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Using a Theory of Expectations to Understand why There is Variation in Voter
Response to Political Scandals

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Byran Nevin Martin

August 2011

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August, 2011

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Using a Theory of Expectations to Understand why There is Variation in Voter Response to Political Scandals

by

Byran Nevin Martin

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Political Science
University of California, Riverside, August 2011
Dr. Martin Johnson, Chairperson

Why are some politicians negatively evaluated for scandals while others are not? Prior research has focused on the effects scandals have on election outcomes and citizen evaluations of institutions. Less research investigates variation in reaction to scandals among the voters. I theorize that to understand how a voter responds to a scandal, we must understand the expectations he or she places on their representative. I argue negative evaluations of public officials are not simply a function of political leaders violating social norms, but rather their failure to meet the voter's expectations. In addition, scandals involving more than one public official should lower the voter's expectation of politicians in general, minimizing the scandal's impact of any one particular official. To test my theory I have built an original database of scandals and electoral outcomes, use public opinion data, and conducted a laboratory based experiment. The experiments will provide an individual-level test for causality for my theoretical expectations. The survey data

will be used to test individual attitudes regarding candidates as a function of voter values and candidate reputation. And the scandal database will allow me to further test other implications of my hypotheses, and examine how well my theoretical expectations generalize across a variety of political contexts.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In November 1989, the Senate Ethics Committee opened hearings on five U.S. Senators regarding their role in resisting federal regulators. The senators had allegedly intervened to chill the investigation of the Lincoln Savings and Loan Association. This investigation was in the midst of the collapse of the Lincoln Savings and Loan Association during an economic period which has come to be known as the “Savings and Loan Crisis”. The reason why U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), U.S. Sen. John Glenn (D-OH), U.S. Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA), U.S. Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ), and U.S. Sen. Donald Riegle (D-MI) were the subject of this investigation was the result of approximately \$1.3 million in campaign donations from Charles H. Keating, Jr., the Chairman of Lincoln Savings and Loan, and a closed door meeting that took place in April, 1987 in which the five senators pressured federal regulators regarding their investigation into Lincoln. The senators involved were aptly nicknamed “The Keating Five”. Shortly after, the federal regulators filed their report recommending that the government should seize Lincoln for improper lending practices. Approximately two years later, federal regulators filed bribery and racketeering charges against Charles Keating.

Attorney Robert Bennett conducted the investigation for the Senate Ethics Committee. In September 1990, a report his office leaked indicated each Senator’s involvement varied considerably. Bennett recommended that both Sens. McCain and Glenn be exonerated. Up until this time the public revered both Sen. McCain and Sen. Glenn as national heroes. Sen. McCain was a Vietnam Prisoner of War for six

years who volunteered to remain a prisoner when offered release because other prisoners had been there longer. Sen. Glenn was a well known pioneer of space exploration and decorated war hero, and one of the subjects of the Academy Award winning movie *The Right Stuff*. Although the investigation would continue, Sens. McCain and Glenn were eventually cleared of any impropriety, but also criticized by the Ethics Committee for “poor judgment”. Both senators, however, still went on to have extensive political careers. Conversely, Sens. Riegle and DeConcini were criticized by the committee for “acting improperly,” and Sen. Cranston was officially reprimanded. None of these three senators ran for re-election.

The Keating Five investigation initiated what became a busy decade for the Senate Ethics Committee. Five years after the Keating Five scandal, the Senate Ethics Committee recommended the expulsion of U.S. Sen. Bob Packwood (R-OR) for charges of sexually harassing numerous women, including lobbyist and staff. Sen. Packwood, before the allegations, had the reputation for being a strong supporter of women’s issues and was the sole sponsor for a bill to legalize abortion shortly after the Supreme Court decision in *Roe vs. Wade*. The smoking gun in the Packwood investigation was the senator’s diary which detailed some of his actions. Sen. Packwood immediately resigned after the Ethics’ Committee recommendation, marking the first time in Senate history that the Ethics Committee ever recommended expulsion.

The Packwood investigation came on the heels of impeachment hearings for President William Jefferson Clinton, which was only the second time in U.S. history a

president had been impeached. Pres. Clinton was accused of lying under oath in a deposition when he was sued by Paula Jones for sexual harassment for mischaracterizing his relationship with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. Another accusation was that President Clinton also tried to convince Ms. Lewinsky to lie about their relationship as well. Even though President Clinton was impeached, the Senate eventually acquitted him in a mostly partisan vote (although six Republicans chose not to find Clinton guilty in at least one of the two charges brought against him). This event, however, was not the first time in recent history the Presidency was shocked with scandal. Approximately 20 years prior, President Richard Milhous Nixon resigned the office of the Presidency, a first for any president, before impeachment charges would have inevitably be brought against him. Seven former members of President Nixon's administration tried to cover up the break in of the Watergate hotel which was the Democratic National Committee's headquarters for the up-coming 1972 election. Although it has never been proven he had prior knowledge or ordered the break-in, the links to his re-election campaign and his attempt to obstruct the FBI's investigation are without question.

These and other types of political scandals have become a constant in American politics. Just recent to the filing of this dissertation project, U.S. Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY) resigned his congressional seat in light of twitter scandal involving lewd pictures that initially denied vehemently. Even though there were calls by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) for an ethics investigation, no firm evidence ever surfaced showing that Rep. Weiner either violated the law or

rules of Congress. Although Rep. Weiner was heavily scrutinized by the national media, a poll conducted by the Marist College Institute of Public Opinion released June 9th, 2011-a week before his resignation-found that 56% of his constituents did not want him to resign his position despite the scandal.

While every scandal is a little different, the variation in the public's reaction remains puzzling. Some public officials retreat from public life or are rejected by their constituents for behavior that others seem to politically survive. Although the public did not approve of President Clinton's behavior he was able to rally support and finish his 2nd term of office with over 60% public approval according to the Gallup Inc., polling organization. In contrast, the public's approval for President Nixon fell dramatically even though Nixon won re-election by over a 23 point margin, including carrying 49 of 50 states in the Electoral College, less than two years before his resignation. Even after the Keating Five scandal both Sen. McCain and Sen. Glenn overwhelmingly won re-election two years after the investigation, despite their opponents tried to use the scandal to their advantage.

Even though political scandals are a constant in American politics, the public's reaction to them is anything but consistent. There are some politicians who have survived numerous scandals throughout their career, while there are others who never given the opportunity of being involved in a second. Why 56% of Rep. Weiner constituents did not want him to resign while former U.S. Representative Mark Foley (R-FL) – who like Rep. Weiner was incredibly popular – resigned after it was discovered he sent lewd email messages to a former congressional page, which

was later to be discovered as habitual behavior, presents a puzzle. Although it has been alleged Rep. Foley had homosexual relations with young men these allegations have never been verified. In addition, former U.S. Representative Christopher Lee (R-NY) resigned his House seat on February 9th, 2011 the same day it was discovered he posted a shirtless picture of himself soliciting sex on the on-line classified advertisement webpage known as Craigslist.com.

In addition, why was there such a heavy endorsement for President Clinton after the Lewinsky scandal while President Nixon resigned his position in disgrace? These mixed reactions and outcomes to political scandals is what motivated these questions and project. Why is there such a large variation in the public's reaction to politicians involved in political scandal? Why do some politicians seem to be immune to scandals while others not? As I will detail in this project the scholarship on political scandals does not address why there is such a discrepancy in the public's reaction to them. Even though political scientists have studied scandals extensively, past research fails to address or ask the following questions: are there factors that can immune politicians to scandals? How does the public evaluate officials involved in political scandals? Are there characteristics in public officials that either makes them immune or more susceptible to scandals? Are there characteristics in the individual voter that affects how he or she may respond to political scandals? And what of the scandals themselves? Are there scandal characteristics that will affect how the voters respond to them?

In this project I develop a mid-range theory that begins to answer some of these questions. I am not attempting to develop a theory that only analyzes how a single or major scandal impacts the political system or the electorate. I am also not attempting to develop a theory used to address how all voters respond to political behavior outside of scandal, even though portions of my theory may be used in future studies to analyze reactions to other types of political behavior. Ultimately, the purpose of this theory is to advance our understanding why and how the public react to scandals the way they do. I acknowledge that some scandals are so severe that it does not matter who the public official or voter is, the outcome will be negative. But the vast majority of scandals I have studied for this project do not fit that criteria, and yet, some of those involved survive while others do not. In addition, the purpose of this theory is to look at general reactions and individual voter evaluations of political scandal.

The consistency of political scandals in American politics constitute a study linking common aspects of how the voter, public officials, and details about the scandal impact the way the public responds to them. Using prior research I construct the various components of my theory, and engage in an extensive discussion on past scholarship regarding political scandal. In addition, I use multiple methodological approaches in testing my theory from a variety of data sources. I combine original, pre-existing survey, and experimental data to test my hypotheses focusing on multiple units of analysis. Finally, I interpret my findings

and discuss how my research fits in existing literature and potential avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2: A THEORY IN UNDERSTANDING VOTER RESPONSE TO SCANDAL

Literature on political scandals is vast, and lacks cohesiveness. Most of the literature does not focus on scandals, but rather how a specific scandal influences electoral behavior or the public's faith in government. For example, scandals are generally studied because it is believed that they affect elections, strategic retirement, and voter efficacy. There is, however, no theory to account why we observe such a large variation in reaction to scandals, and why some politicians seem immune to scandals while others are not. Research on scandals focus on the impact of specific highly visible scandals such the House Banking scandal or the Keating Five savings and loan scandal. There is no real mid-level theory explaining voter reaction to scandals and how voter and candidate attributes influence a particular response to scandals. For this project I develop a mid-range theory explaining voter reaction to scandals. My theory can be applied to explain voter reaction across contexts, and seeks to answer why the voter develops negative opinions of some politicians involved in scandal but not others. I theorize that voter reaction to scandal is influence by three different factors: voter attributes and values, candidate reputation, and details specific to the scandal.

In this chapter, I review past research investigating scandals and how they influence attitudes and political events. In addition, I will discuss how voters evaluate candidates, the role candidates affect these evaluations, and how voters assign credit or blame when there is a diffusion of responsibility. I will also define

what I mean by “scandal” and the implications of this definition. I will introduce various elements of my theory and I will discuss how past literature helps formulate the assumptions of my theory. Finally, I will highlight the implications of my theory and the means I will use to test them.

Scandals and Past Research

Previous research on political scandals focus on how they influence voter attitudes or how a specific scandal impacts an election or candidate behavior. Each of these studies, although, advances our understanding of scandals and are used as the building blocks of my theory. For this section I will discuss past literature on scandals and how they advance our understanding of the impact scandals can have on American politics.

Scandal and voter efficacy: Past research has well documented the decline of trust in the government over the past thirty years (Nye, 1997). And given the current state of American politics, it is hard to envision voter trust returning anytime soon. Furthermore, the decline in trust has helped cause the growing dissatisfaction of the public’s approval of political leaders, and the growing distrust has helped lead to a political environment where success is becoming more difficult for them as well (Hetherington, 1998). But are these trends a function of scandals or perhaps some other reason? The research on the subject does suggest scandals play a role, but the extent is still being debated. Studies have found that accidents and scandals impact public opinion for budgetary support for federal agencies (Kemp, 1984). This reaction can be affected by which party is in power and the

quality of the response from Congress and the Presidency (Kemp, 1984). In addition, scandals are one of the reasons why there has been a steady decline in the public's trust in government (Chanley et al., 2000). However, depending on the institution involved, there is a limit to this decline. Research has found the impeachment of President Bill Clinton may pave the way for a candidate's private life to be more of a national issue, but there will be little consequence in how the public views the Presidency (Spitzer, 2000). In addition, evaluations of Congress and congressional scandals are more closely linked to trust in government than executive scandals (Chanley et al., 2000).

Do political scandals, however, impact voter attitudes about our political system in general? Do voters lose faith in the system when they are constantly bombarded with stories about public officials and their sometimes aberrant behavior? Research has confirmed that questionable ethics among public figures can sway how the public views the system. Studies have provided evidence that if the public responds negatively to scandals, their faith in the political process could suffer (Damico et al. 2000). For example, comparative analyses have shown how scandals effect voters views beyond their representative, and how voters can develop negative attitudes towards both the political process and legislative institutions in general (Bowler and Karp, 2004). In the American case, Bowler and Karp find that "there is a strong relationship between citizens evaluations of a representative and Congress" (page 278) when asked about the House Banking Scandal. Their arguments are further strengthened by general attitudes towards

members of Parliament and scandal in a British survey studied by Bowler and Karp. In addition, scandals have also shown to have cross-institutional impacts. Scandals that involve the executive branch of government affect the likelihood that members of Congress will support the President's policies (Meinke and Anderson, 2001), especially if those members are of the same party as the President. Scandals can also affect how the media reports on a candidate, influencing voter evaluations of candidate traits during an election (Stoker, 1993). The linkages between scandals and elections are well documented in political science. But despite the wide range of research questions regarding scandals and elections, there is not any real mid-range theory that addresses the variation in the public's response towards them.

Electoral impact of scandals: Much of the scandal literature focuses on the impact that scandals have on elections and party identification. Research has found that scandals can influence the voters' party preference (Dobratz and Whitfield, 1992). To what extent, although, do scandals influence electoral outcomes? Many scholars find that scandals do indeed affect the outcome of elections (Welch and Hibbing, 1997), but the extent is still being debated (McLeod et al., 1977). The House Banking scandal illustrates this point. In 1992, information became available that members of the House of Representatives were overdrawing their checking accounts, which is not illegal but ethically questionable. As a result some members who left their checking account overdrawn for a substantial amount of time were singled out by the House Ethics Committee. Although it appears the scandal did impact the following 1994 congressional election (Dimock and Jacobson, 1995), the

majority of those involved still won re-election. There were also many other unfavorable electoral conditions for at least the democrats involved that could have caused the relatively high congressional turnover.

Further research has shown widespread scandals within a political party can affect that party label, making the re-electoral chances of the incumbents within that party more difficult (Jacobson, 1989; Jacobson and Kernell, 1983). Periods of heightened scandals have shown to generate large movements within institutions. To illustrate, there is evidence showing congressional incumbents are more likely to strategically retire in the presence of scandals which can significantly alter institutional make-up (Jacobson and Kernell, 1983). Furthermore, scandals create an electoral condition where tougher and more experienced challengers seek seats where the incumbent is perceived to be vulnerable (Jacobson, 2001). These types of movements can change the policy approach of Congress, the ability of the majority power to govern, and potentially party control of Congress.

In general, corruption has become one of the criteria a voter uses in evaluating the performance of the incumbent party (Fackler and Lin, 1995). In addition, these growing attitudes are not driven by any particular demographic. Although male and female attitudes may vary in terms of ethical judgments towards politicians when young, their attitudes eventually converge the older they get (Aldrich and Kage, 2003). Furthermore, older individuals (of both sexes) tend to be stricter in their ethical judgments (Aldrich and Kage, 2003). Overall, the impact of gender on scandal has been diminishing. For example, in 2005, a study found that

women are not necessarily judged more harshly than men when allegedly committing a transgression (Smith et al., 2005). Other research on scandals focuses on the impact scandals have as major political events and their consequence.

Scandal as major political events: Both Congress and the Presidency have seen their fair shares of scandals throughout the 70's, 80's, and 90's. Whether it is the Keating Five Savings and Loan scandal and the House Banking Scandal plaguing Congress in the early 1990's, or the Iran-Contra Affair and the Bert Lance resignation in the 80's and 70's respectively, that both hurt the Reagan and Carter administrations. Two scandals, however, eclipse all others because one led to the first time resignation of a U.S. President and the other to the only second time in history a President was impeached. Scholars have paid special attention to the consequences of Watergate and the Monica Lewinsky scandals because of their historic rarity and because both scandals impacted an entirely new generation of voters. Shortly after the Watergate scandal, research found that it could affect the political socialization of pre-adults, particularly those who already find scandals as a salient issue (Hershey and Hill, 1975). Watergate ultimately resulted in a breach of trust in the government and growing dissatisfaction with all political leaders (Dunham and Mauss, 1976). In their article Roger Dunham and Armand Mauss write the Watergate scandal resulted in "a clear and general loss of confidence in the executive branch" and "this loss was dispersed to political leaders in general, though on a much smaller scale" (page 485). They also found that "... the weakening bonds did not extend to the system as a whole" (page 485). Roughly twenty years later

the public encountered another scandal that almost brought down another Presidency and lead to the impeachment of President Bill Clinton.

The public, however, responded differently to the Lewinsky scandal than they did to Watergate. At the time of the scandal, President Clinton was very popular; suggesting that outside factors such as popularity can influence the public's response to scandal (Fischle, 2000). Other investigations into the Lewinsky scandal also showed that scandals may impact attitudes towards the President but not necessarily belief in his ability to effectively govern (Rottinghaus and Bereznikova, 2006). For example, in 1999 Arthur Miller argues that in the Lewinsky scandal the public was able to differentiate between the type of scandal and whether or not it spoke to President Clinton's ability to do his job (Miller, 1999). Miller also went to argue that other mitigating factors in the Lewinsky case included an at-least perceived overzealous prosecutor and media; and that trust in government is not altered by any particular political figure and is more of a reflection of how the public judges the broader aspect of government performance (Miller, 1999). After all, the second half of the Clinton presidency saw a strong economy and job growth, and although the public did not approve of Clinton's behavior, they remained satisfied with his overall performance. Why, however, did the public respond differently to the Watergate and Lewinsky scandals? President Nixon may not have had the charisma as President Clinton, but his approval ratings were high enough to earn another term. Furthermore, Nixon won re-election by a whopping margin, and defeated his opponent in 49 out of 50 states. President Clinton may have been

popular, but he never won national support to that extent, so the dissimilar reactions to both Presidents' scandal could not have all been about popularity. Taking a step back, why are some political leaders heavily scrutinized for scandals, while others seem to be able to rally support?

Assessing research on scandals: Past studies on scandals show why they are important for political scientist. Scandals influence voter opinion, candidate behavior, and faith in the political system. In addition, political scandals have always been and will always be a constant in American politics. No elected official is immune to the potential of being involved in a political scandal, and burgeoning careers have been thwarted by scandals.

Where prior scandal studies have fallen short is in explaining why scandals affect candidates differently. There is no mid-level theory that explains reactions to scandals across multiple contexts. There are electoral conditions in which we expect to see two officials treated equally for their involvement in scandals, but are not. The purpose of this study is to advance our understanding of why some officials survive a political scandal, while others do not. I develop a theoretical understanding of how a voter responds to scandals drawing on models of candidate evaluation and expectations. In addition, my theory also speaks to how candidate reputation and scandal specifics can influence voter response. By developing a better understanding of how general opinions are formed about public officials and

expectations a voter¹ places on them we can better understand why some politicians are held more accountable for scandals than others. The theoretical story I am presenting explains the process at the individual level, which will have testable implications for electoral consequences at the aggregate level. But before I elaborate on the details of my theory, I need to address what exactly a political scandal is. Some cases of alleged transgressions, such as Watergate and Lewinsky, are easily identifiable and there is no lack of consensus. But this is not always the case, and many times it is difficult to ascertain whether or not an illicit situation or alleged transgression of a public official warrants the term scandal.

What is a Political Scandal?

There is no consensus in defining scandal. The word “scandal” may invoke thoughts of illegality or unethical behavior. But labeling scandals as either illegal or unethical behavior is not straight forward and could be affected by the context of actions in question. According the on-line *Merriam Webster Dictionary* the definition of “illegal” is “not according to or authorized by law”. But it is debatable whether an act not sanctioned by law is a scandal. For example, in 1985 U.S. Sen. Lowell Weicker (R-CT) was arrested for protesting the South African embassy over South Africa’s policy on apartheid. In this particular case Senator Weicker did not hide the fact he was arrested and he may have known that would have been the inevitable outcome when he made the decision to protest. Given the definition of

¹ For the purposes of clarity and rhythm, I have arbitrarily assigned “the voter” when used in the singular form to feminine pronouns, and “public officials/representatives/candidates” when used in the singular form to masculine pronouns.

illegality, some may feel that Senator Weicker's actions are scandalous and below the standards they place on elected officials. Others, however, may be proud of the stance the senator took, and will not hold the consequences of these actions against him. There is uncertainty whether this particular event would be considered a scandal.

In addition, not all scandals may even include unethical behavior. According to the on-line *Merriam Webster's Dictionary* the definition of "unethical behavior" is "not conforming to accepted standards of conduct." In 2004, U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) made a joke about Gandhi working at a gas station. She said "he [Gandhi] ran a gas station in St. Louis for a couple of years." Senator Clinton later apologized and explained her statement as a "lame attempt at humor." This particular joke was playing off common stereotypes regarding gas station employees and their ethnicity. This statement fits the definition of "unethical behavior" because it was insensitive and offensive and not appropriate for a public official to make (satiric intent or not). Would a gaffe such as this constitute a scandal? Other public officials such as former U.S. Sen. Trent Lott (R-MS) and former U.S. Sen. George Allen (R-VA), although, have made insensitive comments that have in essence ended or damaged their careers.

But scandals are also not simply a function of negative constituent reactions regarding an offensive statement or action of a public official. A public official could take a very unpopular stance or vote on an issue, and may even lose an election as a consequence, but I still would not consider this action as a scandal. I have chosen to

use the definition elaborated by Thompson (2000:13-14). His definition is appropriate for my study because elements within the definition allow me to make definitive decisions with little subjectivity when deciding if a statement or action by a public official warrants being coded as a scandal. Thompson identifies the following criteria for a political scandal:

- “Incident involves the transgression of certain values, norms or moral codes.”
- “An element of secrecy concealment”, but is also “known or strongly believed to exist by individuals referred to as non-participants”
- “At-least some of the non-participants are offended” and “express disapproval for the incident”
- “The events or action may damage the reputation of those involved.”

I adopt this characterization of scandals because this framework allows making choices easily when deciding if actions such as those committed by Sen. Weicker or insensitive statements made by officials such as Sen. Clinton qualify as scandals. The first point about scandal being an incident involving a transgression of values or norms allows me to more clearly identify events as scandals. In the case of Sen. Weicker, even though he did not hide the fact he was arrested and many of his constituents may respect his right to protest, he still pushed his behavior to the point of being arrested. Protesting was not the transgression in this case, but rather protesting to the point that caused his arrest. Therefore the actions by Sen. Weicker would be considered a scandal, even though it may have been for a worthy cause.

Elaborating on the other points of the definition, the non-participants Thompson refers to would be the media and general public. A scandal cannot be a scandal without the public or a non-participant finding out. In addition, public officials would want to hide the nature of the scandals because they violate some sort of social norm and could potentially be penalized for it. The motivation of wanting to keep a scandal a secret is important. Also, for a scandal to exist, there has to be at least some acknowledgement that the alleged inappropriate behavior of the official is either offensive to the public, or is behavior that at least some members of the public view as not meeting a standard of decency. So, in the case Sen. Clinton, her statements were offensive and she even acknowledged that it was in poor taste. So her statement constituted a scandal even though she did not try to conceal that she made the statement. The final criterion is important because if the public official does not at least fear some reprobation, then there is no incentive to hide the event because of potential negative outcomes.

Understanding Voter Response to Scandal

Some politicians suffer as a result to political scandals and others do not. Although the past literature on scandals elaborate on the impact scandals may have, there is no mid-range theory that explains voter response to scandal. I argue voter response to scandals is in part a function of the expectations she places on public officials. What a voter expects out of a politician will vary and what she values will influence these expectations. These expectations are the reason why some voters react negatively to scandals and others do not. Because most of the scandal

literature focuses on the event itself or how scandals influence elections or attitudes, I need to turn to a different literature to investigate why there is a variation in how scandals influence elections or attitudes. As discussed, some politicians get heavily scrutinized by the public for scandalous behavior while others not as much. If the public is responding to some type of social norm violation, then all politicians would be equally punished for scandalous behavior but they are not. In addition, these discrepancies exist independent of party and popularity. Therefore, the question becomes: why isn't there a consistent reaction to scandal among voters?

