
Supported Sanders in 2016	0.17	0.38	0.0	1.0
Supported Trump in 2016	0.03	0.16	0.0	1.0
HS or Less	0.21	0.41	0.0	1.0
Some College	0.38	0.49	0.0	1.0
College Graduate	0.41	0.49	0.0	1.0
Black	0.22	0.41	0.0	1.0
Latino	0.13	0.34	0.0	1.0
Other/Mixed Race/Ethnicity	0.07	0.26	0.0	1.0
White	0.58	0.49	0.0	1.0
Female	0.57	0.49	0.0	1.0
Campaign Knowledge	0.26	0.63	−1.0	1.0
Follows Politics	0.70	0.28	0.0	1.0
Strong Democrat	0.67	0.47	0.0	1.0
Trump Least Preferred	0.84	0.36	0.0	1.0
Intend to Vote	0.93	0.17	0.0	1.0
Registered Voter	0.95	0.22	0.0	1.0
Ideology = ideology	0.31	0.23	0.0	1.0
Political Interest	0.74	0.27	0.0	1.0
# Failed Attention Checks	0.86	0.91	0.0	3.0
Need for Cognition	0.66	0.17	0.0	1.0

$n = 1211$.

Table A6: Descriptive Statistics of Candidate Evaluations (All Respondents)

	Preferences		Electability		Ranking	
Candidate	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Biden	71	27	74	24	2.8	1.9
Bloomberg	57	29	62	27	4.1	2.0
Buttigieg	52	28	53	27	4.5	1.7
Klobuchar	47	28	44	29	5.1	1.6
Sanders	69	28	69	26	3.1	1.9
Warren	64	28	62	27	3.4	1.8
Yang	46	28	44	29	5.0	1.7
Trump	12	24	–	–	–	–

$n = 1211$.