The answer to this puzzle is in how voters develop expectations they place on public officials. I argue that members of the public do not hold all candidates or public officials to the same standards when evaluating his behavior. This is why some individual voter's opinions of elected officials will remain steadfast even if the official is involved in a criminal act, while other voters will develop negative opinions over a public official for something as frequent as reneging on a campaign pledge. My claim is that a negative evaluation of a public official is a function of him failing to meet the expectations of the electorate and not a negative judgment for violating a social norm (i.e. being involved in the scandal).

I argue that each voter has a baseline expectation she places on every public figure. As the voter learns more about the public official she will update her evaluations and the expectations she places on public officials. Voter expectations are a composite of two different factors: aggregate (expectations placed on all public

officials) and individual (expectations based off of an official's reputation).

Aggregate factors are general expectations we place on groups of people, in this case politicians. In other words we expect all public officials to do certain things (i.e. create laws, represent constituent interest, etc). And these expectations are independent of partisanship, gender, and other characteristics that could impact candidate evaluations. For example, if one day our legislators stopped making laws and doing their jobs, a voter would be upset regardless of her party affiliations or ideological allegiance . These are the types of expectations the public places on all leaders and they are the reasons the voter(s) punishes incumbents during hard economic times.

There are also individual factors in expectations that we place on certain individuals but not groups. Individual expectations are based on the candidate's reputation or the image a particular candidate wants to express. For example, I may expect the conservative U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) to advocate cutting taxes or liberal U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) to advocate raising taxes. Both senators have been steadfast in their position over the years. Although the Republican platform includes cutting taxes, not all Republicans feel as strongly about the issue as Sen. DeMint. Conversely, not all Democrats (Sen. Sanders caucuses with the Democrats) feel as strongly about raising taxes as Sen. Sanders. Imagine one day that both Senators DeMint and Sanders decided to vote the opposite of what we would expect them to do. There would be a lot of supporters of both Senators that would be upset.

I argue that the reaction to scandals is a similar process. I am assuming that everyone expects their public officials not be involved in scandals. But, I am sure many voters anticipate that some public officials will be more prone to scandals than others due to their reputation. Therefore, for those leaders that have a reputation for being prone to scandals the voter will alter the expectations she places on them opposed to a leader that has the reputation of being highly ethical. Consequently, when the politician with the scandalous reputation is eventually caught in a scandal, the voter is not as surprised, and, therefore, not as disappointed. Although the voter may not condone whatever the scandal is, her evaluation of the public official will not necessarily be dependent on the scandal. For example, the public always had a high expectation of Clinton's ability to handle the economy but low for Clinton's personal behavior, and as a result Clinton's past indiscretions may have helped him during the Lewinsky scandal (Just and Crigler, 2000). So to understand response to scandal we must understand what the voters' value, how they build expectations, what factors influence these expectations, and factors within the scandal that may enhance or mitigate its impact.

Building Expectations for Public Officials

I argue in evaluating public officials, what a voter deems as important will vary. In addition, the reputation of a candidate will also influence the types of expectations the voter places on that candidate. The reason why there is variation in voter response to political scandals is because the heterogeneity of values and the emphasis of these values the voters place on public officials; and the heterogeneity

in reputation among the public officials themselves. In attempting to build a mid-range theory of voter reaction to scandals I will turn to the literatures candidate impression formation and candidate expectation to establish how voters build expectations for public officials and to what extent public officials can influence these expectations.

Variation in voter impression formation: The process begins with the evaluation of candidates. When a voter is introduced to a candidate, she must decide if that candidate is a person she can support. To begin discussing the possible reasons the voter(s) will support a particular candidate; I turn to prior research on candidate evaluations. The literature on candidate evaluations underscores the heterogeneity of candidate impression formation. Classic candidate evaluation literature focuses on the factors that influence voting and the basis that voters evaluate candidates (Key, 1966; Downs, 1957). More contemporary studies have expanded this research and instead focused on the link between candidate character traits (McGraw and Steenbergen, 1995), issue positions (Sniderman et al., 1991), and how they aid the process of candidate evaluation. Conversely, others have found that voters do not rely on specific issues or policy positions when evaluating candidates but rather rely upon a summary of impressions they have of that candidate (Lodge et al., 1989; Zaller, 1992).

Choosing a candidate can be a dynamic process –simultaneously based on multiple factors, including partisanship, issues, and character traits (Kenney and Rice, 1988). Some studies find perceptions of candidate traits of candidates are

correlated with the certainty a voter has on the candidate's policy positions (Peterson, 2005). Other studies claim voters choose candidates on the basis of what issue they feel are important to them and which candidate speaks more directly to that issue, and not centrists who appear to agree with most people (MacDonald and Rabinowitz, 1993). Scholars have also found that voters place more emphasis on candidate competence than on other qualities such as charisma and being personable (Funk, 1997), and that political sophistication does not impact how the voters use character traits of a candidate in their evaluation of that candidate (Pierce, 1993). In addition, other factors such as electability can influence how a voter evaluates a public official (Steger, 2007). Isolating what factors voters use when deciding on political candidates is difficult. Voters use a variety of criteria, and the degrees to which they place anyone of these criteria on a particular candidate is uncertain and varies from voter to voter. In the context of political scandals, the degree to which a voter bases her opinions on moralistic behavior is uncertain. Whether a voter believes public officials should maintain high moral standards in addition to representing her interest will also vary.

Once the voters decide their preference, she will establish criteria in which to judge the official. Different criteria are used to evaluate candidates – voters combine both their expectations and situational cues when judging political candidates (Moskowitz and Stroh, 1996). Once a preference is formed, I argue the voter uses these as evaluations as criteria for her expectations of the candidate. If the voter chooses to support the candidate she is projecting an expectation on the candidate

or official, if elected. The voter builds an expectation profile and projects it onto the candidate. For example, this profile can include promises made by the candidate (i.e. reforming healthcare or cutting taxes) and can also include the imagery the candidate used to build their image. Shared values such as care for the environment and religious beliefs may be a part of this profile. For “values voters” this profile may include a candidate keeping their promise or pushing certain morals. For “economic voters” this profile may include the candidate maintaining or producing a robust economy. Although this process of establishing the criteria happens at the individual level, there are electoral consequences which I will test for in subsequent chapters.

Variation in candidate reputation: Voters have used multiple approaches in evaluating candidates. They have used an “every-day” standard where they opt for the candidate that is most like them or represents their values, and they have used the “super-human” standard in which they hold the candidate to a higher standard than themselves (Sullivan et al., 1990). Are voters, however, capable of placing the proper expectations on candidates or public officials? To what extent are public officials able to influence the expectations voters place on them? Past studies have shown that candidates themselves can influence voter expectations. Political officials can help mold expectations with their promises, past actions, claims about themselves, and the images they project (Haynes et al., 2002). Credit claiming is a common strategy that candidates use in seeking re-election (Mayhew, 1974).

Mayhew also argued that members of Congress can seek re-election by advertising

and position-taking (Mayhew, 1974). Although these are strategies candidates use to seek re-election, candidates behave in such a way they feel will influence the voter that they deserve to be re-elected.

In addition, more recent studies have found individual evaluations of candidate performance are in part a function of what they have claimed to accomplish in addition to the policies they have passed (McGraw et al., 1995). Imagery can also play a role in how the voter views a public official. Candidates, after all, do spend a lot of money trying to mold their image, and these images and promises during elections do affect and are built into the expectations voters place on them (Thomas, 1989). President Ronald Reagan was a master of using imagery to play into his reputation (Nuestadt, 1990). President Reagan used his experience as an actor and orator to help convince the public he was a strong decisive leader, and used camera more effectively than any president before him (Nuestadt, 1990). So, in addition to the variation in values the voters use in projecting expectation on public officials, the public officials themselves can also play a role in influences these expectations through the reputations they help build.

Once these expectations are established, I argue that failure to live up to these expectations can and do result in negative evaluations. This is why some public officials are not punished for being associated with major or multiple scandals and why other officials are punished for lesser inflections. Consequently, negative evaluations are not the result of violating a social norm (the scandal) but rather the failure of the official to abide by the expectations the voter places on

them. As noted it is possible that expectations of public officials may include abiding by social norms or rather we may expect our officials not to lie to us or do anything illegal. Therefore, if the official is caught in a scandal, negative evaluations may naturally arise. The politician, in this case, is not punished because they behaved badly, but because he did not behave how he was expected to (good). In other words, the variation of the electorates' response to scandals is the result of expectations individual voters place on public officials, built both by voter preferences and candidate reputation.

How the Actions of Many can Mitigate the Behavior of One

To summarize what I have said thus far, I argue that negative evaluations over scandals are a function of failed expectations. Individuals project expectations on politicians. These expectations will vary depending on the politician. Factors that could influence these expectations can be general expectations for all politicians (what the voters value and emphasize) or individual expectations (reputation) placed on one particular candidate/public official. When the public official fails to live up to the individual or general expectation, he is negatively evaluated. It is important to note that my theory does not speak to which type of expectation (individual or general) is dominant in a voter's mind or how expectations are formed. I am only assuming that these expectations exist and are a combination of both. Consequently, if a voter's general expectation about politicians is changed, it could have consequence for individual public officials just as for individual expectations. If one day all politicians ubiquitously became bastions for

moral stewardship, each voter would begin adjust their general expectation of politicians. Conversely, if one day it was discovered that all politicians were involved in a particular scandal this too would impact the general expectations of individuals. Past research suggests the best strategy for a politician involved in a scandal is to deny rather than apologize (Signal et al., 1988). I argue the better approach would be to manipulate the individual or general expectations of the voter. Manipulating individual expectations varies and depends on the voter and politician, but also includes details about the scandal as well. No two scandals are alike, but there are factors within scandals that I argue could mitigate its impact. In manipulating general expectations all the public official would need to do is convince the voter his behavior was not deviant for typical politician behavior, or in other words that there scandalous behavior is typical of all politicians. To help explain the difference between how a voter evaluates an individual or group dynamic in terms of a scandal, I turn to the literature on allocations of responsibility.

Allocation of Responsibility: In *the Responsible Electorate*, V.O. Key claims voters are capable of reasoned decision making; their vote choice is more than party or group-member allegiance (Key, 1966). Further research has tested Key's claim and have found that voters are capable of linking economic conditions to party control. Studies have shown being a member of the incumbent party of power only benefits candidates under conditions of economic success (Kramer, 1971). Some claim the further incumbents stray from the policy positions of their constituents the more likely they are to be defeated because voters expect candidates to

represent their policy interest (Wright, 1978). The voters' perception of responsibility is also contingent on institutional context (Rudolph, 2003). The more power the governing party has, the more likely the voters will place a higher level of responsibility on the governing party (Rudolph, 2003). Rudolph also finds that as the executive increases leverage over the state legislatures, the voters are also keen enough to incorporate this information in their evaluations and lay more responsibility at the governor(s) for economic conditions (Rudolph, 2003).

If one person is responsible for an entire branch of government, then identifying who to reward or punish in that branch of government is straight forward. Therefore, allocating responsibility for an individual scandal would be just as easy. If one member of Congress is the only person involved in a scandal, the voters would have little difficulty in deciding who to punish. In 1992 U.S. Sen. Bob Packwood (R-OR) was accused of sexual harassment. Because he was the only Senator involved, he solely was responsible for the scandal. As a result it would be easy for the voters to allocate responsibility for this case.

What if the scandal involves multiple participants? Is the allocation of responsibility just as easy? The literature on retrospective voting suggests otherwise. In a comparative study, Powell and Whitten find voters are more likely to allocate higher levels of responsibility to incumbents in majoritarian types of democracies than in parliamentary, while taking into account other contextual and electoral conditions (Powell and Whitten, 1993). In a majoritarian system, identifying responsibility is easy because it is clear who the majority party is. In

parliamentary systems, where the Prime Minister has to rely on coalition governments, identifying responsibility for unsuccessful policy becomes more complex (Powell and Whitten, 1993). The voters' perception of responsibility is also contingent on institutional context (Rudolph, 2003). The more power the governing party has the more likely the voters will place a higher level of responsibility to the governing party (Rudolph, 2003). Rudolph also find that as the executive increases leverage over the state legislatures, the voters are also keen enough to incorporate this information in their evaluations and lay more responsibility at the governor(s) for economic conditions (Rudolph, 2003). If one person is responsible for an entire branch of government, then identifying who to reward or punish in that branch of government is fairly simple.

For scandals, I argue the same logic applies. In 1989, the "Keating Five" savings and loan scandal originally broke. Because this scandal involved five senators as opposed to one, allocating responsibility was more difficult. Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and John Glenn (D-OH) went on to burgeoning political careers, while Senators Alan Cranston (D-CA), Don Reigle (D-MI), and Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) never ran for re-election. Another example is the House banking scandal. The House Banking scandal was an institution wide scandal in which most participants did not do anything illegal. Of the twenty-two members who were singled out over the scandal, ten of them were either defeated in the following election or did not regain their party's nomination. Although 10 of 22 members losing is high relative to normal House re-election rates, 12 members were still re-elected. Also, although

the House banking scandal provides an example of how politicians lost votes as a result of scandal, voters on the aggregate were disinclined to punish those involved and their outrage was mitigated by their prior views of the candidate (Dimock and Jacobson, 1995). Conversely, allocating responsibility for an individual scandal would be just as easy. If one member of Congress is the only person involved in a scandal, the voters would have little difficulty in deciding who to punish. In addition, it is clear the public official's behavior is not typical or commonly practiced by the majority of other politicians. In 1992 U.S. Sen. Bob Packwood (R-OR) was accused of sexual harassment. Because he was the only Senator involved, he solely was responsible for the scandal. As a result it was easy for the voters to know who to punish.

The Theory of Failed Expectations

I theorize that in order to understand voter response to scandal, we need to understand what expectations a voter places on public officials in question. I am presenting a mid-range theory to explain voter reactions to political scandal. There are three factors that I argue influence response to scandals: variation in voter what a voter values from their representatives (general expectations), candidate attributes or reputation (individual expectations), and how many public officials are involved in the scandal (allocation of responsibility). My theory predicts a voter will react negatively to a politician who violates her expectations, albeit either an individual or a general expectation. The voter uses individual and aggregate factors to build an expectation profile in which she places on a representative or candidate.

Individual factors can change depending on the politician's reputation. And aggregate factors are general expectations for all politicians based on what the voter values.

The reason why one public official can commit a transgression and not get punished, yet another can commit the same act and be punished is because the individual expectations may not be consistent across all public figures. For example, a voter may expect one politician to be true to his word but not another due to his reputation. So if the official whom the voter expects to tell the truth lies, then she will develop negative attitudes towards that official. If, however, another official the voter does not expect to tell the truth were to also lie, she will not respond as negatively (even though they may not approve of the act). Because voter beliefs vary, my theory does not speak to how much emphasis voters place on individual reputations of public officials opposed to general expectations for all public officials.

In addition to individual reputational factors, I argue that general factors will also influence how a voter responds to a public official involved in a scandal. These general factors are values that voters place on all public officials. If the details of the scandal somehow affect how the voter evaluates all public officials, then it can also influence how she responds to the scandal. In addition, some voters may place certain expectations on all politicians because of what she values. Some voters' value higher levels of moralism among all public officials, or some just may believe politicians should only be judged by their performance as a representative opposed

to how they behave personally. It is the combination of these general and individual expectations that a voter will use to build an expectation profile.

Finally, I argue that scandal involving more than one public official can mitigate the impact it has on any one particular participant because it is more difficult for a voter to allocate responsibility for the scandal. I argue that scandal reach can affect the expectations voters place on their representatives. If a public official is involved in a scandal that reaches multiple members of Congress, for example, the overall expectation of the public official is reduced because it gives the appearance that the official's behavior is not deviating from a typical member of Congress. The more politicians behave inappropriately, the more difficult it is for the voter to place sole responsibility on any one public figure. Just as Powell and Whitten showed in the differences in attitudes towards allocation of economic responsibility in parliamentary systems where it can sometimes become unclear who has the majority of power in a coalition government. In contrast, in a majoritarian government the power clearly falls at the feet of the President and the majority party. Although it may be unclear of who to punish in a coalition government where responsibility is divided, it is just as unclear as whom to punish in a scandal involving more than one public official because the voter does not know who deserves the majority of the blame.

Stated differently, the punishment for the various members involved becomes diluted. In the case of multi-member scandals the average voter is not sure if any one member/politician is really deviating from normal behavior. Conversely,

for individual scandals it is clear who deserves sole responsibility because there is only one person involved. In addition, it is also evident that this individual is deviating from typical politician behavior because, once again, they are the only one involved.

In sum, the various elements of my theory and predicted outcomes can be seen in figure A.

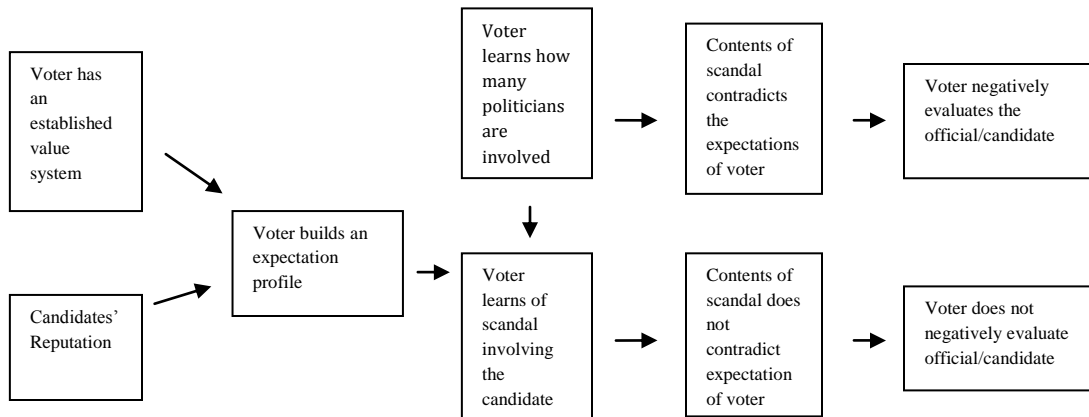


Figure A: Voter Evaluation Summary

The voter first evaluates the candidate by building an expectation profile incorporating her own values and the candidate/public official's reputation. The voter then learns of the scandal and the politician involved and whether the scandal involves more than one public official. If the scandal does involve more than one public official, then the voter will have a tougher time allocating responsibility minimizing the scandal's impact for any one participant. Aside from how many members this scandal may have, if the contents of the scandal contradict the

individual expectation the voter has of the public official, then the voter will develop a negative attitude of him. If, however, the scandal does not contradict the voter's expectation, then she will emphasize other criteria when evaluating this public official. In the next section I will briefly discuss the implications of my theory and how I will test them.

Implications and Empirical Tests

My theory has a variety of observable implications. There are testable implications focusing on the voter, the politician involved in scandal, and the particulars of the scandal itself. If a voter projects an expectation profile and a public official is negatively evaluated due to failing these expectations, then whatever makes up these expectations are the standard(s) to which the public official is held. So, if a voter believes strongly believes in marriage, and the politician is caught cheating on his spouse then the voter will develop a negative view of this public official. I can provide evidence for my theory by exposing a voter to a scandal and seeing if the reaction to the scandal is conditioned on how moralistic the voter is. The more moralistic the voter, the more they will hold their public officials to a higher moral standard.

In addition, I can also test my theory by focusing on the characteristics of a particular politician involved in the scandal. If the expectation profile the voter builds also includes elements of the politician's reputation, then if the public official somehow violates their own reputation the voter will be disappointed. For example, if the public official has the reputation of being a strong believer in egalitarianism

and is caught in a scandal regarding improper loans at a highly reduce rate, then the voter is more likely to develop a negative view of this official than if this official is not quite the same advocate of equality. If my predictions are correct we should expect to see politicians involved in scandal who fail their own standards to be more harshly evaluated than those who do not.

Finally, testing allocations of responsibility in joint scandals (involving more than one public official) versus individual scandals (involving the one politician) would also lend evidence to my theory. If voters have more difficulty allocating responsibility to scandals involving more than one public official as I predict, then participants in joint scandals will not be as harshly evaluated as those involved in an individual scandal. To test these various implications I have constructed a database of scandals and electoral outcomes. In addition, I also test these implications at an individual level of analysis using survey data and test for causality using an experiment. For the three identified testable implications of my theory (voter values, candidate reputation, and how voters allocate responsibility for scandals), I will test each twice in subsequent chapters.

Database: I have constructed a database of scandals and electoral outcomes. Using the Lexis-Nexis search engine, I identify scandals involving Senators between the years 1985 and 2008. I will then test to see if the voters treat public officials in individual scandals different electorally than those involved in multi-member scandals, while controlling for other factors. This will test the allocation of responsibility implications of my theory. In addition, I will also test if senators who

have a scandal history are treated any differently electorally than those who do not. This test will provide evidence toward the candidate reputation implications of my theoretical story. The details of the scandal database, the search parameters, measures, variables, model, and results will be presented in Chapter 3.

Survey: I use a survey from the Princeton Survey Research Associates International published by *Newsweek* Magazine in March 2007 to test individual voter attitudes. The scandal database allows me to test electoral outcomes at the aggregate level but does not provide any evidence for changes in individual attitudes. A public opinion survey provides me this opportunity. Using this survey, I will test if response to candidates involved in extramarital affairs is conditioned by how much the individual voter values marriage. In addition, I will also test to see if how much a candidate emphasizes marriage in their image also alters reactions to him when involved in a sex scandal. The details of the survey, measures, variables, model, and results will be presented in Chapter 4.

Experiments: The database and survey provide both an aggregate level and individual level of analysis for the various implications of my theory. But my theory explains how a particular voter's attitude about a public official involved in a scandal will change as a function of her attitude, the public official's reputation, and how many participants are involved in the scandal. Although the database and survey provide a good starting point, neither method is sufficient in explaining a causal story, which my theory attempts to do. Therefore, for the final empirical test, I devise an experiment that allows testing for causality. I have designed an

experiment where I to test to see if respondents react differently to those public officials involved in a joint scandal opposed to an individual scandal. Furthermore, by using a pre-test for the experiment I am able to account for how moralistic a voter is, which will allow me to test the extent in which individual voter values influence reaction to scandals. Details about the experiment's procedure, the pre and post test, treatment conditions, measures, variables, model, and results will be presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3: ELECTORAL OUTCOMES AS A FUNCTION OF SCANDAL

INVOLVMENT AND CANDIDATE REPUTATION

Why does the public electorally punish some politicians for their scandalous behavior and statements and not others? There are numerous examples when the public does not hold scandalous behavior against their representatives, but conversely punish others who are involved in scandals. For example, U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) was implicated in numerous scandals but continuously was re-elected. In addition, U.S. Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV) has been implicated in numerous scandals but still maintains high levels of popularity in his state. Conversely, U.S. Sen. Brock Adams (D-WA) was involved in a political scandal alleging he sexually assaulted. Eventually other women corroborated the allegation, which eventually led to his retirement despite his popularity among his colleagues and fellow Democrats. Also, U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns (R-MO) was unable to survive the implications that he was a part of the famous Abramoff “pay to play” scandal despite being from a very conservative state and having a strong conservative voting record. Many other popular political figures not only survive scandal but maintain political strength during them. Scandals plagued both the Clinton and Nixon administration. President Nixon resigned the office of the presidency as a result, and even though President Clinton was only the second president in history to be impeached the public rallied behind him immediately after his impeachment. The public’s reaction to scandals historically has been paradoxical, especially scandals involving U.S. Senators. Deciphering why voters respond to scandals differently can provide

insights about the impact that scandals have on elections and the electorates' attitudes towards politicians.