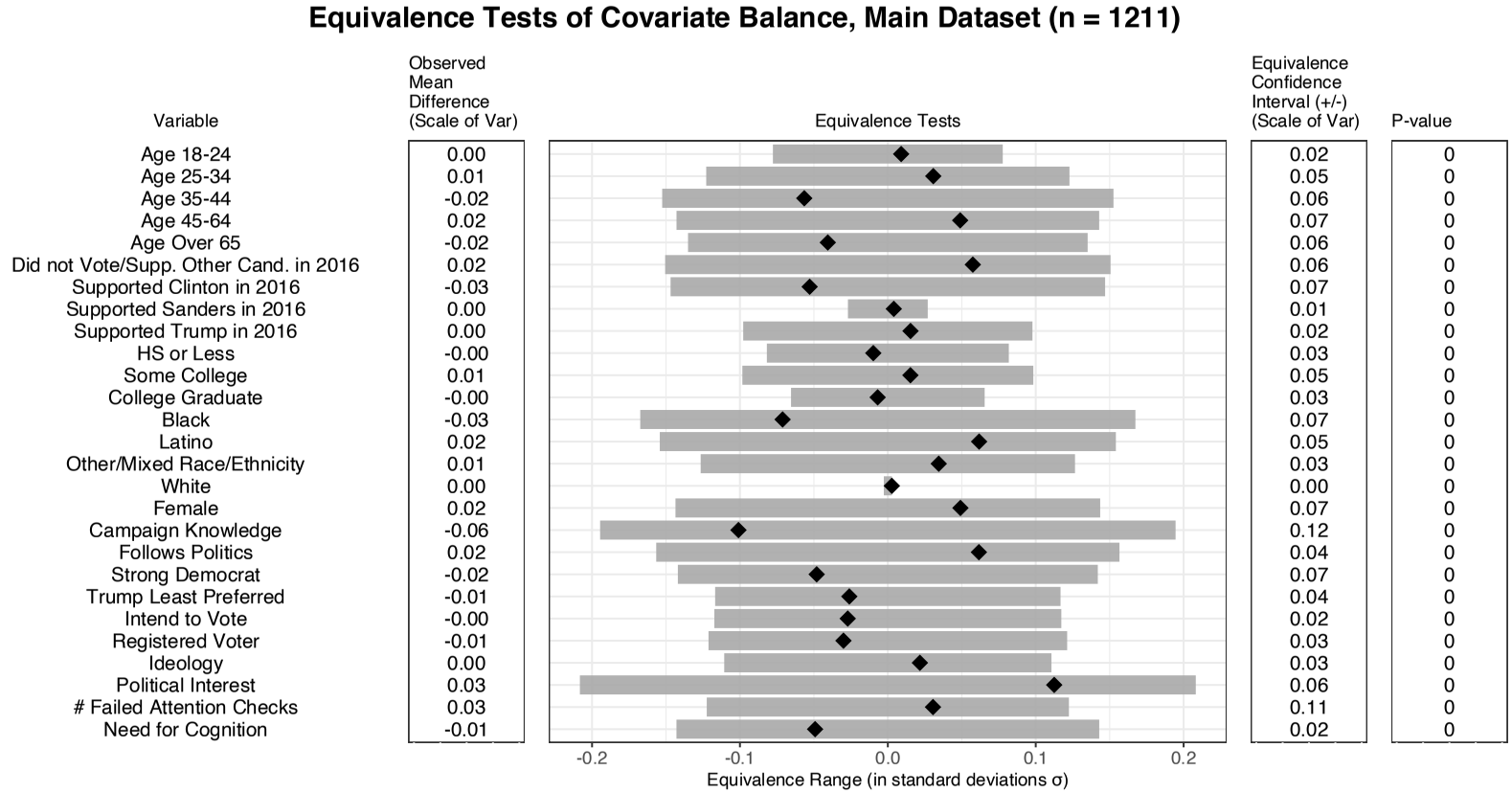

Figure A5: The figure presents equivalence tests of covariate balance (Hartman and Hidalgo, 2018), using all observations (i.e., regardless of passage of attention checks or support for Trump). The tests indicate that we can reject the null hypotheses of differences for all covariates ($p < .001$).

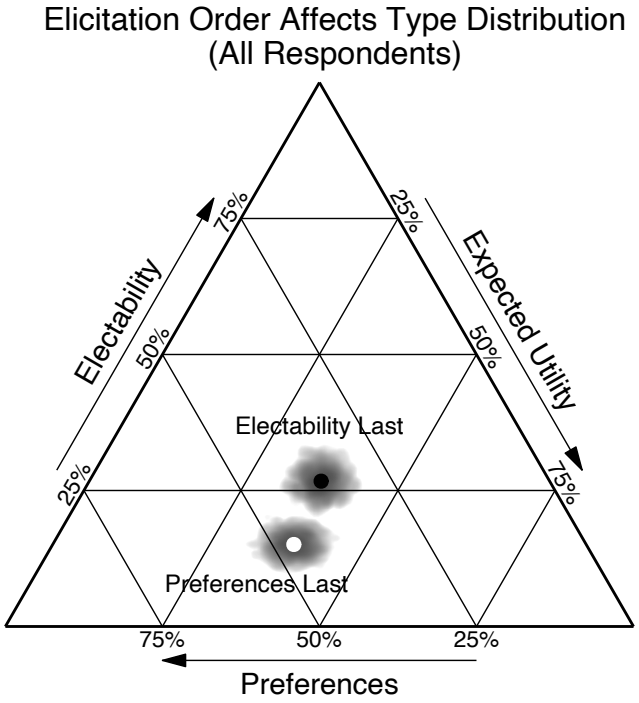

Figure A6: The figure displays ternary plots of the distributions of behavioral types in each treatment condition. Each of the three vertices of the triangles indicates a distribution composed entirely of one type, and the center of the triangles indicates a completely mixed distribution. When electability is elicited most recently, the distribution tends toward the electability vertex (top).