In previous chapter I posed the question do individuals respond differently depending on how many representatives are involved in a scandal? I argue that the number of public officials involved in a scandal can mitigate its impact. Specifically I argue that individual voters are more likely to develop negative attitudes towards politicians involved in an individual scandal opposed to a joint scandal. I argue that for individual scandals (one participant) allocating responsibility is fairly easy for the voter whereas in a joint scandal (more than one participant) the voter does not know who deserves the majority of responsibility or blame. Furthermore, the more politicians involved in a joint scandal will negate the scandals impact because the voter's expectation for all politicians will be reduced. Consequently, individual politicians have a lower expectation to live up to so when they are involved in the scandal the voter is less likely to be surprised and disappointed. In this chapter, I will be building on my theory of voter response to scandal as a function of voter expectations by testing electoral outcomes. Although electoral outcomes do not necessarily measure voter attitudes, they can be however, the result of shift in voter attitudes. To do this I have built a database of senatorial elections and scandals. I will test to see if the phenomenon I have provided evidence for in the prior chapter has electoral implications in the real world.

Electoral Consequences of Scandals and Voter Expectations

To recap, I theorize that in order to understand voter response to scandal, we need to understand what expectations a voter places on public officials in question. I predict a voter will react negatively to a politician who violates their expectation. I argue that voters collect information about a public official and build an expectation profile based on what the voter values and also on some of the promises and image the public official wishes to convey. In addition, there are two different types of expectations the voter will use when building this expectation profile: individual and aggregate. An individual expectation is one a voter places on a particular candidate which is helped established by the candidate's reputation. Candidate's promise certain things and try to convey a particular image. The voter uses this information to help build the expectations they chose to place on the candidate or representatives. General expectation is one that a voter places on all public officials and is built upon what the voter values in all public officials. These expectations are the values that the voter believes all public candidates should adhere to and can include qualities such as honesty, integrity, or competence. When evaluating a public official in response to scandal voters may alter how much responsibility they believe the official should take. If the scandal involves only one public official, allocating responsibility is straight forward. If, however, the scandal involves more than one public official how much responsibility each participant should have is reduced or mitigated.

I theorize that the reason we see variation in response to political scandals is because of these individual and general expectations, and how many participants a scandal involves. The reason why one public official can be involved in a scandal and not get punished, yet another public official can be involved in a similar scandal and be punished, is because the voters may place different individual expectations on each politician. For example, a voter may expect one politician to be faithful to his wife, in part, because this public official is an advocate of traditionalism and family values. So if this official commits infidelity, then the voter will be more likely to develop negative attitudes of this official than of another politician who also commits the same transgression but does not openly advocate faith or family values. Because these expectations vary from person to person, I am only assuming they exist. My theory does not speak to how they are built or weighted by any individual voter.

In addition to individual expectations based on candidate reputation, I also argue that general expectations based on what the voter values will also influence how a voter responds to a public official involved in a scandal. If the particulars of the scandal affect how the voter evaluates all public officials, then it may also influence how the voter responds to that scandal. I also argue that scandal reach (the number of public officials involved) can affect the expectations a voter places on their representative. If a public official is involved in a scandal that involves more than one member of Congress, the overall expectation of the public official is reduced because it gives the appearance that all public officials behave this way and

any official's behavior is not deviating from the norm. In other words, the more politicians behave inappropriately, the more difficult it is for the voter to place sole responsibility on any one public figure.

Drawing from the literature on allocation of responsibility, Powell and Whitten find voters are more likely to allocate higher levels of responsibility to incumbents in majoritarian than parliamentary democracies (Powell and Whitten, 1993). Identifying who is responsible for economic conditions under a coalition government is more difficult than in a majoritarian democracy because it is clear who the majority party is (Powell and Whitten, 1993). In addition, other studies find the more power the governing party has; the more likely the voters are to place a higher level of responsibility on the governing party (Rudolph, 2003). I argue that just as it is unclear who to punish in a coalition government where responsibility is divided, it is just as unclear as whom to punish in a scandal involving more than one public official because the voter does not know who deserves the most responsibility. In other words, multi-member scandals mitigate the impact on any one individual member because the general expectation of all politicians is lowered. This in turn lowers the standard that all politicians must live up to.

To test these theoretical predictions I will use electoral outcomes, survey data, and experiments. The electoral outcomes will test the real world consequences to scandal involvement as a function of candidate reputation and how many participants are involved in the scandal. In addition, I will also use survey data to test voter if scandals cause voter attitudes to alter as a function of candidate

reputation (individual expectations) and voter values (general expectations). Finally, I will use experiments to test if there is a causal relationship between scandals as a function of what the voter values and how many participants are involved in the scandal.

For this chapter I will be testing electoral outcomes as a function of candidate reputation and how many participants are involved in a scandal. Specifically I will be using a database of U.S. Senate elections from 1986 to 2008 to test if the public allocates different levels of responsibility for individual and joint scandals and if candidates who have a scandal history are evaluated differently than those who do not. I will test to see if Senators involved in an individual scandal have a higher chance of being defeated than Senators involved in a joint scandal. I predict that voters are more likely to punish Senators if they are involved in an individual scandal opposed to a joint scandal. I argue this change in reaction is a function of the reduced expectations a joint scandal would bring. If more public officials are involved in a joint scandal the more likely we would observe the voters' general expectation of all politicians to be lowered. This would mitigate the impact the scandal would have on any one member, because the more members that are involved in a joint scandal gives the appearance that any particular participant is not deviating from typical politician behavior. Consequently, the voter will be less likely to use this information against the politician in the next election and, therefore, the Senator in question has a higher likelihood of being re-elected (after controlling for other relevant factors).

In addition, I will also be testing if Senators with a history of scandal have a more difficult time being re-elected than those who do not have a scandal history. If a Senator has a history of scandal the voter will use that information in their individual expectation evaluation. Although the Senator may not advertise their scandal history, the voter will nevertheless, use this information when placing expectations on the official. Senators with a scandal history will develop a reputation of being susceptible to political scandal, just as a Senator who votes for tax reductions would develop a reputation for being against taxes. I predict that Senators with a scandal history have a greater likelihood of being re-elected even if involved in an individual scandal. Because of the Senator's scandal history, the voter will be less surprised over his involvement and will therefore not place as much value on that information when evaluating him. In other words, the voter will be less surprised over the Senators behavior because of his history scandal.

Hypotheses and Model

After the voters evaluate a candidate, they will build an expectation profile of him. As noted, this expectation profile will be a composite of both individual expectations based on the candidate's reputation and general expectations based on what the voter values. If a politician does not violate any part of this expectation profile, he will not be negatively evaluated, and conversely, if he does violate the profile, he will be negatively evaluated. In addition, the contents of the scandal – specifically how many participants it has – can also influence the voter response. If a public official is involved in an individual scandal, assuming the scandal violates

the voters' expectation of the public official, they will be negatively evaluated. If the public official, however, is involved in a joint scandal, the voter will have more difficulty in knowing how to allocate responsibility and the impact of anyone participant will be mitigated. The voters will more likely to view this particular scandal as "normal political behavior", and will less likely hold this behavior against the public official (although they may not personally condone the behavior). As a consequence, they will be less likely to negatively evaluate the politician(s) involved.

If my theoretical premise is confirmed, we should expect to see a senator involved in an individual scandal to be negatively evaluated, and therefore, punished electorally. In this case, the voters will have no difficulty allocating full responsibility for the scandal on the only participant involved and will vote against him. So, if the null hypothesis is that voters respond negatively to all scandals (including individual scandals), and punish their representatives accordingly, then we seek to accept the null hypothesis in our first test because a senator involved in an individual scandal will have violated the voters' expectations and have a greater likelihood of not being re-elected.

Hypothesis 1: Other things equal, if a senator is involved in an individual scandal the voter will not have difficulty allocating responsibility for that scandal, and consequently, he will have a greater likelihood of not being re-elected.

Conversely, if the candidate is involved in a joint scandal, we should expect to see no difference between these types of elections and elections not involving a political scandal at all. The voters will have difficulty in allocating responsibility, and consequently, will be less critical of those who are involved in the joint scandal.

Even though the voter may be adjusting their response for all public official(s) involved as a function of diffused responsibility, she is also now holding their officials to different standards because the more public officials involved in a scandal the less it appears any one participant is deviating from normal/typical political behavior. As a result, the voters will be less likely to develop a negative response towards that senator(s), and will treat the election no different than any other. Therefore, we should not expect to see statistical significance in electoral outcomes for elections involving a senator in a joint scandal than for an election involving an incumbent senator not involved in a scandal. For the second hypothesis we should expect to reject the null that all scandals affect electoral outcomes equally.

Hypothesis 2: Other things equal, if a senator is involved in a joint scandal, the voter will have more difficulty allocating responsibility for that scandal, and then the electoral outcome will not be changed from that of an election not involving a scandal.

Because voters will reduce their allocation of responsibility for scandals involving more than one senator, then how would the voters respond to a senator who has been involved in more than one scandal? Thus far I have argued how voters allocate responsibility for senators involved in a joint scandal differs from those involved an individual scandal. But as I have noted it is possible for individual expectations (those placed on the politician as politician function of their reputation) can also affect these expectation profiles as well. There is a condition in the database that I can test for the individual expectation of a politician. If a Senator has a history of scandal, then this history will become a part of his reputation. So, in

this case the voters will alter their expectation profiles for only this public official as a function of their reputation and not all public officials in general. In other words, if a senator is involved in more than one scandal over their career, then the voters will not be surprised by the scandalous behavior. As a result, their expectations will not be failed when the more recent scandal arrives, and at the least we should not expect to see the voters treat this senator(s) any differently than one not involved in a scandal. So, we should not expect to see any negative evaluations over failed expectations for senators who both have a scandal history and are now involved in an individual scandal. Therefore, there should be no electoral difference between senators who have a reputation of scandal, and are involved in an individual scandal, and those senators who have no history of scandal.

Hypothesis 3: If a senator has a scandal history and therefore a reputation for scandals, there will be no significant relationship between individual scandals and general electoral outcomes.

To test these hypotheses I will employ three different statistical models. For each model I will test all three hypotheses and will note each hypotheses test will a corresponding letter matching it to the statistical test (i.e. hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a for the first statistical test; hypotheses 1b, 2b, and 3b for the second hypotheses test; and hypotheses 1c, 2c, and 3c for the third statistical test). Since electoral outcome is my independent variable, I will be using a logit regression model for each statistical test. After controlling for alternative explanations that can affect electoral outcomes, the first set of tests will be conducted using a basic logistic regression.

I recognize that any given senatorial election within a distinct election cycle may not be independent of each other (despite the inclusion of control variables aimed at capturing other factors that can influence electoral outcomes) due to electoral conditions that can affect one particular election cycle (i.e. a wave of an anti-incumbent sentiments). To account for this possibility, I relax the assumption that each election within a given cycle is independent of each other. Therefore the next statistical test I impose is a logistic regression model while clustering around election cycle. For example, even though a senatorial election in Wyoming is independent of a senatorial election in New Jersey (after all there are different candidates who are voted on by different voters) there are national attitudes and sentiments that can influence both elections. The logistic regression model including the cluster variable will help account for these intervening sentiments and attitudes.

Finally, for the third statistical test I impose an even tougher model taking into account sentiments and attitudes within a given election cycle and potential state-level characteristics that may influence how voters within a state react to a scandal. Therefore, for the third statistical test I will impose logistic regression modeling adding in fixed effects for potential sentiments and attitudes within a given election cycle, and random effects for various state-level characteristics that may influence how the voting public within a state reacts to political scandals. I will discuss each model in more detail later in this chapter when I present the findings

for each statistical test. As noted earlier, to conduct these tests I have built a database of senatorial elections and scandals ranging from 1985 to 2009.

U.S Senate Scandal Database, 1985-2009

To test these hypotheses, I have constructed a database of scandals and electoral outcomes for all United States Senate elections. Adhering to the definition of scandal used in this project, I have identified 216 total scandals from January 1st, 1985 to Dec 31st, 2009. Because I am ultimately testing electoral outcomes, I chose a source that voters should have access to in identifying the scandals – newspapers. As a result of using a fairly broad definition of scandal, some scandals are easily recognizable to political scientists while some scandals are fairly obscure. Some of the more famous senatorial scandals include the “Keating Five” savings and loans scandal, the “House Banking” scandal, the more recent Abramoff “pay to play” scandal, and highly publicized sexual harassment scandal involving U.S. Sen. Robert Packwood (R-OR) that eventually lead to his expulsion. Some of the more obscure or forgotten scandals include U.S. Sen. Jessie Helms making comments towards then President Bill Clinton that many interpreted as threatening comments towards the president, a scandal involving U.S Senator Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) where he allegedly used his position to get privileged access to Mount Rushmore, and the discovery that U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX) in 1988 was a member of an all white social club.

To identify each scandal, I used the Lexis-Nexis newspaper article database. Using the search engine function, I conducted a key word-search on the word “senator” for all U.S. newspapers articles and wire services with the following terms

appearing within five words before or after the keyword: *scandal, ethic(s), investigate, probe, indict, bribe, prison, guilty, sex, corrupt, and resign*. Due to the extensive search parameters, I read through tens of thousands of newspaper articles searching for relevant information. Many newspaper articles I encountered involved the professional baseball team the Washington Senators and any bill or legislation debated on or passed in the Senate addressing ethics or any type of investigation. The main goal of the search was to identify enough scandals that would allow me to perform fairly extensive statistical tests that would include numerous control variables which will enable me to test for alternative explanations. Included in the database is information on when the scandals occurred (to the month), the senator(s) involved, and the type(s) of scandals.

After identifying the scandals, I included the contents of the scandal in the database. Once all the scandals were identified, I performed another keyword search on each scandal, counting the amount of newspaper articles from the *New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today*, and all Associated Press Newswires mentioning the scandal. This raw count is used as a scandal visibility variable in my paper. For example some scandals such as the Keating-Five and the Abramoff pay to play scandal had hundreds of newspaper articles written about them. Conversely, some of the more obscure scandals involving gaffes (such as Senator Hillary Clinton's 7-11 ethnic joke) and allegations of improper book deals only had a one or a couple of articles written about them. The next set of variables includes electoral information. Since electoral outcomes will be my independent variable, information

for *all* senate elections between 1986 and 2008 were merged into the database. I have identified a total of 519 Senate elections in that time frame. In addition, I have also included information on the electoral outcomes of each Senate race including: the incumbent senator's party identification, what senators were up for election in a given year or the cohort they are a member of, the time removed from the scandal (to the month), and electoral outcomes.

The final set of variables includes measures that will account for general electoral conditions that may influence electoral outcomes, enhance, or detract from the probability of the incumbent senator being reelected. For example, I have included variables whether the election was in a presidential year because presidential election years receive much higher turnout rates than off presidential years. In addition, I have also included variables for presidential approval ratings and if the senators were of the same party as the executive. This will help capture potential presidential coattails affects or, perhaps, negative affects an unpopular president will have on those who are a member of the same political party. In other words, these measures will allow me to create proxies for other general electoral conditions that may affect an outcome.

Finally, I have included state-level characteristics that may affect electoral outcomes. Arguments can be made that state level affects (albeit historically or culturally) may influence how the public responds to political scandals. Borrowing measures from *American Federalism: a View from the States*, I included Daniel Elazar's classification for political culture at the state level. Elazar argues that there

are three dominant state level cultures: moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic (Elazar, 1972). For example, the public from a moralistic state may emphasize different norms when evaluating public officials than those from either an individualistic or traditionalistic state. These additional variables will allow me to account for state-level characteristics that may affect political outcomes independent of party ID, electoral conditions, and scandalous behavior. As noted, I will continue to build upon this database by including more cases in future elections as they become available, and also include more electoral variables if/as they become relevant.

Variables and Measures

To test the hypotheses I have constructed a dichotomous variable for electoral outcomes of U.S. Senate elections from 1985 to the present, coded 1 for re-election and 0 for not. In addition, I treat incumbents who have retired as not being re-elected (and consequently are coded as 0). If I included a dummy variable for retirees there would be 100% correlation between retirees and election outcomes. Furthermore, I make no assumption for the reasons why the senator retired. Some senators retire because of the scandal while others retire for different reasons. The model treats these outcomes the same as any normal election outcome not involving scandal. Therefore if a senator does retire because of a scandal, then this result would strengthen whatever finding I do have. These electoral outcomes will serve as my dependent variable in the model.

I have also included dummy variables for both individual and joint scandals. In the period between 1985-2009, I have identified 52 joint scandals and 162 individual scandals. If any politician is accused of the same indiscretion within a month's time, it is coded as a joint scandal. For example, both U.S. Sen. Kent Conrad (D-ND) and U.S. Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT) were accused in the same month of getting preferential treatment in a VIP loan from Countrywide Financial, Inc. In addition, if a joint scandal has already broken, and senators are implicated later, I still coded it as a joint scandal. An example of this is the Abramoff "pay-to-play" scandal where lobbyist Jack Abramoff was accused of buying political favors with campaign contributions. As the scandal evolved over an eight month period, more and more senators were implicated forcing them to either give back or donate the contributions to charity. My theory predicts that individual scandal variable will be negative and significant, and the joint scandal variable will be insignificant, signifying individual scandal will significantly reduce the probability of being re-elected and a joint scandal will have no significant difference.

For testing my third hypotheses I coded each senator who has been involved in more than one scandal between the test periods. I also created a dummy variable for senators who had been involved in more than one scandal during their career. Then, I interact the scandal history dummy with individual scandals. This allows me to see if the voters treat senators with a scandal history any differently, even if the more recent scandal involves only one senator. I am arguing that if the senator has a history of scandals, then this would alter the expectations the voter places on him or

her. So, when the senator gets involved in another scandal, the voters will be less likely to have their expectations failed, and will be less likely to hold the more recent individual scandal against their representative.

I have included a control variable for scandals relating to extra-marital affairs or sex. These types of scandals also include allegations of sexual harassment. All the scandals sex scandals I have identified are individual scandals. To obviate any concern that my findings are a function of sex scandals and not individual scandals I have chosen to control for them. In addition, sex scandals do command a lot of media attention and because of the visibility of sex scandals I differentiate them from other types of scandals. For example the recent “sexting” scandal involving Congressman Anthony Weiner (D-NY) has dominated the news coverage throughout the month of June, 2011. Consequently, Anthony Weiner has become a household name as well as his actions. In addition, I also have created a scandal visibility variable. Scandals that draw more media attention could also draw more scrutiny. Therefore, after collecting the scandals, I performed another key word search in Lexis-Nexis for selected newspapers and the AP newswires, and performed a raw count of articles or press-wires mentioning both the scandal and the senator(s) involved.

In addition, prior research has found that time removed from a scandal does impact how the voters will evaluate a candidate and whether or not they choose to vote for him or her (Miller, 2010). Simply, voters who do not remember a scandal(s) will not use it in their evaluations of a candidate. Theoretically, if a

senator was involved in a scandal his or her first term, there is a chance their constituents will have forgotten this information five to six years later. To obviate this concern, I have included a control variable for time removed from scandal. Also, how the scandal is handled by the Senate Ethics committee may mitigate its overall impact. If the Senate Ethics Committee, for example, decides to conduct an investigation the scandal and its participants may draw more media attention, especially if the outcome is not favorable. Also, if the Ethics Committee clears those allegedly involved, the voters may also absolve them as well. I control for both possibilities.

There are also factors outside of scandals and types of scandals that effect elections and need to be included in my model. The senator's political affiliation may affect election outcome, so I include a control variable for party identification. Since senators are elected for six year terms, most senators who run for re-election in a off presidential year won their previous election during a presidential year and vice versa. The only exceptions are those senators who were appointed or won their seat in a special election. Because presidential years have higher turnout, I control for whether the senatorial election took place during a presidential or not.

I also control for the popularity for the President, which may also impact a senator's chance of re-election, especially if the Senator shares the same party as the President. Historically, in off-presidential election years, the President's party loses seats in Congress, although this was not the case in 2002. Therefore, I constructed three variables to capture a potential drag or bounce the President may have on the

Congressional ballot. Using dummy variables, I first control for senators who share the same party as the President in power. I then control for presidential popularity. If the President's approval is 50% or above, I coded the variable as 1, and if the President's approval is below 50%, I coded the variable as 0. I then interact the two dummy variables, which allows me to account for the cases where a senator shares the same party as the President, and will get a boost because of the President's popularity. This interaction will allow me to control for the potential drag or bounce the unpopular or popular president can have on the senatorial election.

Finally, I include a control variable for state characteristics. This will allow me to control for any state-level characteristics that may be driving any electoral outcome. Borrowing from the American Pluralism literature, I use Daniel's Elazar's measure of state-level political culture. Elazar argues that each US state has a distinct unchanging political culture. He develops a measure of political culture (moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic), which are found to be robust (Elazar, 1972). Elazar argues that each type of political culture yields different values that affect electoral behavior. For example, voters in a state with a moralistic political culture may respond differently to a political scandal than voters from an individualistic state. If voters from a moralistic state look upon government as a positive force in their lives, then they would be more likely to respond negatively to scandals. Conversely, if voters from an individualistic state view government in very narrow skeptic terms, they would be less surprised over a scandal because of their initial skepticism over public officials in the first place. Further studies have tested

these measures and have also found them to be viable (Johnson, 1976; Sharkansky, 1969; Morgan and Watson, 1991).

Findings

For the first statistical test of my theory I use the logit regression model because I code the re-election variable dichotomously. I report the coefficients and parameter standard errors in Table 1. The coefficients for the all the variables of interests are both in the expected direction and are statistically significant when predicted to be so. Consequently, I am able to confirm hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a. The findings in Table 1 provide evidence that voters fundamentally treat senators involved in scandal differently depending on how many public officials the scandal includes. If the scandal includes more than one public official, there appears to be little effect on re-electoral chances, and if the scandal involves only one senator, there appears to be a significant effect on a senator's electoral chances.

Table 1: Electoral Outcomes, using a Logit Regression Model

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Coefficients</u> <u>(Standard Errors)</u>
Individual scandal	-1.241* (0.590)
Joint scandal	-0.014 (0.522)
Scandal propensity	0.944 (0.933)
Scandal propensity*Individual scandal	0.486 (1.090)
Sex Scandal	0.066 (0.848)
Scandal Visibility	0.001 (0.003)
Time removed from Scandal	-0.025 (0.123)
Presidential election cycle	-0.179 (0.224)
Presidential approval	-0.305 (0.373)
Same party as President	-0.743+ (0.424)
Same Party as President*Presidential approval	0.441 (0.495)
GOP	-0.095 (0.239)
Ethics Committee cleared	-1.118 (0.733)
Ethics Committee penalty	-1.617* (0.766)
Individualistic	0.324 (0.257)
Moralistic	-0.051 (0.303)
Constant	1.407** (0.368)
Observations	410
Pseudo R^2	0.047

Standard errors in parentheses; + p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

Holding other variables constant at their mean values, the probability of a senator being re-elected who was not involved in any scandal between 1986 and 2008 is 0.761. The coefficient for individual scandals is -1.241, significant at a 0.05 p-value. Interpreting the coefficients, when a senator is involved in an individual

scandal, the probability of being re-elected is about 0.52. This is a difference of approximately 0.24. So, for those senators involved in an individual scandal, the chance of being re-elected is reduced from 76.1% to 52.0%, which is a difference of 24.1% (illustrated in Figure A). In other words, whereas a typical incumbent has a very good chance of getting elected, a senator involved in an individual scandal has his chance of getting re-elected reduced to about half.

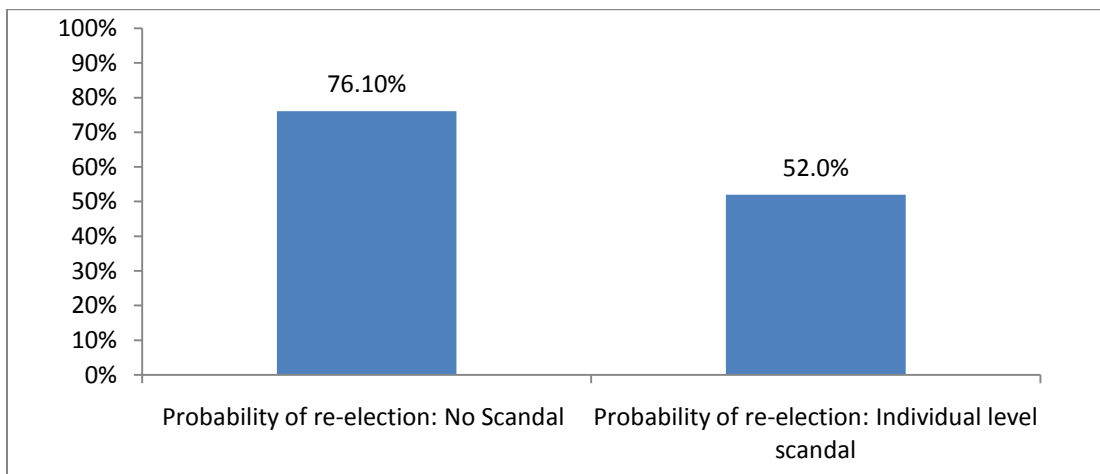


Figure A: Probability for Re-Election: No Scandal vs. Individual scandal (Logit Regression model)

For those senators who are involved in a joint scandal, the likelihood of being re-elected is almost the same as for those who are not involved in a scandal. Recall that the likelihood for senators not involved in any scandal to be re-elected is 0.761 or 76.1%. The coefficient for the joint scandal variable is -0.014 and, as predicted, the coefficients are not statistically significant. The likelihood of a senator involved in a joint scandal of being re-elected is 0.759 or 75.9%. In other words, the senator

involved in a joint scandal is only 0.2% less likely to be re-elected than those who are not involved in any scandal. The differences in probability are illustrated in Figure B.

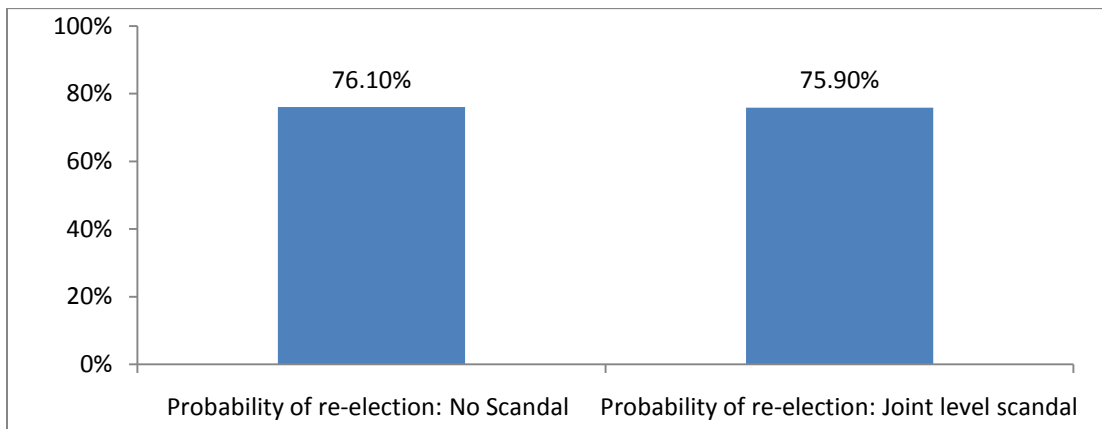


Figure B: Probability for Re-Election: No Scandal vs. Joint scandal (Logit Regression Model)

The final variable of interest is the interaction between senators who have a history of political scandals and are also involved in an individual scandal. I argue that negative evaluations and their electoral consequences are a function of failing the voters' individual expectations, in addition to general expectations. If a scandal involved more than one senator, the voters' overall expectation for public officials in general will be lowered. As a result, there are fewer expectations the senator(s) has to live up to. If the scandal involves only the one senator the voters are more likely to negatively evaluate that official, and, consequently, lose the election because of his failure to abide by the same rules that other public officials adhere to. However, if a senator has a scandal history, my theory predicts that the voters will have

already incorporated this information in their evaluations of him. Therefore, it will not matter if the scandal involves other public officials or not. I find if a senator has a history of scandalous behavior and is involved in an individual scandal; his chance of reelection is not significantly different than typical election not involving any scandals. The coefficient is 0.486 and not statistically significant. Holding all other control variables at the mean, the chances of being re-elected is 0.737 or 73.7%. A comparison to a typical election not involving any scandal is illustrated in Figure C. The likelihood for re-election is only about 2.4% less for a senator with a scandal history associated with an individual scandal than a typical incumbent with no scandal history and not involved in any scandal.

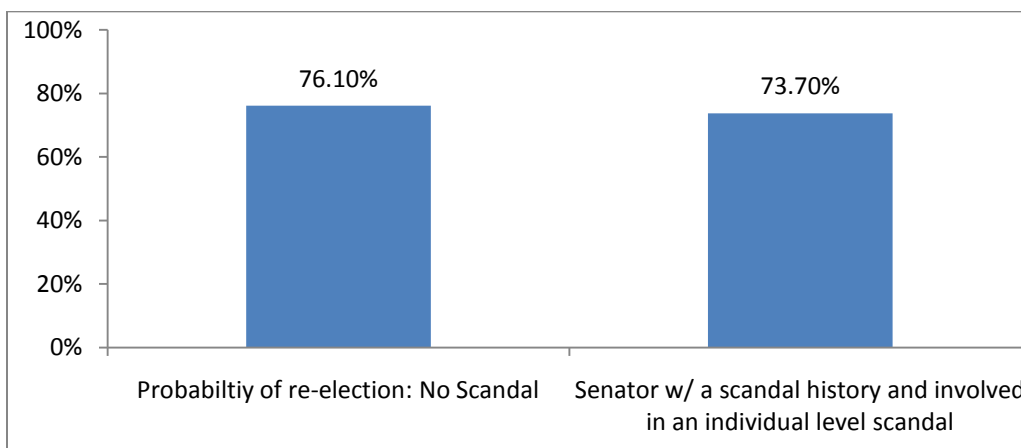


Figure C: Probability for Re-Election Conditioned on Individual Scandal: Senator with a Scandal history vs. Senator with no Scandal history (Logit Regression Model)

For the next statistical test I use the same logit regression model but cluster around election cycles. This clustering allows me to loosen the assumption that

each observation is independent of each other. Even though senatorial elections involve different candidates with different voting populations, there are electoral conditions, such as anti-incumbent sentiments, that can permeate all elections in a given cycle. The clustering will help to account for these types of occurrences. And just as for the first statistical test, I am able to confirm all three of my hypotheses for the second statistical test. I report the coefficient and standard errors in Table 2.

Table 2: Electoral Outcomes, using a Logit Regression Model while Clustering around election cycle

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Coefficients</u> <u>(Standard Errors)</u>
Individual scandal	-1.241** (0.456)
Joint scandal	-0.014 (0.349)
Scandal propensity	0.944 (0.893)
Scandal propensity*Individual scandal	0.486 (0.959)
Sex Scandal	0.066 (0.510)
Scandal Visibility	0.001 (0.002)
Time removed from Scandal	-0.025 (0.118)
Presidential election cycle	-0.179 (0.243)
Presidential approval	-0.305 (0.435)
Same party as President	-0.743* (0.324)
Same Party as President*Presidential approval	0.441 (0.356)
GOP	-0.095 (0.185)
Ethics Committee cleared	-1.117+ (0.655)
Ethics Committee penalty	-1.617 (1.159)
Individualistic	0.324 (0.282)
Moralistic	-0.051 (0.283)
Constant	1.407** (0.455)
Observations	410
Pseudo R^2	0.047

Standard errors in parentheses

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

The coefficients for the clustered model are almost identical to the previous statistical test. The coefficients for individual scandals are -1.24, and are significant at a 0.01 p-value, which is a slight improvement over the previous model. This

means that when a senator is involved in an individual scandal, the probability of being re-elected is about 0.521. This is a difference of approximately 0.24. The comparisons in probabilities for hypotheses 1b, 2b, and 3b are illustrated in Figures D through F. So for those senators involved in an individual scandal, the chance of being re-elected is reduced from 76.1% to 52.1%, which is just fewer than 24%. Once again for Senators involved in a joint scandal, the probability of re-election is almost identical than for those senators not involved in a scandal at all. Once again, the chances of being re-elected while being involved in a joint scandal is 75.9%, whereas the probability for being re-elected while not being involved in any scandal is 76.1%. This is the almost the same result I obtained in the first statistical model. And finally, senators involved in a individual scandal that have a prior history of being involved in scandal have almost the same chance of being re-elected as those who are not involved in any scandal. The likelihood for re-election is only about 2.4% less for a senator with a scandal history involved in an individual scandal than for an incumbent senator with no scandal history.

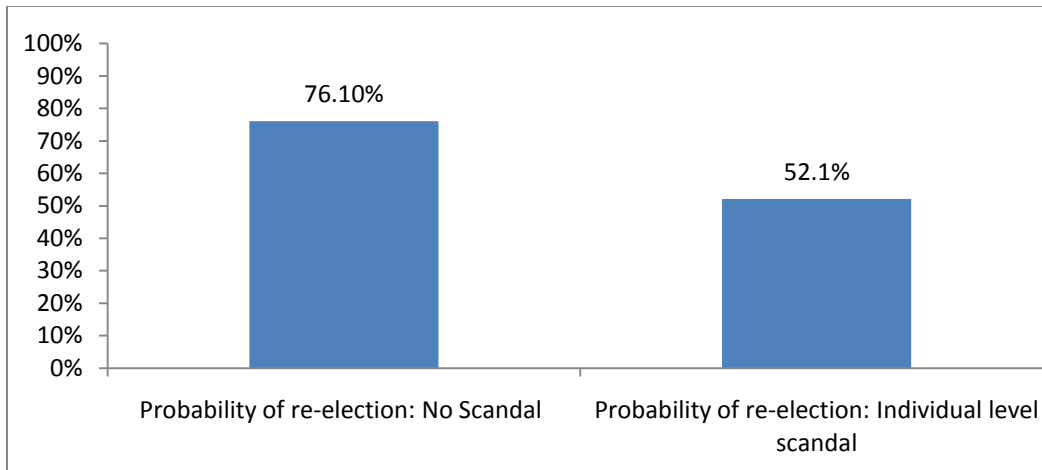


Figure D: Probability for Re-Election: No Scandal vs. Individual scandal (Logit Regression with cluster model)

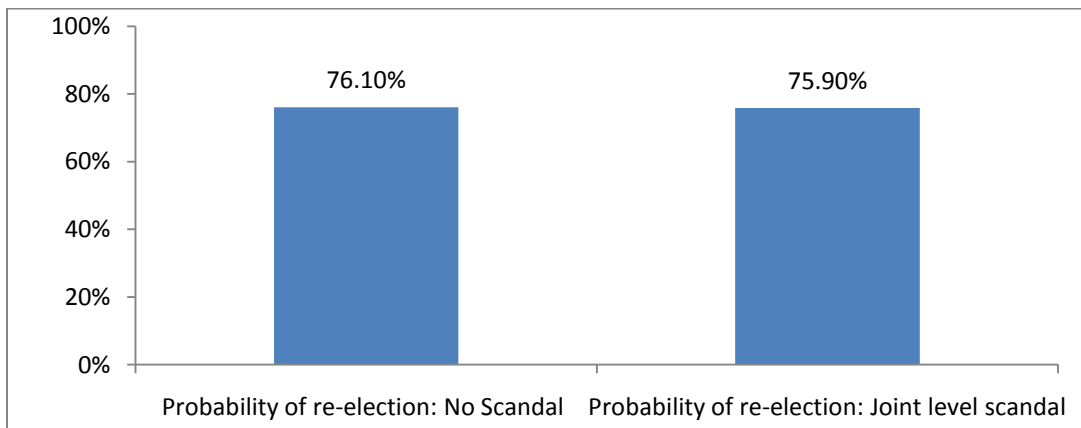


Figure E: Probability for Re-Election: No Scandal vs. Joint scandal (Logit Regression with cluster model)

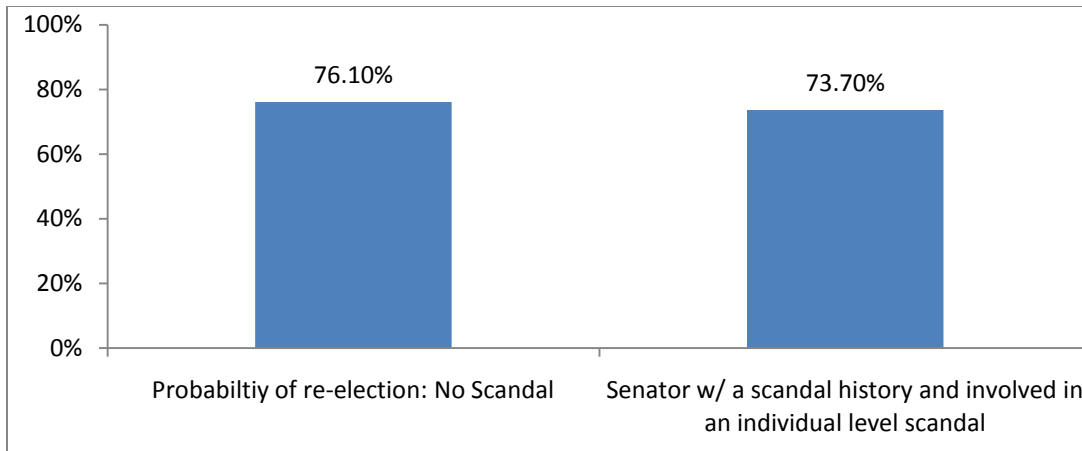


Figure F: Probability for Re-Election Conditioned on Individual Scandal: Senator with a Scandal history vs. Senator with no Scandal history (Logit Regression with cluster model)

These initial findings provide evidence in support of my theory. However, the data being studied is across multiple election cycles in 50 different states. I need a multi-level statistical model to account for any election year or state specific effects. Therefore, I test the robustness of these findings by adding to the model fixed effects for election years, aimed at controlling for anti-incumbent shifts and other electoral processes that these dichotomous indicators for years will allow me to capture. I also include random effects for states, adjusting for state-level differences without including a variety of state-level control variables that are highly collinear (Boehmke and Troeger, 2010). These random effects can include differences in voting restrictions and registration laws that vary from state to state.

Also, these modeling techniques will allow me to adjust the assumption that each observation is independent of each other as in the prior statistical model.

Electoral forces do exist which could be skewing the results in certain time periods. In addition, all the elections in the data are focused around 50 states. For example comparing two electoral outcomes in Alaska (although in different years) is different than comparing one electoral outcome in Alaska to another electoral outcome in another state. By using a random effects model I am able to account for these potential state-level effects. I report the coefficients and standard errors for the adjusted model in Table 3, and after accounting for potential state-level and election year effects, the statistical significance of the model remains robust.

Table 3: Electoral Outcomes, using a Random Effects Model

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Coefficients</u> <u>(Standard Error)</u>
Individual scandal	-1.520* (0.644)
Joint scandal	0.097 (0.576)
Scandal propensity	0.726 (1.001)
Scandal propensity*Individual scandal	1.102 (1.184)
Sex Scandal	0.026 (0.912)
Scandal Visibility	0.001 (0.003)
Time removed from Scandal	-0.042 (0.134)
Presidential election cycle	1.324* (0.661)
Presidential approval	-0.170 (0.643)
Same party as President	-0.991* (0.462)
Same Party as President*Presidential approval	0.652 (0.538)
GOP	-0.082 (0.267)
Ethics Committee cleared	-1.421+ (0.787)
Ethics Committee penalty	-1.687* (0.836)
Individualistic	0.431 (0.327)
Moralistic	-0.042 (0.384)
Constant	0.945+ (0.523)
Insig2u	-1.212 (0.751)
Observations	410

** p<.01, * p<.05, + p<.10, Standard errors in parentheses; I do not report coefficients and standard errors for estimated year-specific effects.

The comparisons in probabilities for hypotheses 1c, 2c, and 3c are illustrated in Figures G through I. Once again, it appears that individual scandals increase the likelihood of defeat, whereas joint scandals appear to have little impact on electoral

outcomes. The probability for senators being re-elected who are not involved in scandals is 80.1%. The probability for senators being re-elected who are involved in individual scandals is 56.1%. This is a difference of 24%. The probability for senators involved in a joint scandal of being re-elected is 81.6%, which is slightly higher for the re-election rates for senators not involved in a scandal. In addition, even after applying the tougher statistical test, senators with a scandal history appear to be given a free pass by the voters when a newer scandal emerges, even if that scandal involves only the one senator. The probability for senators with a scandal history involved in an individual scandal of being re-elected is 81.1%, which, once again, is slightly higher than the re-election rates for senators not involved in a scandal. These findings provide further evidence that reactions to scandals are a function of both voter individual and general expectations. If negative reactions to senators involved in scandals affected electoral outcomes, then why do voters treat those senators involved in an individual scandal differently than those involved in a joint scandal? In addition, if negative reactions to the violations of social norms were driving these electoral results, then why would the voters treat senators with a scandal history differently (and more favorably) even if the scandal does not include more than one politician?

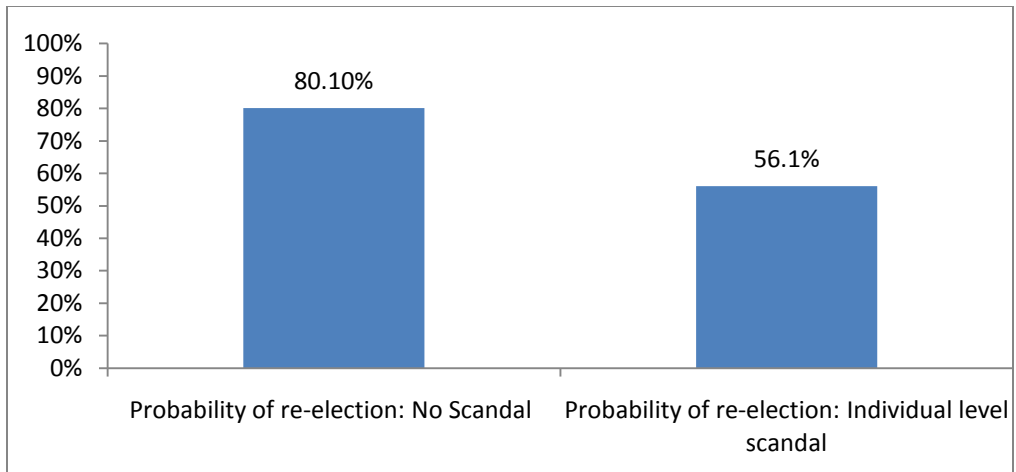


Figure G: Probability for Re-Election: No Scandal vs. Individual scandal (Logit Regression adjusted for Fixed and Random Effects)

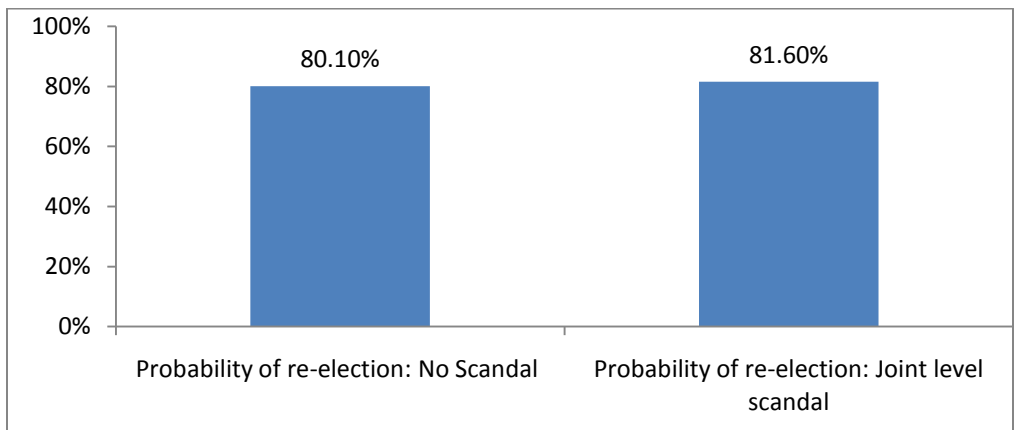


Figure H: Probability for Re-Election: No Scandal vs. Joint scandal (Logit Regression adjusted for Fixed and Random Effects)

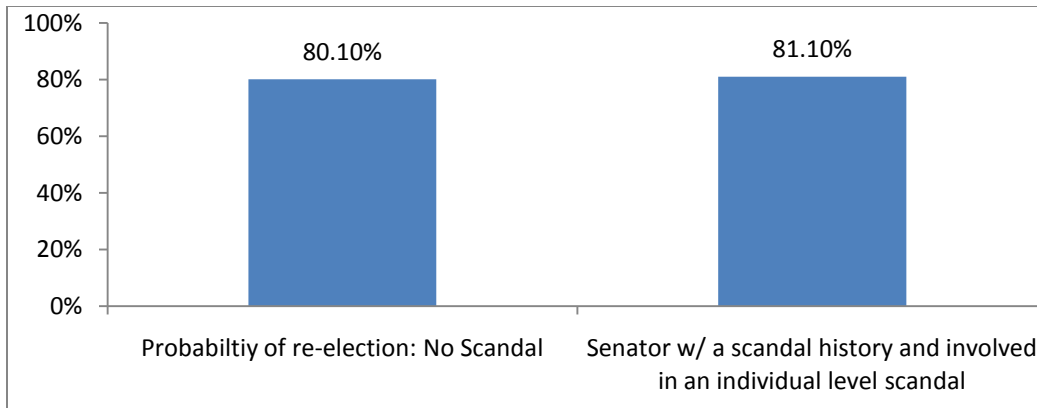


Figure I: Probability for Re-Election Conditioned on Individual Scandal: Senator with a Scandal history vs. Senator with no Scandal history (Logit Regression adjusted for Fixed and Random Effects)

Discussion

Voters use a combination of general expectations and individual expectations when evaluating public officials. General expectations are those placed on all public officials based on what the voter values, no matter who the politicians happen to be. However, individual expectations vary from politicians to politician and are based on the officials/candidate's reputation. How a voter reacts over a scandal will be a function of these expectations. If the official violates the expectation of the voter then he will be negatively evaluated, and conversely, if the scandal does not violate these expectations then the scandal will be less likely to make a difference in the voter's mind. In addition, how many public officials involved in a scandal can also mitigate its impact. If a politician is involved in a joint scandal (a scandal involving more than one public official), the voter's general expectation for all politicians will be lowered because of the difficulty of allocating

responsibility mitigating the overall impact the scandal will have on any one participant. In other words, lowering of general expectations for all politicians will result in a lower standard that individual politicians will have to live up to. Therefore, any one participant in a joint scandal will have a reduced allocation of responsibility for the scandal. In an individual level scandal, it is easier for the voter to identify who is solely responsible and, therefore, have an easier time allocating the responsibility for that scandal.