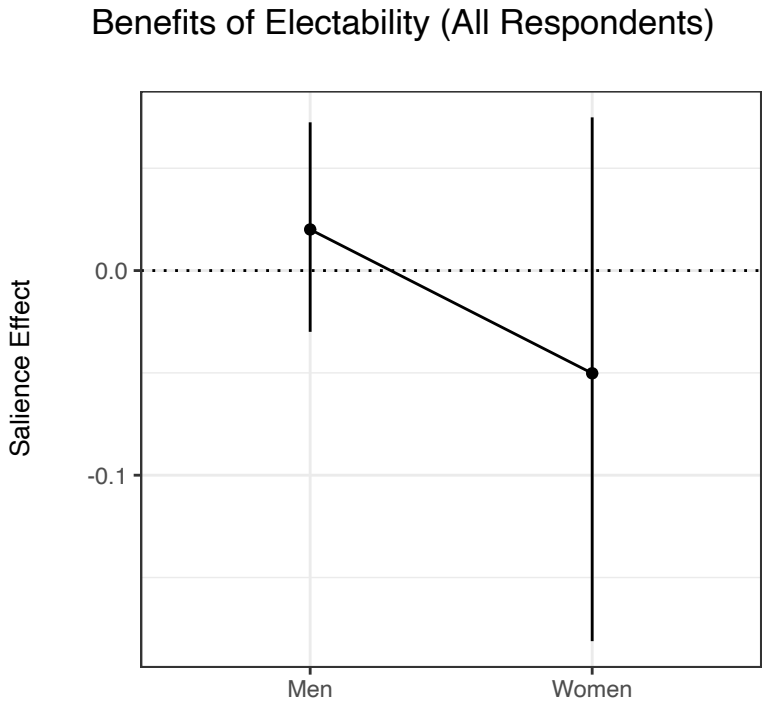

Figure A7: The figure displays the estimated average effects of eliciting electability last on the (reversed) rankings of men candidates compared to women candidates, with 95% intervals. Effects are generally less precisely estimated for this dataset, which includes all respondents, than they are for the dataset that includes only those who passed attention checks and did not support Trump.

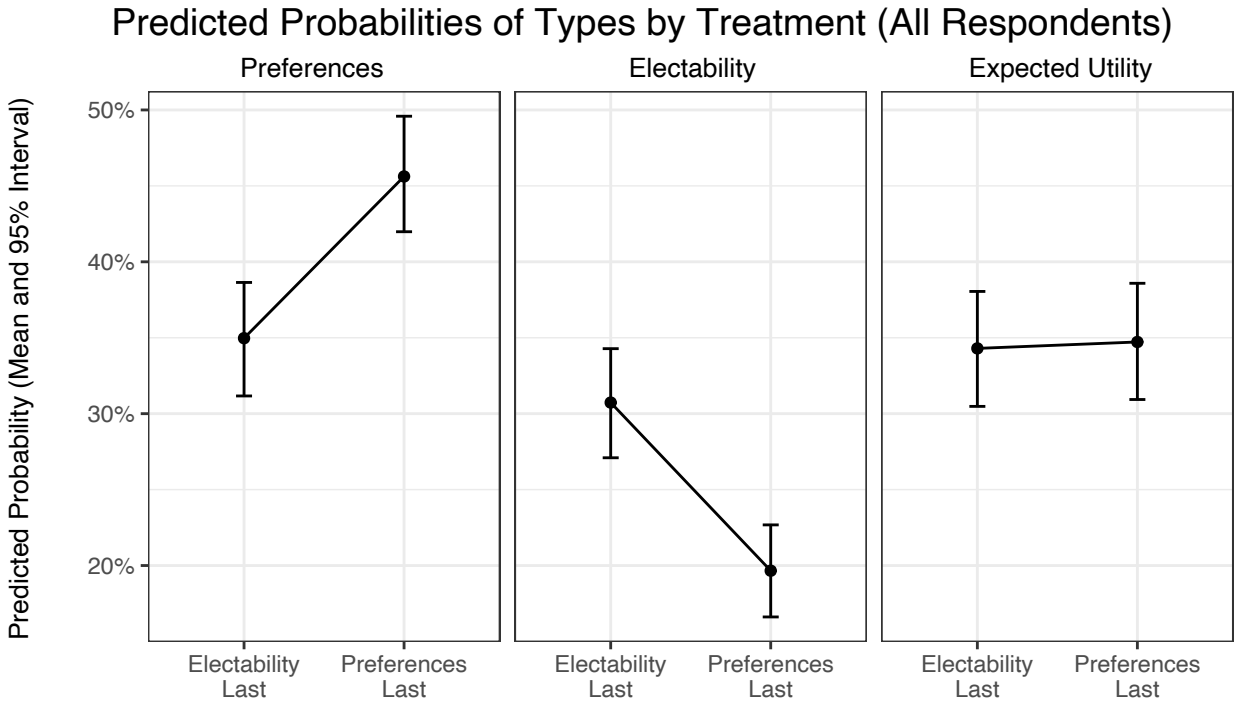

Figure A8: The figure displays the estimated average effects of elicitation order on the predicted probabilities of types, based on a multinomial logit. When preferences are elicited last, there is a statistically significant increase in the probability of a respondent being classified as a preferences type, with a concomitant change in the probability of being an electability type when it is elicited last.