In this chapter I have presented evidence that the negative evaluations for elected officials have electoral consequences and that the individual process and reactions to individual scandals opposed to joint scandals do indeed happen in the real world as well. In addition I have also provided evidence that candidates who have a scandal history are more likely to be immune their impact. It is important to note that in this chapter I have shown the electoral consequences of scandals as a function of how many senators are involved and the senator's reputation. This, however, does not necessarily reflect voter attitudes or causality. Electoral outcomes can be the result of changing voter attitudes, but to in order to test for voter attitudes I need to use individual level data.

Using a database of senate elections and scandals, I have provided evidence that senators involved in individual scandals have a much tougher time being re-elected than senators involved in joint scandals. Because multiple participants in scandals lower the general expectations of voters and have difficulty allocating responsibility for the scandal, the voters are more likely not to hold the scandal

against any public official involved. Conversely, if the senator is the only one involved, then the voter will punish the senator in the next election. In addition, I have also provided evidence that lowered individual expectations (those based on the candidate's reputation) will mitigate the impact an individual scandal has on a senator. This is a function of the scandal not failing the expectation the voter places on the senator. For example, if a senator who has been involved in multiple scandals is involved in a newer, individual scandal, then the voter will have already incorporated this information when building their expectation profile of that senator. So if the senator is implicated in another scandal the voter is neither surprised nor disappointed.

These findings are encouraging, but only speak to a portion of my theory. I theorize that negative reactions to scandals are a function of expectations and not violations of social norms. I argue that the contents of a scandal can impact the voter evaluations of a participant if it conflicts with the expectation profile a voter places on politician. I have shown evidence that senators who have a history of scandals are more likely to survive newer scandals. In other words, there is a phenomenon happening in senatorial elections that I believe is a function of individual expectations. Also senators who are involved in individual scandals opposed to joint scandals appear to be punished by the voters except if that senator has a history of scandalous behavior. This I believe is a function of how the voters allocated different levels of responsibility for individual scandals and joint scandals.

In the next chapter I will test if failure to meet general expectations or what the voter values results in negative evaluations. In addition, I will also use survey data to test for changes in attitudes as a function of scandal. Although the evidence I have provided in this chapter can be the result of changes in attitudes, I cannot make that claim with any degree of certainty unless I use individual level data to corroborate the findings I have presented using the scandal database. Specifically, I will use public opinion survey data to test if candidates involved in a scandal that violates either their reputation or what the voter's value will result in negative attitudes.

CHAPTER 4: USING SURVEY DATA TO TEST VOTER VALUES AND CANDIDATE REPUTATION OVER RESPONSE TO SCANDAL

I seek to answer why some public officials are negatively evaluated over scandal while others are not. Scandals are a constant in American politics and even recently U.S. Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY), a high ranking member of Congress, was caught in a scandal where he admitted to sending lewd photos over the internet. Although Rep. Weiner initially announced he was not going to resign, he eventually succumbed to the pressure and formally resigned his position. Up until his resignation the debate regarding Weiner was whether he could salvage his career like U.S. Sen. David Vitter (R-LA), or if his career would come to an end like former U.S. Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID). It is unclear what the future holds for Rep. Weiner, and the question remains for future public officials who are caught in scandal. Will the public hold the scandal against him, like Sen. Craig, or will they focus on other attributes such as job performance and position on issues like Sen. Vitter, when deciding if they should re-elect him?

In Chapter 3 I provided evidence that candidate reputation and the number of participants in a scandal can and do mitigate the scandal's impact. But testing election outcomes is not the same as testing voter attitudes, although the two are assumed by many to be associated. In this chapter I test whether voter attitudes in response to scandal are affected by what the voter values and by the reputation of the candidate. Using survey data, I will identify survey questions that allow me to

gauge both voter values and candidate reputation. I will then test to see if these factors can influence attitudes about a potential candidate involved in a scandal.

Understanding Voter Response to Scandal

I have developed a mid-range theory on why there is no consistent reaction among voters to political scandals. Public officials such as U.S. Sen. Jessie Helms (R-NC) and U.S. Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV) have been linked to numerous scandals throughout their career but yet continually have gotten or get re-elected. Sen. Reid even won re-election convincingly in 2010 despite the overall poor performance of congressional and senate Democrats nationwide. Other public officials such as U.S. Sen. Brock Adams (D-WA) and U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns (R-MT) have been linked to a scandal and suffered greatly. Why do some representatives get negatively evaluated, and consequently punished electorally, while other representatives seem to be immune to scandal?

I theorize that reaction to scandal is a function of three factors. I argue voters build an expectation profile which is composed of two different criteria. The first deals with voters and what they value. No two voters are alike, and what a voter emphasizes when choosing a candidate varies. Some voters identify themselves as “value-voters” meaning their main concern is whether or not a candidate identifies with them on certain moral issues. Other voters do not care about values and base their entire evaluation on the official’s performance in office. When the voter builds this expectation profile she places within it certain attributes, and evaluates whether the candidate lives up to these particular expectations.

Therefore if a politician is involved in a scandal, and the contents of the scandal is something the voter really does not care about, then the public official is less likely to be negatively evaluated and electorally punished.

Second, the voter also incorporates into his expectation profile the reputation of the candidate. Various candidates bring certain strengths to their image. Some candidates campaign as being an economic expert, anti-tax, pro-values, pro-egalitarian, etc. I argue when a voter evaluates the performance or actions of public officials she takes into account the image or persona the public official tries to project. This image or persona may be actively pursued by a candidate, but can also be an assigned reputation based on voting habits, past behavior, or the public official's background. Therefore when a public official is involved in a political scandal, and the contents of the scandal contradict his reputation the voter is more likely to be disappointed in that public official. For example, not many voters were surprised when President Clinton was caught in the Monica Lewinsky sex scandal. President Clinton already had a reputation for promiscuity brought to the public's attention in the 1992 Democratic Presidential primary.

A voter's expectation profile is made up of what she values and the candidate's reputation. The negative evaluation of a public official involved in a scandal is not a function of the official's bad behavior but rather them failing the voter's expectation. This is why some candidates are negatively thought of after a scandal and while others are not as harmed. In addition, the contents of the scandal itself can also influence the public's reaction. When a scandal involves only one

public official, allocating responsibility for that scandal is fairly easy for the voter. When, however, the scandal involves more than one public official allocating responsibility is not as easy. In other words it is unclear who should shoulder the majority of blame, whereas, in a single scandal the only participant is fully responsible. For example, some scandals involve so many politicians where it is unclear if the public official was really deviating from typical political behavior. An example of this is the House Banking scandal. Even though there was public outrage over the House Banking scandal most of those involved still won re-election. Conversely, scandals involving a single participant such as U.S. Senator Bob Packwood's (D-OR) infamous sex scandal lead to his expulsion from the Senate.

In this chapter, I will primarily focus on the expectation profile of the voter. Using a survey I will test individual voter attitudes towards a hypothetical public official involved in a sex scandal against what the voter values and the reputation of the public official. In Chapter 3 I provided evidence that candidate reputation and how the number of participants a political scandal can mitigate its impact. While the evidence in Chapter 3 is encouraging, testing electoral outcomes against candidate reputation, and the amount of participants a scandal has, does not get at individual voter attitudes. In addition, the unit of analysis is at the aggregate level (election outcomes) and generalizing how individual voters will respond to a political scandal by focusing the study on electoral outcomes is not appropriate. My theoretical story accounts for how individual voters will respond to scandals. As I have shown in Chapter 3, the collective of these individual attitudes will have electoral

consequences, but also tell us very little about each individual voter's attitude.

Therefore, building upon the findings from the scandal database in Chapter 3, I will provide an individual level of analysis using survey data to focus on voter attitudes.

Hypotheses and Model

I argue that voter reaction to scandal will be a function of what the voter values and candidate reputation. Specifically, I test voter attitudes towards potential presidential candidates involved in extramarital affairs, who have been divorced multiple times, and who claim strong family values despite having been divorced. I predict voters who value marriage will be less likely to vote for candidates who have been divorced multiple times and who are involved in extramarital affairs. I also predict that voters who value marriage will be less likely to believe a candidate who claims family values, but has a history of being divorced. To test each prediction one of the measures I have chosen for voter values in the survey questionnaire is how important a voter feels information regarding a candidate and his/her spouse in his or her evaluation. I argue if a voter believes the relationship between a candidate and his/her spouse tells a lot about the candidate then the voter is more likely to value marriage. Therefore:

H1: The more telling the voter believes information regarding the marriage between a candidate and his/her spouse is, the less-likely she is to vote for a candidate that has been involved in an extra-marital affair.

H2: The more telling the voter believes information regarding the marriage between a candidate and his/her spouse is, the less-likely she is to vote for a candidate who has been divorced multiple times.

H3: The more telling the voter believes information regarding the marriage between a candidate and his/her spouse is, the less-likely she is to believe a candidate who advocates family values but has history of divorce.

In addition to how telling a voter believes information regarding a candidate and his/her spouse is, another measure of voter value I have chosen is if the voter believes that a no-fault divorce system is a bad or good thing. No fault divorce is a system where the divorce between a couple easy and with little consequence. I argue that voters who believe such a system is a bad thing are more likely to hold marriage sacred. If the voter is more likely to hold marriage in high esteem then it would be something she values. Therefore:

H4: If a voter believes that no-fault marriage is a bad thing, the less-likely she is to vote for a candidate that has been involved in an extra-marital affair.

H5: If a voter believes that no-fault marriage is a bad thing, the less-likely she is to vote for a candidate who has been divorced multiple times.

H6: If a voter believes that no-fault marriage is a bad thing, the less-likely she is to believe a candidate who advocates family values but has history of divorce.

In addition to voter values, I also believe candidate reputation to be a predictor of how a voter will respond to political scandal. As a measure of candidate reputation, I have chosen whether the voter is more likely to support a candidate who has a strong marriage. Though this does not measure how a candidate chooses to represent themselves per say, it does treat a strong marriage of a candidate as his reputation. A voters willing to claim she is more likely to vote for a candidate because of his strong marriage buy into that reputation. I predict voters who more willing to buy into this reputation (i.e. more willing to vote for this candidate) will

also be critical of candidates involved in extra-marital affairs, multiple divorces, and claim strong values even though he has a history of divorce. Therefore:

H7: If a voter is more willing to vote for a candidate in a strong marriage, the less-likely she is to vote for a candidate that has been involved in an extra-marital affair.

H8: If a voter is more willing to vote for a candidate in a strong marriage, the less-likely she is to vote for a candidate who has been divorced multiple times.

H9: If a voter is more willing to vote for a candidate in a strong marriage, the less-likely she is to believe a candidate who advocates family values but has history of divorce.

To test each hypotheses I use a logit regression because the dependent variables are coded dichotomously. Hypotheses 1-6 asks whether the extra-marital scandal and knowing a candidate who has been divorced multiple times would cause the voter to vote against that particular candidate. Each of these variables is coded 1 for “vote against” and 0 for “would not cause to vote against” or “don’t know”. Hypotheses 7-9 asks the respondent whether she is less likely to believe a particular candidate given who claims family values but has a history of divorce, or if it does not make a difference. If they are “less-likely to believe the candidate” they are coded as 1 and “if it really does not make a difference” or “don’t know” they are coded as 0.

Survey, Variables, and Measures

In 2007, *Newsweek* Magazine sponsored a public opinion poll conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International on family values and marriage. The survey was conducted over a March 14-15, and included a random sample of 520 women and 481 males (a total of 1001 respondents). The purpose of the poll

was to survey attitudes towards the Bush administration, same-sex marriage, and the impact marriage infidelity and divorce has on the evaluation of public officials. In this section I will identify the questions in which I pulled the dependent variables, variables of interest, and control variables. In addition, I comment on how each variable is coded and why. Each question used is provided in Appendix A.

I have identified three dependent variables which I will test against my variables of interest. In choosing the dependent variables I have identified a situation that is considered a scandal in the questionnaire, and two others that are not considered scandals according to my definition but may cause character concerns for a potential candidate. All respondents in the survey were prompted the following: "We're interested in whether certain information about a presidential candidate would cause you to vote against the candidate, regardless of other factors". The first two dependent variables I use come sequentially after this question prompt. For the first dependent variable the question I chose asks "First, what if you found out that the candidate had extra-marital affairs. Would that alone cause you to vote against the candidate? Those who said "yes" are coded as a 1 and those who chose "no" or "don't know" are coded as a 0. So if the coefficients for the variables of interest are positive it means that the voter with that attribute is choosing to vote *against* the candidate in question.

The second dependent variable I chose asks "First, what if you found out that the candidate had been divorced more than once. Would that alone cause you to vote against the candidate? It too is coded as 1 for "yes" and 0 for "no/don't know",

so a positive coefficient means the respondent is against this candidate, and negative coefficient means the respondents is not necessarily against (nor for) this person. Although multiple divorces do not fit my definition for scandal, I have chosen this question as a dependent variable because this information could cause concern for voters who put high value on marriage. The third dependent variable I chose asks: "What if a presidential candidate has been divorced, but now has a strong marriage and takes personal responsibility for mistakes that broke up their first marriage. On balance, are you more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate with this kind of marital history, or doesn't it make much difference to you either way?" Although divorced candidates talk up family values all the time, and the question does not specify when the divorce happened or under what circumstances, a voter could view this as being hypocritical. This variable also does not fit my definition for scandal, but allows me to test the reach of voter attitude change as a function of what a candidate's history is and what he says. This variable is also coded dichotomously where 1 signifies "less likely" and 0 signifies "doesn't make a difference/don't know." Once again, a positive coefficient would indicate a negative attitude towards the candidate/public official.

The variables of interest are questions that gauge the reputation of the public official and voter values. The first variable of interest asks the respondents if they would "vote for a candidate who seems to have a strong marriage and has never been divorced?" Though this question does not imply a successfully married candidate actively pursues this image, but the candidate's reputation is set

regardless. This variable is coded dichotomously as well where 1 is “more likely” and 0 is “doesn’t make much difference/don’t know.” The second variable of interest gauges voter values. Each respondent is asked if “the relationship of a candidate and their spouse tells a lot, some, not much, or nothing about how good a president they would be.” If a respondent responds “a lot” I argue this shows the voter uses marriage as one of the criteria in judging potential presidential candidates, and would therefore value marriage. Conversely, if the respondent says “nothing” this tell us they do not consider marriage a factor when evaluating a candidate and therefore do not consider it (though it may not speak to how they personally view marriage in their own life). This variable is coded continuously where 4 represents “a lot”, 3 is “some”, 2 is “not much” and 1 is “nothing.”

The final variable of interest is another voter value measure dealing with no-fault divorce. No-fault divorce is a system that makes it easier for couples to end their marriage because it does not require either partner to show evidence of wrong-doing. Either participant could petition for a no-fault divorce and not have to prove that their partner had violated any terms of the marriage contract. In the survey, the respondent is asked if they feel no-fault divorces is a “good thing” or “bad thing”? I infer that respondents who believe that a no-fault divorce system is a bad thing believes it may be too easy for couples to get a divorce, which also means they are more likely to value the sanctity of marriage than those respondents who feel no-fault divorces are a good thing. Therefore a respondent who believes that no-fault divorces are bad is more likely to value marriage and more likely use

marriage as a part of their criteria when evaluating candidates. This variable is too coded dichotomously where 1 is “bad thing” and 0 is “good thing”.

In addition to my variables of interest I have identified informational and descriptive characteristics of the respondents that may influence their views on extra-marital affairs and/or divorce. I control for if the respondent has ever been divorced, anticipating that those who have will be more forgiving of public officials who have also been divorced. I also control for gender, because in the scandal database I constructed I identified 14 cases dealing with infidelity, divorce, or sexual harassment. In each case it was always the male senator doing the cheating, leaving his wife, or harassing. Because it always seems to be male politicians that are involved in sex scandals, women may feel sensitive to the subject due to the fact their gender (or is at least reported) is the one that continuously gets abused. Past research has also had similar findings between gender and response to sex scandals (Smith and Winter, 2002). In addition to gender I also control the respondent’s education because education can affect how citizens interpret political scandals (Dancey, 2011). Finally, I also control for voters who self-describe as born-again or evangelical Christian and political ideology.

Findings

The first model uses the question regarding a candidate involved in an extra-marital affair as the dependent variable, and test hypotheses 1, 4, and 7. The coefficients and standard errors are reported in Table 1. I am able to confirm

hypotheses 1 and 7, but not 4 (although it and is in the predicted direction). The coefficient for the first variable of interest (how informative the respondent feels a candidate's marriage), is 0.48 which is significant at $p\text{-value} > 0.01$. Substantively, while holding all other variables constant at the mean, if a respondent feels that a candidate's marriage is not informative at all the likelihood she will choose to vote against the candidate involved in an extra-marital affair is 24.3%. Conversely, if the respondent feels that a candidate's marriage is at-least somewhat informative the likelihood of them voting against the candidate involved in the affair is goes up to 45.7%. And if the respondent feels if the marriage is very informative (or tells them "a lot") then the likelihood of them voting against the candidate involved in the affair goes up to 57.7%, which constitutes a difference of 21.4% and 33.4% respectively. In other words, if the respondent feels marriage is very important or informative (opposed to not at all) then the candidate's probability of losing goes up a third.

The coefficient for the candidate reputation variable is 0.64 which is also significant at a $p\text{-value} > 0.01$. If the candidate's strong marriage does not make the respondent more likely to vote for him, then the probability the voter will vote against the candidate involved in an affair is 36.2% (while holding the other values constant at the mean). If, however, if the respondent is more likely to vote for a candidate because of a strong marriage, then the probability she will vote against the candidate goes up to 51.9%. If the respondent believes both that a candidate's marriage is very informative and is more likely to vote for a candidate with a strong

marriage (holding both the voter value and candidate reputation variable at the highest value) the probability of her voting against a candidate involved in an affair is 66.6%. If I hold these two variables at the lowest value, then the probability the voter will vote against the candidate involved in an affair is 19.7%, which is difference of 46.9%.

Table 1: Vote against Candidate Involved in Affair

Variables	Coefficient (Stan. Err)
Candidate Marriage Info	0.483** (0.073)
No-Fault Divorce - Bad	0.158 (0.157)
Vote Can. Strong Marriage	0.644** (0.168)
Respondent Divorce	-0.239 (0.163)
Evangelical	0.019 (0.178)
Ideology	0.252** (0.083)
Education	-0.073 (0.046)
Female	0.327* (0.148)
_cons	-2.497** (0.405)
Observations	888
Pseudo- R	0.116

Standard errors in parentheses
+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

In regards to the value variable that is not significant (whether or not the respondent feels a no-fault divorce system is a bad thing) the coefficient is still in the anticipated direction. In addition, the wording of the question gauges the respondent's view of society and the role of marriage opposed to how marriage

incorporates in their expectations of politicians. Though the two attitudes may be correlated they are also gauging two different philosophical viewpoints: what the voter feels is wrong with the institution of marriage, and second, what the voter expects from public officials.

The second model uses the dependent variable asking the respondent if they would vote against a candidate who has been divorced multiple times. The coefficient and standard errors are reported in Table 2. This model test hypotheses 2, 5, and 8 and I am able to confirm each. In looking at the first voter value variable of interest (how informative a candidate's marriage is) the coefficient is 0.316 and is once again significant at a p-value > 0.01 . In other words the probability of a voter choosing to vote against a candidate if she believes the candidate's marriage is not at all informative is 14.25%. If the voter believes the candidate's marriage is very informative then the probability she will vote against a candidate with multiple divorces is 30.0%, which is an increase of over 15%. Though this increase is not as dramatic as in the first model, it is enough to influence a large enough portion of the electorate to bring about defeat.

The second voter value variable of interest is whether or not the voter believes in no-fault divorce. The coefficient is 0.47 and also is significant at p-value > 0.01 . If the respondent feels that a no-fault divorce system is a good thing the probability she will vote against a candidate with multiple divorces (holding all other variables constant at the mean) is 19.1%. If she believes a no-fault divorce is bad then the probability jumps 27.4%, which may not seem dramatic, but again, is a

large enough swing that could cost a candidate an election. When taking the difference between the two voter value variables of interest holding them at their lowest value from their highest, the probability of the voter voting against a candidate with multiple divorces goes from 9.1% to 36.1%, which is an increase in 25%.

For the candidate reputation variable of interest (likelihood of voting for a candidate with a strong marriage) the coefficient is 1.3 and is significant at a p-value > 0.01 . While holding all other variables constant at the mean (including the voter value variables), if the candidate's strong marriage does not make the respondent more likely to vote for him, then the probability the voter will vote against the candidate who has been divorced multiple times is 14.5%. If, however, the respondent is more likely to vote for a candidate because of a strong marriage, then the probability she will vote against the candidate goes up to 38.3%, which is a difference of almost 24%. When holding both the voter value variables and the candidate reputation variable at their lowest level, the likelihood a respondent will vote against a candidate involved in multiple divorces is about 7.5%. When holding all the variables of interest at their highest value the probability the voter will opt against the candidate is 55.1%, which is a difference of almost 50%. Stated differently, when deciding if to vote against a candidate who has been involved in multiple divorces, the candidate's reputation and what the voter values (in terms of marriage) make up almost half of the decision.

Table 2: Vote against Candidate with Multiple Divorces

Variables	Coefficient (Stan. Err)
Candidate Marriage Info	0.316** (0.085)
No-Fault Divorce - Bad	0.469** (0.175)
Vote Can. Strong Marriage	1.300** (0.187)
Respondent Divorce	-0.380+ (0.195)
Evangelical	0.362+ (0.191)
Ideology	-0.036 (0.094)
Education	-0.041 (0.052)
Female	0.180 (0.168)
_cons	-2.589** (0.455)
Observations	888
Pseudo- R	0.146

Standard errors in parentheses
+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

The dependent variable for the final model asks the respondent if they believe a candidate who touts strong family values but has a history of divorce, and test hypotheses 3, 6, and 9. The coefficients and standard errors are reported in Table 3. I am able to confirm hypotheses 6 and 9, but not 3. Even though I am not able to confirm hypotheses 3 (the voter value measure asking respondents if they believe a relationship between a candidate and his spouse is telling), the statistical test misses significance at the p-value > 0.05 convention, but would be significant if I imposed a two-tail hypothesis test at a p-value >0.104.

The voter value variable of interest that measures whether or not the respondent believes the no-fault divorce system is bad is significant at a p-value >

0.05 and has a coefficient of 0.34. When holding all other variables constant at the mean, a voter that believes no fault divorce is a bad thing is less likely to believe a candidate who has been divorced but touts family values by 7% (33.5%-26.5%). Though this is statistically significant, substantively these voter value variables are better predictors of attitudes regarding voting for or against a candidate, but no whether the candidate is believable or not. After all, there are many politicians who have been divorced that tout family values. This dependent variable does not really represent a scandal, but rather the reaction a voter when it is perceived a candidate is being hypocritical.

For the candidate reputation variable, the findings are more robust. The coefficient for a respondent being more likely to favor a candidate with a strong marriage and less likely to believe a candidate with a history of divorce who touts family values is 0.72 and is significant a p-value > 0.01 . Putting these numbers in terms of likelihood, if a voter is more likely to vote for a candidate because of a strong marriage, then she is less-likely to believe a candidate who has a history of divorce by 15.1% (38.7%-23.6%). Once again, though this finding appears to be both statistically and substantively significant the dependent variable can be viewed as an attitude regarding candidate believability, which is not the same as being involved in a scandal. For example, a voter may understand that a candidate will tout family values to appeal to a religious demographic because of his history of divorce. Furthermore, the survey prompt does not give any details about the divorce which inevitably is left up to the imagination of the respondent. For

example, this could be problematic because a respondent may view a divorce differently if it happened two years ago, or involved an extra-marital affair, than if it happened 30 years ago and no affair took place. This statistical test was meant to see how well the variables of interest could predict attitude behavior regarding candidates not involved in scandal, but rather just appearing to be hypocritical. Nevertheless, two of the three variables of interest are still statistically significant and the third misses statistical significance barely with a p-value > 0.014.

Table 3: Believe a Candidate who's been Divorced but touts Family Values

Variables	Coefficient (Stan. Err)
Candidate Marriage Info	0.123 (0.076)
No-Fault Divorce - Bad	0.337* (0.165)
Vote Can. Strong Marriage	0.715** (0.176)
Respondent Divorce	-0.268 (0.175)
Evangelical	0.134 (0.187)
Ideology	-0.281** (0.086)
Education	0.106* (0.049)
Female	-0.044 (0.154)
_cons	-1.196** (0.409)
Observations	851
Pseudo- R	0.047

Standard errors in parentheses
+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

Discussion

In developing a mid-range theory to answer the question why there is variation in response to political scandals, I have provided evidence that voter attitudes will change if the public official involved in scandal violates what the voter values or his or her own reputation. In the previous chapter I provided evidence that there are electoral consequences to scandals as a function of how many politicians are involved and if those who are involved violate their reputation (having no history of scandal). This chapter provides evidence that in addition to the electoral consequence observed in chapter 3, that these electoral outcomes are a function of adjusted voter attitude and not some other factor I did not or could not account for.

When evaluating public officials in relation to scandal, each voter brings a value set in which they begin to build an expectation profile. In addition, they incorporate the reputation of the public official in this profile and project it on their representative. If the public official is then involved in a scandal, the voter response will be a function of her expectation profile and whether or not the public official violated it in some way. If a voter does not develop a negative attitude towards the official does not necessarily mean she condones the scandal. There were many voters that did not condone the actions of President Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky scandal, but still based their evaluation of Clinton on other factors (i.e. economic performance). By the time the Monica Lewinsky scandal became public, Clinton already had a reputation or history of extra-marital affair. In other words, the

voters were not surprised by Clinton's behavior and therefore did not develop a negative attitude towards him because their expectations of him did not include fidelity.

Though both the electoral outcome test from the database and the voter attitude test from the survey provide evidence in support of my theory, the crux of my theory relies on a causal relation between voter expectation and negative evaluations. I argue that failing to meet the voter's expectation will cause a negative evaluation when a scandal emerges. Neither testing electoral outcomes nor testing respondent attitudes in surveys allows me leverage to claim a causal story. To do this I have developed an experiment design in which respondents will be exposed a public official involved in a scandal. In Chapter 5 I will test to see if there is a causal relationship between voter values and negative evaluations over scandal. In addition, I will also test to see if voters allocate responsibility differently to public officials in single scandals (with only one participant) opposed to multiple scandals (if there is more than one participant).

CHAPTER 5: USING EXPERIMENTS TO TEST REACTION TO SCANDAL AS A FUNCTION OF VOTER VALUES AND ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Why does the public electorally punish some politicians for their scandalous behavior and statements and not others? Many popular political figures not only survive scandal but maintain political strength during them. Famously, President Bill Clinton enjoyed high public approval during the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Conversely, the Watergate scandal not only brought about the resignation of President Richard Nixon but tarnished his legacy as well. Scandals have also ended or stalled the political careers of popular figures such as U.S. Sen. Robert Packwood (R-OR) and more recently Gov. Elliott Spitzer (D-NY). Others still, such as Gov. Mark Sanford (R-SC), U.S. Sen. John Ensign (R-NV), and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaragosa remain in office, following revelations of marital infidelity, with uncertain future political prospects. The public's reaction to scandals historically has been paradoxical. Unpacking why voters respond to scandals the way they do can provide insights about the impact that scandals have on elections.

Do individuals respond differently depending on how many representatives are involved in a scandal? I have developed a mid-range theory of voter response to scandal to account for why there is variation in voter response to scandals. There may also be characteristics within scandals that may affect how voters view them. In this chapter, I will be presenting and testing the theory of voter response to scandal as a function of voter expectations and how voters allocate responsibility to scandals involving more than one public official. I will be looking specifically at how

a voter responds to political scandals involving more than one public official opposed to those involving just one, and if voter response is conditioned on what a voter values. I argue reactions to scandals are a function of expectations made up of voter values and candidate reputation, and when multiple public officials are involved in the same scandal it will adjust how voters allocate the responsibility of that scandal. Consequently, any public official involved will have a lower standard to live up to and as a result will not be penalized as heavily if he was the only participant involved in the scandal.

Understanding Voter Response to Scandal

I theorize that in order to understand voter response to scandal, we need to understand what expectations a voter places on public officials in question. My theory predicts a voter will react negatively to a politician who violates their expectation, albeit either an individual or a general expectation. An individual expectation is one a voter places on a particular candidate which incorporates the candidate's reputation, and general expectation is one that a voter places on all public officials and is based on what the voter values. The voter uses these criteria to build an expectation profile in which to place on any particular candidate. Individual factors can change depending on the politician involved and aggregate factors are general expectations for all politicians that apply to everyone. The reason why one public official can commit a transgression and not get punished, yet another can commit the same act and be punished is because the individual expectations may not be consistent across all public figures. For example, a voter

may expect one politician to be faithful to his wife because he campaigns on their faith and family values. So if this official commits infidelity, then the voter will develop negative attitudes towards that official. If, however, the voter does not expect a certain official to be faithful because of that official's history of infidelity, in the case of transgression the voter will be less likely to develop negative attitudes. Because these expectations vary from person to person, I am only assuming they exist. I am not explaining how they are formulated or how the voter builds their expectation.

In addition to individual or reputational factors, I argue that general factors will also influence how a voter responds to a public official involved in a scandal. If the details of the scandal somehow affect how the voter evaluates all public officials, then it can also influence the voter response to the scandal. For example, if the voter feels that all politicians must conduct themselves morally, she will develop negative attitudes towards any public official caught in a scandal no matter what their reputation. I also argue that scandal reach (the number of public officials involved) can affect how the voter allocates responsibility for that scandal. If a public official is involved in a scandal that reaches multiple members of congress, the overall expectation of the public official is reduced because it gives the appearance that the official's behavior is not deviating from a typical politician. The more politicians behave inappropriately, the more difficult it is for the voter to place sole responsibility on any one public figure. Powell and Whitten find voters are more likely to allocate higher levels of responsibility to incumbents in majoritarian

rather than in parliamentary democracies, while taking into account other contextual and electoral conditions (Powell and Whitten, 1993). In a majoritarian system, identifying responsibility is easy because it is clear who the governing party is. For parliamentary systems, where the Prime Minister has to rely on coalition governments, identifying responsibility for unsuccessful policy becomes more complex (Powell and Whitten, 1993).

Although it may be unclear whom to punish in a coalition government where responsibility is divided, it is just as unclear whom to punish in a scandal involving more than one public official because the voter does not know who deserves the most responsibility. In other words, the punishment for the various members involved becomes diluted. In the case of multi-member scandals, the average voter is not sure if any one member/politician is really deviating from normal behavior. Conversely, for individual scandals it is clear who deserves sole responsibility because there is only one person involved. In addition, it is also evident that this individual is deviating from typical politician behavior because once again, he is the only one involved.

For this section, I will be using an experiment to test if the public allocates different levels of responsibility for individual and joint scandals. I will test for how many public officials are associated with a particular scandal – an individual (1) and joint scandal (more than 1). Specifically, I will test if the reactions among voters are different, in terms of both attitudes and electoral preference, towards a public official who is involved in a singular scandal opposed to a joint scandal. My

prediction is that the voters will view the public official involved in a single scandal more harshly than those who believe the same politician is involved in a joint scandal. This change in reaction is a function of the reduced expectations a joint scandal would bring. Because more members are involved in a joint scandal it does not appear that any one participant is deviating from typical politician behavior.

After the voter learns of the scandals and the number of participants, she will adjust the criteria in which she expects all public officials to live up to. If the scandal involves more than one public official, then their overall expectations for all public officials will be altered. Consequently, the voter's evaluation of any one participant will not be significantly altered because that public official will not be failing the (new or adjusted) expectations of the voter. However, if the public official is the only participant involved, then the voter's previous established expectations will not be altered, and the voter will, therefore, judge the public official accordingly.

I will also test to see if there is a difference in reaction among those who are more likely to adhere to or embrace social norms. In other words, I will look at both everyone's reaction and specifically at those who are more embracing of certain social norms. If a voter is more embracing of social norms she is more likely to put adherence to these norms in their expectation profile. I argue that voters who are more moralistic will project these expectations on their representatives. I will be using experiments to test my theory and I will vary the treatment conditions by changing the number of officials involved in a scandal. I also have developed a moralistic measure to gauge how embracing of social norms the voter is. Using both

the scandal treatments and moralistic measure I will be able to test those portions of my theory.

Experiment Overview

Experiments are the most appropriate means to test my theory because they are the best tool to use when testing causality (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). In Chapter 3 I have provided evidence that the number of public officials involved in a scandal and individual expectations can alter electoral outcomes. In addition, I have also provided evidence in Chapter 4 that candidates who fail expectations by either not living up to their reputation or conducting themselves in a way that violates what the voter values will affect voter attitudes. My theory is ultimately an individual level story and is based off of the predicted causal relationship between voter expectations and reaction to scandal I am arguing that an the presence of more than one public official in a scandal will cause the individual to adjust how she will allocate the responsibility of that scandal Because I am arguing that number of politicians involved in a scandal will cause a change in voter evaluation, I need to be able to manipulate my independent variable and experimental setting is most suited for testing my theory. I also argue that voter reaction is a function of failed expectation, and if the voter expects candidates to behave in an ethical way and he does not, she will develop a negative attitude towards them.

For each experimental condition the subjects have been administered a pre-test. The pre-test includes basic demographic information used as control variables, which some may argue could account for the variation in the public response to

scandal. These measures include race, gender, religious affiliation, partisanship, political interest, ideology, age, and educational attainment. In addition, there are questions regarding trust and overall feelings towards people, the media, political leaders, and their general evaluation of public figures. These questions allow controlling for those who have higher faith in people and the political system than those who do not. Finally, I include a battery of questions that ask respondents whether they agree or disagree with certain ethical and social questions. These questions allow me to develop a moralistic measure which I will use to conduct interactions among those who are more likely to embrace current social norms. This moralistic measure will allow me to test if voter response to scandal can also predict reactions to scandal. All of the questions used in the experiment are listed in Appendix C and D. The subject then will be randomized into one of three groups.

The subject of the study is a Tennessee Democratic State Senator named Ward Crutchfield. Crutchfield was a member of the Tennessee Waltz investigation and subsequent federal prosecution. Each member indicted was suspected of corruption which allowed the federal agents to pose as representatives from a fictitious company offering bribes in exchange for friendly votes. The sting operation started in 2003 and led to the convictions of 7, including five lawmakers and one county commissioner. Crutchfield was one of the five and pleaded guilty to bribery in 2007. I chose this particular case due to its characteristics. First, considering the subject pool of the respondents it is highly unlikely that any of the potential subjects would be familiar with Ward Crutchfield or the Tennessee Waltz

operation. Secondly, Ward Crutchfield fits the typical demographic that make up most of our public figures. And third, there were plenty articles written about Tennessee Waltz investigation, which allowed me to sufficiently manipulate the treatments making it appear as either an individual scandal or joint scandal. The texts and images used for each treatment condition are listed in Appendix B.

The first group will be administered the control condition. The control treatment is a news article written about Ward Crutchfield and his involvement in redistricting state assembly seats. The article itself is more about the process and Ward Crutchfield is mentioned several times due to his chairmanship over the committee that handles redistricting. The article is bland and neither paints Crutchfield in a positive or negative light. The knowledge presented in this article (the Tennessee redistricting process and the fact Ward Crutchfield chairs the committee that oversees redistricting) should not bias the control group either for or against political scandals.

The second group will be administered the first treatment, which is a newspaper article discussing the upcoming guilty plea for Ward Crutchfield in the Tennessee Waltz investigation. The article gives a brief history of the scandal and names all those involved. Crutchfield is pictured and is the primary focus of the article that also quotes both Crutchfield and his attorney. The third treatment group will be given the same news article to read, but all references to the multiple lawmaker participants will be removed. In no other ways do the contents of the two articles differ.

Upon completing the experiment, the respondents will be administered a post-treatment questionnaire. The subjects will be asked to briefly describe the contents of the article they just read and list the thoughts they had immediately after reading the article. Once completed the thought-listing exercise respondents will answer multiple attitudinal questions regarding Cruthfield's behavior, leadership qualities, and job performance, and if they would ever consider voting for him if he was their representative. In addition, the respondents are asked similar questions about all politicians in general, and how they view their own representative. Finally, I ask the respondents some questions gauging their basic political knowledge.

Hypotheses and Models

If my theory holds true, then we will expect to see respondents exposed to treatment 2 (single scandal) to react more negatively than treatment 3 (joint scandal). I expect respondents who read the story about the Tennessee Waltz in its entirety will respond negatively on the attitudinal and voting questions regarding Ward Crutchfield, but not as much if she believes that Crutchfield was the only participant involved in the scandal. Because I argue that evaluations are a function of failed expectations and not bad behavior, those that read about the scandal in its entirety will have reduced overall expectations of public officials in general and have more difficulty allocating responsibility for that scandal. Furthermore, the respondent may penalize Crutchfield, but the penalty will not be as harsh for those who believe Crutchfield was the only participant involved in the Tennessee Waltz.

In addition, those participants who believe more strongly in social norms are more likely to be disappointed in Crutchfield if he fails to abide by them. If respondents build an expectation profile and use indicators in this file to judge public officials, then those who don't value social norms are less likely to hold their public officials to these standards. In other words, those who put more emphasis on abiding by social norms will be more likely to emphasize these types of criteria in their expectation profile. Voters, after all, do not randomly pick criteria to evaluate performance on. It is assumed that voters will choose criteria they care about when building expectation profiles. For the moralistic scale I have constructed, I ask the respondents 12 questions probing if they agree or disagree with an established social norm. For every question that voter agreed with the social norm is coded 1, creating a scale that could theoretically range from 0 to 12. The higher the voter is on this scale, the more she is accepting of social norms. The expectation is that respondents who are more likely to embrace social norms will be more critical of Crutchfield if she believes he was involved in a scandal.

I will also test hypotheses 1 & 2 against all attitudinal measures regarding Crutchfield, placing each measure in one of three categories: behavioral, leadership qualities, and job performance. To test these hypotheses, I will use an Ordinary Least Squared model to gauge the impact of attitudes as a function of how many public officials are involved in a scandal and voter expectation. In addition, using OLS will allow me to control for important informational and descriptive

characteristics that could also enhance or mitigate how a respondent reacts to Crutchfield. Therefore,

H1: After controlling for informational and descriptive characteristics, those who believe Ward Crutchfield was the only person involved in the Tennessee Waltz investigation will be more likely to negatively evaluate him than if she knows he was not the only participant.

&

H2: After controlling for informational and descriptive characteristics, those respondents who scored higher on the moralistic measure will be more likely to develop negative attitudes of Ward Crutchfield.

In addition to these statistical tests, I will need to interact the moralistic measure I have constructed with the treatment groups. Because my causal story states that voters will develop negative attitudes towards public officials who violate their expectations, those who do not expect their public officials to stay clear of scandal will not care if he is the only participant or not. It is more difficult for voters to allocate responsibility for scandals involving multiple politicians, but if the voter does not care whether their representative is involved in a scandal then she will also not care if the scandal involves more than one public official and will not have difficulty allocating responsibility. For the interaction variable, I will multiply the 12 point moralistic scale with the treatment groups which are coded dichotomously. This interaction variable will allow me to interpret the coefficients and will also give me a more refined statistical test to see if the number of political participants involved in scandal mitigates the impact the scandal may have on a voter's attitude. Therefore,

H3: After controlling for informational and descriptive characteristics, the more moralistic the voter the more likely she will negatively evaluate Ward Crutchfield if she believes he is the only person involved in the Tennessee Waltz scandal.

Just as I will test hypotheses 1 & 2 using attitudinal measures, I will also test hypotheses 3 against all attitudinal measures regarding Crutchfield, placing each measure in one of three categories: behavioral, leadership qualities, and job performance.

Finally, I also predict there are electoral implications in my predictions. We can expect those who negatively evaluate Crutchfield to be more likely not to vote for him. The more negatively she views Crutchfield, the more difficult it is to vote for him. As this negative evaluation goes down, the likelihood of at least considering voting for Crutchfield will go up. Therefore, we can expect those who know that Crutchfield was not the only participant involved in Tennessee Waltz to be more likely to consider (or remain uncertain) about the prospects of voting for him. In addition, we should also expect to see those who are more embracing of social norms to be more likely to vote against Crutchfield if they received one of the two scandal treatments. Consequently, the same dynamic I discuss in the third hypothesis should also hold true. Those who are more likely to embrace social norms will also use these evaluations when deciding if they would consider voting for Crutchfield if they believe he was the only participant involved in the scandal.

The 4th, 5th, & 6th hypotheses are natural extensions of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd hypotheses. Whereas I am testing causality for negative evaluations in the first three hypotheses, in hypotheses 4, 5, & 6 I am testing to see if these negative

evaluations manifest themselves in electoral consequences, and I am predicting they will. Therefore,

H4: The voter who knows that Crutchfield was not the only member of the Tennessee Waltz investigation will be more likely to consider (or remain uncertain) about voting for him than those who believe he was the only participant.

H4: The voter who scores higher on the moralistic measure will be less likely to vote for Ward Crutchfield if she believes he was involved in a scandal.

&

H6: The voter who knows that Crutchfield was not the only member of the Tennessee Waltz investigation, and is more moralistic, will be more likely to consider (or remain uncertain) about voting for him than those who believe he was the only participant.

Data and Variables

The subject pool for the experiment was drawn from the student body of the University of California, Riverside. The use of only student subjects has, although, drawn criticisms in the past. There is on-going debate over the appropriateness of solely using college students in a laboratory setting (Sears, 1986). College students are more deliberate in their thought process and rely less on emotion than the general public (Sears, 1986). In addition, responses from student subjects tend to be more homogenous than the non-students subjects (Peterson, 2001). Studies have also found students may be used to represent the public, but shouldn't be used to represent elites in experiments (Mintz et al., 2006). Because I am interested in making generalizations about lay-person attitudes and not elite attitudes, students are an appropriate subject pool.

In addition, UC-Riverside is one of the more socially and ethnically diverse campuses in both California and the US. Consequently, I am able to get ethnic variation I would normally not be able to achieve. Normally, getting enough ethnic variation in a sample is problematic, but because I am based out of UC-Riverside, I have an ethnically rich student body to pool subjects. The total subject pool of my study is 132 respondents. Of the 132 subjects, 71% are female, 14.4% self identify as Caucasian, approximately 10% identify as black or African American, 26.5% identify as Asian, and 48.5% identify as Hispanic or Latino. Consequently, I control for gender and ethnicity in my model.

In total, 49 respondents were randomized into treatment 1 (the news article regarding the Tennessee Waltz scandal and all the participants) and 50 students were randomized into treatment 2 (the news article only linking Crutchfield to the Tennessee Waltz scandal). 33 total respondents were randomized into the control group featuring a news article about the Tennessee redistricting process. Each treatment group is a variable of interest. They are all measured dichotomously (1 in the group; 0 out of the group). When running the regression, I dropped the control group from the model and only focus on the coefficients for scandal treatment groups. These measures were used to test the first hypothesis.

The second variable of interest is the interaction between the moralistic scale I have constructed and the treatment groups. I use a total of 12 questions to construct the scale. Using a six point scale for each question I ask the respondents if they somewhat agree/disagree, agree/disagree, or strongly agree/disagree with a

particular statement. I then dichotomize the answers for each question coding those who at least somewhat agree (or more) with the statement as a 1 and those who at least somewhat disagree with the statement (or more) as a 0. I then add all of the dichotomous measures in a single variable estimating the extent each respondent will embrace social norms. Theoretically, this measure can range from 0-12, where the higher the number, the more embracing of social norms the respondent is.

In addition, I include control variables for political knowledge and interest. The extent someone is aware of the politics or how closely they follow politics may affect their evaluation criteria. Political scandals happen with relative frequency, and those who are interested in politics are more likely to have been exposed to past political scandals. Although I cannot make a prediction that interest in or knowledge of politics will affect how a voter responds to a scandal, it is still necessary to control for these variables because knowledge and interest may affect the criteria in which the voter may evaluate the official.

In testing each of my hypotheses, I use different dependent variables and models for hypotheses 1, 2, & 3 and hypotheses 4, 5, & 6. Since the first three hypotheses predict attitudinal changes, I use the battery of attitudinal questions as my dependent variable. I treat the six point scales of each attitudinal variable (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) as continuous and use a multivariate regression model to test the first two hypotheses for each measure. In addition, I have divided the attitudinal variable into three types: behavioral,

leadership qualities, and job performance. I will discuss each of my findings as they relate to one of these three categories.

For testing the 4th, 5th, and 6th hypotheses, I use a different dependent variable. Each respondent is asked if she would vote for Crutchfield. The respondents are given three choices: yes, no, and uncertain. I assume all of those who chose uncertain will at least consider voting for Crutchfield. I realistically did not expect any respondent to claim she “would” vote for Crutchfield, even in the control group. The respondents know nothing about the Senator outside of the information provided in the treatments. I cannot realistically expect a respondent to make an informed decision based on what little information I gave him or her. So even if the treatment made Crutchfield look positive, I would still expect a non-committal response in the voting question from the respondents. Therefore, I have combined the “uncertain” and “yes” into a category I call “considering voting for Crutchfield” and coded these responses 1. For those who claim they would not vote for Crutchfield, I coded a 0. Because this measure is dichotomous, I use a logit regression model to test the likelihood that a respondent would consider voting for Crutchfield.

Findings

My theoretical story states that we should see a certain type of attitudinal response from voters and how they respond to scandals as a function of how many public officials are involved and whether or not the respondent scores high on the moralistic scale. Similarly to the literature on allocation of responsibility, I argue

that public will be less critical of participants in joint scandals (as opposed to individual scandals) because of the number of participants involved. If more than one public official is involved it looks less like any one particular member is deviating from “typical” politician behavior. In addition, I argue that we should see this effect especially among those who are more likely to believe in social norms, which I also provide evidence for in Chapter 4.

After running the OLS regression I must reject the first and second hypothesis for each attitudinal category. I am able, however, *to accept* the third hypothesis in most cases, which confirms that respondents do allocate different level of responsibility depending on how many public officials are involved in a scandal, but only for those who value social norms. This does not mean, however, that my theory does not apply to those who do not embrace social norms, even though I am unable to accept the first hypothesis. I assume those who do not embrace social norms have a different criterion in which they place expectations. Since they do not put much emphasis on social norms, using adherence to social norms as a means to test attitudinal response is not the ideal way to gauge their expectations.

In focusing on the behavioral category of attitude responses, I am able confirm the third hypothesis in two of the four attitudinal responses. The respondent is more likely to maintain an ambivalent attitude towards Crutchfield in terms of “trying to do the right thing” and “his overall trustworthiness” if she were placed in the joint scandal treatment than in the single scandal treatment. The

coefficients and standard errors are reported in Tables 1 & 2. For the attitudinal variable measuring if the respondent believes Crutchfield tries to do the “right thing the most of the time”, the coefficient for single scandal treatment is approximately -0.32 for those individuals who are more likely to embrace social norms. Even though a shift from -0.32 may not seem profound on a six point scale, this is only if we hold the moralistic scale constant and change from the single scandal treatment to the joint scandal treatment. But as the voter becomes more moralistic, she is more likely to negatively evaluate Crutchfield if she believes he was the only participant in the scandal. In other words, if someone who embraces half of the social norms listed in the questionnaire goes to embracing $\frac{3}{4}$ of the social norms listed, their attitude can completely change (going from somewhat agree to somewhat disagree) when asked questions regarding Crutchfield’s personal behavior if she believed he was the only participant involved in the scandal.

The same can be said regarding the attitudinal response regarding trustworthiness, but to a lesser extent. Perhaps, the explanation for the non-findings for the “lying to get re-elected” and using the “office for financial benefit” is because those two notions are popular clichés associated with public officials, and therefore may be more likely to be established norms associated with all public figures. Despite the findings for the interaction variable, the two treatment variables and the moralistic scale fail to reach statistical significance on their own, and I must reject hypotheses 1 & 2. The lack of findings for these variables suggests

that how the respondent allocates responsibility is conditioned on whether or not she is embracing of social norms.

Table 1: Behavioral Attitudes Regarding Crutchfield

Variable	<i>Right thing</i>	<i>Lie to get reelected</i>
	Coefficient (Std. Error)	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Group Scandal	0.277 (1.271)	-2.507 (1.592)
Single Scandal	1.814 (1.226)	-0.423 (1.536)
V. Moralism	0.179+ (0.104)	0.075 (0.131)
Mor_Group	-0.122 (0.136)	0.125 (0.170)
Mor_Single	-0.318** (0.133)	-0.077 (0.166)
GOP	0.421 (0.362)	-0.245 (0.454)
DEM	-0.035 (0.278)	-0.549 (0.348)
Knowledge	-0.004 (0.108)	-0.174 (0.135)
Interest	0.079 (0.122)	0.021 (0.152)
Black	0.123 (0.355)	-0.104 (0.445)
Hispanic	-0.124 (0.212)	0.210 (0.265)
Female	-0.039 (0.235)	-0.182 (0.294)
_Constant	2.051+ (1.051)	5.174** (1.316)
	n=132 f(12, 119) = 2.31* r2 = .19	n=132 f(12, 119) = 1.94+ r2 = .16

Standard errors in parentheses
+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

Table 2: Behavioral Attitudes Regarding Crutchfield

Variable	<i>Can be trusted</i>	<i>Uses office for fin. Benefit</i>
	Coefficient (Std. Error)	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Group Scandal	-1.048 (1.001)	1.324 (-1.130)
Single Scandal	0.326 (0.966)	0.015 (1.277)
V. Moralism	0.101 (0.082)	-0.110 (0.109)
Mor_Group	-0.038 (0.107)	0.237+ (0.141)
Mor_Single	-0.189+ (0.104)	0.054 (0.138)
GOP	0.012 (0.285)	0.376 (0.377)
DEM	-0.204 (0.219)	0.346 (0.290)
Knowledge	-0.005 (0.085)	0.040 (0.113)
Interest	0.157 (0.096)	0.046 (0.127)
Black	0.054 (0.280)	-0.476 (0.370)
Hispanic	-0.043 (0.167)	-0.229 (0.220)
Female	0.001 (0.185)	0.191 (0.245)
_Constant	2.337** (0.828)	4.803** (1.094)
	n=132 f(12, 119) = 5.43** r2 = .35	n=132 f(12, 119) = 1.16 r2 = .10

Standard errors in parentheses

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

For the Job performance category, I can once again confirm the third hypotheses, but not hypotheses 1 or 2. The results are reported in Table 3. Once again, the interaction between the moralistic scale and the scandal treatment is a better predictor for respondent attitude than simply looking at the scandal treatment and moralistic scale independently. For the interaction term, the

measure that was not statistically significant was the question regarding Crutchfield “caring about his constituents”. However, the coefficient is in the expect direction and would be statistically significant if I had loosened my standard to a one-tail hypothesis test at a p-value of 0.10. For the measure question asking if Crutchfield “represented his constituents to the best of his ability”, those who think he was the only member involved in the scandal say no. It is uncertain whether those exposed to the joint scandal treatment believe Crutchfield does represent his constituents to the best of his ability, but the findings do at least suggest ambivalence. The coefficients for the single scandal treatment group (for individuals who believe strongly in values) measuring if the respondent believes “Crutchfield tries to represent his constituents to the best of his ability” is approximately -0.22, or somewhere between one-fifth to one fourth of a single point in the scale. Once again, this amount may swing those whose minds are not made up, especially if they are likely to embrace social norms. In addition, when comparing this coefficient to that of the joint-scandal treatment group, -0.04, the difference is drastic. And as noted earlier, the coefficient is not significant for the measure asking the respondent if she felt Crutchfield “cares” about his constituents, but it is in the expected direction.

Table 3: Job Performance

Variable	<i>Represent Const.</i>	<i>Cares about Const.</i>
	Coefficient (Std. Error)	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Group Scandal	-0.896 (1.239)	-1.092 (1.261)
Single Scandal	1.185 (1.195)	0.633 (1.217)
V. Moralism	0.111 (0.102)	0.078 (0.104)
Mor_Group	-0.042 (0.132)	0.005 (0.135)
Mor_Single	-0.219+ (0.129)	-0.191 (0.132)
GOP	0.139 (0.353)	0.158 (0.359)
DEM	-0.323 (0.271)	-0.290 (0.276)
Knowledge	0.124 (0.105)	0.030 (0.107)
Interest	-0.014 (0.118)	0.065 (0.121)
Black	0.363 (0.346)	0.332 (0.352)
Hispanic	0.082 (0.206)	-0.095 (0.210)
Female	0.011 (0.229)	0.049 (0.233)
_Constant	2.569** (1.024)	3.071** (1.042)
	n=132 f(12, 119) = 2.65** r2 = .21	n=132 f(12, 119) = 2.30* r2 = .19

Standard errors in parentheses
+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

Finally, for the third attitudinal category - leadership qualities - I can confirm the fourth hypothesis for three of the four dependent variables, and although the fourth is not statistically significant, it is once again very close. The results are reported in Tables 4 and 5. For the single scandal treatment group, the coefficients (for the interaction variable) are -0.33 (the warm and friendly measure), -0.26 (the effective leader measure), and -0.32 (the good communicator measure). Once again,

if we hold the voter's value constant we do not see much movement in attitudes from those who know Crutchfield was the only participant in the scandals to those who know the entire story. In addition, voter values by itself does not predict how the respondent will react to Crutchfield being involved in a scandal. But, as in the prior two categories, the more moralistic the voter is the more change we see in attitudes from those exposed to the single scandal than joint scandal treatment.

In other words, if a voter goes from embracing 6 social norms to 9 social norms on the moralistic scale, we could observe a change in the respondent from agreeing with the questions about leadership qualities to disagreeing with them. In addition, the hypothesized coefficient that was not significant (-0.20 for "cares about what the public thinks of him") barely misses the mark. It appears the reaction among the respondents regarding Crutchfield's leadership qualities and being involved in a singular scandal is quite strong if the respondents are likely to embrace social norms. Politicians caught in joint scandals, however, appear not to receive anywhere near as harsh a reaction as politicians involved in singular scandal in terms of leadership qualities.

Table 4: Leadership Qualities

Variable	<i>Cares what people think</i>	<i>Warm and Friendly</i>
	Coefficient (Std. Error)	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Group Scandal	1.332 (0.220)	-1.085 (1.162)
Single Scandal	1.080 (1.285)	2.226+ (1.121)
V. Moralism	0.082 (0.109)	0.121 (0.095)
Mor_Group	-0.099 (0.142)	-0.003 (0.124)
Mor_Single	-0.204 (0.139)	-0.332** (0.124)
GOP	0.554 (0.380)	0.289 (0.331)
DEM	0.053 (0.291)	-0.169 (0.254)
Knowledge	-0.076 (0.113)	-0.016 (0.099)
Interest	0.291* (0.127)	-0.039 (0.111)
Black	0.135 (0.372)	-0.283 (0.325)
Hispanic	-0.030 (0.222)	-0.125 (0.193)
Female	-0.089 (0.246)	-0.135 (0.215)
_Constant	2.391* (1.101)	2.835** (0.960)
	n=132 f(12, 119) = 1.55 r2 = .14	n=132 f(12, 119) = 3.04** r2 = .23

Standard errors in parentheses

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

Table 5: Leadership Qualities

Variable	<i>Effective Leader</i>	<i>Good Communicator</i>
	Coefficient (Std. Error)	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Group Scandal	0.455 (1.212)	0.566 (1.268)
Single Scandal	1.065 (1.169)	2.123+ (1.223)
V. Moralism	0.128 (0.100)	0.197+ (0.104)
Mor_Group	-0.190 (0.129)	-0.178 (0.135)
Mor_Single	-0.261* (0.126)	-0.320* (0.132)
GOP	0.495 (0.345)	0.399 (0.361)
DEM	-0.035 (0.265)	-0.334 (0.277)
Knowledge	0.006 (0.103)	0.022 (0.108)
Interest	0.133 (0.116)	0.017 (0.121)
Black	-0.102 (0.339)	0.113 (0.354)
Hispanic	-0.110 (0.202)	0.098 (0.211)
Female	-0.033 (0.224)	-0.520* (0.234)
_Constant	2.283* (1.002)	2.516* (1.048)
	n=132 f(12, 119) = 3.58** r2 = .27	n=132 f(12, 119) = 2.77** r2 = .22

Standard errors in parentheses

+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

Finally, I look at if these adjustments in attitudes would have any electoral consequence for the members of this subject pool. The answer is yes. For those who believed that Ward Crutchfield was the only member involved, they are more likely to have eliminated the consideration for voting for him. In other words, Ward

Crutchfield should not expect to get any votes from this population. The coefficients and standard errors are reported in Table 6. As in my earlier test, I am unable to confirm hypotheses 4 and 5, but am able to accept the 6th hypothesis. My theoretical story appears to be contingent on how moralistic the respondents are, but neither the treatment groups nor the moralistic measure predict voter attitudes independently. For the interaction variable, however, I find both statistical and substantive significance when testing the 6th hypothesis. If the respondent was in the joint scandal condition, and I hold all other variables constant at their mean and the interaction constant at 6 (embracing half of the social norms on the moralistic scale), the likelihood that the respondent would consider voting for Crutchfield is approximately 45%. This number is far from a ringing endorsement of Crutchfield, but it does at least suggest ambivalence. If, however, the respondent agrees with 9 of the 12 listed social norms, the probability she would consider voting for Crutchfield falls to approximately 13%, which is a difference of 32%. This likelihood gets closer to 0% as the respondent embraces more and more social norms.

Table 6: Considering voting for Ward Crutchfield

Variables	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Group Scandal	-2.191 (3.005)
Single Scandal	1.161 (2.825)
V. Moralism	0.177 (0.237)
Mor_Group	-0.210 (0.323)
Mor_Single	-0.557+ (0.325)
GOP	-0.513 (0.932)
DEM	-1.327+ (0.722)
Knowledge	0.063 (0.282)
Interest	-0.164 (0.321)
Black	2.283** (0.855)
Hispanic	1.064+ (0.581)
Female	0.479 (0.584)
_Constant	0.422 (2.362)
n=132	
LR chi2(12) = 61.93	

Standard errors in parentheses
+ p<.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01

In sum, what appears to be driving the results is not only whether the respondent was placed in the single or joint scandal treatment or how moralistic the voter is, but the interaction of moralism and how many public officials are involved in the scandal. In other words, how many public official involved in the scandal or how moralistic the voter is does not predict voter attitude. If, however, the voter does embrace more social norms then she is affected by how many public officials

are involved in the scandal. The more social norms the respondent embraces, more likely she is to develop negative attitudes towards Crutchfield (if she believes he was the only participant involved in the scandal) and less likely she would consider voting for him.

Discussion

My original question why some public officials are negatively evaluated over scandals while others are not is not fully answered. Thus far I have provided evidence that number of participants involved in a scandal and candidate reputation can influence electoral outcomes for public officials involved in scandal during the course of their term. Electoral outcomes, however, are different than measuring voter attitudes (although may be the result of voter attitudes). In Chapter 4, I have also provided evidence that voters will develop a negative attitude towards politicians involved in a scandal that defies his reputation and what the voter values. With the data and test presented in this chapter I have shown evidence for causality that attitudes towards public officials involved in scandal can be mitigated as a function of whether they are the only participant or not. If the public official is the only participant, the voter will develop more negative views of him because it is easier to allocate responsibility for that scandal. If a public official is involved in a scandal involving multiple participants, then it is more difficult to attribute all the blame to just one individual, and the blame is in essence diffused. In addition, the official in question then has the appearance he is not deviated from the typical politicians because more than one was involved. If the official is the only participant

in the scandal, then he is more easily to be singled out and their behavior is clearly deviant from other public officials.

Those subjects who believed that Ward Crutchfield was the only member of the Tennessee Waltz scandal were much more likely to be critical of him as a person, his leadership abilities, and his ability to do his job. Those, however, who knew he was not the only participant, were far less critical. These findings, however, are robust only for those persons who put value in social norms. With this said, my theoretical story could still hold for persons who do not value social norms and may not care if a public official is involved in scandal. A better test would be identifying what these voters do value, and then testing to see if the number of public officials who contradict this value effects their evaluation of any one of them. What I have is shown evidence that voters who embrace social norms react differently and more negatively to public officials if they are involved in an individual scandal than a joint scandal.

My causal story for this observed phenomenon is that voters when evaluating candidates create an expectation profile of a public official. This expectation profile is made up of what the voter values and the candidate's reputation. The reaction to scandals depends on whether the public official in some way violated this expectation profile. In addition if more than one public official is involved in the scandal it could mitigate the impact the scandal has on any one member because of the diffusion of responsibility. If more than one public official is involved in the same scandal, it alters the way the voter reacts to any one member of

that scandal. If a public official's behavior does not deviate from what a typical politician would do, then the voter would have less reason to be critical of him. And the presence of a scandal involving more than one politician gives the appearance that any one participant is not deviating from typical politician behavior. In other words, if the voter believes all public officials are corrupt, and joint scandals are more likely to give that appearance than individual scandals, then the voter would less likely hold any one public official more accountable for corruption than the other. As a result, where voters attitudes for all public officials may suffer, it will not for anyone particular member. It is difficult to fail an expectation when there is not much of one.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The research question I attempt to answer is why some public officials are negatively evaluated over political scandals while others are not. There are numerous examples of public officials involved in scandal who not only survive but continue to have burgeoning political careers. For example, U.S. Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV) and former U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) have or had been implicated in numerous scandals throughout their respective careers. In May, 2006, it was reported that Sen. Reid had taken improper benefits through the form of boxing tickets and later that year it was also reported that he had used campaign money to allocate Christmas bonuses. Yet, Sen. Reid recently won re-election in 2010, an election cycle unfavorable to incumbent Democrats. In December, 1994, Sen. Helms made hostile comments regarding President Bill Clinton that many viewed to be as a threat to the President. He said that President Clinton “better have a bodyguard” if he were to visit the state. Sen. Helms later apologized and acknowledged the comment as inappropriate. In October, 1996, Sen. Helms was accused of being a slumlord. Just like Sen. Reid, Sen. Helms continued to be re-elected and retired from the Senate in 2003 – five years before his passing.

Other officials, however, such as former U.S. Sen. Alfonse D’Amato (R-NY) and former U.S. Sen. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) were involved in political scandals and did not experience the same favorable outcomes. In 1986, Sen. D’Amato was accused of improperly securing federal grants for relatives from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and later in 1996 was accused of impropriety regarding

stock options that netted him over \$37,000. Sen. D'Amato later lost his re-election bid to current U.S. Sen. Charles "Chuck" Schumer (D-N.Y.) by an 11-point margin. In addition, Sen. Torricelli was also accused of impropriety regarding gains from a stock option, which was invested on his behalf by a brokerage firm that was later shutdown for illegal activity. Sen. Torricelli later was accused of exchanging favors for gifts when a major donor allegedly helped him put a down payment on a luxury car. Sen. Torricelli's name was eventually replaced on the 2002 New Jersey senatorial election ballot by current U.S. Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ).

In addition to these senatorial scandals, the U.S. Executive Branch has been rocked by scandals that lead to the resignation of President Richard Nixon and later to the impeachment of President Bill Clinton. Members of President Nixon's administration were implicated with the cover-up of the break in of the Watergate hotel in 1973, and despite Nixon's 23-point electoral victory margin the prior year, Nixon resigned before impeachment hearing could be formally filed. Conversely, President Bill Clinton was caught lying to the grand jury over his sexual relationship with intern Monica Lewinsky in a hearing regarding the alleged sexual harassment of former state employee Paula Jones. Even though the House of Representatives later impeached President Clinton, the public rallied behind him –Clinton left office with public approval ratings over 60%. These past cases and others provoke the question as to why there are vastly different outcomes to political scandals.

Existing research on political scandal does not address this question. Past research on scandal view its impact on elections, trust in government, and candidate

behavior. There is, however, no mid-range theory to address why we observe variation in the public's response to scandals. The goal of this project was to address this gap in the literature and develop a mid-level theory that addresses why voters react differently to political scandals. Although each political scandal is unique and the context may differ, I theorize there are causal factors that can be observed in most of the reactions to political scandals. Addressing this question is important for political science because scandals are a constant in American politics. Uncovering how a voter responds to scandals is important because there will always be current and future politicians who will either be implicated with or actively involved in political scandals. Knowing why a voter responds the way she does will provide insight to the impact current and future political scandals can and do have on American politics.

Theory

I theorize that in order to know why there is variation in response to political scandals, we must understand what expectations a voter has for public officials. For this project I presented a mid-range theory to explain voter reactions to political scandal. I argue three factors influence voter response to scandals: what the voter values, the public official/candidate's attributes or reputation, and attribution of responsibility for a given scandal, conditioned primarily by how many public officials are involved. Each voter builds an expectation profile which she projects on all public officials. It is a violation of this profile that results in a negative evaluation. If the public official involved in a scandal does not violate this profile then he will

not be as negatively evaluated. Conversely, if the official does violate this profile then he will be negatively evaluated.

As noted, this expectation profile is in part based on what the voter values and will be placed on all public officials she evaluates. I also refer to these values as general expectations. For example, if the voter has a high sense of moralism, then she will expect all public officials to be consistent with these values. Conversely, if the voter values competence then she is more likely to use that criterion when evaluating her representative(s). Whenever a public official or candidate fails these expectations he will be viewed negatively. Therefore if the contents of the scandal violate these values the official involved will ultimately be negatively evaluated as a result.

The expectation profile is also based on the candidate's reputation, which will vary among each public official. I also refer to the expectations based on the candidate's reputation as individual expectations. For example, if a candidate has the image of being honest or a straight-talker, and he is caught lying then he will be viewed negatively. Conversely, if the candidate does not have an image of being honest, but rather highly effective, and is caught in a lie the voter will not view him as negatively (although she may not personally condone lying). The official/candidate's reputation can be built in a variety of ways. It can be based on the public official's past action(s) or an image in which he bases his persona. Although I argue this expectation profile is used when evaluating candidates, I do

not explain how different criteria within this profile are weighted or how these profiles are built. For now, I am only assuming their existence.

In addition to the expectation profile, if the scandal involves more than one public official it could augment how the voter responds to him. If the scandal involves more than one public official, I argue it is more difficult for the voter to identify who deserves most of the blame. For example, 22 members of Congress were implicated in the House Banking Scandal. Although, the conduct for each member was viewed as scandalous it was also clear that banks allowing the overdrafting of checking accounts was a perk given to many members of Congress. Therefore, everyone involved in the scandal was not deviating from a behavior that was typical of many politicians. In addition, because so many officials were involved it was difficult for the voter to decide who should receive most of the blame. Whereas if the scandal involves only one public official, like an extra-marital affair, it is easier for the voter to allocate sole responsibility for that scandal. In other words, scandals involving more than one public official can mitigate the impact it may have on each individual member. When there are more members to share the blame, the responsibility for that scandal becomes less.

Theory tests and findings

I theorize and argue there are ultimately three factors that influence response to political scandals. To test these implications, I created a database of senate election outcomes and scandals ranging from 1985 to 2008, used a recent

public opinion survey based on voter values and candidate impression formation, and developed an experiment.

For Chapter 3, I used the scandal database and applied an aggregate level of analysis testing aggregate voting behavior across elections as a function of whether a political scandal involved more than one public official and candidate reputation. For Chapter 4, I used the public opinion survey and applied an individual level of analysis testing change in individual voter attitudes over scandal as function of voter values and candidate reputation. And finally, for Chapter 5, I used an experiment to illustrate a causal link between the reaction to political scandal as a function of voter values and if the scandal involved more than one public official. Throughout the project, I was able to test each of the three factors that influence voter response to scandal two times. Because each chapter imposed a test with a different unit of analysis, I was able to provide evidence for each factor that influences response to scandal across multiple contexts.

In Chapter 3, after controlling for alternative explanations that could influence electoral outcomes, I found that senatorial incumbents involved in an individual scandal (where they are the only participant) were less likely to be re-elected than an incumbent not involved in a scandal. In addition, I found that election outcomes involving incumbents in a joint scandal (where they were not the only participant) were about the same as those who were not involved in a scandal. In other words, scandal will influence electoral outcomes only if the public official involved is the only participant.

Furthermore, I also found that candidates with a scandal history (being involved in at least one other joint or individual at some point during their career) were immune to the affects that involvement in an individual scandal would otherwise create. Although these findings give credence to my theory, testing electoral outcomes does not explain voter attitude change. Electoral outcomes can be a function of voter attitude change, but I cannot say with certainty they were caused by attitude change. Nevertheless, I do provide evidence that involvement in joint scandals have no real influence on electoral outcomes while individual scandals do. In addition, I also provide evidence that incumbents with a history of scandal are immune to these affects.

Building upon my findings in Chapter 3, in Chapter 4, I find that voters who value marriage are less likely to support a presidential candidate who has been involved in an extra-marital affair. In addition, I also find that voters who value marriage are more critical in their evaluation of candidates who have been divorced multiple times. This finding provides evidence that voter values or general expectations do condition how a voter reacts to a candidate. If the candidate violates these values, then he will be negatively viewed.

In addition, I also find that candidate reputation also influences how a voter reacts to a potential presidential candidate. If the voter believes a candidate has a strong marriage then she is less likely to vote for a candidate who has been involved in an extra-marital affair or has been divorced multiple times. These findings provide evidence that candidate reputation does influence how voters evaluate

them. Although these findings provide evidence that voter values and candidate reputation influence candidate evaluation they do not show the causal link between public officials receiving negative evaluations as a function of failed expectations. The survey questionnaire used states a hypothetical scenario that gauges voter reaction. It also only shows that voter attitude can be influenced by candidate reputation and not if a violation of this reputation causes a negative reaction.

Finally, in Chapter 5, I test for a causal link between negative evaluation as a function of voter values and how many participants are involved in a scandal. I chose a case involving the bribery of a multiple state-level public officials. A portion of the respondents were exposed to a news article high-lighting a state level official and the bribery charge. The other respondents were exposed to the same story, but also provided additional information there was more than one official being investigated.

I found that respondents who scored high on a moralistic measure I constructed (representing voter values) allocated responsibility differently for joint scandals opposed to individual scandals. Respondents who scored high on the moralistic scale were less harsh towards the state level official if they believe he was one of numerous participants in the scandal opposed to being the only participant. Although I expected to find respondents allocate responsibility differently for joint than individual scandals independent of their value set, I was still able to provide evidence that voter values do influence how a respondent reacts to individual and joint scandals.

Implication of the Findings and Future Research

In this project, I developed a mid-level theory to explain the variation in voter reaction to scandal. I have provided evidence that candidate reputation can influence electoral outcomes involving scandal, and voter attitudes regarding potential candidates. I have also provided evidence that voter values can influence attitudes regarding candidates and can change how a voter allocates responsibility for scandals involving one or more politicians. Finally, I have also provided evidence that incumbents involved in scandal are not more likely to suffer electoral defeat if the scandal involves more than one participant. Although, these findings are encouraging more tests and further scrutiny need to be done to give my theoretical story credence.

What I have been able to accomplish is provide evidence that there are factors that can influence how voters generally respond to scandals. This research will help fill the gap in past scholarship regarding political scandals. The literature on scandals focus on the effects scandals have on voter efficacy, strategic behavior of candidates, and the consequences of highly public political scandals such as Watergate and the House Banking scandal. This research begins to provide the voter a more active role in scandal research whereas past research on scandals tends to be candidate focused or attempts to speak to the overall consequences scandals have on trust or faith in government.

Furthermore, this research also provides evidence that general candidate impression formation can be influenced by voter values and candidate reputation.

In addition, this research also strengthens previous findings on how voters allocate responsibility. Previous research on allocations of responsibility focus on economic performance evaluation for the executive opposed to the legislative branch, or how voters evaluate job performance in coalition or multi-party governments opposed to majoritarian or two-party systems. By using this literature to help explain the variation in voter response to scandals, I have shown that studies on voter evaluations can complement each other even though the subject that is being studied may seem to be disconnected. Future research questions on allocations of responsibility can also incorporate past literature and my current contribution. Do voters allocate responsibility differently for decisions of war and peace? This question is particularly relevant in recent times with the Invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the recent decision by President Barack Obama to involve the U.S. in attempt to overthrow Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi.

Although my theoretical story seeks to explain voter response to scandal, using voter expectations as a function of voter values and candidate reputation may also provide insight to how voters evaluate public officials for other non-scandalous behavior, such as job performance, voting habits, credit claiming, and campaigning. In addition, this research also can provide insight for strategic decisions candidates make during elections. Elections are not simply events where candidates craft a message and voters either embrace or reject that message, nor are they simply voters making decisions about candidates as a function of what they want the country to look like in the future or how an incumbent has performed in the past.

Elections involve a give and take between candidates and voters. In other words, candidates react to voters and voters react to candidates. To complicate matters, this give and take happens over a period of time when voter minds can change as well as campaign strategies.

In addition, political scandals are a constant in American politics. Some politicians resign because of scandals while others try to work through them. If a public official attempts to survive a scandal he may try to diffuse the responsibility placed on him by implicating others, or convince the public his behavior (albeit wrong) is common among all politicians. Doing this may adjust how voters react to him or his involvement in the scandal. In addition, a politician may try to alter his image during a political scandal in an attempt to change the expectations the voters place on him. Although President Clinton did not have the reputation for being faithful to his wife, during the Lewinsky scandal he had the ability to emphasize his economic performance. Despite being only the second president to have been impeached, the Clinton presidency is remembered for its successful economic policies and job growth.

Although I have helped advance an understanding as to why voters react to scandals the way they do, there are numerous avenues for future exploration. More experiments testing expectations and reactions to scandals can be pursued. My experiment design used voter values to test expectations while varying the number of participants involved in a scandal. A future experiment design can expose subjects to a single scandal and vary the reputation of the official involved by

altering his image or changing information regarding his voting history. In addition, if voter response to scandals is a function of expectations, how do voters weight these expectations? In this project I have discussed the criteria voters use when building their expectation profiles but I do not speak to how they construct these profiles. I only assume these voter expectations exist. Future research questions could explore what factors are dominant in voter expectations. What criteria do voters use when building these expectations? What role do descriptive characteristics such as race, religion, or gender play when voters build or project expectations? Do voters use identity when evaluating candidates or building expectations? What role does identity play when voters build an expectation profile, and then are confronted with a public official involved in a scandal who happens to share this identity?

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Appendix A: Princeton Survey Research Associates International on Family Values and Marriage Questionnaire

16. What is your opinion of the no-fault divorce system that makes it easier for couples to end their marriages? Overall, do you think no-fault divorce has been a good thing or a bad thing?

1)	Good thing
2)	Bad thing
9)	Don't know/Refused

- *18. Thinking about factors you might consider in choosing a presidential candidate to support... Do you think the relationship between a candidate and their spouse tells you a lot, some, not much, or nothing about how good a president they would be? *(last asked 2/5-6/04)*

1)	A lot
2)	Some
3)	Not much
4)	Nothing
9)	Don't know/Refused

- *19. We're interested in whether certain information about a presidential candidate would cause you to vote against the

candidate, regardless of other factors. (First,) what if you found out that...

(INSERT—READ AND

RANDOMIZE)?

READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Would that ALONE cause you to vote against the candidate? *(items a-b last asked 9/19-20/96)*

a. The candidate had extramarital affairs
ALWAYS ASK ITEMS e-g AS A GROUP, IN ORDER
f. The candidate had been divorced more than once
1) Yes, would cause to vote against
2) No would not
9) Don't know/Refused

20. If a presidential candidate talks about upholding traditional family values, are you less likely to believe them if they have been divorced themselves, or doesn't it make much difference to you?

1)	Less likely
2)	Doesn't make much difference
9)	Don't know/Refused

21. Are you more likely to vote for a presidential candidate who seems to have a strong marriage and has never been divorced, or doesn't it make much difference to you?

1)	More likely
2)	Doesn't make much difference
9)	Don't know/Refused

- D7. What is your religious preference -- Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, an Orthodox Church, or some other religion?

1)	Protestant (includes Baptist, Christian, Episcopalian, Jehovah's Witness, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.)
----	--

2)	Roman Catholic/Catholic
3)	Jewish
4)	Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)
5)	Orthodox Church (Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, etc.)
6)	Islam/Muslim
7)	Buddhist
8)	Hindu
9)	Other religion (SPECIFY - BACK-CODE AS APPROPRIATE)
97)	(VOL.) No religion/Atheist/Agnostic
98)	Don't know
99)	Refused

ASK D8 IF OTHER RELIGION/DK/REF (D7=9,98,99):

D9. Would you describe yourself as a born-again or Evangelical Christian, or not?

1)	Yes
2)	No
9)	Don't know/refused

24a. Have you EVER been DIVORCED?

1)	Yes, have been divorced
2)	No, have not
9)	Don't know/Refused

D2b. In general, would you describe your OWN political views as...(READ)

1)	Very conservative
2)	Conservative
3)	Moderate
4)	Liberal, OR
5)	Very liberal?
9)	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

D4. What is the LAST grade or class that you completed in school? **(DO NOT READ)**

1)	None, or grade 1 to 8
2)	High school incomplete (grades 9 - 11)
3)	High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
4)	Technical, trade, or vocational school AFTER high school
5)	Some college, no four-year degree (includes associate degree)
6)	College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other four-year degree)
7)	Post-graduate or professional schooling, after college (e.g., toward a Master's Degree or PhD; law or medical school)
9)	Refused

D1. **RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX:**

1)	Male
2)	Female

Appendix B: Experiment treatments

Control Treatment: Sen. Crutchfield's district will include Marion County after redistricting

Chattanooga Times Free Press (Tennessee)

Michael Finn Senior Political Writer

Senate Majority Leader Ward Crutchfield, D-Chattanooga, said his state Senate district will grow to include Marion County when the General Assembly passes a redistricting plan in January. "I'm going to take Marion County, and Senator (Jerry) Cooper is going to take Sequatchie County," Sen. Crutchfield said.



Redistricting plans should be ready for consideration when the General Assembly convenes its 2002 session on Jan. 8, House and Senate leaders said. Sen. Crutchfield and Sen. Bill Clabough, R-Maryville, are on the five-member committee drafting a redistricting plan for the Tennessee Senate's 33 seats. "Our (Senate) plan will be very bipartisan, and I don't expect it to displace anybody," Sen. Clabough said. "There are people all over the state working on it. We'll have the majority of the work done before we go back into session. If everybody is in agreement, it will take no longer than two weeks to pass our plan."

The General Assembly has the constitutional responsibility to redraw district lines for legislative and congressional seats on the basis of population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. The lines must be redrawn every 10 years.

House Democratic Caucus Chairman Randy Rinks of Savannah is chairing the House Democratic panel drafting a reapportionment plan for the 99 state House seats. He said a plan can be passed within two weeks of the opening of session. "We hope to have everything worked out when we go back into session so we can move on this the very first thing," he said. The House and Senate leaders said they are waiting for the eight U.S. representatives who will seek re-election in 2002 to provide them with a plan to redraw the state's nine U.S. House districts. U.S. Rep. Van Hilleary of the 4th District, who is not running for re-election, is seeking the Republican gubernatorial nomination in 2002.

The sticking point in both the state House and Senate plans is in the Memphis/Shelby County area of West Tennessee, said Senate and House members. "Shelby County is losing a (state House) seat," Rep. Rinks said. "We have to get that

area worked out first; then we can move on from there. It's hard to make everybody happy. Everybody wants to keep what they have or improve it, but it's difficult to do that when the population has shifted as much as it has."

Memphis now has six state senators, but Sen. Crutchfield said one of those is going to have to take in some counties outside Shelby County. Districts of the other five senators will remain fully in Shelby County, he said. "In a metropolitan county with multiple districts, only one district can go outside the county," he said. The U.S. Census Bureau shows that the state's highest percentage of population increase has been in the metro Nashville/Davidson County area.

"That will give Middle Tennessee a new Senate district," Sen. Crutchfield said. "Meanwhile, Upper East Tennessee will remain pretty much the same," he said. "Passing the plans in early January would provide plenty of time for papers to be filed by anyone desiring to seek a legislative or congressional seat," Sen. Crutchfield said.

When you have finished reading, please press the Continue button.

Joint Scandal Treatment: Tenn. Lawmaker Pleads Guilty to Bribery

By WOODY BAIRD (Tennessee)

The Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. -- A veteran state senator pleaded guilty to bribery Thursday, admitting he took \$3,000 in money during a statewide corruption investigation. Sen. Ward Crutchfield, 78, was one of five current and former state lawmakers charged in an investigation named the Tennessee Waltz, and the only one to remain in office. His trial was scheduled to begin Monday.



In return for the Chattanooga Democrat's guilty plea, a more serious charge of extortion was dropped by federal prosecutors. "I have read the (plea) agreement, and I accept responsibility," Crutchfield told U.S. Judge J. Daniel Breen.

Defense attorney William Farmer characterized the money that Crutchfield admitted taking as a "gratuity" rather than a bribe. "They gave him a gratuity _ thanks for all your help _ long after he had already agreed to support this bill," Farmer said outside court.

Crutchfield and former Sen. Kathryn Bowers, D-Memphis, were the last of the Tennessee Waltz lawmakers still facing trial. The others have pleaded guilty or been convicted at trial. Bowers' attorney, William Massey, said she would plead guilty on Monday. "She brings this one blemish to the courtroom but a lifetime of good work and a positive history in the community," Massey said. "We hope to convince the judge it's not necessary to punish her severely." If prison time is ordered, he said, "that's what she'll do. She's strong."

Tennessee Waltz indictments were returned in May 2005, charging the five with taking payoffs from a company called E-Cycle Management, which turned out to be a creation of the investigators. Farmer said that Crutchfield, who has served in the General Assembly for 31 years, plans to resign "in due time," before the Legislature returns to session in January. Crutchfield still will be eligible for a \$42,000 annual pension because his membership in the state's retirement system predated changes in a law designed to strip benefits from convicted lawmakers. He faces a maximum of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, though federal guidelines for a first-time offender would call for a much lighter sentence. Sentencing was set for Nov. 28.

The indictment against Crutchfield accused him of splitting \$12,000 in bribes with a so-called "bagman" and former lobbyist, Charles Love. Love pleaded guilty and was

to testify against Crutchfield at trial. Prosecutors say the Tennessee Waltz investigation is ongoing.

Pushing through a crowd of reporters and photographers outside the Memphis courthouse, Crutchfield refused to talk about Tennessee Waltz. "I'm ready to go home to Chattanooga right now," he said. Crutchfield was first elected to the state House in 1956 and served 14 terms in the Senate. He was Senate Democratic leader for six years until losing a caucus vote about five months before the Tennessee Waltz investigation became public.

"It is our hope that this does not obscure what was a record of noteworthy public service. Senator Crutchfield represented the people of his district with distinction for a very long time," Democratic caucus chairman Joe Haynes said in a statement. In all, 11 people have been indicted on Tennessee Waltz charges, including several officials in Memphis and Chattanooga. Nine of those charged, including Crutchfield, now stand convicted.

When you have finished reading, please press the Continue button.

Individual Scandal Treatment: Tenn. Lawmaker Pleads Guilty to Bribery

By WOODY BAIRD (Tennessee)

The Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. -- A veteran state senator pleaded guilty to bribery Thursday, admitting he took \$3,000 in money during a statewide corruption investigation. In return for the Chattanooga Democrat's guilty plea, a more serious charge of extortion was dropped by federal prosecutors.



"I have read the (plea) agreement, and I accept responsibility," Crutchfield told U.S. Judge J. Daniel Breen. Defense attorney William Farmer characterized the money that Crutchfield admitted taking as a "gratuity" rather than a bribe. "They gave him a gratuity _ thanks for all your help _ long after he had already agreed to support this bill," Farmer said outside court.

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Senator Crutchfield represented the people of his district with distinction for a very long time," Democratic caucus chairman Joe Haynes said in a statement.

When you have finished reading, please press the Continue button.

Appendix C: Experiment Pre-test

Experiment 1: Pretest

The first group of questions involves your opinions about social norms. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

[RANDOMIZE ORDER]

Exaggerating on one's taxes is never right. (preq1)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The tax code is fundamentally unfair, so if I can somehow benefit from exaggerating or withholding some of my earnings is OK from in select cases. (preq2)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Physically assaulting someone is always wrong. (preq3)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If someone throws the first punch, it is OK to strike back. (preq4)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

It's OK to assault someone if they insult someone I love or someone who is close to me. (preq5)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Cheating on one's spouse or partner is never right. (preq6)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If my spouse or partner cheats on me, it is alright for me to cheat back. (preq7)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Lying is always wrong. (preq8)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Telling lies to avoid discouraging or hurting someone else is sometimes justified. (preq9)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Cheating on a test or exam is always wrong. (preq10)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Cheating is sometimes justified if the test I am cheating on is bias or poorly written. (preq11)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Racial profiling is always wrong. (preq12)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Racial profiling is justified when it is done for the greater good. (preq13)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Using my friends or family to obtain a job or a special favor over more qualified individuals is always wrong. (preq14)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

One person's crony is another person's trusted advisor. (preq15)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Stealing is always wrong. (preq16)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Stealing is sometimes justified for those who do not have the financial stability to provide for one's family. (preq17)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

It is one's moral responsibility to take care of one's family. (preq18)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

It is my moral obligation to take care of my family even if I think they are lazy or abusive. (preq19)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Speeding on the high-way is always wrong. (preq20)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Speeding is alright if I am the only person driving on the highway. (preq21)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Using foul language in public should never be tolerated. (preq22)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Laws are made to protect our freedom. (preq23)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Some of our current laws infringe on our freedoms. (preq24)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Hate groups (such as the American Nazi party or the Klu Klux Klan) should be protected under the first amendment (freedom of speech) (preq25)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The government should put more emphasis in protecting one's individual right of privacy than enforcing societal standards of right and wrong. (preq26)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

We should hold others to the same standards we hold ourselves. (preq27)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

We should hold those with more money to a higher standard than we hold ourselves. (preq28)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

We should hold our employers to a higher standard than ourselves. (preq29)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

We should hold public officials to a higher standard than ourselves. (preq30)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Next, I am going to ask you a series of questions about your media preference. Please give your best estimation on each question.

How do you get your news about national and international issues? (preq31)

1. Internet
2. Television
3. Newspaper
4. Radio
5. Magazines
6. Other (please specify): _____

During a typical week, how many days do you watch or read news **on the Internet**, not including sports? (preq32)

[If one day or above on previous question] On a typical day when you watch or read the news **on the Internet**, approximately how many hours do you spend watching or reading news on the Internet, not including sports?

During a typical week, how many days do you watch or read news **on television**, not including sports? (preq33)

[If one day or above on previous question] On a typical day when you watch or read the news **on TV**, approximately how many hours do you spend watching or reading news on the TV, not including sports?

During a typical week, how many days do you read news **in a newspaper or a magazine**, not including sports? (preq34)

[If one day or above on previous question] On a typical day when you read the **news in a newspaper or magazine**, approximately how many hours do you spend reading the news in a newspaper or magazine, not including sports?

During a typical week, how many days do you listen **to news on the radio**, not including sports? (preq35)

[If one day or above on previous question] On a typical day when you listen to **the news on the radio**, approximately how many hours do you spend listening to the radio, not including sports?

The next set of questions deal with general attitudes towards other and government. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

[RANDOMIZE ORDER]

Most people are trustworthy. (preq36)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most people try to do the right thing most of the time. (preq37)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most people will lie if they know they can get away with it. (preq38)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most people are motivated by self-interest. (preq39)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I can make a difference in politics. (preq40)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Public officials in Washington DC care about what I think. (preq41)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

My vote matters. (preq42)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

In America, anyone can make a difference as long as they are persistent. (preq43)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The process in which our public officials make decisions is fair. (preq44)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Public officials don't care much what people like me think. (preq45)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

People like me don't have any say about what the government does. (preq46)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The decisions our public officials make benefit the public for the most part. (preq47)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Though our system of government is not perfect, it is the best one out there.
(preq48)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Now, I would like to ask you some basic demographic questions about your background. Please remember that all answers will be strictly confidential.

What year were you born? (preq49)

Please write your answer here: _____

What is your gender? (preq50)

- 1. Male
- 2. Female

In which of the following racial or ethnic categories would you primarily place yourself? {CHOOSE ONLY ONE}(preq51)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. White or Anglo | <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Black or African American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Hispanic or Mexican American | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Asian American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Arab American | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Native American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Other:_____ | |

What is the last grade or class that you completed in school? (preq52)

- 1. None, or grade 1-8
- 2. High school incomplete (Grades 9-11)
- 3. High school graduate (Grade 12 or GED certificate)
- 4. Technical, trade, or vocational school AFTER high school
- 5. Some college, associate degree, no 4-year degree
- 6. College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other 4-year degree)

- 7. Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's Degree or Ph.D.; law or medical school)
- 9. Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

Please tell me your religious affiliation. (preq53)

- 1. Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, Non-denominational, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Episcopalian, Reformed, Church of Christ, Jehovah's Witness, etc.)
- 2. Roman Catholic (Catholic)
- 3. Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints/LDS)
- 4. Orthodox (Greek, Russian, or some other orthodox church)
- 5. Jewish (Judaism)
- 6. Muslim (Islam)
- 7. Buddhist
- 8. Hindu
- 9. Atheist (do not believe in God)
- 10. Agnostic (not sure if there is a God)
- 11. Something else (**SPECIFY: _____**)
- 12. Nothing in particular
- 13. Christian
- 14. Unitarian (Universalist)
- 15. Don't Know/Refused

Do you go to religious services every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never. (preq54)

- 1. Every week
- 2. Almost every week
- 3. Once or twice a month
- 4. A few times a year
- 5. Never

Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs **most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?** (preq55)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Some of the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Only now and then | <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Hardly at all |

When it comes to your own politics, would you say that you are very conservative, somewhat conservative, moderate, somewhat liberal, or very liberal. (preq56)

- 1. Very conservative
- 2. Somewhat conservative
- 3. Moderate
- 4. Somewhat liberal
- 5. Very liberal

Are you registered to vote? (preq57)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Please skip next two questions)

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? (preq58)

- 1. Republican
- 2. Democrat
- 3. Independent
- 4. Other party {SPECIFY}

Would you call yourself a strong [Democrat/Republican] or a not very strong [Democrat/Republican]? (preq59)

- 1. Strong
- 2. Not Very Strong

Appendix D: Experiment Post-Test

We are interested in what you were thinking about article you have just read. You might have had ideas all favourable to the article, all opposed, all irrelevant, or a mixture of the three. Any case is fine; simply list what it was you were thinking immediately after reading the news article. The next screen will present a form we have prepared for you to record your thoughts and ideas. Simply type the first idea you had in the first box, the second idea in the second box, etc. Please only put one idea of thought in a box. Please state your thoughts and ideas as concisely as possible...a phrase is sufficient. IGNORE SPELLING, GRAMMER, AND PUNCTUATION. You will have 2½ minutes to write your thoughts. We have deliberately provided more space than we think most people will need to ensure that everyone would have plenty of room to write the ideas they had during the message. So don't worry if you don't fill every space. Just write down whatever your thoughts were during the message. Please be completely honest about the thoughts that you had.

[FOLLOW WITH SCREEN WITH BLANK LINES](postq1)

If State Senator Ward Crutchfield was your representative would you consider voting for him? (Just because you may consider voting for this person doesn't mean you actually would). (postq2)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Undecided

The following items ask how you feel about State Senator Ward Crutchfield. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

[RANDOMIZE ORDER]

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield tries to do the right thing most of the time.
(postq3)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield has tried to represent his constituents to the best of his ability. (postq4)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield puts his own financial well-being ahead of his constituents. (postq5)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield thinks different rules should apply to him. (postq6)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield cares about his constituents. (postq7)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree

- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Congressman X can be trusted. (postq8)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield uses his office to benefit himself financially. (postq9)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield would lie to get re-elected. (postq10)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield cares about what people think. (postq11)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree

- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield is warm and friendly. (postq12)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield is an effective leader. (postq13)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I believe Senator Ward Crutchfield is a good communicator (postq14)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I am going to make express certain statements about politicians in general and your current representative. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

[RANDOMIZE ORDER]

Most politicians try to do the right thing most of the time(postq15)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians put their own financial well-being ahead of their constituents.
(postq16)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians represent their constituents to the best of their ability. (postq17)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians think different rules should apply to them. (postq18)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians care about their constituents. (postq19)

- Strongly Agree

- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians can be trusted. (postq20)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians use their office to benefit themselves financially. (postq21)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Most politicians lie to get into office. (postq22)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

My own Congressman cares about what I think. (postq23)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree

- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

As long as my own Congressman does a good job representing my interest, I do not care if they are involved in scandals. (postq24)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The remaining questions are about political facts. Most people aren't sure of the correct answer to these questions, but we're interested in your best guess. If you aren't sure of the answer please make a guess.

What job or political office is currently held by Joe Biden? (postq25)

- 1. Vice President
- 2. Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
- 3. Prime Minister of Canada

Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not? (postq26)

- 1. President
- 2. Congress
- 3. Supreme Court

Which political party currently has the most members in the U.S. House of Representatives? (postq27)

Please write your answer_____

How many years in a U.S. Senate term (postq28)

Please write your answer_____

What is the name of the current Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (postq29)

1. Harry Reid 3. Trent Lott
 2. John G. Roberts, Jr.